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ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND EMPOWERMENT OF SELECTED PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN RIVERS STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This research work was carried out to investigate entrepreneurship and empowerment in the private secondary schools in Rivers state. It has an empirical study of five selected private secondary schools in Rivers state. A survey research design was adopted and primary data was used to collect data from the population of 150 respondents and by administering a set of questionnaires to 108 staff of the selected private secondary schools in Rivers state with the Krejcie Morgan formula in which only 102 were returned. The findings of the study revealed that entrepreneurship had a significant effect on empowerment. The hypotheses formulated were tested using the Pearson product moment correlation co-efficient, ANOVA and ordinal regression. It was concluded that entrepreneurship was attached with innovation and creativity in terms of generating new ideas for the progress of the private secondary schools and also that empowered entrepreneurs and their employees had the intellectual capacity and autonomy in making decisions that would improve their respective private schools. It was recommended that the entrepreneurs should have the capacity to develop and manage their private secondary schools at profitable ventures; innovative strategies have to be applied to enable the employees to have the quality of intelligence and skills to effect their duties, entrepreneurs should be able to collaborate with the government, ministry of education, employees and parents so that there would be academic success in their various schools and there must be goal attainment and commitment among the school owners and their employees so that they can perform their functions with great determination.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, Empowerment, Commitment, Leadership, Collaboration, Competitiveness, Goal attainment Innovation, Motivation.

1. Introduction

Entrepreneurship is an approach of creating and managing a business venture in order to derive profit by taking distinct risks in the corporate world. This has to do with the willingness and capacity to develop a new business. Entrepreneurship has played a determinant role and it is still playing the usual role in the economic development of secondary schools of the expanding global market place. The sole proprietor develops willingness to work as an entrepreneur.

An entrepreneur is perceived as an innovator and should have the potentiality of creativity to generate new ideas for a prospective establishment. The entrepreneur should have the quality of leadership and strong sense of unified teamwork to derive maximum benefit. Putari (2006) explains that entrepreneurship is self employment of any sort which is associated with the concept of innovation in the business environment. Penrose (1963) emphasizes that entrepreneurship is an activity that involves identifying opportunities within the economic

system. Leibenstein (1979) explains that entrepreneurship is an activity necessary to create and implement the business venture where not all markets are well established or clearly defined and in which production functions are not adequately known. In this manner, the private secondary school entrepreneurs should establish their respective schools in areas that are not yet developed by exhibiting their creative and innovative business opportunities.

Nwachukwu (1990) enumerates that entrepreneurship is the process of evaluating business opportunities by bringing together the necessary resources to take advantage of them and initiate appropriate actions to ensure viable success. The private secondary school owner should have mission and vision and ensure that organizational goals are achieved. The entrepreneur should also be a risk taker in terms of the positivity or negativity of the business venture. Despite all the obstacles encountered in running a business, it is the prime motive of an entrepreneur to make profit for the viability of the business.

The secondary school owners should have the available and adequate resources to implement their enterprises profitably. The structure of the school buildings, educational facilities, employment of good teachers are the vital resources to be put in place. Di -Masi (2010) explains that risk bearing is an important element of entrepreneurial behaviour because many entrepreneurs have succeeded by avoiding risks where it is possible.

Government empowers the school owners to establish their schools according to the guidelines of the ministry of education. The private school owners manage their various schools with the provision of their resources. They empower their employed principals, head teachers, teachers and other workers to perform their duties effectively and efficiently. It is the responsibility of the school owners to motivate and engage the employees to work and this can be accomplished through empowerment (Banatu, 2015).

The school entrepreneurs must exhibit leadership qualities and inspire the employees by paying them reasonable and attractive salaries so that they can perform very well in order to actualize the organizational goals and objectives.

