



ENTREPRENEURSHIP MANAGEMENT SKILLS NEEDED BY SELF-EMPLOYED MOTOR VEHICLE MECHANICS IN THE NORTH CENTRAL STATES OF NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study identified the entrepreneurship management skills needed by self-employed motor vehicle mechanics in the North-Central States of Nigeria. Two research questions and two null hypotheses guided the study. A descriptive survey research design was employed for the study. The study was carried out in the North-Central States of Nigeria. The targeted population for this study was 22,523 respondents. The sample for the study was 2,019 respondents comprising of 1,435 registered self-employed motor vehicle mechanics, drawn through the use of Taro Yamane formula for finite population, 475 managers of micro firms in motor vehicle mechanics and 109 entrepreneurship lecturers. A structured questionnaire titled: Self-Employed Motor Vehicle Mechanics Entrepreneurship Management Skills Needed Questionnaire (SEMVMEMSNQ) developed by the researchers and validated by five Lecturers in the Department of Industrial and Technology Education, Federal University of Technology, Minna was used for the data collected for the study. The reliability coefficient of the instrument was 0.84 established through Cronbach Alpha Statistic techniques. Mean and standard deviation were the statistical tools used to analyze the data for answering the research question; While One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) statistics was employed to test the null hypotheses for the study at .05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed among others that all the 13 items entrepreneurial accounting skills and public relations skills are highly needed by motor vehicle mechanics in the North Central States of Nigeria. Based on the findings it was recommended among others that: The National Council on Automotive (NCA) should in collaboration with the Federal Ministry of Labour and Productivity incorporate the identified entrepreneurial skills into their training and re-training programmes so that motor vehicle mechanics can be made to acquire the needed entrepreneurship management skills that will assist them to sustain and secure their employment.

Keyword: Entrepreneurship, management skills, Self-employed, motor vehicle mechanics

Introduction

Entrepreneurship is the hub of the modern business, a force behind innovative businesses that typify the modern economy. It is a dynamic process of creating incremental wealth by individuals who assume the major risks in terms of equity, time and career commitment of providing value for some product or service. Entrepreneurship, in the words of Oghiagbephan (2016) entrepreneurship is the process of putting together creative and innovative ideas and putting these with management and organization skills in order to combine man, money, machineries and other resources to meet an identified need and thereby create wealth. It is the introduction of new business activities into economy to improve the standard of living of the people and make new profit (Adeyeye, 2008). Allawadi

(2007) defined entrepreneurship as a process that involves judging business chances, development of a business intention, and determination of the needed resources as well as the skillful handling of resulting enterprises. This means that for an individual or group of people to succeed in any enterprise he/she needs entrepreneurship management skills. Entrepreneurship management skills are skills needed to succeed in business. It involves the basic skills necessary to enable one to start, develop, finance and succeed in his /her business enterprise. According to Abdulkarim (2012), entrepreneurship management skills are those categories of skills that enable one to form and exploit entrepreneurial opportunities at profit level. Profit is an end goal of any individual who is involved in entrepreneurship activities. Little or no profit in business



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enterprise especially those that are operated by self-employed motor vehicle mechanics most often results in business failure. This probably could partly be responsible for the movement of highly skilled self-employed motor vehicle mechanics from one vocation to another especially in the North Central States of Nigeria despite its growing economic, industrial and transport activities. Yapzalu (2015) noted that most self-employed motor vehicle mechanics abandoned their occupation or have their attention divided over another vocation and even engages in jobs like hawking of petroleum products and illegal foreign exchange market business which are not in line with the training they received.

Entrepreneurship management skills are capable of equipping entrepreneurial self-employed motor vehicle mechanics with the ability and vision of how to access and transform business opportunities of different types that are related to their profession (Abdulkarim, 2012). Parts of the entrepreneurship management skills to be possessed by entrepreneurial self-employed motor vehicle mechanics identified by Abdulkadir (2016) include accounting skills and public relation skills.

