

IMPROVING TVET PRACTITIONERS FOR DIGITAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP THROUGH SOCIAL NETWORKING.

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Abstract

The study was carried out to determine the improvement needs of TVET practitioners for digital entrepreneurship through social networking. Three research questions guided the study while two null hypotheses were tested at $p \leq 0.05$ level of significance. Description survey research design was adopted for the study. The population for the study was 770 TVET enterprises and the proportionate sampling techniques was used to select 10% of the population giving a sample size of 77 TVET in Nsukka metropolises. Data was collected using structured questionnaire. The data collected were analyzed using grand and standard deviation for answering the research questions while ANOVA was used for testing the null hypotheses. Findings of the study revealed that most TVET practitioners have high awareness level on the use of social Networking for entrepreneurship, however highly need improvement skills in the use of social networks for enterprise advertisement and in networking with professionals online for entrepreneurial information. The results of the hypotheses showed that there is a significant difference in the mean ratings of TVET practitioners on the awareness level on social Networking for entrepreneurship and a further post hoc, using Duncan test showed that the source of the difference was from welding enterprise practitioners. However, the study showed that there was no significance difference in the mean responses of the practitioners on the improvement skill needs on networking professionals online for expert entrepreneurial information. The study therefore, recommended that TVET centres should organize training and workshop for TVET Practitioners on the identified improvement Skill needs.

Keywords: TVET Practitioners, Digital Entrepreneurship, Social Networking and TVET practice

Introduction

The advancement in technology has brought a great change in the way individuals explore and use the internet. The use of the Internet through social networking sites now provides individuals with diverse opportunities (Adebayo, 2015). Social networking in the view of Nicole (2007) is an online service, platform, or site that focuses on building and reflecting of social relation among people. Social networking is the practice of expanding the number of one's business or social contacts by making connections to individuals, often through social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn,

Google+, among others (Rouse, 2016). More so, the two forms of social networking in the opinion of Exforsys (2010) include: personal and professional social networking. Personal social networking is the type of social networking to connect and gain friends while Professional social networking on the other hand, is geared towards career or business enhancement. Social networking establishes interconnected online communities that help people make contacts that would be beneficial to them, and would not have ordinarily made. It is the ability of one being able to connect to other people using any

social networking site to acquire and share useful information or skills. Social networking sites allow people to easily create their own online profile and display an online network of friends (Collin, Rahilly, Richardson, and Third, 2011). Through social networking sites, information, pictures of activities and special events could be shared. Social networking sites are online environments in which one can connect, share and interact with other users who are typically known to you offline. These sites provide opportunities for people to build personal webpages and then connect with friends to share content and communication. According to Exforsys (2010), social networking is geared towards individuals who wanted to connect for personal reasons. It has revolutionized the way everyone connects online and a tool for professionals for career enhancement. Social networking abilities such as listening, visual thinking, pattern recognition, statistical analysis, improvisation and public speaking are crucial competencies any individual or entrepreneur should desire to possess for efficiency.

An entrepreneur is typically in control of a

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commercial undertaking, directing the factors of production including the human, financial and material resources that are required to exploit a business opportunity. Entrepreneurs act in the capacity of business managers and oversee the launch and growth of an enterprise (Sankar, 2017, Goel, 2018). An entrepreneur denotes somebody who develops a new way of beholding at things and producing output out of the new concept. Given an existing technology or some kind of invention, the entrepreneur will come up with a process that will utilize the available tools

and technologies to produce a good or a service that will add value to the economy and benefit both him and the society. An entrepreneur is also an individual who likes freedom, flexibility, builds a new solution and ideas, looks for new opportunities, and delves into entrepreneurship.

Entrepreneurship can be defined as the setting up of a new business venture and taking financial risks in the pursuit of success and profit. In today's world, where job opportunities are shrinking and unemployment is at an all-time high, entrepreneurship may be the path to financial success and independence (Naval, 2018).

