Journal of Innovative Research in Management and Humanities 1(1), October, 2010.
Maiden Edition
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# Role of Basic Learning Opportunities in Building Capacity for Inventiveness *(pp. 16-25)*

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**Abstract:** The study examines the efficacy of capacity-building of basic learning opportunities in stimulating entrepreneurship inventiveness potentials of trainees. Two hypotheses were tested in the study at $P < .05$ significant level. The first hypothesis examined gender differences in the efficacy of basic learning opportunities in building capacity for inventiveness. The second hypothesis examined the various dimensions of entrepreneurship inventiveness as a result of capacity building of basic learning opportunities. The data for the study was of primary source. A total of 348 University students, with the average age of 23 years, were randomly sampled for the study, from technoscience disciplines, socio-behavioural disciplines, and managerial disciplines. They were challenged to provide answers to a learning exercise that embraced the trio disciplines. With multivariate analyses, it was found out that both genders have above average capacity-building to be inventive. However, the female gender developed more capacity-building to be technically creative, and exhibit social skills inventiveness than the male gender. On the other hand, the male gender had more capacity-building for leadership inventiveness than the female gender. Basically, the value system and motivation could have played significant roles in the outcome. It is therefore recommended that learning opportunities should be open and be encouraged for both genders across disciplines.

**Key words: basic-learning, capacity-building, inventiveness, cognition**

## INTRODUCTION

To be inventive entails to be creative, inventiveness is therefore an attribute of entrepreneurship. The latter is a productive combination of strategic thinking style and positive action geared towards achieving/actualizing a goal or development. Proactive entrepreneurship as reflected by Moruku (2009) is that socio-human action that directs strategic thinking, and decision-making self-efficacy that enhance performance and achievement. Consequently, proactive entrepreneurship gingers productivity and result-oriented performance by stimulating inventiveness in individuals and the society.

Inventiveness stimulation involves facilitating an enabling opportunities that will support the manifestations of creative potentials of individuals and the society. In the organization

of learning opportunities, inventiveness stimulation is synonymous with what Nwankwo, etal (2009) referred to as embellishing the natural competence of individuals and the society to be sensitive to creative opportunities. Conscious efforts to facilitate the creative prowess of individuals and the society are essentially capacity-building activities cum programmes. Expectedly, capacity-building is an organized training action with the motive of instilling the personality competence of coping with and managing challenges. This corresponds with the observation of Onuka, and Emunemu (2009) that the capacity-building of learning opportunities should equip the learners or trainees with the skills to be development strategists.

In learning cum training opportunities, the trainers and managers or organizers of learning/training programmes should be responsive in facilitating the socio-human qualities that induce inventiveness. This makes learning/training resources to be well utilized. An efficacious learning/training programme that is very responsive in strengthening the capacity building of the trainees should be entrepreneurial characterized. Hence, Archibong and Ejue (2009) observed that the organization of such learning/training opportunities should be able to develop the intellectual capability of individuals, to understand and appreciate their local and external environment. Under well managed capacity-building actions, individuals are well transformed to be resourceful. They can easily appreciate the achievement correlates and opportunities inherent in their environment. With such transformation, individuals can create opportunities that enhance achievement.

The 21st century is a highly productive era. It is characterized by comparative advantage in wealth-creation and socio-human development sustainability. It is not surprising therefore that the focus of the century is "millennium development goals" (MDG). This entails improving the quality and sustainability of socio-human development, in consonance with positive and healthy endeavours. As a result, the strategic necessity of entrepreneurship proaction in such development is indispensable. This is aptly captured by Bassey and Archibong, (2006) that entrepreneurship proaction and skills lead to competitive advantages, a sense of industry, and the ability to engage in innovative and economic development.

To be able to participate functionally in socio human development, basic learning cum training advantage is very necessary. Basic learning opportunities are essentially the pre-degree or pre-higher institutions learning programmes (opportunities). It is therefore the focus of the study to examine the quality of basic learning opportunities in Anambra State of Nigeria. Oghuvbu.(2007) rightly observed this when he emphasized that learning develops the individuals latent skills. This is as regards how the learning opportunities stimulate entrepreneurship capacity-building for inventiveness.

