



ENTREPRENEURIAL COMPETENCIES IN HOME ECONOMICS EDUCATION FOR NATIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT: *This study seeks to investigate Entrepreneurial Competencies in home economics for National Economic Development of Nigeria with a view to ascertain the specific role the entrepreneurship component of home economics education plays in the standard of living of graduates and National economic development. The study adopted a systematic review approach to review over eighty (80) empirical and quality research findings and views of several researchers on related studies from reputable international journals. This study concludes after a systematic and extant review of reputable and empirical studies of related areas that there is a direct connection between entrepreneurial competencies in home economics and Nigeria's economic development. This result implies that the entrepreneurship component of home economics Education has contributed and is still contributing to Nigeria's economic development through employment creation, which contributes to the increase in GDP. The study also discovered that home economics' mission to improve family well-being and national development, along with its multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, context-based, and skills-based nature, makes it an ideal field for the integration of entrepreneurship knowledge. The knowledge and skills learned in home economics, including consumer education, household resource management skills, and HE-related marketable skills, provide the ideal combination to improve the sustainability of micro and small businesses. The study recommends that the federal government should create a national policy on aggressive entrepreneurship implementation to drastically reduce youth unemployment and crime in view of proven contributions of entrepreneurship education to National Economic Development of Nigeria.*

KEYWORDS: Entrepreneurial Competencies, Entrepreneurship, Home Economics Education, National Economic Development, Employment Creation.



INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurial competencies in home economics education concentrate on giving students the tools they need to work for themselves and start their own businesses (Abefe-Balogun & Nwankpa 2012). These abilities include seeing opportunities, creating company ideas, and managing resources, which eventually promote innovation and economic expansion. Entrepreneurship education is a skill-based field under home economics that aims to provide its graduates with work skills and self-sufficiency in sectors such as food and nutrition, home administration, clothing and textiles, and more (Burton, 2021).

In order to enable economic self-sufficiency, the home economics program is purposefully created to give graduates employable skills. This includes being exposed to several occupational skill areas, including fashion design, tailoring, cookery, washing, and craftwork. According to Ozioma (2021), these many disciplines provide job options, particularly for recent graduates who are having trouble finding permanent jobs. Nonetheless, Nigeria faces a substantial disparity between the growing working-age population and the need for jobs. The goal of the home economics curriculum is to educate graduates for flexible work arrangements, such as working for themselves; yet, the nation's unemployment rate continues to climb.

Oluwaseyi (2016) noted that Nigerian graduates are finding it more and more challenging to get gainful employment. Alarming unemployment rates are shown by recent data from the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS, 2023), which also calls for addressing related societal problems, including criminality.

According to Okeke (2019), who cited the National Policy on Education (2013), home economics, as a component of tertiary-level vocational education, attempts to educate students for flexible jobs, including self-employment, in addition to teaching. Due to its skill-based nature, home economics gives graduates the chance to start small enterprises and employ people (Lemchi, 2015).

The capacity to produce something worthwhile by devoting time, energy, and taking on related risks in order to eventually reap financial and personal rewards is referred to as entrepreneurial skill, which is essential in this context (Hisrich Peters, 2020). Anyakoha and Lemchi (2020) stressed the need for using entrepreneurial skills in the tertiary home economics curriculum in a way that best suits students' requirements and future employment prospects. The study is to assess methods for improving entrepreneurial abilities within home economics education at the postsecondary level in response to the difficulties experienced by graduates, particularly with regard to unemployment. The research aims to close the gap between academic knowledge and the demands of the dynamic society, acknowledging the significance of practical experiences and competences for real-world application (Chukwuka & Imide 2024).



LITERATURE REVIEW

The Concept of Entrepreneurship

Iyamah and Chukwuka (2024) provided a clear and thorough definition of entrepreneurship as a process of problem solving through business establishment, opportunity identification, and resource (human, financial, material, and machine) utilization with the goal of maximizing profits in order to satisfy market and societal demands. Nonetheless, Hamilton and Harper (1994) asserted that entrepreneurship encompasses all tasks performed by an individual or individuals to guarantee the establishment, expansion, and maturity of a business entity, with the aim of generating revenue.