Entrepreneurship, according to Onuoha (2007) is —the practice of starting new organizations or revitalizing mature organizations, particularly new businesses generally in response to identified opportunities.|| Entrepreneurship is the process of coming up with new ideas or ways of achieving some set objectives. Mostly it will involve the production of goods and services. It requires some cleverness coupled with a lot of time and effort. Entrepreneurship is an activity

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that involves the discovery, evaluation and exploitation of opportunities to introduce new goals and services, ways of governing markets, processes, and raw materials through organizing efforts that previously had not existed (Shane and Venkataraman, 2000). It depicts a process where individuals use organized efforts and means to pursue opportunities to create/grow values by fulfilling needs through innovation, no matter what resources are currently controlled (Kobia and Sikalieh, 2010).

However, entrepreneurship has other aspects that need to be considered and they are risk and uncertainty. An entrepreneur takes risk because there are lots of uncertain elements associated with the new innovation, which depends heavily on the market conditions/demands. Embracing new ventures and the transformation of existing business using new digital technologies is normally referred to as Digital entrepreneurship (Isenberg, 2011). Digital Enterprises are characterised by a high intensity of utilisation of new digital technologies to improve business operations, invent new (digital) business models, sharpen business intelligence, and engage with customers and stakeholders through new (digital) channels to improve business operations, invent new (digital) business models, sharpen business intelligence, and engage with customers and stakeholders through new (digital) channels (Ries, 2011). The process of entrepreneurship can be initiated by any individual provided he/she is creative, skillful, and resourceful and determined enough to tackle any obstacles. Becoming an entrepreneur is not an easy task! There are certain qualities that are absolutely necessary if you would like to become successful in your business ventures. Some of these qualities are self-confidence, skills, and desire to become creative and rich. These sets of attributes and behaviors can be attributed to Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) practitioners especially as regards digital entrepreneurship for efficient enterprise practice.

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is, simply, education to prepare people, students, job seekers, the employed and the selfemployed for the world of work and business. According to UNESCO (2012), TVET is an aspect of the educational process involving

the study of technologies and related sciences and the acquisition of practical skills, attitudes, understanding and knowledge relating to occupation in various sectors of economic life. TVET is also known as workforce training, that includes all programmes and courses that contribute towards the development of the knowledge, technical skills, attitudes, and essential skills for being competitive in the world of work (Barbados, 2018). In many tertiary institutions in Nigeria, some of these TVET programmes or courses include: Agricultural Education, Business Education, Computer & Robotics Education, Home Economics & Hospitality Education, and Industrial Technical Education and others. These programmes also offer skills training in several trades including Fishery, poultry, crop production, Computer hardware maintenance, Tailoring, catering, welding, electrical/electronics among others. Individuals who engage in these trades are referred to as TVET practitioners. TVET practitioners are specialists in different TVET trades and are certified or registered in a trade association to practice.

TVET practices are activities, mechanisms, innovations and strategies undertaken and have proven to be effective in reforming, developing, promoting and improving TVET.

UNESCO/UNEVOC (2010) indicates that best practice is a technique, method, process, activity, incentive or reward that is believed to be more effective at delivering a particular outcome than any other technique, method or process. According to McCluskey (2007), practice is the organized way in which an individual or a group carries out a particular activity. Practice is necessarily the fruit of what individuals do and is largely composed of tacit knowledge rooted in the experience of those individuals and groups. Practice is characterized by implementation, actualization, actions and doing. Practice comprises of actions and

activities undertaken by practitioners. Many practices of TVET practitioners in Nigeria, in running their enterprises are still undermined with the philosophy of TVET being a second-class education which does not fit into the fast trend in which businesses are run in the globe today (UNESCO, 2013). Consequently, the activities of these practitioners, no matter how valued they may be, may not be given adequate projection needed for better entrepreneurship. It is therefore imperative that the entrepreneurs should improve on themselves and how they run their enterprises.

