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Enhancing Entrepreneurial Skills through Effective Leadership For Sustainable National Development In Bayelsa State

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Abstract

This study examined the extent to which effective leadership has enhanced entrepreneurial skills for sustainable national development in Bayelsa State. Two research questions were raised and two null hypotheses formulated to guide the study. The study adopted the descriptive survey research design with a population of 325 community development committee (CDC) members from three local government areas which also constituted the sample size of the study. Data collecting instrument of the study was a questionnaire, validated by three experts. Cronbach Alpha which was used for the reliability test, yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.87. The research questions were answered using the mean, while the null hypotheses were tested using one-way Analysis of variance (ANOVA). Findings revealed that to a high extent, managerial and communication prowess of leaders enhanced entrepreneurial skills for sustainable national development in Bayelsa State. The null hypotheses were not rejected. Based on the findings, it was recommended that leaders should be encouraged by governmental bodies to acquire entrepreneurial skills capable of making them play active roles in nation building, among others.

Keywords: Entrepreneurial Skills; Leadership; Sustainable National Development.

Introduction

The role of leadership in the direction of organisation and development of nations has continued to prompt debate following its diversification in meaning. Leadership involves a collective activity where key

decisions that affect the ability to exploit current opportunities as well as identifying the opportunities is addressed. According to Colley, Doyle, Logan and Stettinius (2004), leadership is conceived as a social influence in an organisational setting, the effect of which is relevant to or has an impact upon the achievement of organisational goals. This means that growth opportunities cannot be identified and exploited without the facilitation of individuals and collective efforts.

Leadership is central to understanding the growth of entrepreneurial ventures. Marguis and Huston (2012) noted that the nature of leadership and governance defines the pace of development in every entity. Hence, Ward (2009) defined leadership as the act of motivating a group of people to act towards achieving a common goal, and not a selfish objective. Northouse (2007) added that it is the process of getting things done through people; it means responsibility, having passion for the purpose and the mission of the organisation or society one lives in. It is therefore not surprising as Colley et al (2004) rightly indicated that the quality of leadership determines the success of an enterprise or organisation. To achieve success in an organisation, leadership is conceived as moral and intellectual ability to visualise and work for what is best for the organisation. This further buttressed the importance of effective leadership as helping the organisation dreams come true; and shifting people's perception from seeing change as a threat to seeing it as exciting challenge. The ability to articulate ideas for profit making of an organisation makes a leader an entrepreneur.

Entrepreneurs in this context are leaders with skills to create, manage and maintain business enterprise for profit maximisation. Deakins and Freel (2009) observed that the entrepreneur leads the firm or organisation and demonstrates leadership qualities by selecting managerial staff. Suffice it to say that management skills and strong team building abilities are essential leadership attributes for successful entrepreneurs. Thus, Oguntibeju, Ibitoye, Aloyebi and Falana (2014) in a study revealed that effective leadership and good corporate governance were seen as solution tools for global financial crises. In a related development, Agu, Anidiobu and Ezinwa (2016) revealed that the increasing global phenomenon and awareness on entrepreneurship education will enhance the acquisition of the necessary skills for gainful self-employment. Agbim, Orlarewo and Owutuamor (2013) in a similar study on the relevance of entrepreneurial leadership further revealed that

the dimensions of entrepreneurial leadership have positive effects on sustained entrepreneurial success. The findings by these authors underscore the importance of effective leadership especially in the promotion of entrepreneurial skills owing to some attributes he possesses. These attributes include but not limited to self-confidence; vision, ability to articulate the vision, strongly conviction about the vision, behaviour that is out of the ordinary, and environmental sensitivity. It is therefore not unlikely that the essential act of entrepreneurship is a process of exploiting opportunities that exist in the environment that are created through innovation and in attempt to create value (Brown & Ulijin, 2004). It further presupposes that effective leadership involves direct willingness to seek out investment opportunities and to run an enterprise for profit. This invariably suggests that the ability to maximize profit requires the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills.

Entrepreneurial skills refer to entrepreneurial competencies which enable entrepreneur to be successful in his field. These skills include creative skill (ability to visualize and identify new problem areas in the society or try to generate new ideas or concept in that line, innovative skill (ability to generate and apply creative ideas in some specific content to solve identified problems for the benefit of the society), managerial skill (ability to define goals and objective, plan and stipulate strategies to organise, motivate, direct and control resources to attain stated objective); analytical skills (ability of numeracy, generation and analysis of data for relevant decision making); communicative skill (ability to use relevant language to negotiate, persuade and convenience), and career skill (ability to access self-career planning technique and self-directed learning (Idowu, 2004). The application of these skills by leaders will further trigger development in the society vis-à-vis sustainable national development.