Accounting skills are sum total of skills ranging from financial management and reporting skills that are expected to promote effective decision on performance of the business. Accounting is the systematic recording of financial transactions. It is a service activity in which its functions include among others, identifying, measuring, recording and communicating quantitative information, primarily on financial aspects (Ezeani, 2008). Accounting skills that should be possessed by entrepreneurs as identified by Akpotowoh (2005) include: knowledge of accounts, knowledge of costing, ability to interpret financial statement and ability to acquire the skill of preparing financial statements. For motor vehicle mechanics to become successful entrepreneurs and self-employed, they must strictly adhere to proper accountability of the financial transactions through the adoption of effective accounting skills, they must take into consideration the public impact of their action through effective adaptation of public relation skills.

Public relation is a deliberate, planned and sustained effort to establish and maintain mutual understanding between the business environment or organization and its publics. Public relation is clearly a management function which involves mutual lines of communication, understanding, acceptance and cooperation between an organization and entire public (Ademiluyi, 2007). The purpose of public relations by any business organization according to Okereke (1993) is to have good relations with her internal and external publics. Thus, the public relation skills to be possessed by self-employed motor vehicle mechanics that want to become a successful entrepreneur as identified by Adeyemi (1994) includes: understanding, acceptance, cooperation, ability to manage problems and ability to keep management informed on public opinion. While trying to maintain a mutual relationship between business organization and public, entrepreneur also needs to adopt effective marketing skills as it is through marketing that products are made available to the potential customers. However, in spite of the importance of the foregoing entrepreneurship management skills to entrepreneurial self-employed motor vehicle mechanics, they must also possess practical knowledge aspect of motor vehicle mechanic.

Motor Vehicle Mechanic is one of the Mechanical Engineering trades which involve the acquisition of scientific knowledge in design, selection of materials, construction, operation and maintenance of motor vehicles. Welbur (1999) described motor vehicle mechanic as a person who, for compensation, engages in the diagnosis or repair of faulty motor vehicles components or system. The National Board for Technical Education (NBTE, 1985) maintained that a competent motor mechanic should possess sound theoretical and practical knowledge of motor vehicles and be able to diagnose and carry out repairs and/or maintenance on all types of diesel and petrol engines. This means that motor vehicle mechanics are responsible for the service and repair of motor vehicle including undertaking work on engine, transmission, differential, steering, suspension and brakes in the automobile industry. Similarly, motor

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vehicle mechanics, car dealers, spare parts distributor, spare parts sellers and jobbers complement each other in the automobile world of business. They operate either as paid employees or self-employed individuals in the automotive industry.

A self-employed individual earns his/her income through conducting profitable operations in a trade or business that he/she operates directly. People who are self-employed earn a living directly from their own businesses or services instead of working to earn money from a company (Abdulkadir, 2016). Self-employed Motor Vehicle mechanics in the context of this study refers to the highly skill individual or group of individuals whose major works are to diagnose faults on gasoline (petrol) and diesel engines; and performs minor and major repairs to engines and components, diagnose malfunctions in power transfer and chassis components (clutch assembly, transmission, drive lines, differential, air and hydraulic brake systems, and suspension items).

The foregoing clearly revealed that mechanic job is enterprising, as National Examinations Council (NECO, 2011) identified motor vehicle mechanic work as one of trade/entrepreneurship subject to be offered at school certificate level. The overall aim of this according to the council is to prepare student's mind in readiness for the world of work. It equally direct the teaching of entrepreneurship management skills that will enable them set up their own workshop and manage it upon graduation as most of these students according to Garba and Danjuma (2010) having become self-employed mechanics lacks entrepreneurship management skills that will enable them function effectively in their business environment. Thus self-employed motor vehicle mechanics should have entrepreneurial abilities that will enable them set up their workshops and manage them effectively bearing in mind the risk involved as entrepreneurs.

The entrepreneurship management skills are important skills that ought to be possessed by successful entrepreneurial self-employed motor vehicle mechanics. These according to Abdulkarim (2012) will enable them function

effectively in their business environment at the same time enable them to form and exploit entrepreneurial opportunities at profit level. However, having noticed that most of these self-employed motor vehicle mechanics seem to lack such entrepreneurship management skills that will enable them establish, manage and undertake the maintenance and repairs of motor vehicles effectively at profit level, a study to identify entrepreneurship management skills needed by self-employed motor vehicle mechanics in the North central State of Nigeria becomes necessary.