Parents who pay school fees for their children want to ensure that their children obtain values for money spent. This is why the proprietors should make appropriate effort to pay their employees fairly and provide the necessary educational materials for effective teaching-learning approach. The employees of the school, especially the teachers perform well when they are empowered and this would breed talent development, cultural transformation and behavioural change (Adeoye, Olubunmi, Adamu and Ebirim, 2020). Empowerment of the staff would lead to improved employee tenure, job satisfaction and attainment of organizational objectives and optimum products and services quality (Mowday, Porter and Steers, 1982).

Employee empowerment would contribute to effective training and teamwork. There would be enhancement of knowledge exchange among the employees, improvement of intellectual capacity and autonomy in decision making (Karim and Rehman, 2012). Rochon (2014) explains that teamwork is a success factor for employee efficiency and the teams of employees who work together achieve a common objective. Teamwork among the teachers is a collective and shared responsibility that is directed towards the accomplishment of set objectives.

The objectives of the study in this research work are to:

i. Determine the extent to which innovation affects leadership in private secondary schools in Rivers state.
ii. Ascertain the relationship between collaboration and goal attainment in private secondary schools in Rivers state.
iii. Examine the extent to which competiveness has effect on commitment in private secondary schools in Rivers state.

The following research questions are:

i. How does innovation have effect on leadership in private secondary schools in Rivers state?
ii. What is the relationship between collaboration and goal attainment in private secondary schools in Rivers state?
iii. Does competitiveness have significant effect on commitment in private secondary schools in Rivers state?

2. Review of Literature and Theoretical Framework

Concepts of Entrepreneurship and Empowerment

Entrepreneurship is the capacity and desire to develop, organize and manage a business venture along with any of its risks so as to make a reputable profit. Entrepreneurs are encouraged in business activities in order to create and provide new products and services (Van Stel, Carree and Thurik, 2005). The entrepreneur is an entity which has the ability to find and act upon opportunities to translate inventions or technologies into products or services. The entrepreneur has the desirability to recognize the commercial potential of the invention and organize the capital, talent, and other resources that turn an invention into a commercially viable innovation. Entrepreneurs have provided employment opportunities for various individuals at the macro level so as to enhance a country's economic growth (Nkechi, Emeh and Okechukwu, 2012).

Entrepreneurship is the act of being an entrepreneur, owner or manager of an enterprise who by risk initiates the business in a profitable manner. Entrepreneurs act as managers and school owners and try to oversee the lunch and growth of a business. The private school owners accumulate the business assets and take full responsibility for all the debts and liabilities in the business activities and have the right to all profits of the business (Schneeman, 1993). Entrepreneurs can create something new, something different and transform values in the school system and in any other viable business in the economy.

Empowerment exists where the employees are given power and authority to improve in their working conditions without excess supervision from the management (Jega, 2012). The teachers in the private secondary schools have the specialized training, skills, and ideas to impart knowledge to the students especially when they are appropriately paid their remunerations as at when due. Egbefo and Abe (2017) explain that empowerment leads to the restoration of an individual's sense of values, strength and capacity to handle cumbersome activities. Empowerment would make a staff to be innovative and creative and also have the tendency to discover new ideas. Mbah and Okeke (2020) emphasize that empowered workers can survive any turbulent situation and environment. Lack of entrepreneurial skills can make school owners to be redundant and incapable of becoming empowered in the management of

their schools' affairs. Technological development has been empowering the entrepreneurs and their employees in the discharge of their official responsibilities (Tohidi and Jabbari, 2011).

i. Innovation and Leadership

The innovation strategies utilized by the entrepreneurs encourage the workers to be creative and innovative. The innovative strategies applied would enable the employees to have the quality of intelligence, skills and knowledge to implement their duties (Taggar, 2012). There must be internal forces to propel the teachers and other staff even when there are challenges encountered in the school environment (Shalley and Gilson, 2004).

Technological innovation has improved the performance of the school owners, the teachers and students within the school environment. Responding achievements have been made in the teaching-learning outcome and students have highly passed their exams successfully with flying colours. Students and teachers have been made to adjust to the needs of computer technology which has dominated the global educational industry.