Prior to the present millennium (21st century), the Igbos of the Eastern Nigeria were heavily entrepreneurial. The primary education, which according to Eghosa and Awo (2009) is one of the goals of the millennium development goals (MDG), was the sustaining

learning opportunity for the thriving entrepreneurship of the then Igbo society. Consequently, the prevailing socio-human aberrations, even with the universal basic learning, tend to indicate that the glamorous efficacy of the basic learning in building entrepreneurial capacity is dwindling among the Igbos.

In order to investigate the above position, three (3) hypotheses were tested. The first (1) hypothesis examined no significant gender variations in the efficacy of the basic learning in building inventive entrepreneurial capacity among youths in Anambra State. And the second (2) hypothesis examined no significant difference in nature of inventive entrepreneurship emanating from capacity-building influence of basic learning in Anambra State. The third (3) hypothesis examined no significant gender differences in capacity-building of basic learning vis-à-vis inventive entrepreneurship.

## 2 METHODOLOGY

The hypotheses for the study were tested at $P < .05$ significant level. Primary data were collected for the study, through the responses of fresh University students in Anambra state. The responses examined three (technical, social skills, and leadership) dimensions of entrepreneurship functionality. For the technical entrepreneurship, they were asked to identify any very common socio-human inventive enterprise in Anambra State, and describe how improvements in its functioning can be achieved. For the social skills, the students were asked to describe their various forms of community participation toward the socio-human development. Finally, as it concerned leadership, the participants were asked to describe how their selfless assistance to others has helped those others succeed in their endeavours.

Each entrepreneurial factor was scored 10 marks, as the participants were instructed not to give more than 10 points. Thus, the three factors had 30 marks, 30 points, and 30 minutes timing (10 minutes for each factor). The points needed not to be professional provided, but yet intelligible enough to depict functional capacity.

The fresh students of Anambra State University, Anambra State, Nigeria were the study's population. It was a population of youths characterized by psychosocial diversities with the average age of 23 years. A. symmetrical sample of 174 for each gender (total sample 348) was systematically sampled from the population. With a design of 2 x 3 factorial design, the collected data were subjected to the multivariate 2 x 3 statistical analyses. The gender was taken for Factor A, while entrepreneurial capacity was taken for Factor B. Extraneous variables are controlled through quality control. Only the very fresh University youths were used. Randomization was also used to check bias selection cum sampling.

## 3 RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Analyses of the collected data accepted the first hypothesis. It was found out that no significant gender variations existed in the efficacy of the basic learning in building inventive entrepreneurial capacity among the youths in Anambra state of Nigeria. In the same vein, the second hypothesis was also accepted. It was similarly found out that no

significant differences existed in various aspects of inventive entrepreneurship emanating from capacity-building influence of basic learning. On the other hand, the interactive effects revealed the rejection of third hypothesis. It stated that no significant gender differences existed in capacity-building of basic learning vis-à-vis inventive entrepreneurship. The results of the hypotheses testing are presented in the Table 1 below.

**Table 1: Factorial Analysis for Gender**

| **Source of Variable** | **Df** | **SS** | **MS** | **F-ratio** | **P<.05** | **P** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Gender (A) | 1 | 6.57 | 6.57 | 1.8408 | 3.86 | Non significant |
| Entrepreneurship Capacity-Building (B) | 2 | 7.33 | 3.67 | 1.0270 | 3.02 | Non Significant |
| Gender X Entrepreneurship Capacity-Building (A-B) | 2 | 28.48 | 14.24 | 3.9883 | 3.02 | Significant |
| Within | 342 | 1162.65 | 3.40 | | | |
| Total | 347 | 1205.03 | | | | |
| **Critical values** (df =1; 342) F-ratio @ P<.05 ≥ 3.02 ≥ 3.86} Accept Ho for A, and B; but reject A.B | | | | | | |

