Manager's Perception of Social Networking Skills Needed by Vocational and Technical Education Students for Enterprise Management in Low and Medium Income Countries

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Abstract: The study determined social networking skills needed by vocational and technical education students for enterprise management in low and middle income countries. The study adopted a descriptive survey design and the population for the study was 101 subjects comprising 65 urban and 36 rural enterprise managers randomly selected within the study area. The instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire developed by the researchers. The internal consistency of the questionnaire items was determined using Cronbach alpha reliability method and reliability coefficient value of 0.89 was obtained. Every researcher was involved in the administration and collection of instruments. Data collected were analyzed using Mean and standard deviation for answering research questions while t-test was employed to test the null hypothesis formulated at 0.05 level of significance with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). Data analyzed revealed that all the social networking skills are needed by students for enterprise management. Furthermore, the findings on hypothesis tested revealed that there was no significant difference between the mean responses of the respondents on social networking skills needed by vocational and technical education students for enterprise management in low and middle income countries. Recommendations include that all the skills determined should be included into the entrepreneurial programme of Nigerian universities.

INTRODUCTION

People engage themselves in all kinds of enterprises in order to make profits for better life. Students of vocational and technical education programmes when they graduate can embark on running an enterprise. They can involve themselves in selling of industrial technical education products which require active advertising and marketing through social media or networking. To be successful in whatever enterprise they have established on their own, they need networking skills which include communication, creativity and analytical thing skills. A

network is defined as groups or systems of interconnected people and organizations whose aims and purposes include the improvement of learning and aspects of well-being known to affect learning[1]. This, however is both an overly broad definition of networking when one is discussing networking at the organizational level and an overly prescriptive one. On the one hand, it appears to encompass networks of individuals, possibly even within schools while on the other hand, it is highly prescriptive in its insistence on one particular goal that would describe all network activity.

Social networking sites have provided an additional medium through which social identities can be developed and explored. Social networking has become increasingly popular over the past decade, attracting millions of active users worldwide. These sites offer an opportunity to maintain friendships, create new friendships and even date. Many activities such as dating, advertising, marketing, buying and selling of goods and services and meetings can be done on social sites or social media such as facebook, whatsaap among others. Social networking is central to many Web 2.0 applications and involves the explicit modeling of connections between people, forming a complex network of relations which in turn enables and facilitates collaboration and collaborative filtering processes). For example, it enables users to see what their peers or others with a predefined relationship (friends, colleagues etc.) are doing; enables automated selection of relevant information (based on what peers are doing and reading on the Web); enables reputation and trust management, accountability and quality control and fosters viral dissemination of information and applications (it is this "viral marketing" aspect that makes Web 2.0 applications so attractive enterprise).

Social networking can be grouped according to professions of people using it. There are multiple different types of networking groups though and the best type for each individual varies depending on the business they are in and prospects they want to meet. Networking works in the favour of small businesses as the owners have to dabble with a variety of job functions in a small set-up[2]. A business networking is a socioeconomic business activity by which business people and entrepreneurs meet to form business relationships and to recognize, create or act upon business opportunities[3], share information and seek potential partners for ventures. A business network is a type of business social network which is developed to help business people connect with other managers and entrepreneurs to further each other's business interests by forming mutually beneficial business relationships. Business networking is a way of leveraging your business and personal connections to help you bring in new customers, vendors or just get great advice for running

your business[4]. Many businesses use networking as a key factor in their marketing plan. It helps to develop a strong feeling of trust between those involved and play a big part in raising the profile of a company. Business networking involves making connections not only with likely customers or clients but also with other individuals who might refer business to someone or mention someone name in some positive way to people they know[5]. It also involves making contacts with people who provide information or training and can be an excellent way of locating reputable vendors to hire for your own business. According to Ward[6], the primary purpose of business networking is to tell others about ones's business and hopefully turn them into customers.

Before online business networking, face-to-face networking was the only option for business people and this was achieved through a number of techniques such as trade show marketing and loyalty programs[3]. Though these techniques have been proven to still be an effective source of making connections and growing a business, many companies now focus more on online marketing due to the ability to track every detail of a campaign and justify the expenditure involved in setting up one of these campaigns[2].

Moreover, social networking is a potentially powerful tool to engage users in that it provides "social" incentives to enter, update and manage personal information. Teenagers spend hours keeping their Facebook profile current, constantly updating their status. Now imagine the same generation of users turning their attention and energy to similar tools for enterprise (that is Enterprise book application). Social networking gets people interested in enterprise records, motivates users to take responsibility for their goods and services information, and more importantly retain their interest over time for quality management and collaborative filtering, the application of social networking (and the attempt to model relationships) is not an entirely new idea.