The staff of the private secondary education should have creative abilities and capacity to utilize their knowledge to create new ideas, machine process and systematic approach to enhance academic services. Technology innovation improves the organizational performance by ensuring that quality services are produced (Taylor, 1958). Organizations utilize different innovative methods to promote and use technology in its adaptability and management of the ever changing environment in which it operates. Employees take the most active part in the innovative process because they use their initiatives to render quality services in the educational sector. Lack of finance and poor facilities might hinder innovation of new technology by the employees. The availability of cheap labour might hinder the use and purchase of labour saving device or innovation. Organizations apply innovation to actualize technical and market requirements to improve client satisfaction so as to improve employee performance and increase profitability (Dauda, 2010).

Employees working in private secondary schools are highly interested in creativity and innovation, in response to the pressures associated with globalization, competition, economic factors and technological changes. Entrepreneurs recognize creativity as a means of obtaining a sustainable competitive advantage. They must continuously develop innovative and high quality services and renew their ways of operation if they want to remain competitive in the global market. The employees should generate, discuss, modify, realize and promote the ideas that would enhance the organization's capacity (Scott and Bruce, 1994).

Leadership approach is very crucial among the entrepreneurs of the private secondary schools. De Meyer (2011) explains that leadership is the capability to successfully manage change in organizations. The way one manages is contextual and is influenced by the environment. The environment the future leaders have to operate in, is entirely different from what we are used to in the previous decade. Leadership styles need adaptation. Leadership is considered to be an essential attribute of successful management, whether it is in the private or public sector. Research on leadership has come up with multiple variants of leadership (Kets de Vries, 2000), ranging from the traditional command and control leadership which has become a global learning approach (Brown, 2007). The contradictory literature on leadership

would not help in explaining how young potential entrepreneurs would be prepared to rise to the leadership challenge in the professional world. The best approach is to develop the inspiringpotential entrepreneur to become effective innovators and managers of change (De Meyer, 2011). Management is coping with complexity, whileleadership is coping with change (Kotter, 1990). The provision of leadership helps to manage change to some extent. It is dependent on the culture in which one operates (Schneider and Barsoux, 2003).Leadership should be appropriately adapted among the entrepreneurs in the private secondary schools so as to cope with the emerging environment in which leaders will have to operate. Leadership is often associated with formal command and control, or sometimes with a charismatic leadership style, where the leader may seduce groups of followers to sometimes blindly execute his or her wishes. When there is a collaborative leadership in a school system, positive achievements are actualized. In the leadership domain, there must be visible power for the employees to work together. There should be a distinction between an operating change in a coercive manner versus operating change in a co-active manner, and the organization should be considered as a creative process that can be effective by constantly reframing the issues.

Effective leadership in the current climate requires collaboration, listening, influencing and flexible adaptation, rather than command and control. Chrislip and Larson (2002) emphasize that leadership can be employed in almost any situation, and is practised in some businesses with great success, but is seen more often in institutions where there are coalitions and initiatives. Leadership is a vital source of competitive advantage in the highly networked and team-basedeffort among the entrepreneurs and their employees in the work environment. Few leaders have been trained to lead in a collaborative manner, especially those at the more senior levels who have climbed the organisational ladder in different eras (Hurley, 2011).

ii. Collaboration and Goal Attainment

Entrepreneurs of the private secondary schools should tend to collaborate with the government, ministry of education, employees, students and parents so that there would be appropriate records of academic success of their various schools. Collaboration is a term that is used to describe different management techniques that promote a sense of teamwork and unity between entrepreneurs and employees within a business organisation.This management style allows the entrepreneurs to combine their strengths with the strengths of other members of the team, making it possible to collectively offset any weaknesses that may be found among the team members. Collaboration is a strategy in which entrepreneurs contribute to operations and also offer a forum for the expression of many views, which can increase the quality and timeliness of the information incorporated in the strategy. The degree of participation enhances commitment to the strategy, and it improves the chances of efficient implementation. Collaboration as the relationship of trust between participating sides to enable employees to participate and perform efficiently. Collaborationis focused on the exchanging of information, altering activities, sharing resources and enhancing the capacity of workplace for mutual benefit and achievement (Himmelmen, 1996). Enhancing the capacity of the institution requires sharing responsibilities, resources and risks.