Development as a concept is a victim of definitional pluralism. To this end, Gboyega (2003) explained that development embodies all attempts to improve the conditions of human existence in all ramifications. It seeks to improve personal, physical security and livelihood and expansion of life's changes. Thus, suggesting that development is essential and critical to growth and sustenance of any country. National, development on the other hand embraces all aspects of social behaviour such as the establishment of law and order,

resourcefulness in business dealing, honesty in business relation, broad-mindedness, familiarity with science and overall national positive outlook (Ogai, 2003). It is the gradual manifestation of positive change in the economic, industrial, political, social-cultural and administrative life of a country. Consequently, national development is anchored on three major aspects; economic and social aspect, political and cultural aspect and industrial and administrative aspect. In a similar vein, sustainable national development is a process of change which emphasizes the importance of participation as a means to sustain the development process and to ensure a more equitable distribution of benefits created by development initiatives.

Achieving sustainable national development in Bayelsa State requires the services of effective leadership with entrepreneurial skills prowess. Several studies to ascertain the relevance of these skills to leadership have been conducted in different settings. These studies however failed to address the extent of effective leadership to enhancing entrepreneurial skills for sustainable national development in Bayelsa State. The failure to recognise this especially in Bayelsa State has further provided a gap which this present study sets to fill. This is therefore central to the study.

Purpose of the Study

The study aimed at investigating the extent of contribution of effective leadership to enhancing entrepreneurial skills for sustainable national development in Bayesla State. The objectives of the study specifically are to determine the:

1. extent to which managerial competence of leaders enhanced entrepreneurial skills for sustainable national development in Bayelsa State.
2. extent to which communication prowess of leaders enhanced entrepreneurial skills for sustainable national development in Bayesla State.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised for the study:

1. To what extent has managerial competence of leaders enhanced entrepreneurial skills for sustainable national development in Bayelsa State?

2. To what extent has communication prowess of leaders enhanced entrepreneurial skills for sustainable national development in Bayelsa State?

Hypotheses

The hypotheses of this study are stated in null form and tested at .05 level of significance, as follows:

Ho1: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of community development committee (CDC) members from Yenagoa, Ogbia and Kolokuma/Opokuma Local Government Areas on the extent to which managerial competence of leaders enhanced entrepreneurial skills for sustainable national development in Bayelsa State.

Ho2: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of community Development Committee (CDC) members from Yenagoa, Ogbia and Kolokuma/Opokuma Local Government Areas on the extent to which communication prowess of leaders enhanced entrepreneurial skills for sustainable national development in Bayelsa State.

Methodology

The descriptive survey research design was adopted in the study. The population of the study consisted of 325 community development committee members which comprised of 127 from Yenogoa, 93 from Ogbia and 105 from Kolokuma/Opokuma Local Government Areas of Bayelsa.. The sample size of the study was 325 community development committee members drawn using the purposive sampling technique. The choice of this technique was informed by the suggestion of Agyedu, Donkor and Obeng (2010) that in using this sampling technique, the researcher uses his or her own judgment about which respondents to choose and picks only who best meets the purpose of the study. This sampling technique was used since the Community Development Committee (CDC), and community leaders, were not all involved in promoting entrepreneurial skills for sustainable national development.

Data collecting instrument was the researchers' developed questionnaire, titled, 'Questionnaire on Enhancing Entrepreneurial Skills through Effective Leadership'. The questionnaire was divided

into two sections, A and B. Section A provided information on the personal characteristics of the respondents. It contained three items. Section B contained the questionnaire items which provided answers to the two research questions. This section contained 13 items structured on a four point modified likert scale of Very High Extent (VHE) (4-points), High Extent (HE) (3-points), Low Extent (LE) (2-points) and Very Low Extent (VLE) (1-point). The questionnaire was validated by three experts, two of who were in Business Education Department, while one was in Measurement and Evaluation Department, all from the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. The instrument was trial-tested using 20 Community Development Committee Member in Sagbama Local Government Area of Bayelsa State. To determine the reliability coefficient, the Cronbach Alpha method was employed. With the reliability coefficient value of .87, the instrument was adjudged reliable to be used for the study. The research questions were answered using the mean. The real limit of number was used to establish the classification of extent on items in the questionnaire. Items with mean scores between 3-50 -4.00 were termed VHE, 2.50-3.49 HE, 2.00-2.49 LE and 1.00-1.99 VLE. The null hypotheses were tested at .05 level of significance using One Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The condition for not rejecting a null hypothesis was the probability value is greater than 05 level of significance. This implies that a probability value less than the .05 level of significance is to be rejected.

Results: Answers to Research Questions

1. To what extent has managerial competence of leaders enhanced entrepreneurial skills for sustainable national development in Bayelsa State?