Appraisal of the above result shows that the calculated or observed F-ratio values 1.8408 (for gender, A) and 1.0270 (for entrepreneurship capacity-building, B) are all lesser than their critical table values (3.86) and (3.02) respectively at P<.05. This indicates the acceptance of the first two null hypotheses. The first hypothesis was accepted that no significant gender variations existed in the efficacy of basic learning in building inventive entrepreneurial capacity among the youths in Anambra State. Similarly, the second hypothesis was accepted that no significant hindrances existed in the various aspects of inventive entrepreneurship emanating from capacity building influence of the basic learning. On the contrary, the result of the table 1.1 shows the calculated/observed F-ratio value (3.9883) being greater than the critical table value (3.02) at P <.05. Consequently, its null hypothesis is accepted. This indicates that there are correlate significant differences for gender and inventive entrepreneurship vis-à-vis the capacity-building impact of basic learning in the youths of Anambra State of Nigeria. Hence, a more critical examination of the findings can be made with descriptive statistics Table 2 below.

From Table 2 below, analyses of FACTOR **A** (GENDER) showed the mean/percentage (5.75 / 51.16%) values for the female gender was marginally greater than those of the male (5.49 / 48.84%). This should have indicated greater performance of the female gender vis-à-vis the entrepreneurial capacity building effect of basic learning among youths in Anambra State. However, the significant testing of the gender factor in Table 1 earlier had already proved that the result was not significant. This meant that basic learning had similar entrepreneurial capacity-building effects on the youths in Anambra State of Nigeria.

Essentially, both genders' respective means (Female = 5.75; male = 5.49) were all greater than their common critical mean (5.00). It indicated that basic learning was just very slightly above average efficacious in inculcating entrepreneurial capacity building in the youths. The standard deviation's (SD) high value (female = 5.60; male = 5.30) indicated that there was considerable intra-gender variation on how basic learning influenced their (youths) entrepreneurial capacity-building.

**Table 2: Gender and Inventive Entrepreneurship Correlation**

| | **Factors/Variables s** | $\bar{X}$ | **N** | **%** | **SD** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Factor A (Gender) | Male | 5.49 | 174 | 48.84 | 5.30 |
| | Female | 5.75 | 174 | 51.16 | 5.60 |
| | **Total** | **11.24** | **348** | **100** | |
| | ***Critical Mean = 5.00*** | | | | |
| Factor B (Entrepreneurship Capacity-Building ) | Technical Capacity-Building | 5.78 | 116 | 34.28 | 2.08 |
| | Social Skills Capacity-Building | 5.44 | 116 | 32.27 | 1.71 |
| | Leadership Capacity-Building | 5.64 | 116 | 33.45 | 1.60 |
| | **Total** | **16.86** | **348** | **100** | |
| | ***Critical Mean = 5.00*** | | | | |
| Effects Interaction (A.B) | Male, and Technical Capacity-Building | 5.67 | 58 | 16.82 | 2.06 |
| | Male, and Social Skills Capacity-Building | 5.04 | 58 | 14.95 | 1.54 |
| | Male, and Leadership Capacity-Building | 5.74 | 58 | 17.03 | 1.56 |
| | Female, and Technical Capacity-Building | 5.90 | 58 | 17.51 | 2.11 |
| | Female, and Social Skills Capacity-Building | 5.83 | 58 | 17.29 | 1.79 |
| | Female, and Leadership Capacity-Building | 5.53 | 58 | 16.40 | 1.70 |
| | **Total** | **33.71** | **348** | **100** | |
| | ***Critical Mean = 5.00*** | | | | |

However, there was a high inter-gender consistency/similarity in the entrepreneurial capacity-building of basic learning, as revealed from the very tight inter-gender range (5.60 – 5.30 = 0.30).

For FACTOR **B** (ENTREPRENEURSHIP CAPACITY-BUILDING), the mean/percentage values for technical capacity-building (5.78 / 34.28%) were greater than those of leadership capacity-building (5.64 / 33.45%). And the latter was greater than those of social skills capacity-building (5.44 / 32.27%). This did not necessarily indicate significant variations of entrepreneurial capacity-building effects of basic learning, as it had already been proved in the analyses of Table 1. Yet, the three domains of entrepreneurial capacity-building were very slightly greater than their common critical mean (5.00). It indicated that basic learning was very slightly efficacious in building entrepreneurial capacity in youths in Anambra State of Nigeria. With the very closeness in the SD's for the respective three domains of entrepreneurial capacity-building, it can be said that there were both intra, and inter

consistency/similarity in the functional effects of basic learning to inculcate entrepreneurial capacity-building in the youths.