Goal attainment is the process through which employees and other resources are mobilized for the attainment of collective goals and purposes. In a social system, the goal attainment functions are met through political activities and mobilization occurs through the generation

and exercise of power (John and Gordon, 2015). In every organized setting, goal attainment is expected because it forms part of the functions of educational survival and therefore, academic performance could be measured through the level of goal attainment as a result of entrepreneurship and empowerment in private secondary schools. Effectiveness is the process of attaining organizational goal (Griffin, 2008). The institutions' organizational behaviour are viewed as rational whose primary purpose is to accomplish goals and objectives. The more efficiently and effectively an organization achieves its goals, the more successful it handles its approaches.

iii. Competitiveness and Commitment

Competitiveness should be a watchdog for the entrepreneurs who want to ensure effective running of their schools in appropriate manners. The employees they employ should be highly competitive so that they would bring out their skills and efforts in imparting knowledge to the students.

In every establishment, competitiveness is an organizational ability to improve continuously on its operations by ensuring that educational pursuits are of high quality standard to the academic environment at a competitive price that will provide adequate returns on the resources employed. This can possibly be achieved through strategic knowledge management on education. Zack (1999) observes that in order for the knowledge to be used as a strategic resource, each entrepreneur should identify sources of its competitive advantage. Strategic knowledge management should be applied in secondary schools where specific knowledge is capable of creating or sustaining a strategic advantage by allowing them to have the opportunity for better formulation or achievement of the corporate strategy. Knowledge should be regarded as a strategic resource for the teachers and other staff. In this manner, utmost importance should be given to the employees' knowledge, ideas and talent. Competiveness is measure which ensures that the entrepreneurs and their staff have the capability of piloting their activities for positive educational standards.

Entrepreneurs in school business should exhibit commitment in the discharge of their duties. They should ensure that their employed employees are highly committed in their teaching professions and other endeavours.Cohen (2003), states that commitment is a force that strengthens an employee to discharge his/her duties in a positive manner. A committed staff in a school environment should be able to perform very well. Commitment is a state in which an employee is identified with in a particular organization and his/her wishes and goals are to work hard and maintain membership with the organization. Morrow (1993) explains that commitment is characterized by attitude and behaviour. The attitude of the employees in secondary schools should reflect their feelings on attachment, identification and loyalty to the school authority. Reichers (1985) emphasizes that commitment in terms of behaviour is only visible when the employees are committed to existing groups within the organization. The organizational members are bound by their actions and beliefs which sustain their activities and their involvement in the establishment.

Theoretical Framework

i. Social Theory

Social theory is the study of scientific ways of thinking about social life. It embraces ideas about how societies change and develop about methods of explaining social behaviour,

power, social structure, class, gender and ethnicity, modernity and civilization, revolutions and concepts of problems of social life. Social theory would enable the entrepreneurs to interact with their employees in the school environments and also empower them to accomplish their functions.

ii. Theory of Need of Achievement

This theory was developed by David McClelland and his associates. These needs are learned and acquired by the kinds of events people experience in their environment and culture. People who acquire a particular need behave differently from those who do not have such behaviour. The need for achievement theory is a drive to excel, to achieve in relation to a set standard and strive to succeed. This need is a behaviour directed towards competition with the standard to excellence. The school entrepreneurs and their employees should strive for the need of their personal achievements and the achievements of their various schools. The high need achievers have strong desire to assume personal responsibilities for performing tasks or finding solutions to problems.

iii. Behaviourial Theory

This means changing behaviour through rewards or punishments that are contingent in performance. For managers, behaviour modification is focused on two main principles: Firstly, that behaviour modification which appears to be a positive consequence leads to reward and tends to be repeated, while behaviour that appears to lead to negative consequence (punishment tends not to be repeated. Secondly, managers can get someone to change his or her behaviour by providing the properly scheduled rewards, or punishment. The school entrepreneurs should reward their employees positively when they perform well and equally punish them when they deviate from organizational rules.