Table 1: Mean ratings of respondents on the extent managerial competence of leaders enhanced entrepreneurial skills for sustainable national development

S/N	Items	Yenagoa ($\frac{n=113}{x}$)	Remark	Ogbia ($\frac{n=90}{x}$)	Remark	Kolokuma/Opokuma ($\frac{n=98}{x}$)	Remark
1	Possessing skills for clearly defining goals	2.71	High extent	2.69	High extent	2.68	High extent
2	Strategies ways of achieving stated objectives	2.70	High extent	2.67	High extent	2.69	High extent
3	Ability to motivate followers to strive towards goal attainment	2.59	High extent	2.58	High extent	2.62	High extent
4	Ability to judiciously use available materials resources in pursuance of identified goals	2.91	High extent	2.98	High extent	2.95	High extent
5	Ability to coordinate human resources for the realisation of organisational goals	2.98	High extent	2.94	High extent	2.97	High extent
6	Operating in open door policy	2.23	Low extent	2.19	Low extent	2.19	Low extent
7	Embracing positive changes in setting entrepreneurial outlets	2.59	High extent	2.58	High extent	2.59	High extent
Cluster mean		2.67	High extent	2.66	High extent	2.67	High extent

Table 1 shows the responses of respondents on the extent managerial competence of leaders enhanced entrepreneurial skills for sustainable national development in Bayelsa State with seven items. Items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 7 have mean scores of high extent for Yenagoa as 2.71, 2.70, 2.59, 2.91, 2.98 and 2.59, Ogbia local Government Area has the mean scores of 2.69, 2.67, 2.58, 2.98, 2.94 and 2.58, while Kolokuma/Opokuma had 2.68, 2.69, 2.62, 2.95, 2.97 and 2.59. Item 6 has the mean score of low extent (2.23) for respondents in Yenagoa, (2.19) for Ogbia and 2.19 for Kolokuma/Opokuma respectively. The cluster mean of 2.67 as high extent for both Yenagoa and Kolokuma/Opokuma and 2.66 for Ogbia Local Government Area is an indication that to high extent, managerial competence of leaders enhanced entrepreneurial skills for sustainable national development in Bayelsa State.

2. To what extent has communication prowess of leaders enhanced entrepreneurial skills for sustainable national development in Bayelsa State?

Table 2: Mean ratings of respondents on the extent to which communication prowess of leaders enhanced entrepreneurial skills for sustainable national development.

S/N	Items	Yenagoa ($\frac{n=113}{x}$)	Remark	Ogbia ($\frac{n=90}{x}$)	Remark	Kolokuma/Opokuma ($\frac{n=98}{x}$)	Remark
1	Application of easily understood language for negotiation	2.80	High extent	2.80	High extent	2.84	High extent
2	Possessing the attributes of persuading followers to acquire practical skills	2.92	High extent	2.86	High extent	2.88	High extent
3	Disseminating entrepreneurial knowledge without compulsion	2.58	High extent	2.52	High extent	2.52	High extent
4	Providing relevant information to convince followers on the need to acquire entrepreneurial skills	2.56	High extent	2.57	High extent	2.50	High extent
5	Accepting complaints and suggestions from followers on ways of improving services to organization	2.28	Low extent	2.28	Low extent	2.30	Low extent
6	Enhancing a two way communication in organisation	2.26	Low extent	2.39	Low extent	2.28	Low extent
Cluster mean		2.57	High extent	2.57	High extent	2.55	High extent

Data on table 2 indicate the extent to which communication prowess of leaders enhanced entrepreneurial skills for sustainable national development with six items in Bayelsa State. The table further shows the mean scores of high extent for items 1, 2, 3, and 4 in three local government areas. Items 5 and 6 have mean scores of (2.28, 2.26) as

low extent for Yenagoa, (2.28, 2.39) for Ogbia and (2.30, 2.28) for Kolokuma/Opokuma. The cluster mean of 2.57 for both Yenagoa and Ogbia, and 2.55 for Kolokuma/Opokuma is an indication that communication prowess of leaders to a high extent, enhanced entrepreneurial skills for sustainable national development in Bayelsa State.

Tests of Hypotheses

Ho1: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of community development committee (CDC) members from Yenagoa, Ogbia and Kolokuma/Opokuma Local Government Areas on the extent to which managerial competence of leaders enhanced entrepreneurial skills for sustainable national development in Bayelsa State.

Table 3: One-way ANOVA showing the extent to which managerial competence of leaders enhanced entrepreneurial skills for sustainable national development.