In fact, almost a decade ago, within the framework of the industries projects, we started thinking about this and envisioned the explicit modeling of social relationships and information concerning who said what about a specific website as one promising way to guide consumers to high quality information. We developed a vocabulary to describe relationships between those involved in quality initiatives on the Web with the eventual goal being to build intelligent tools that can harness this information. Social networking skills are those abilities that are needed for the exchange of information in a social platform or social media[7]. Social networking skills are those abilities that help in the exchange of information in a social media. Social

networking skills in the context of the study are those abilities that are needed to be social media professionals for enterprise management.

This will help to develop a business or get employment that involves social networking. In other to achieve the aim of developing a business via social media, there is need to acquire relevant skills. Skill is the ability to do something well. However, Onoyovwi, stated that skills are required when procedural instructions are matched with performance activities. Repetition is the watchword. For skills to be acquired and developed there must be opportunity for participation and practice of such skills under real life condition. Business dictionary (2005) defined skills as an ability and capacity acquired through deliberate, systematic and sustained effort to smoothly and adaptively carry out complex activities or jobs functions involving ideas (cognitive skills), things (technical skills) and (interpersonal skills). One needs skills to successfully run running of an enterprise.

Enterprise is defined here as the application of creative ideas and innovations to practical situations. This is a generic concept that can be applied across all areas of education. It combines creativity, ideas development and problem solving with expression, communication and practical action. Enterprise describes the actions of someone who shows some initiative by taking a risk by setting up, investing in and running a business. Someone create an enterprise to make to take risk and to make profits. Enterprise simply means to plan a business to start it and run it. According to Seth[8] enterprise means to bring the factors of production together, assign each its proper task and pay them remuneration when the work is done. It implies not only running of a business but also shouldering the loss if any. Someone who undertakes all this work is called an organiser or more commonly an entrepreneur. Organising and risk-taking are the two main functions of the entrepreneur.

Enterprise management is activities involved in designing and managing an enterprise. Enterprise management in broad terms is the field of organizational development that supports organizations in managing integrally and adapting themselves to the changes of a transformation. Enterprise management is a way of thinking, communicating and working, supported by an information system, that organizes enterprise's resources in a direct relationship to the leadership's vision and the mission, strategy, goals and objectives that move the organization forward The social networking skills according to Dominique[9] include: communication skills, creativity skills, business marketing and analytical thinking skills.

Communication skills are one of the indispensable skills needed for enterprise management. Nelson[10] explained that communication has become incredibly important for the world of business. Smart phones, Internet work spaces and video conferencing have expanded the work place physically and length wise, smart phones such as blackberry and iPhone among others give business people ability to make calls, text and email business associate anytime from nearly any place. Social network helps an organization to communicate and interact with their customers online. Internet work space such as file sharing, programs and collaborative messages boards have given companies the ability to facilitate group work regardless of geographic location. Video conferencing has been given business owners the opportunity to conduct meetings with people on opposite sides of the globe.

Creativity skills or creative thinking skills are the generation of imaginative new ideas involving a radical newness innovation or solution to a problem and a radical reformulation of problems[11]. Other definitions propose that a creative solution can simply integrate existing knowledge in a different way. A third set of definitions proposes that a creative solution, either new or recombined, must have value[12]. A novel idea is not a creative idea unless it is valuable or it implies positive evaluation. Also, according to Ogilvie[13], imagination which involves the generation of ideas not previously available as well as the generation of different ways of seeing events, is important to achieve creative actions. To combine this variety of definitions, we can say that creativity involves the generation of new ideas or the recombination of known elements into something new, providing valuable solutions to a problem. It also involves motivation and emotion. Creativity is a fundamental feature of human intelligence in general. It is grounded in everyday capacities such as the association of ideas, reminding, perception, analogical thinking, searching a structured problem-space, and reflecting self-criticism. Creative thinking is a feature every enterprising person has. They come up with new ideas or approaches to business. Creativity skill is very important in an organization, it brings unique ideas when sharing information with customers online, there is also needs to generate ideas that will attract customers and it involves not only a cognitive dimension (the generation of new ideas) but also motivation and emotion and is closely linked to cultural context and personality factors[14]. The general purpose of the study was to find out the social networking skills for enterprise management. Specifically the study sought to determine the:

- Communication skills needed by vocational and technical education students for enterprise management

- Creativity skills needed by vocational and technical education students for enterprise management
- Business online marketing skills needed by vocational and technical education students for enterprise management?

Research questions: The following research questions guided the study:

- What are the communication skills needed by vocational and technical education students for enterprise management?
- What are the creativity skills needed by vocational and technical education students for enterprise management?
- What are the business online marketing skills needed by vocational and technical education students for enterprise management?

Hypothesis: The following null hypothesis were tested at 0.05 level of significance: These is no significant difference between the mean responses of respondents on the communication skills needed by vocational and technical education students for enterprise management There is no significant difference between the mean responses of respondents on the creativity skills needed by vocational and technical education students for enterprise management.