3. Methodology

The research adopts survey method and design. The area of this research consists of five selected private secondary schools which include Macdonald Memorial Institute, Port Harcourt, Beryl Comprehensive College Diobu, Port Harcourt, Lily's Twadsis International Schools, Port Harcourt, Brilliant International Schools, Mgbouba, Port Harcourt and Tantua Group of Schools Elekahia, Port Harcourt which are all situated in Rivers state. The schools were selected because their entrepreneurs have played positive roles in improving educational standards and also empowered their staff to perform their duties effectively. The population of the study was 150. The researcher determined the size of the sample by applying Krejcie Morgan formula of 1970 with the total of 108 sample size. Data were collected mainly from the primary source through self administered questionnaire. The answer options for the questionnaires were developed using five point Likert scale with SA – Strongly Agree, A – Agree, U – Undecided, D – Disagree, SD – Strongly Disagree.

Table 1: Population Study of the Respondents of the Five Selected Private Secondary Schools in Rivers State:

S/N	Selected Private Secondary Schools	Population	Sample
1.	Macdonald Memorial Institute, Port Harcourt	40	29
2.	Lily's Twadsis International Schools, Port Harcourt	20	14
3.	Beryl Comprehensive College Diobu, Port Harcourt	40	28
4.	Tantua Group of Schools,Elekahia, Port Harcourt	30	22

5.	Brilliant International Schools, Mgbuoba, Port Harcourt	20	15
	Total	**150**	**108**

Source: Researcher's Computation (2022)

4. Analysis, Results and Discussion

One hundred and eight questionnaires were administered and only one hundred and two representing 94.4% were returned and found worthy for data analysis.

The biographical information of the respondents depicted that 66.7% were female staff, and 33.3% male staff. All the principals of the schools were male, while the vice principals were two males and three females. The schools' entrepreneurs were combination three females and two males. Majority of the respondents (80.6%) were experienced qualified graduate teachers and staff, while the unskilled staff were representing 19.4%. This indicates that the findings would give reliable results since the employees are responsive and educated. This has justified that there is the level of entrepreneurship and empowerment in the private secondary schools in Rivers State.

Test of Hypotheses

The three hypotheses were formulated and tested using the Pearson Product Moment, ANOVA, and Ordinal regression analysis. Hypothesis one was tested with Pearson product moment, hypothesis two was tested with ANOVA, while hypothesis three was tested with Ordinal regression.

Hypothesis One:

H_0: Innovation does not affect leadership in private secondary schools in Rivers state
H_1: Innovation does significantly affect leadership in private secondary schools in Rivers state

Table 2: Correlation Matrix on the Relationship between Innovation and Leadership

		Innovation	Leadership
Innovation	Pearson Correlation	1	.816**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	102	102
Leadership	Pearson Correlation	.816**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	102	102

Source: SPSS Analysis of Field Data 2022

Table 2 is the Pearson correlation coefficient matrix of the relationship between innovation and leadership, showing the correlation coefficient, significant values, and the number of cases. The correlation coefficient shown was 0.82. This value indicated that correlation was significant at 0.05 level (2tailed) and it implied that there was a relationship between innovation and leadership (r = .82). However, the computed correlations coefficient was greater than the table value of r = .195 with 102 degrees of freedom (df. = n-2) at alpha level

for a two-tailed test (r = .82, p < 0 .05). Since the computed r = .82, was greater than the table value of .195 we reject the null hypothesis and concluded that there was significant positive relationship between innovation and leadership in the private secondary schools in Rivers State as was notified in the probability value of (r =.82, p < 0.05).