The business of motor vehicle mechanics in the automobile industry is maintenance and repairs of motor vehicles. Mechanics either operate as paid employees in the automobile industry and other organization or as self-employed motor vehicle mechanics in the automobile world of work. Self-employed motor vehicle mechanics have played a vital role in the sustenance of economic, industrial and transport industry of the North Central States of Nigeria. However, over the years it has been observed by Abdulkadir (2016) that, most self-employed motor vehicle mechanics who once enjoyed a constant flow of customers for effective maintenance and repairs of their automobiles have run out of the business and now are employed as civil servants.

Abdulkadir equally noted that some self-employed motor vehicle mechanics are struggling to secure their maintenance and repair business by relocating from one place to another or even abandoning their workshop services or activities to take other business such as motor-cycle transport business (okada), commercial transport drivers and oil black marketing. This ugly trend does not only pose serious threats to the survival of self-employed motor vehicle mechanics business but also to the economic, industrial and transport industry of the North Central States of Nigeria. To succeed in motor vehicle mechanics business, self-employed motor vehicle mechanics need not only technical skills but also entrepreneurial management skills which include: accounting skills and public relation skills which many do not possessed.

Entrepreneurship management skills are those skills that enable an individual such as self-



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employed motor vehicle mechanics to explore entrepreneurship opportunities at profit level (Abdulkarim, 2012). These skills and competencies seem also capable of helping self-employed motor vehicle mechanics run their enterprise successfully; hence entrepreneurship skills are very necessary for self-employed motor vehicle mechanics to be able to secure and succeed in their jobs in the automobile world of work. The question here therefore is: what are the entrepreneurship management skills needed by self-employed motor vehicle mechanics in the North Central State of Nigeria?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to find out the entrepreneurship management skills needed by Self-employed Motor Vehicle Mechanics in the North Central States of Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Find out the entrepreneurial accounting skills needed by self-employed motor vehicle mechanics.
2. Determine the entrepreneurial public relations skills needed by self-employed motor vehicle mechanics.

Research Question

The following research question was answered in this study:

1. What are the entrepreneurial accounting skills needed by motor vehicle mechanics for self-employment?
2. What are the entrepreneurial public relation skills needed by motor vehicle mechanics for self-employment?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study and were tested at .05 level of significance:

H₀₁ There is no significant difference in the mean responses of self-employed motor vehicle mechanics, managers of micro firms in motor vehicle mechanics and entrepreneurship lecturers on the entrepreneurial accounting skills needed by motor vehicle mechanics for self-employment ($P < .05$).

H₀₂ There is no significant difference in the mean responses of self-employed motor vehicle mechanics, managers of micro firms in motor vehicle mechanics and entrepreneurship lecturers on the entrepreneurial public relation skills needed by motor vehicle mechanics for self-employment ($P < .05$).

Methodology

A descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. The study was conducted in the North Central States of Nigeria. The targeted population for this study was 22,523 respondents consisting of 21,340 Registered Self-Employed Motor Vehicle Mechanics; 1,016 Managers of Micro firms in MVM and 167 Lecturers teaching entrepreneurship in all the tertiary institutions in North Central States, Nigeria. Purposive sampling technique and Taro Yamane formula for a finite population given as $n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$ was used to sample 2,019 respondents comprising of 1,435 registered Self-Employed Motor Vehicle Mechanics, 475 managers of micro firms in MVM and 109 Lecturers teaching entrepreneurship courses. A structured questionnaire titled: Self-Employed Motor Vehicle Mechanics Entrepreneurship Management Skills Needed Questionnaire (SEMVMEMSNQ) developed by the researchers and validated by five experts was used for the data collected for the study. All sections of research questions were structured so that respondents expressed their opinion on a four-point rating scale of: Highly Needed (HN), Needed (ND), Moderately Needed (MN) and Not Needed (NN). Mean and Standard Deviation were the statistical tools used to analyze the data for answering research question; While Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significant.

Results

Research Question One: What are the entrepreneurial accounting skills needed by motor vehicle mechanics for self-employment?