According to Utomi (2002), entrepreneurship is the constant search for chances to build money by developing goods or services that satisfy the demands of consumers. Similar to this, Igbo (1995) proposed that entrepreneurship happens when a person starts a new business, takes a fresh approach to an existing business concept, and uses resources in a novel way while taking on risk. According to Osuala (1999), entrepreneurship is the process of integrating ideas that are creative and original with managerial and organizational abilities to combine people, money, and resources in order to satisfy a need and so produce wealth. Based on the aforementioned, coming up with a company idea is insufficient. The capacity to be innovative with ideas and create something novel and unusual is what distinguishes the differences. Almost every business idea has been thought of by entrepreneurs. The capacity to be creative enough to come up with ideas, goods, and services that are somewhat or totally distinct from the ordinary is what gives new companies strength in the cutthroat market. In entrepreneurship, creativity will enable people to take advantage of business possibilities more successfully and economically (Chukwuka & Igweh, 2024).

Entrepreneurial Competencies

Entrepreneurial competencies refer to the talents, knowledge, and aptitudes that allow someone to launch, run, and expand a business successfully. Developing these skills via education, training, and experience is essential for success as an entrepreneur. These particular traits, abilities, and behaviors are known as entrepreneurial competencies, and they help entrepreneurs better manage the possibilities and pitfalls of entrepreneurship (Chukwuka & Bello, 2024).

Entrepreneurial competencies consist of three essential elements:

- Knowledge:** An awareness of pertinent laws, industry trends, and commercial concepts.
- Skills:** Capabilities in areas such as networking, communication, problem-solving, planning, and decision-making.
- Abilities:** The ability to spot opportunities, take measured chances, and adjust to shifting conditions.

The Correlation Between Home Economics and Entrepreneurship

There is a significant correlation between home economics and entrepreneurship because home economics education imparts important information and abilities that are essential for creating successful entrepreneurs, such as resource management, consumer education, and marketable talents. The teaching of home economics is trans-, multi-, and inter-disciplinary. This topic of study offers a variety of employable skills that can guarantee independence and work. Because home economics education is a multidisciplinary functional delivery system, Mbah (2001) refers to it as the people's profession. According to Olaitan and Agusiobo (1981), home economics is the study of how to improve family and individual lives by imparting useful information and abilities. According to Tupac (1980), home economics education may help a person grow and develop more strongly, empowering them to assume responsibility in the family and society. Functionality is emphasized in the concepts of home economics given above.

Three key factors make home economics a suitable place for entrepreneurship: First, home economics works to improve the lives of individuals and families by giving them the tools to support themselves and by providing them with valuable goods and services. Second, because it is multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, and context-based by nature, it offers the chance to integrate current knowledge in response to societal demands. Third, it is a field rich in skills, making it an ideal setting for connecting livelihood entrepreneurial activities with other critical skills (Minna, 2021).