Improvement is the process of a thing moving from one state to a state considered to be better, usually through some action intended to bring about that better state. The concept of improvement is important to governments and businesses, as well as to individuals. Improved TVET entrepreneurial activities carried out by practitioners in a technology driven society may be more tasking without the involvement of the digital angle. In doing this, social networking has been seen to be an efficient means of entrepreneurial success. These networks can be used for maintaining social contacts with friends, clients, relations, entertainment, education and professional reasons. However, as useful as the social networking sites are, there is a growing concern on the lack of social networking skills such as ability to upload video clips, pictures, create blogs, update information on blogs, communicate convincingly online, respond to internal input emanating from online advertisement by TVET practitioners. In a pilot study carried out by the researchers, it was observed that many TVET practitioners have mobile technologies that can help them improve their enterprises using social networking, however, they spend more time on calls and entertainment at the expense of valuable business time, and yet do not utilize the social networking platforms for digital

entrepreneurial activities. On a further enquiry, the researchers discovered that the practitioners need the acquisition of social networking skills for improving their digital entrepreneurial activities.

Therefore, the purpose of the study is to determine the improvement needs of TVET practitioners for efficient digital entrepreneurship through social networking. Specifically, the study sought to determine:

1. the awareness level of TVET practitioners on the use of social Networking for entrepreneurship.
2. the improvement skill needs of TVET practitioner in the use of social networks for enterprise advertisement.
3. the skill needs of TVET practitioners in online networking with professionals for entrepreneurial information.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the awareness level of Tailors, Computer Hardware Engineers, Welders, and Poultry farmers (TVET practitioners) on the use of social Networking for entrepreneurship?
2. What is the improvement skill needs of Tailors, Computer Hardware Engineers, Welders, and Poultry farmers (TVET practitioners) in the use of social networks for enterprise advertisement?
3. What is the improvement skill needs Tailors, Computer Hardware Engineers, Welders, and Poultry farmers (TVET practitioners) in online networking with professionals for entrepreneurial information?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

Ho₁: There is no significant difference in the mean responses of TVET practitioners on the awareness level on the use of social Networking for entrepreneurship.

Ho₂: There is no significant difference in the mean response of TVET practitioners on the skill needs in online networking with professionals for entrepreneurial information.

Method

Descriptive survey design was adopted for this study. The study was conducted in Nsukka metropolis in Enugu State of Nigeria. The population for the study was 770 TVET enterprises registered with appropriate TVET enterprise Associations in Nsukka metropolis (Data obtained from chairmen of Poultry, Welding, Tailoring and Computer hardware maintenance Associations). The population comprised of 350 poultry, 120 Computer hardware, 150 Welding and 150 Tailoring enterprises. These trades areas were used in the study as they represent the major programme areas studied in TVET.

Proportionate sampling techniques was adopted to select 10% of the population giving a sample size of 77 comprised of 35 poultry, 12 Computer hardware, 15 Welding and 15 Tailoring enterprises.

Data was collected using a structured questionnaire of 30 items with a four-point scale, which was validated by three experts from Nsukka metropolis. The instrument was divided into two parts. Part 1 elicited demographic information of the respondents. Part 2 was divided into three Sections and was used to elicit information to answer the research questions. Section A was used to

elicit information on awareness level of TVET practitioners on the use the use of social networking for entrepreneurship with scaling items of Very High Extent (VHE), High Extent (HE), Moderate Extent (ME), Low Extent (LE) and weights of 4,3,2, and 1 respectively; Sections B and C were used to elicit information on the improvement skill needs of TVET practitioner in the use of social networks for enterprise advertisement and skill needs of TVET practitioners in online networking with professionals for entrepreneurial information respectively with scaling items of Very Highly Needed(VHN), Highly Needed(HN), Averagely Needed(AV) and Slightly Needed (SN) with weights of 4,3,2, and 1 respectively. Data collected were analyzed using mean scores for answering the research questions. Items that had mean values of 2.50 and above were regarded as to a High Extent/Highly Needed, while items with mean values below 2.50 were regarded as to a Low Extent/Not Needed while t-test statistic was used to test the hypotheses formulated for the study.

Results

The results of data collected and analyzed are presented in Tables 1, 2 and 3 according to the research questions and Hypotheses tested.

Research Question 1: What is the awareness level of TVET practitioners on the use of Social Networking for entrepreneurship?