**Table 1: Mean Responses and Standard Deviation of the Respondents on the Entrepreneurial Accounting Skills Needed by Motor Vehicle Mechanics for Self-Employment**

S/No	Items	Mean	SD	Remarks
1.	Interpreting financial statement.	3.64	0.52	Highly Needed
2.	Competency in using banking facilities.	3.78	0.42	Highly Needed
3.	Sourcing for and obtaining loans.	3.62	0.59	Highly Needed
4.	Determining federal, states and local taxes.	3.59	0.50	Highly Needed
5.	Computing trade and cash discount.	3.45	0.50	Needed
6.	Effectiveness in bargaining.	3.39	0.49	Needed
7.	Effectiveness in purchasing.	3.46	0.56	Needed
8.	Determining effective labour repair/maintaining	3.40	0.61	Needed
9.	Demonstrating budgeting and financing.	3.76	0.51	Highly Needed
10.	Demonstrating prudence in fund management.	3.84	0.58	Highly Needed
11.	Maintenance of financial integrity.	3.54	0.50	Highly Needed
12.	Determining employee wages and benefits.	3.51	0.51	Highly Needed
13.	Ability to honestly keep accurate accounting records.	3.86	0.51	Highly Needed
Grand Mean/SD		3.60	0.52	Highly Needed

Note: N = Number of Respondents, SD = Standard Deviation

Table 1 shows the mean responses of the respondents on the 13 items posed to determine the entrepreneurial accounting skills needed by motor vehicle mechanics for self-employment with grand mean of 3.60. This implied that entrepreneurial accounting skills are highly needed by motor vehicle mechanics for self-employment. The standard deviation of the items ranges from 0.52-0.61 this indicated that

the respondents were not too far from the mean and were close to one another in their responses. This closeness of the responses adds value to the reliability of the mean.

Research Question Two: What are the entrepreneurial public relation skills needed by motor vehicle mechanics for self-employment?

Table 2: Mean Responses and Standard Deviation of the Respondents on the Entrepreneurial Public Relation Skills Needed by Motor Vehicle Mechanics for Self-Employment.

SN	Items	Mean	SD	Remarks
1	Analyzing the public perception and attitude	3.67	0.47	Highly Needed
2	Creating mutual understanding between the organization and public	3.69	0.47	Highly Needed
3	Maintaining good relationship with customers	3.68	0.41	Highly Needed
4	Promoting good public relations	3.61	0.50	Highly Needed
5	Maintaining better media relation	3.63	0.51	Highly Needed
6	Removing the misunderstanding when the organization is under crisis	3.67	0.51	Highly Needed
7	Explaining the importance of organizational image	3.73	0.47	Highly Needed
8	Identify the organizational policy with public interest	3.65	0.48	Highly Needed
9	Directing what people think or do in order to meet the needs and wants of an organization	3.59	0.50	Highly Needed
10	Talking sincerely to both staff and other customers.	3.63	0.49	Highly Needed
11	Utilizing feedbacks effectively without bias	3.67	0.47	Highly Needed
12	Projecting self-confidence in organization	3.59	0.51	Highly Needed
13	Competency of being always constructive and civil in human relations	3.66	0.47	Highly Needed
Grand Mean/SD		3.65	0.48	Highly Needed

Note: N = Number of Respondents, SD = Standard Deviation



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Table 2 shows the mean responses of the respondents on the 13 items posed to determine the entrepreneurial public relation skills needed by motor vehicle mechanics for self-employment with grand mean of 3.65. This implied that, entrepreneurial public relation skills are highly needed by motor vehicle mechanics for self-employment. The standard deviation of the items ranges from 0.41-0.51 this revealed that the respondents were not too far from the mean and were close to one another in their responses. This closeness of the

responses adds value to the reliability of the mean.

Hypothesis One

There is no significant difference in the mean responses of self-employed motor vehicle mechanics, managers of micro firms in motor vehicle mechanics and entrepreneurship lecturers on the entrepreneurial accounting skills needed by motor vehicle mechanics for self-employment

Table 3: One-way ANOVA of Mean Ratings of the Respondents on the Entrepreneurial Accounting Skills Needed by Motor Vehicle Mechanics for Self-Employment

Source	Sum of Square	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig	Decision
Between Groups	0.168	2	25.084	1.94	.090	Not Significant
Within Groups	28.567	1633	.244			
Total	28.738	1635				

Table 3 revealed that there was no significant difference ($P < 0.05$) in the mean scores of the respondents. These data supported the hypothesis, $F(2, 1633) = 1.974, p = .090$. Post-Hoc (Tukey HSD) was not carried out simply because there was no significant difference in the mean responses of the respondents.