There is no significant difference between the mean responses of respondents on the business online marketing skills needed by vocational and technical education students for enterprise management

MATERIALS ANS METHODS

This study adopted quasi-experimental research design. Quasi-experimental design according to Abid[15] is a research design which uses non-randomized group and these options occurs when the researcher cannot randomly sample and assign the subjects to treatment group and control group. The study was conducted in southeast Nigeria and the population for this study consisted 201 managers of small and medium enterprises and business educators. Purposive sampling was used to select managers of only registered and updated enterprises in the study areas. The instrument for data collection was non structured questionnaire and this was validated by academic and professional experts in the field. The Cronbach alpha reliability Coefficient value of the entire sections of the questionnaire was determined to be 0.89. data collected was analysed to answer research questions while t-test was used to test the null hypothesis formulated at 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data presented on Table 1 showed that the communication skill items had their mean ranging from 3.60-4.25 which are all greater than the cut-off point of 3.00 on a 5 point rating scale. The standard deviation values for the 8 items ranged from 0.58-0.89 which showed that the respondents were not far from one another in their responses and that their responses were not far from the mean. Hence, all the communication skills are needed for managing enterprises. t-test shows that F-calculated value for the groups are 0.10 with a significance of F at 0.51 which is >0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis was therefore accepted at 0.05 level of significance. With this result there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of respondents on the communication skills for enterprise management.

The data presented on Table 2 showed that the 12 items had means ranging from 3.43-4.33 which are all greater than the cut-off point of 3.00 on a 5 point rating scale. The standard deviation values for the 12 items ranged from 0.48-0.78 which showed that the respondents were not far from one another in their responses and that their responses were not far from the mean. Hence, creativity skills are needed for enterprise management. t-test analysis shows that F-calculated value for the groups are 2.742 with a significance of F at 0.071 which is greater than 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis was therefore accepted at 0.05 level of significance. With this result there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of respondents on the creativity skills for enterprise management.

The data presented on Table 3 showed that the all the items had mean ranging from 3.38-4.33 which are all greater than the cut-off point of 3.00 on a 5 rating scale. The standard deviation values for the 12 items ranged from 0.48-0.78 which showed that the respondents were not far from one another in their responses and that their responses were not far from the mean. Hence, creativity skills are needed for enterprise management. T-test analysis shows that F-calculated value for the groups are 2.742 with a significance of F at 0.071 which is <0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis was therefore accepted at 0.05 level of significance. With this result there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of respondents on the online marketing skills for enterprise management.

Discussion of the findings: The findings in research question one on communication skills is similar to the view by Hildreth *et al.*[16] Hildreth and Kimble[17] which said that in communication today, people have a lot of activities to do such as working and learning from other part of the world. In order to solve the problems, they can use technologies such as video conferencing to create a tele-presence that

Table 1: Mean responses of the respondents and t-test on the communication skills needed by vocational and technical education students for enterprise management

Items statements	Mean	SD	Sig.	Remarks
Ability to advertise on Facebook, business pages and Facebook groups	3.88	0.72	0.76	NS
Ability to use social networks like Facebook, Twitter, Google and LinkedIn to communicate with people	3.80	0.61	0.56	NS
Ability to share document like PDFs, Google Doc and Microsoft Office files when using social media	3.90	0.81	0.82	NS
Ability to send confidential and legal documents and ordering for a new product using fax machine when using social media	3.90	0.63	0.78	NS
Ability to compose to a message to communicate with friends on social media platform	3.60	0.74	0.87	NS
Ability to perform telephone etiquette on social media platform	3.76	0.62	0.52	NS
Ability to use of phones to do online calls	4.25	0.89	0.87	NS
Ability to use App store (play store) to download useful productivity tools like budget calculator, currency converter and software's etc.	4.03	0.58	0.94	NS

Table 2: Mean responses of the respondents and t-test on the creativity skills needed by vocational and technical education students for enterprise management

Item statements	Mean	SD	Sig.	Remarks
Ability to design a logo on social media platform	4.30	0.76	0.09	NS
Ability to increase staff productivity by devising performance incentives	3.60	0.50	0.15	NS
Ability to develop a litigation strategy to defend a client on social media platform	3.68	0.66	0.36	NS
Ability to devising a computer program to automate the billing process	3.43	0.60	0.20	NS
Ability to restructure a filing system to facilitate easier retrieval of information	3.43	0.55	0.77	NS
Ability to devise a social media strategy for the new iPhone	4.03	0.77	0.95	NS
Ability to generate themes for a fundraising campaign on social media	3.48	0.72	0.24	NS
Ability to conducts interview questions using in social media	3.68	0.48	0.22	NS
Ability to identify ways to cut costs during a budget crisis	3.75	0.54	0.17	NS
Ability to write for online advertisement	4.22	0.66	0.23	NS
Suggesting a way to improve customer service	3.40	0.78	0.36	NS
Ability to create the packaging for a product	4.33	0.57	0.31	NS