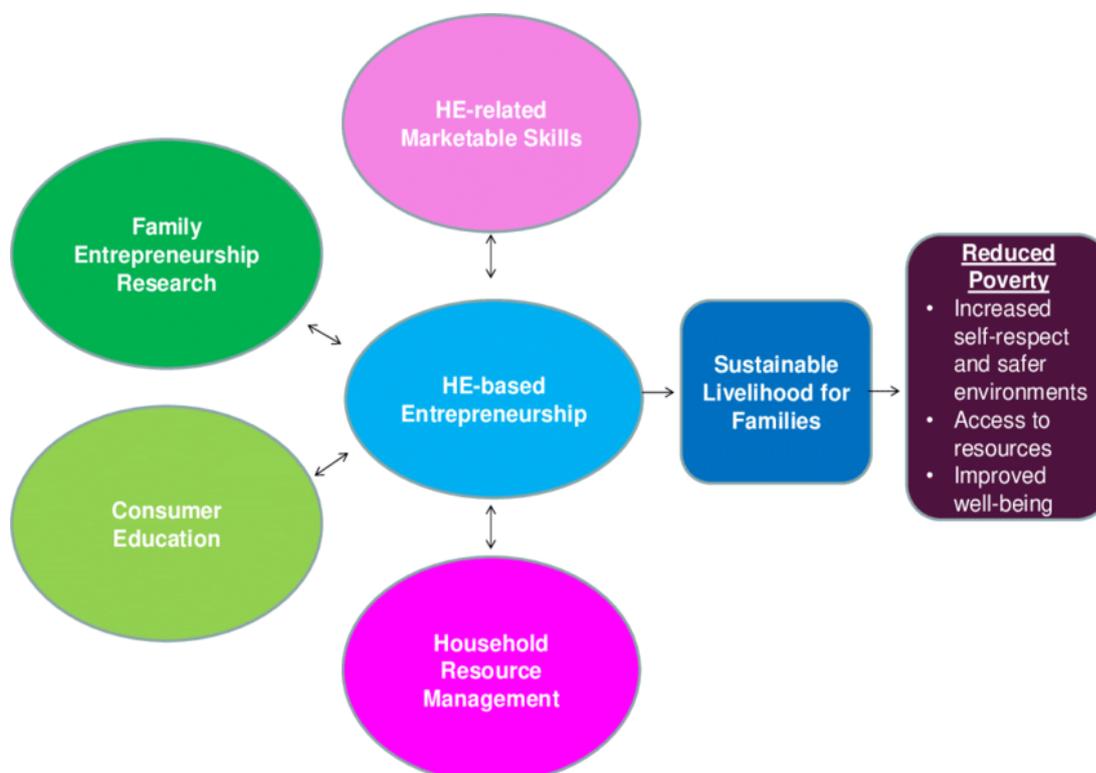


Figure 1: Home Economics-Based Entrepreneurship Framework

Source: Chua (2018) Home Economics-Based Entrepreneurship Framework. The Journal of PATHESCU Philippines



The aforementioned figure demonstrates how home economics-based entrepreneurship is reinforced by its links to other home economics fields, including consumer education (e.g., consumer rights and protection, consumer decision-making, sustainable practices), household resource management skills (e.g., work-family balance, financial management, time management, conflict resolution), and home economics (HE)-related marketable skills (e.g., crafts, clothing, foods, nutrition, child development, and hospitality). Family entrepreneurship research that focuses on small businesses is another example. These elements working together provide families a better chance of a stable income. In the end, this will improve family quality of life and reduce poverty (Chua, 2018).

There are four main ways by which home economics and entrepreneurship are related, or how home economics encourages entrepreneurship.

Development of Skills: People who study home economics get useful skills that they may use in a variety of entrepreneurial endeavors, such as food preparation, clothes and textiles, house administration, and family resource management, etc.

Entrepreneurial Mindset or Attitude: A resourceful, creative, and problem-solving mindset—all necessary for seeing possibilities, coming up with novel solutions, and running businesses—is fostered by home economics.

Business Knowledge: A foundation for comprehending market dynamics and creating successful business strategies is provided by the curriculum's frequent inclusion of components related to business management, marketing, and consumer behavior.

Self-Sufficiency and Livelihood: The goal of home economics-based entrepreneurship is to give people and families stable sources of income so they may start their own enterprises and occupations.

The Concept of Home Economics

According to the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (2015), home economics, often known as domestic science or family and consumer sciences (commonly abbreviated as FCS or FACS), is a field of study that focuses on topics such as consumer concerns, personal and family finances, human development, interior design and housing, food preparation and nutrition, and textiles and clothing. Even while home economics classes were formerly taught primarily in high school or secondary school, they are now far less popular.

There are many different educational levels and locations where home economics courses are provided. Traditionally, the goal of these classes was to make housekeeping more professional, provide women intellectual fulfillment, highlight the importance of "women's work" in society, and get them ready for the conventional roles of the sexes (Danovich, 2018). Family and consumer sciences is taught in elementary school as a continuing education course at institutions and as an elective or required subject in secondary schools.

Sewing was the primary skill taught in this female-dominated school, which started in Scotland in the 1850s and which prepared women to be homemakers. According to the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences, Americans wanted young people to acquire occupational skills during the start of the 20th century. Home economics education



was influenced by politics, and it was not until the latter part of the century that the course's focus changed from being exclusively for women to currently being compulsory for both sexes (Minna, 2021).

Family and consumer sciences is now part of the larger field of job Technical Education, which teaches current technologies, applied sciences, skilled crafts, and job preparation, thereby promoting entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial competence for self-reliance and self-sufficiency for economic development. The number of home economics courses given by educational institutions has significantly decreased, despite the subject content expanding over the previous century (American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences, 2015).

Entrepreneurial Competency Examples

Recognizing opportunity and assessing possible company ideas and market demands is known as opportunity recognition, which is an entrepreneurial competency.

Resource Acquisition: This includes obtaining capital, identifying skilled personnel, and forming alliances which is an essential part of entrepreneurial competency (Chukwuka & Bello, 2024).