Hypothesis Two

H_0: Collaboration does not have significant relationship with goal attainment in the private secondary schools in River state

H_2: Collaboration has a significant relationship with goal attainment in the private secondary schools in Rivers state

Table 3a: ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	108.579	1	108.579	6.576	.0001[a]
Residual	48.630	3	16.200		
Total	157.200	4			

a. Predicator: (Constant) Collaboration

b. Dependent Variable: Goal attainment

Source: SPSS Analysis of Field Data 2022

Table 3a showed the assessment of the statistical significance of the result. The ANOVA table tested the null hypothesis to determine if it was statistically significant. The ANOVA table showed the Fcal 6.576 at 0.0001 significance level. Hence the null hypothesis was rejected as collaboration had effect on goal attainment.

Table 3b Coefficients

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	T	P
1 (Constant)	28.369	20.854		1.360	.001
Collaboration	.184	0.71	. 826	2.588	.001

b. Dependent Variable: Goal attainment

Source: SPSS Analysis of Field Data 2022

Table 3b is a coefficient table that showed the simple model that expressed how collaboration affected goal attainment in the private secondary schools in Rivers state. The model was shown mathematically as follows; Y = a + bx where y is goal attainment and x is collaboration, 'a' is a constant factor and 'b' is the value of coefficient. From this table therefore, goal attainment= 28.369+ 0.184 (Collaboration). This means that for every percent change in goal attainment collaboration contributed 18.4%. The standardized coefficients (Beta) value of

0.826 in Table 3brevealed that the independent variable was statistically significant at 0.05 significant level. The null hypothesis was therefore rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted. Thus, we concluded that value collaboration significantly affected goal attainment in the private secondary schools in Rivers state.

Hypothesis three

H_0: Competiveness does not have a significant effect on commitment in the private secondary schools in Rivers state

H_3: Competitiveness has a significant effect on commitment in the private secondary schools in Rivers state

Table 4a Model Fitting Information

Model	-2 Log Likelihood	Chi-Square	Df	Sig.
Intercept Only	13.634			
Final	11.986	1.648.	102	0.048.

Table 4a has the results of ordinal logistic regression with the complimentary log-log link function. The relationship between commitment and competiveness was based on the statistical significance of the final model (11.986). The -2 log likelihood of the model with the intercept was 1.780, the -2 log likelihood of the model with competiveness and commitment was 0.000. The difference was13.634 – 11.986 = 1.648 which was significant at 0.05, since P = 0.048. It was concluded that there was a significant relationship between commitment and competitiveness in the complimentary log-log link function.

Table 4b Goodness-of-Fit

	Chi-Square	Df	Sig.
Pearson	67.472	102	.023
Deviance	59.576	102	.048

Table 4b tested the consistency between the data from competiveness and commitment in fitted model. The alternative hypothesis stated that the data were consistent with the fitted model. The alternative hypothesis was accepted and it was concluded that the data were consistent with the estimated values in the fitted model since the P-value was P = 0.023 and 0.048> 0.05.

5. Conclusion And Recommendations

This work examines entrepreneurship and empowerment of the private secondary schools in Rivers state, Nigeria and finding how the independent variables have effect on the dependent variables. Arising from the results and discussions of the participants' responses, the study had proven that innovation significantly affected leadership, collaboration had a positive relationship with goal attainment and finally competiveness significantly affected

commitment. In relation to these findings, it is necessary to conclude that entrepreneurship was attached with innovation and creativity in terms of generating new ideas for the progress of the organization. The empowered entrepreneurs and their employees had the intellectual capacity and autonomy in making decisions that would improve their respective private schools.

In line with the study from the findings and conclusions, the researcher deemed it necessary to make the following recommendations that would be beneficial to the entrepreneurs and their employees in Rivers state and Nigeria at large:

1. The entrepreneurs should have the capacity to develop and manage their private secondary schools at profitable ventures.
2. Innovative strategies have to be applied to enable the employees to have the quality of intelligence and skills to implement their duties.
3. The school owners should empower the teachers and other staff by paying them their remunerations as at when due to enable them to perform their duties promptly.
4. Entrepreneurs should be able to collaborate with the government, ministry of education, employees and parents so that there would be academic success in their various secondary schools.
5. There must be commitment and goal attainment among the school owners and their employees so that they can perform their functions with great determination.

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