
**INFLUENCE OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION ON
ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS NEEDED BY STUDENTS OF BUSINESS
EDUCATION IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS**

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Abstract

The study examined influence of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial skills of business education students in Nigerian North-Eastern region. The researchers employed mixed method design that combined a strong quantitative methodology with a qualitative approach. The study was guided by a single research question and a single hypothesis. The population was made up of 864 NCE III business education students in colleges of education and ND II students in North-Eastern Zone. A sample of 269 students was randomly selected. Using the stratified random sampling technique, questionnaire was employed as the tool for gathering quantitative data, and semi-structured interviews were used to gather qualitative data for the study. Six research assistants assisted in administering the instrument. Quantitative data was analyzed with percentage, mean rating and standard

deviation and t-test was used to test the hypothesis at a significance level of 0.05. The qualitative data was analyzed with content analysis. The result showed that respondents rating on influence of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial skills needed by business education students to high extent in the business environment of North-Eastern, Nigeria. The study suggested that school administration should continue to support lecturers by encouraging conference attendance, seminars, and workshops, to further prepare them for effective lecture delivery, and it is important to make sure students of business education understand that fraud and crime are not forms of entrepreneurship when teaching them the dos and don'ts of actual business.

Key words: *entrepreneurship education, entrepreneurial skills and business education*

Introduction

Entrepreneurship necessitates being creative in the establishment of new ventures and taking risks in order to capitalize on possibilities. It also necessitates optimal resource use in order to generate profit. Entrepreneurship is a person's ability to take risks and combine factors of production in order to produce goods and services. It may also be a person's willingness and capacity to search out investment opportunities in his immediate environment, and to be strategically positioned to build and manage a business based on such prospects. Entrepreneurship education is a specialized training provided to students in tertiary institutions in order for them to develop skills, ideas, managerial competence, and capacities for self-employment rather than being job searchers (Amadi, 2014). Amadi emphasized that entrepreneurship education is a type of education that instils in students the concept, information, and abilities necessary to start a new business or create new job prospects. More specifically, entrepreneurship education is the acquisition of knowledge, skills, attitude, value, and competences that enable learners to comprehend and appreciate life's challenges in whatever form they may take, as well as to take decisive steps to realize new trends and opportunities for meeting those challenges in all areas of human endeavour (Brown, 2014).

The growing demand for entrepreneurial skills as a key ability in the Nigerian educational system has led to the introduction of entrepreneurship education in Nigerian tertiary institutions. Entrepreneurship education has grown to represent all types of information delivery that aim to empower students to produce actual wealth in the economy, hence boosting the nation's overall development. According to National Commission for Colleges of Education NCCE (2016), the most important reason for incorporating

entrepreneurship education into all levels of tertiary education in Nigeria is to find a long-term solution to the country's rising unemployment rate among graduates. Developing entrepreneurial capacities, entrepreneurial capabilities, entrepreneurial thinking, entrepreneurial acumen, and abilities for self-reliance and self-employment are thus expected to adequately prepare students to be responsible enterprising youths.

Entrepreneurial skills refer to the necessary skills, competencies, and attitude to manage and effectively run a business. The purpose of strengthening entrepreneurship program in higher education is to educate students, regardless of their discipline, with information, skills, and competencies needed to create value by recognizing and creating possibilities. Entrepreneurial skills entail the acquisition of skills, knowledge, and competencies that will enable students to be self-sufficient and to make effective use of available resources in order to make firm career commitments in starting businesses, marketing services, or working as productive employees of organizations (Ezenwene, 2018). Additionally, entrepreneurial skills are the practical knowledge and experiences required to transform ideas into action and the capacity to use information in a practical setting, a unique ability that drives the growth of creativity and innovation. Highly developed abilities in entrepreneurship can assist students' entrepreneurs effectively recognize and acquire effective resources in a dynamic and complicated social environment (Nwabuo, 2019). Entrepreneurial abilities are business skills acquired via education that enable people to function effectively as entrepreneurs in a changing business environment (Obi, 2011). Entrepreneurial skills, according to Gidado (2019), enable students to demonstrate personal characteristics, qualities, attitude, and aptitude, as well as functional management skills, required for successful entrepreneurial ventures within one's area of specialization in business education program. Self-confidence, readiness, bravery, empathy, persistence, and drive to utilise expert guidance, visionary and ability to see opportunities, and desire for rapid results are all examples of entrepreneurial skills (Salgado-Banda, 2015).