On the contrary, the INTERACTION EFFECTS (**A.B**) has been proved in Table 1 to be significant. It meant that there were differences in the correlates of each gender with any of the domains of entrepreneurial capacity-building vis-à-vis the impacts of basic learning on them. From their means/percentage analyses, basic learning influenced each gender's various entrepreneurial capacity-building in the following order of magnitude. The basic learning had more capacity-building for technical entrepreneurship on the female gender (5.90 / 17.51%) than their male counterparts (5.67 / 16.82%). Again, the basic learning had more social skills capacity-building for entrepreneurship on the female gender (5.83 / 17.29%) than the male gender (5.04 / 14.95%). However, the efficacy of the basic learning to inculcate leadership capacity-building for inventive entrepreneurship was more felt with male gender (5.74 / 17.03%) than the female gender (5.53 / 16.40%). Generally, basic learning was very slightly above average in inculcating the capacity-building for inventive entrepreneurship in the youths in Anambra State of Nigeria. Hence, the respective means (Xs) of the interaction effects were very slightly greater than their common critical mean (5.00). Furthermore, the closeness of their respective SDs showed a measure of internal (intra) consistency/similarity for each correlate, in the effects of basic learning to inculcate inventive entrepreneurship. In the same vein, the very small range of 0.57 (ie 2.11 – 1.54 = 0.57) also showed a measure of external (inter) consistency/Similarity across the six correlates, in the effects of basic learning to inculcate inventive entrepreneurship in the youths.

## 4 DISCUSSIONS

The findings of the study are very imperative for the socio-human development of the youths in the Anambra State of Nigeria. The implications of the findings are well brought out in the course of the discussions. First the gender-related implications are examined. This is followed by a discussion on the entrepreneurial capacity building of basic learning. Highlights are also made on the interaction effects between gender and inventive entrepreneurial capacity-building, as inculcated through basic learning. Finally, recommendations based on the findings are proffered.

The finding of the study revealed that basic leaning inculcates equal capacity-building in both the male and female genders. It is revealed that the empowerment of the capacity building through basic learning is very slightly above average for both genders. It shows that both genders must be taken to be socio-human development partners (Mba, 2001). Basically, entrepreneurship arises when individuals strategically imbibe the right values, skills, attitudes and approaches to challenges. Consequently, both genders are confronted by socio-human challenges. Basic learning is therefore a fundamental trainings and skills acquisition opportunities for being functionally relevant. Functional learning is therefore the hallmark of any capacity-building efforts that is entrepreneurial motivated.

Another feature of finding is that gender superiority is manifestedly discredited. This supports the observation of Chikwelu and Arinze (2009) that the female gender is equally able to exhibit functional prowess like the male gender. The similarity in the performance of both genders vouches for the abilities of the male and female genders to be equally entrepreneurially competent. There are other attributes (factors) of capacity-building and entrepreneurship, which are not considered in the study. Essentially, the study focused primarily on human-capital development (intelligentsia development) aspect of capacity-building. Mohammed (2008) is there absolutely right as he observed that basic learning should be fundamentally focused as a tool for liberating the creative capabilities of the population.

The finding of the study therefore has certain implications for the socio-human development of both genders. The study x-rays the futility of the gender prejudice inherent in socio-human endeavours. The pseudoscientific readiness (attitude) of ascribing lower functionality and weaker superego to the female gender depicts knowledge invalidity (Irene, 2007). Basic learning, as the foundation of knowledge management should be rightly channeled toward eliminating the enshrined cum internalized gender biases. Such gender biases could present constraints to the capacity-building and entrepreneurial ambitions of individuals (particularly the female gender). It is therefore worthy to reemphasize the finding of the study that both genders are similarly entrepreneurial endowed and can simultaneously manifest same.

Despite finding similarity for both genders as regards the impact of basic learning to inculcate entrepreneurial capacity-building, occasionally a particular gender tends to show more potential inclination to certain socio-human endearvorus. A plausible reason for the varied potentials inclination could be attributed to the observation of Nwankwo (2000) that the socio-culture, value system, motivation, learning etc are likely shaping paradigms of personality that may alter each gender's entrepreneurial functionality. This is therefore a potent explanation for the varied manifestations of entrepreneurial capacity-building inculcated by basic learning.