Hypotheses

There is significant difference in the mean responses of Tailors, Computer Hardware Engineers, Welders, and Poultry farmers (TVET practitioners) on the awareness level on social Networking for entrepreneurship.

Research question 1 was answered by presenting questionnaire items 1–10 to the respondents and the results are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Mean ratings and ANOVA testing on the awareness level of TVET practitioners on the use of social Networking for entrepreneurship.

S/N	Items	\bar{X}_T	\bar{X}_P	\bar{X}_H	\bar{X}	—		F	DECISION	
w						GX	SD		RQHo	Sig
1	I am aware that social Networking platform can be used to make contact	3.20	3.54	4.00	2.80	3.40	1.03	3.86	.013	HE
2	I am aware that activities/pictures of product in my enterprise can be shared using social networking platform	3.47	3.51	4.00	3.07	3.49	0.85	2.88	.042	HE NS
3	I know that social networking can reduce barriers to group interaction and communications such as distance and economic status.		2.67	3.34	2.75	3.13	3.08	0.86	3.13	.031
4	I am aware that with Social Networking could help me build personal business WebPages and connect with friends to share ideas	2.87	3.31	3.75	2.33	3.10	1.01	6.52	.001	HE
5	I am aware that creativity 9 be achieved through Social Networking platform	2.33	3.54	3.00	3.20	3.16	0.79	11.7	.000	HE S among TVET practitioners can
6	I know that Social networking opportunities among individual TVET practitioners	2.80	3.06	3.50	1.67	2.81	1.10	10.3	.000	HE S can enhance learning 4
7	I am aware that TVET practitioners can have sense of belonging among other users of social Networking platform.	2.13	2.40	2.50	1.95	2.25	0.77	1.86	.145	LE
8.	I am aware the my enterprise can be advertised through social networking		3.80	3.74	3.50	3.87	3.74	0.44	1.73	.167
9.	I know that innovative ideas 0 Networking	3.27	2.57	3.25	1.80	2.66	0.81	18.2	.000	HE S can be assessed through Social

10.	I am aware that marketing of HE NS my products can be done through social networking.	3.67	3.74	3.50	3.00	3.55	0.80	3.43	.021
	Cluster Details						6.63	0.01	S

Key: X_T = Mean for Tailoring, X_P = Mean for Poultry, X_H = Mean for Hardware, X_W = Mean for Welding, GX = Grand Mean. SD = Standard Deviation, HE = High Extent, LE = Low Extent, S = Significant, NS = Not Significant

Data presented in Table 1 reveal that out of the 10 items listed, 9 had their means above the cut-off point 2.50 indicating that TVET practitioners (Welders, Tailors, Poultry and Comp. Hardware Maintenance) in Nsukka metropolis are aware on the use of Social Networking for entrepreneurship on these items, while item 7 had its mean below the cut-off point of 2.50, therefore, indicating TVET entrepreneurship. Data on the hypothesis testing showed the F- value (6.63) reached a significance level of 0.001. This indicates that there is a significant difference in the mean ratings of TVET

practitioners are unaware that they can have sense of belonging among other users in a social Networking platform.

Similarly, the researchers examined whether there is a significant difference in the cluster mean responses of TVET practitioners on the awareness level on the use of social Networking for

practitioners on the awareness level on the use of Social Networking for entrepreneurship.

Table 2: Post Hoc Analysis on the on the awareness level of TVET practitioners on the use of Social Networking for entrepreneurship.

Duncan^{a,b}POST HOC ANOVA

TRADE	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05	
		1	2
		2.68	
Welding	15		3.02
Tailoring	15		3.28
Poultry	35		3.38
Hardware	12	1.00	.051
Sig.			

The results of pair-wise multiple comparisons of means using Duncan post hoc test presented in Table 2 showed the mean of the welding group (x = 2.68) was significantly different from the rest of the other groups tailoring (x = 3.02), Poultry (x = 3.28), and Hardware(x = 3.38). This indicates that the source of the difference on the awareness level on the use of Social Networking for entrepreneurship is from the welding group.