Business education is a course of study that prepares students with skills, information, attitude, and competences they will need for employment, career growth, and self-sufficiency. Business education is a field of study that imparts skills and knowledge necessary for entering a variety of business jobs and developing plans of action for thriving in a particular line of business. As such an individual gets more productive and functioning, his acquired skills increase his chances of becoming a valuable asset to the society. As a result, rather than being a liability or a dependent citizen, the individual contributes meaningfully to the development of society. (Nwokike, 2016).

Additionally, Business Education was designed to provide students in tertiary institutions with entrepreneurship skills, knowledge, attitude, and skills they need to find

paid work, be self-sufficient, and achieve self-actualization. Therefore, it is abundantly obvious that business education is a crucial component of entrepreneurship since it is a field that fosters entrepreneurship and results in entrepreneurial success by empowering the learner with entrepreneurial skills and nurturing their entrepreneurial spirit.

Around the world, female students are a powerful force in entrepreneurship. The employment rate and growth rate of women-owned businesses are also impressive. The increased focus on management and lecturers are placing on entrepreneurship education as a course in higher education is as a result of these findings, which also demonstrate the value of the subject. Male students continue to engage in entrepreneurship at a higher rate than female students around the world (Minnitti, et, al, 2005). Undoubtedly, a number of reasons contribute to the disparity in entrepreneurship practices between men and women students in higher educational institutions.

Federal and state colleges of education are higher education institutions in Nigeria, tasked with training of teachers for the purpose of obtaining teaching certificates in education or other related discipline. Federal and state polytechnics, on the other hand, are institutions that train technicians, technologies, applied scientist, with managerial skills for the first two years of study, culminating in the issuance of a National Diploma (ND) certificate of polytechnic program, where they can graduate to become self-employed and generate jobs for others. They are relevant to the nation's diverse economy and industries' requirements, aspirations, and development. Considering the foregoing, the institutions that will be the focus of this research are Colleges of Education, and Polytechnics that offer Business Education program and having functional entrepreneurship centers. Similarly, the goal of establishing, operating, and effectively managing Business Education as a course in North-Eastern tertiary institutions is to ensure that quality services, quality assurance delivery, quality output, and practices in Business Education are entrenched and sustained. In the light of this and considering of the relevant factors, the researcher's wishes to investigate the influence of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial skills by Business Education students in tertiary institutions.

Statement of the Problem

One significant issue plaguing emerging countries around the world, including Nigeria, is how to find productive employment for its graduates. To address this problem, students of Business Education are required to study entrepreneurship education as a course before graduation. Nevertheless, a large percentage of graduates still wander the streets in search of jobs that hardly exist. Specifically, a large number of Business Education students in North-Eastern Zone of Nigeria graduate from higher educational institutions, without

proper career possibilities and without recourse to using entrepreneurial skills, when graduates of this programme are expected to develop different entrepreneurial abilities that will allow them to start small businesses.

Thus, their jobless condition has long been linked to several forms of criminality, violence, and a variety of social vices among youngsters, including; corruption, kidnapping, terrorism, and insurrection, trafficking, prostitution, cultism, cybercrime, and yahoo internet fraud. This therefore, calls to question whether students of Business Education students were exposed to entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions in North-East which ought to result in the development of entrepreneurial skills which are sine que none to self-employability? Is it because they lack the necessary entrepreneurial abilities, or they are unwilling to put such skills to use? It also calls to question the students' low self-efficacy in using entrepreneurial skills to launch desirable and viable businesses for economic survival. It is in view of the above stated problems that it becomes pertinent for the researchers as a concerned business educator, to investigate if entrepreneurship education offered in higher institutions in North-Eastern Zone influence Business Education, students' entrepreneurial skills.

If this is not done, institutions will continue to produce deficient graduates unable to bring about growth and natural development. As such, this investigation seeks to pave ways for tertiary institutions in this part of the country to know whether there is need for change in the training pattern of entrepreneurship education or modify the method and approach, in order to help the students. Consequently, the researchers consider it germane to investigate influence of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial skills of Business Education students.

Research Question

One research question guided the study:

1. To what extent does entrepreneurship education influence entrepreneurial skills of Business Education students in Colleges of Education and Polytechnics?