Table 3: Mean responses of the respondents and t-test on the business online marketing skills needed by vocational and technical education students for enterprise management

Item statements	Mean	SD	Sig.	Remarks
Ability to plan for online marketing and advertisement	4.33	0.76	0.09	NS
Ability to choose best or effective online platform for marketing and advertisement of goods and services	3.60	0.50	0.15	NS
Ability to develop a litigation strategy to defend a client on social media platform	3.68	0.66	0.36	NS
Ability to choose a computer program to automate the billing process	3.43	0.60	0.20	NS
Ability to create and show attractive picture/images of the products	3.43	0.55	0.77	NS
Ability to devise a social media strategy for the new iPhone and other mobile communication technologies	4.03	0.77	0.95	NS
Ability to respond to comments of the intending customers online	3.38	0.72	0.24	NS
Ability to conducts online interview without a problem	3.68	0.48	0.22	NS
Ability to identify ways to cut costs during a budget crisis	3.75	0.54	0.17	NS
Ability to write for online advertisement about each product or service	4.22	0.66	0.23	NS
Ability to suggest a way to improve customer service	3.40	0.78	0.36	NS
Ability to design a supplying route of the paid products and services to customers	4.33	0.57	0.31	NS

they can communicate anywhere and anytime. They can create virtual teams to work efficiently when having the face-to-face communication where they can overcome the issue of trust and ambiguity surrounding in the virtual world. They also said that communication is very essential in the enterprise; it plays a vital role in all stages of design production, organization and management. Various professionals in the industry must communicate effectively for any given project to be successful. During the course design and production, information must be fully disseminated to some professionals who may not be able to understand some aspects of a project if little information is available thus leading into project failure. Effective communication system leads to motivated

workforce, speed in job in production. There is need for professionals within an organization to appropriately communicate with each other for the successful delivery of performance goals within the organization. According to Mehra, communication will always involve more than one person. As a project unfolds, communication can occur in various directions. There is upward communication to management from one organization and the customer's organization. Lateral communication takes place with customers and within project teams. Ineffective communication will have adverse effects on the goals of an organization.

The findings in research question one on creativity skills is similar to the view by Brcline *et al*.[14] which said

that creativity skills is very important in an organization, it brings unique ideas when sharing information with customers online, there is also needs to generate ideas that will attract customers and It involves not only a cognitive dimension (the generation of new ideas) but also motivation and emotion and is closely linked to cultural context and personality factors. The author also said that creative industries offer services which may be inputs to innovative activities of other enterprises and organizations within and outside the creative industries. Creative industries are intensive users of technology and often demand adaptations and new developments of technology, providing innovation impulses to technology producers. The degree of an enterprise's creativeness positively influences the contribution to innovation in other firms in the early stages of the innovation process including the product design stage. Creative enterprises that use networking within the creative industries are more likely to support industrial innovation. This effect is particularly strong for using creative inputs, though restricted to the idea, design and implementation/marketing stages. It suggests that creative enterprises that focus their resources are more capable to provide valuable innovation inputs to others. Team working has more widespread effects since creative enterprises engaged in networks with other creative enterprises show a higher propensity to support their customer's innovation activities in all stages of the innovative process.

CONCLUSION

Social networking skills include communication skills, creativity skills, analytical skills, decision making skills and time management skills. With digital empowerment, learners will gain new abilities and ways to participate and express themselves in a networked information technology driven society. Being digitally empowered is likely to influence graduate's future pathways, since, it is generally considered to be an essential requirement for access to the desirable labour market. It is imperative to state that computer students in Nigeria University and Enugu state in particular are not well grounded on social networking skills. To achieve effective social networking skills among computer education graduates, the lecturers should empower the students in content, training and application of digital technologies for learning.

Therefore, the study outlined the social networking skills needed by computer education graduates for enterprise management. The study found out that the computer education lecturers, computer education graduates and enterprise managers agreed that social networking skills are needed by computer education graduates for enterprise management. Based on these findings the study concluded that social networking skills should be integrated into the curriculum of computer education in Enugu state Nigeria, so that, when they graduates they will be employed.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and the conclusion drawn from this study, the following recommendations were made: The enterprises should use the findings of this research on creativity and communication skills to organize seminars, conferences and workshops for retaining of already employed staff on social networking skills. The enterprises should use the findings of this research on creativity to organize seminars, conferences and workshops for retaining of newly employed staff on social networking skills. Facilities provided in the various enterprises should also embrace the present state of information technology to enhance communication skills in an enterprise.

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