Research Question 2:
What are the improvement skill needs of TVET practitioners in the use of social networks for enterprise advertisement?

This research question was answered by presenting questionnaire items 11 – 20 to the respondents and the results are shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Mean ratings on the improvement skill needs of TVET practitioner in the use of social networks for enterprise advertisement.

S/N	Items	\bar{X}_T	\bar{X}_P	\bar{X}_H	\bar{X}_W	\bar{G}_X	SD	RQ
11	Ability to upload video clips for online visibility	3.07	3.86	3.50	3.87	3.65	0.68	HN
12	Ability to upload pictures to the Web	3.60	3.46	3.50	3.87	3.57	0.49	HN
13	Creating an enterprise website	3.73	3.69	3.25	3.20	3.08	0.99	HN
14	Ability to capture pictures of enterprise product	3.33	2.23	3.00	2.93	2.70	1.10	HN
15	Updating of information on a website	3.67	3.43	3.00	4.00	3.52	0.66	HN
16	Responding to external input emanating from online advertisement	3.60	3.23	2.75	3.47	3.27	0.72	HN
17	Activating online subscription for online advertisement	3.67	2.80	3.00	3.60	3.16	0.78	HN
18	Ability to network with people that need my products	3.33	3.40	3.25	4.00	3.48	0.62	HN
19	Ability to communicate convincingly online	3.00	2.54	3.25	2.67	2.77	0.98	HN
20.	Ability to upload gimmicks online for the sale of my products	3.20	3.40	3.00	3.07	3.23	0.89	HN

Key: X_T = Mean for Tailoring, X_P = Mean for Poultry, X_H = Mean for Hardware, X_W = Mean for Welding, G_X = Grand Mean. SD = Standard Deviation, HE= Highly Needed, S = Significant, NS = Not Significant

Data on Table 3 reveals that all the items have grand mean scores above 2.50. This shows that the TVET practitioners highly need the skills represented by the items to improve themselves on the use of social networks for enterprise advertisement.

Research Question 3: What are the skill needs of TVET practitioners in online networking with professionals for entrepreneurial information? This research question was answered by presenting questionnaire items 21 – 30 to the respondents and the results are shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Mean ratings and ANOVA analysis on the skills needs of TVET practitioners in online networking with professionals for entrepreneurial information.

S/N	Items	\bar{X}_T	\bar{X}_P	\bar{X}_H	\bar{X}	— GX	SD	F	Sig	DECISION RQ Ho
21	Ability to socially connect to professional colleagues online HN S	2.87	3.83	3.75	3.87	3.64	0.72	9.44	.000	
22	Ability to communicate in clear terms, business areas where information is needed online. HN S	2.53	3.46	3.50	4.00	3.39	0.78	13.92	.000	
23	Ability to filter relevant information for business among many others in the web. S	2.73	3.60	3.00	3.47	3.31	0.83	5.34	.002	HN
24	Ability to maintain a steady online network HN S	2.87	3.06	3.00	4.00	3.19	1.00	4.767	.004	
25	Ability to follow the progress path of successful professional colleagues online for application to my business HN S	2.80	2.69	2.75	3.87	2.95	1.17	4.39	.007	
26	Ability to have an open business platform to always receive business information S	3.60	2.80	2.75	3.60	3.10	3.23	6.85	.000	HN
27	Ability to expand my business online HN NS	3.07	3.40	3.00	3.20	3.23	0.92	.78	.506	
28.	Ability to expand the network for my business HN NS	3.47	3.14	3.25	2.67	3.13	1.15	1.30	.282	

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29.	Ability to engage in mobile HN NS transactions for update information	3.00	2.94	3.00	2.53	2.88	1.19	.54	.659
30.	Ability to analyses discussions/ HN S data provided online to make profitable inferences	3.07	2.17	3.25	2.67	2.61	1.15	4.21	.008
	Cluster Details						1.40	0.25	NS

Key X_T = Mean for Tailoring, X_P = Mean for Poultry, X_H = Mean for Hardware, X_W = Mean for Welding, GX = Grand Mean. SD = Standard Deviation, HE= Highly Needed