Variable	Sum of Squares	Mean square	df	f-value	pvalue	Level of significance	Decision
Between Groups	6.92	.99	7	1.420	.20	.05	Not rejected
Within Groups	203.33	.69	293				

Table 3 indicates that the probability value (.20) is greater than the .05 level of significance, hence the null hypothesis was not rejected. This means that significant difference was not found in the mean ratings of community development committee (CDC) members from Yenagoa, Ogbia and Kolokuma/Opokuma Local Government Areas on the extent to which managerial competence of leaders enhanced entrepreneurial skills for sustainable national development in Bayelsa State.

Ho2: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of community Development Committee (CDC) members from Yenagoa, Ogbia and Kolokuma/Opokuma Local Government Areas on the extent to which communication prowess of leaders enhanced entrepreneurial skills for sustainable national development in Bayelsa State.

Table 4: One-way ANOVA showing the extent to which communication prowess of leaders enhanced entrepreneurial skills for sustainable national development.

Variable	Sum of Squares	Mean square	df	f-value	pvalue	Level of significance	Decision
Between Groups	8.77	.55	16	.77	.72	.05	Not rejected
Within Groups	201.48	.71	284				

Data on table 4 show that the null hypothesis is not rejected since the probability value of (.72) is greater than .05 level of significance. This implies that significant difference was not found in the mean ratings of community development committee (CDC) members from Yenagoa, Ogbia and Kolokuma/Opokuma Local Government Areas on the extent to which communication prowess of leaders enhanced entrepreneurial skills for sustainable national development in Bayelsa State.

Discussion of Results

Findings from research question one showed that managerial competence of leaders to a high extent, enhanced entrepreneurial skills for sustainable national development in Bayelsa State. This is not unconnected with the fact that certain managerial attributes were evident in a leader. The study further revealed some of these attributes as the ability to clearly state the goals to be attained, and strategies to the achievement of the stated objectives. The application of these qualities by a leader in organizations, is most likely to yield profit for organizations. This finding is in corroboration with the findings of Agbim, Orlarewo and Owutuamor (2013), that the dimensions of entrepreneurial leadership have positive effects on sustained entrepreneurial success. One of the dimensions of this entrepreneurial leadership is its managerial capability. Thus, incorporating this managerial capability into an organization will help in the promotion of entrepreneurial skills which will further promote the attainment of sustainable national development. This is also true as Brown and Ulin (2004) rightly observed that the process of exploiting opportunities in an environment through the creation of innovation that adds value, is an essential ingredient of entrepreneurship.

Findings from research question two revealed that to a high extent, communication prowess of leaders enhanced entrepreneurial skills for sustainable national development in Bayelsa State. Respondents indicated that the significant role played by the leaders in the promotion of entrepreneurial skills is witnessed in several roles. Some of the leading roles as identified by the respondents were the use of simple language well understood for negotiation, attributes of persuading followers to acquire practical skills. The awareness in the provision of entrepreneurial skills to followers may not have been unconnected with the provision of financial management. This view is in line with Oguntibeju, Ibitoye, Aloyebi and Falana (2014) that effective leadership and good governance were seen as solution tools for global financial crises. The essence of good leadership in an organization among others, is to guide against financial mismanagement. This anomaly could be corrected with the dissemination of right information to the followers. Hence, possession of good communication skills by leaders is tantamount to disseminating relevant information that will further provide the followers with requisite skills for profit maximization. One of such skills is the entrepreneurial oriented skills. To this end, Agu, Anidiobu and Ezinwa (2016) averred that the increasing global phenomenon and awareness on entrepreneurship education will enhance the acquisition of necessary skills for gainful self-employment.

Findings further revealed that significant difference was not found in terms of the extent to which managerial competence and communication prowess of leaders enhanced entrepreneurial skills for sustainable national development in Bayelsa State. The existence of no significant difference is an indication that respondents from the three local government areas share similar views on the variable comprising qualities of effective leaders in the promotion of entrepreneurial skills for sustainable development in Bayelsa State.

Conclusion

The managerial competence of leaders has significantly enhanced the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills for the attainable of sustainable national development in Bayelsa State. To a high-extent, the communication prowess of leaders also enhanced the acquisition of

entrepreneurial skills for sustainable national development in Bayelsa State.

Recommendations

In view of the findings of the study the following recommendations were made:

1. Leaders should be exposed to further trainings through the sponsorship of government or other non-governmental organizations, on the need to be abreast with democratic leadership.
2. Leaders should be encouraged by governmental bodies to acquire entrepreneurial skills capable of making them play an active role in nation building.
3. Awareness campaign should be provided to the populace through the assistance of the government on the need to acquire further entrepreneurial skills for the attainment of sustainable national development.
4. Funds should adequately be provided by government to various community leaders for the procurement of new entrepreneurial skills facilities and also adequately monitor and supervise operations of existing facilities.

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