Hypothesis Two

There is no significant difference in the mean responses of self-employed motor vehicle mechanics, managers of micro firms in motor vehicle mechanics and entrepreneurship lecturers on the entrepreneurial public relation skills needed by motor vehicle mechanics for self-employment.

Table 4: One-way ANOVA of Mean Ratings of the Respondents on the Entrepreneurial Public Relation Skills Needed by Motor Vehicle Mechanics for Self-Employment

Source	Sum of Square	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig	Decision
Between Groups	4.621	2	.310	1.639	.067	Not Significant
Within Groups	165.384	1633	.123			
Total	170.005	1635				

Table 4 revealed that there was no significant difference ($P < 0.05$) in the mean scores of the respondents. These data supported the hypothesis, $F(2, 1633) = 1.639, p = .067$. Post-Hoc (Tukey HSD) was not conducted simply because there was no significant difference in the mean responses of the respondents.

Findings

1. Motor vehicle mechanics highly needed entrepreneurial accounting skills for self-employment.
2. Motor vehicle mechanics highly needed entrepreneurial public relation skills for self-employment.

3. There is no significant difference in the mean responses of self-employed motor vehicle mechanics, managers of micro firms in motor vehicle mechanics and entrepreneurship lecturers on the entrepreneurial accounting skills needed by motor vehicle mechanics for self-employment
4. There is no significant difference in the mean responses of self-employed motor vehicle mechanics, managers of micro firms in motor vehicle mechanics and entrepreneurship lecturers on the entrepreneurial public relation skills needed by motor vehicle mechanics for self-employment.



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Discussion of Findings

The findings on the entrepreneurial accounting skills needed by motor vehicle mechanics for self-employment revealed that, a self-employed motor vehicle mechanics as an entrepreneur needs the skill or the ability to honestly keep accurate accounting records. This is in consonance with the views of Needle (2019) who opined that accounting records and information is particularly useful to the management in planning, organizing and controlling of the organization resources. Osuala (2018) corroborating these views, suggested that ledger, balance sheet, sales document and other business records are the basic financial records to be kept by self-employed motor vehicle mechanics as potential entrepreneurs. Also buttressing this assertion Akinola (2019) maintained that entrepreneurs such as self-employed motor vehicle mechanics should be able to keep and maintain records of receipts and payment, income and expenditure and balance sheet of their business enterprise as this according to him will yield accurate and true picture of operating results. The findings on the entrepreneurial public relation skills needed by motor vehicle mechanics for self-employment revealed that, self-employed motor vehicle mechanics needs the ability to create mutual understanding between the organization and public. This is in agreement with the views of Fejkans (2018) who noted that ability to create mutual understanding between the organization and public assist our complex, pluralistic society to reach decisions and function more effectively by contributing to mutual understanding among groups and institutions. It serves to bring private and public policies into harmony. Fejkans further explained that at the time of adverse publicity or when the organization is under crisis effective public relations can remove the misunderstanding and can create mutual understanding between the organization and the public.

Conclusion

This study determined the Entrepreneurship Management Skills Needed by Self-employed Motor Vehicle Mechanics in the North Central States of Nigeria. The findings of the study serve as the basis for making the following conclusion: That entrepreneurial accounting skills and public relation skills are needed by motor vehicle mechanics for self-employment in the North Central States of Nigeria.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. The National Council on Automotive (NCA) charged with the responsibility of organizing training and re-training programmes for motor vehicle mechanics should in collaboration with the Federal Ministry of Labour and Productivity to incorporate the identified entrepreneurial skills into their training and re-training programmes so that motor vehicle mechanics can be made to acquire the needed entrepreneurship management skills. This will assist them to sustain and secure their employment.
2. Regular seminars, workshops, and conferences should be organized from time to time for motor vehicle mechanics in the North Central States of Nigeria and indeed mechanics in any other parts of Nigeria by National Directorate of Employment on the need to acquire the identified entrepreneurial skills for self-employment.



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