Data on Table 4 reveal that all the items have grand mean scores above 2.50. This shows that TVET practitioners highly need the skills represented by the items. Furthermore, the researchers examined whether there is a significant difference in the mean responses of TVET practitioners on their skills needs on online networking with professionals for entrepreneurial information. The results of the oneway ANOVA presented in Table 4 shows the F-ratio of the overall items was seen to be significant at 0.05 level of significance: $F(3, 73) = 1.405$; $p < 0.05$. The Fvalue of 1.405 reached a significance level of .248 which is greater than the testing significance level. The null hypothesis was therefore accepted. Hence, there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of the respondents on the skills needs of TVET practitioners in online networking with professionals for entrepreneurial information.

Discussion of the findings

The findings of the study are discussed in relation to the research questions and the null hypothesis that guided the study. The findings of the study regarding the awareness level of TVET practitioners on the social networking for entrepreneurship as presented in Table 1 showed that most TVET practitioners are aware to a high extent on the use of social networking for entrepreneurship. This finding is similar to the report of Zhang (2010) on a study carried out in Singapore that entrepreneurs have a high level of awareness of the potential problems of social networks. The assertions of Stuart, & Sorenson (2003), aligns with this finding, in that it is uppermost to an entrepreneur to identify promising opportunities and to mobilize means of exploiting them, in this case maybe the identification of technologies that may expand the enterprise.

The findings of the study also showed that the following improvement skills needs of TVET practitioners in the use of social networks for enterprise advertisement: Ability to up upload video clips for online visibility, Ability to upload pictures to the Web, creating an enterprise website, responding to external input emanating from online advertisement, Activating online subscription for online advertisement, Ability to communicate convincingly online among others. The result from table 4 revealed that all the skills needs are highly needed by TVET practitioners in the use of social networks for enterprise advertisement. As stated by Moses (2016) an entrepreneur's ability to promote his/her marketing is determined by the company's authority and one way to build that authority is with the use of the social networking site. It is also known that social media marketing has a higher conversation rate compared to any other type of marketing. Similarly, Nyekwere, Kur, & Nyekwere, (2013) opines that social media are good media for advertising, and It is recommended that social media users should take advantage of the marketing opportunities present on social platforms.

The findings further showed that the following skills needs for entrepreneurial information: Ability to maintain a steady online network, Ability to follow the progress path of successful professional colleagues online for application to my business, Ability to engage in mobile transactions for update information, Ability to expand my business online, Ability to expand the network for my business, Ability

to have an open business platform to always receive business information and among others. The result from Table 4 revealed that TVET practitioners highly need these skills in order to network with professional colleagues online for entrepreneurial information. Dowla (2011) asserts that for the purpose of gathering resources, entrepreneurs engage in social relationships (network) to gain access to information that may ultimately lead in the acquisition of such resources.

The result from test of the hypotheses one in Table 1 showed that there was a significant difference on the awareness level of the TVET practitioners on the use of social networking in entrepreneurship. The post hoc test further revealed that the source of the difference was from the Welding group. This may be attributed to the low level of exposure of the practitioners in this group. The second null hypothesis tested showed that there was no significant difference in the mean ratings of the Practitioners on their skill needs on the use of social networking to connect with professional for entrepreneurial information.

Conclusion

The study investigated the awareness level of TVET practitioners in the use of social network for entrepreneurship and further indentified their skill needs in the use of social networking for enterprise advertisement and collaboration with Professional for entrepreneurial information. The study showed that despite the high level of awareness by the practitioners on the use of social networking for entrepreneurship, TVET practitioners grossly lack adequate skills for effective digital entrepreneurship through social networking.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made based on the findings of the study:

1. TVET training establishment should always organize training and workshop for TVET Practitioners on the identified skill needs to make them digital entrepreneurs.
2. Government should make internet service accessible by reducing the cost of subscriptions to enable easy and convenient digital entrepreneurship by the Practitioners.
3. TVET practitioners should enroll in digital entrepreneurship skill acquisition centers for upskilling in the identified needed skills.

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