Strategic Thinking: Creating and carrying out successful company plans and strategies is known as strategic thinking.

Risk Management: This is the process of evaluating and reducing any risks and uncertainties.

Creativity and Innovation: Creating new goods, services, and business models is an example of creativity and innovation.

Leadership and Motivation: Motivating and inspiring groups to accomplish objectives is the essence of leadership and motivation. Developing connections with stakeholders and successfully inspiring them to achieve organizational objectives is an entrepreneurial competency (Danovich, 2018).

Communication and Interpersonal Skills: This involves building relationships with stakeholders and effectively delivering ideas.

Resilience and Adaptability: This has to do with overcoming obstacles and adjusting to shifting market conditions.

Home Economics Entrepreneurial Education and National Policy on Education

The goal of the study of home economics is to safeguard and advance the welfare of people, families, and communities. Teaching children the right values, attitudes, and character traits is the goal of home economics education. Young people should typically be prepared for a contented and productive home and family life through education. Home economics education's primary goal is to make children capable members of their families. Education may provide people with the knowledge and self-assurance they need to grow in a meaningful way. Everyone can get the information, abilities, values, and attitudes required to create a sustainable future, thanks to it (Anyakoha & Lemchi, 2020).



In the industry section of the National Policy on Education, Fourth Edition (2004), the importance of education in achieving all facets of national development—economic, medical, industrial, political, social, and so forth—is summed up. Developing the abilities required for entrepreneurship is the main goal of education, and this includes: (i) cultivating an entrepreneurial spirit, traits and personality, (ii) fostering the growth of small business and entrepreneurial skills—the ability to launch and launch one's own enterprise, and (iii) cultivating the technical, technological, and other professional competencies required for productive work and employment, as well as the managerial skills necessary to successfully operate the business or engage in other forms of self-employment.

Many people from various households rely on home economics as a vocational topic to help them survive in the future. By imparting knowledge of contemporary science to alleviate the issue of unemployment, home economics education aims to enhance Nigeria's educational legacy. According to Ochiagha (1995), a person who develops vocational teaching skills (home economics) is able to work productively for an employer or for himself. Therefore, a country that supports technical or vocational education enhances its citizens' capacity to obtain and maintain gainful work.

Entrepreneurial Competencies in Home Economics Has the Role of Enhancing Quality of Life and National Development

Entrepreneurial competencies in home economics are playing a major role in enhancing the quality of life of graduates, as well as improving the national economy (Chua, 2018). Despite the lack of the term "entrepreneurship" in the early history of home economics, the activities associated with it, such as product development, creativity and innovation, offering value and solutions, and marketing, are reflected in the roles that early home economists played. For example, in the 1920s, home economists were considered to be actively involved in the design, development, and innovation of new consumer products for the benefit of families, acting as consultants regarding high-quality home products and equipment for consumers, and acting as a liaison between businesses and consumers (Cornell University Library Rare and Manuscript Collections, 2001). Because of their perceived value in product creation, design, testing, sales, and marketing, among other tasks, early home economists like Lucy Maltby, Marye Dahnke, and Eleanor Ahern were employed by businesses (Blaszczyk, 1997; Goldstein, 1997). Since home economics is the discipline that works with families the most, it has the finest understanding of their needs, desires, values, and objectives. In light of this, it makes sense that home economics entrepreneurs would lead the way in creating products and services that will improve the lives of families.

By giving people the tools to meet their own needs and by providing them with worthwhile goods and services, home economics may improve the quality of life for both individuals and families. Home economics is the study of families and how they utilize the resources at their disposal to meet their fundamental requirements in ever-changing surroundings. According to the definition, home economics focuses on educating people and families on how to manage their material and human resources so they may meet their requirements. It is evident from the description that home economics teaches people and families how to manage their material and human resources, so they may meet their requirements. Making the most of available human and non-human resources while also utilizing them effectively to meet family requirements is referred to as resource management. Herein lies the significance of entrepreneurship in the field of home economics. Through entrepreneurship, the family may



raise their level of living and meet their fundamental necessities by generating a steady income (Anyakoha & Lemchi 2020).