From the study's finding, basic learning had more technical capacity-building for entrepreneurship on the female gender than their male counterpart. The training environment for technical learning has many characteristics that do not promote the skills and practical capacity-building (Iteku, etal, 2007) in Anambra State. These technical learning inhibitors are mystified conceptualization of techno-science, dilapidated learning structures, incompetent trainers, poor or non-functional training/learning materials, etc. It is therefore surprising that the participants performed very slightly above average in the study, as regards the entrepreneurial capacity-building effects of basic learning. It is even more surprising that the female gender edged their male colleagues in the performance. Ordinarily, it was expected that the reverse should have been the case.

The finding could be attributed to the fact that human beings are inevitably relating with the natural environment and other environmental features based on techno-science. Such

interactions involve the operations of observation, measurement, analysis, verification, and deduction (inference/assumption). These are done even without formal training of the educational opportunities (Njoku, 2009). Perhaps, the female gender is more operational and sensitive to the activities of the environment. Thus, she exhibited in the study more technical entrepreneurship capacity-building as inculcated through basic learning. Here, technical capacity building relates to the skills needed for human activities.

Again, the finding of the study correlated more social skills capacity-building for entrepreneurship with the female gender than the male gender. Possibly, the female gender is very conscious of the need for her active participation in socio-human endeavours (Milkatu, 2007). As the prospect of employment opportunities in Nigeria deteriorates, entrepreneurial activities become the survival alternatives for the youths. As the very poor socio-economy becomes adverse on both genders, the female gender tends to be less dependent on the male counterpart. She tends to be more entrepreneurially self-reliant (Onuegbu, 2008). Attaining and enhancing this self-reliance requires sustainable social skills right from the basic education.

Finally, on the other hand, it is also found out from the study that the male gender experienced more inventive entrepreneurial capacity-buildings for leadership than the female gender. Perhaps there is still a lingering effect of male-gender influenced society. It is plausible that the female gender perceives leadership to be more masculine than feminine. As leadership often involves taking decisions and actions, the female gender may be negatively judged when her actions become very firm, decisive, or even autocratic (Kent and Moss, 1994). Even fear of criticism can inhibit the female gender leadership capacity-building through basic learning.

## 5 CONCLUSION

The study investigated the building capacity for entrepreneurial inventiveness through basic learning opportunities in Anambra State of Nigeria. The study found out that basic learning has inculcated similar entrepreneurial capacity-building in both the male and female genders. Therefore, psychological attributes, such as the shaping effects of socio-culture, value system, and other reinforcement motivations, could contribute toward the eventual actual choices and entrepreneurship performance of each gender in the open society (Bernardian, etal, 2000). Nevertheless, the female gender experienced more technical, and social skills capacity-building than the male gender. But the male gender experienced more leadership capacity-building than the female gender through basic learning. Consequently the efficacy of basic learning to inculcate capacity-building for entrepreneurship in the youths is very slightly above average in Anambra State of Nigeria. The following recommendations are therefore proffered.

With the completion of the study, the following recommendations as proffered below are therefore made based on the findings of the study. It is recommended that **(1)** the female gender should not be deterred by extra-intellectual factors that could inhibit her participation in socio-human endavours cum development. This is bearing in mind that the

female gender can simultaneously be functionally capable of achieving results. Similarity, **(2)** the managers of learning programmes should make conscious effort and policy to encourage the female gender to embrace any discipline she has the potential for. This is irrespective of whether the discipline is dominated by the male gender or perceived as masculine discipline/profession or not. Essentially, **(3)** while encouraging/promoting the capacity-building of the female gender, it is also very necessary that the male gender should not be neglected. In essence, both genders are simultaneous partners for the socio-human development. Observing this recommendation entails that no gender will be a burden on the other, as both will be entrepreneurially equipped/prepared for self-reliance, and mutual assistance.

In the same vein, **(4)** the managers of learning organizations and curricula developers should be attuned with the entrepreneurial potentials of the learners. As a result, effective capacity-building policies and training curricula will be very instrumental in embellishing the inventiveness efficacy of the basic learning.

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