Another aspect of entrepreneurship is developing and inventing products and services that benefit consumers. Entrepreneurship allows home economics to fulfill their mission of coming up with novel solutions to common issues. Entrepreneurs in home economics are ideally suited to achieve this as they research families and customers, who are the products' final users. Because they know how to produce high-quality goods and services that families require, they are able to provide them valuable items.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In order to ascertain the nature of connections and understand the motivations, viewpoints, theories, empiricism, and opinions of scholars, and findings and in addressing the study objectives, this study used secondary sources of data and employed a systematic and extant review of over 80 research articles from several international and reputable journals of related topics. Systematic literature reviews, according to Guillaume (2019, 1), are a transparent and reproducible process for combining scientific data to answer a particular research issue. They also aim to incorporate all relevant data and assess the data's quality. The importance of thorough literature reviews in determining current knowledge and knowledge gaps on specific topics is emphasized by Mengist et al. (2020, 2).

In order to examine the key academic contributions to the related themes of exchange rate stability, monetary policy, and poverty reduction, as well as related concepts, this study built a methodical examination of the literature. We examined over 80 empirical and qualitative research papers from credible international journals to learn about scholarly viewpoints and study findings on the pivotal role of entrepreneurial competencies in home economics in fostering the quality of life and national development. The research technique used in the literature study was based on the notion that "thematic analysis is the process of identifying patterns or themes within qualitative data," as stated by Braun and Clarke (2015, 225). The first step in evaluating the data for entrepreneurial competencies in home economics was becoming familiar with it, which required reading the summaries of each paper and closely examining the content as well.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

After a systematic review of over 80 research articles from several international and reputable journals of related topics to this study, this study found that there is a direct connection between entrepreneurial competencies in home economics and Nigeria's economic development. This result implies that the entrepreneurship component of home economics education has contributed and is still contributing to Nigeria's economic development through employment creation, which contributes to the increase in GDP. The study also discovered that home economics' mission to improve family well-being, along with its multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, context-based, and skills-based nature, makes it an ideal field for the integration of entrepreneurship knowledge. The knowledge and skills learned in home economics, including consumer education, household resource management skills, and



HE-related marketable skills, provide the ideal combination to improve the sustainability of micro and small businesses. The research component of home economics education further amplifies this benefit. Home economics (HE), particularly when taught in elementary or secondary school, makes entrepreneurship and HE-related skills accessible to the general public. In the event that regular work is not available, graduates will have a backup plan to support themselves and their families. Businesses that arise from Home Economics Education (HEE) have the potential to improve people's lives by offering goods and services and creating jobs for others. This is likely to have a cascading impact that can ultimately reduce poverty on a larger scale.

It is clear from the study that entrepreneurship comprises finding, seizing, and optimizing lucrative business possibilities in a sustainable way that will support a community's or a country's economic development. Citizens who get home economics education are equipped with the information, abilities, concepts, and dispositions needed to lead fruitful lives. One strategy to lower unemployment and create a more developed and successful nation is through home economics entrepreneurship education. Additionally, it was discovered that the main way that entrepreneurship may support economic growth and development in Nigeria is by creating jobs and encouraging the expansion of businesses. Nigeria's economy has been growing rather steadily, although the rates of inflation and unemployment have been much higher. An essential component of every country's economic development and progress is entrepreneurship. When the Nigerian government takes entrepreneurship seriously, unemployment will progressively decline, which would lead to wealth generation and poverty alleviation.

By enabling young people to be job creators rather than job seekers and equipping them with the skills and knowledge to increase their productivity, income, and wealth, entrepreneurship education will contribute to the creation of jobs and enable them to hone their entrepreneurial abilities.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes, after a systematic review of over 80 research articles from several international and reputable journals of related topics to this study, that there is a direct connection between entrepreneurial competencies in home economics and Nigeria's economic development. This result implies that the entrepreneurship component of home economics education has contributed and is still contributing to Nigeria's economic development through employment creation, which contributes to the increase in GDP. The study also discovered that home economics' mission to improve family well-being, and national development along with its multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, context-based, and skills-based nature, makes it an ideal field for the integration of entrepreneurship knowledge. The knowledge and skills learned in home economics, including consumer education, household resource management skills, and HE-related marketable skills, provide the ideal combination to improve the sustainability of micro and small businesses.



RECOMMENDATION

Based on the above findings, the study recommends that the federal government should create a national policy on aggressive entrepreneurship implementation to drastically reduce youth unemployment and crime in view of proven contributions of entrepreneurship education to the economic development of Nigeria.

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