Hypotheses

The null hypothesis was postulated and tested at significance level of 0.05

H₀₁: there is no significant difference in the mean responses of Business Education students from Federal and State institutions on the extent to which entrepreneurship education influence entrepreneurial skills.

Methods

The researchers employed mixed method approach this is because the study requires the gathering and analyses of data, based on the fusion of quantitative and qualitative

methods. According to Merriam (2018), the integration of a quantitative and qualitative technique offers a more thorough analysis and comprehensive representation of the study problem. When a quantitative method cannot fully convey the focus on silent points that the study requires, a mixed method approach is the best option, and it is utilized to improve quantitative results. This approach yields findings with a broader view of the larger problems or studies (Ademiluyi, 2019). This method involves first carrying out a quantitative study, which serves as the main component, followed by conducting a qualitative study to help understand the quantitative results. Descriptive survey research method was applied for the quantitative component. The descriptive survey research according to Umoru (2015), determines and reports the current state of affairs. It involves analyzing individuals' attitudes and perspectives toward other people, institutions, activities, and events. The population consists of 864 NCE III business education students in Colleges of Education and NDII students in Polytechnics in North-Eastern, Nigeria. The sample size of the study was made up of 269 respondents based on Cohen, et. al. (2007). Proportional stratified random sampling technique was used to select the sample representative from all the tertiary institutions involved in the study.

However, for the qualitative aspect of the study, a purposeful sampling technique was adopted in selecting a total of 11 class representatives which is 50% of the entire 22 class representatives from the six states in North-East, Nigeria. This necessitated due to the need to gain deeper insight on influence of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial skills acquisition to ensure adequate representation of each institution under investigation.

The instrument for data collection for the study was a 15-item structure questionnaire titled: Entrepreneurship Education on Entrepreneurial Skills Acquisition Questionnaire (EEESAQ). The questionnaire consists of two sections: The first section sought relevant demographic characteristic of the respondents. This was used in testing the hypothesis. The second section contains question items generated from literature reviewed based on the study purposes. The questionnaire was designed to elicit the ratings of respondents on 4-point rating scale as follows: of: Very High Extent, 4 points; High Extent, 3 points; Low Extent, 2 points; Very Low Extent, 1 point. Interviews were conducted on the 7 out of 11 class representative due to the difficulties in reaching them, as such only seven were interviewed on the influence of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial skills acquisition by students of business education in North-Eastern, Nigeria.

The purpose of the interview was to get more clarifications and in-depth explanations on issues that might not be clear from the quantitative questionnaire responses. The interview guide used was self-designed and it comprised seven open-ended questions sought respondents' clarifications on influence of entrepreneurship education on

entrepreneurial skills acquisitions of business education students in colleges of education and polytechnics. The instrument designed for this study was subjected to face, construct and content validation by two experts in Business and Entrepreneurship Education Department from Kwara State Univesity, Malete.

The reliability of the instrument was determined through the statistical analysis of the data collected from the pilot study. Cronbach alpha method was used to analyse the data collectedso as to determine the instrument' internal consistency, and the reliability coefficient of 0.93 was found. The instrument was deemed dependable and stable for measuring what it was intended to measure because the reliability coefficient was positive and very high. The researchers and the research assistants distributed copies of the questionnaire to the respondents who filled and returned the questionnaire on the same day whenever possible.The respondents were reached through their respective institutions. In-depth interviews with the selected class representative were subsequently conducted by the researchers to reinforce the findings of the questionnaire and to clarify grey areas of the findings.The demographic data for the respondents was analyzed using percentages, and the data gathered regarding the research questions was analyzed using mean ratings and standard deviation. Independent samples t-test was used to assess the formulated hypotheses at significance level of 0.05. the decision rule was that any item within the range of 3.50–4.00 was regarded as very high extent, items with mean ratings of 2.50–3.24 was regarded as high extent, and items with 1.75–2.49 was regarded as low extent, Items with a mean score between 1.00 and 1.75 was regarded as having a very low extent. The null hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance using independent sample t-test. Were the calculated p value was less than or equal to the 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was to be rejected. Conversely, if the calculated p-value was greater than the level of significance, the null hypothesis was not to be rejected.Forthe qualitative data analysis, content analysis was used to analyze the respondents' comments on influence of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial skills acquisition of business education students.

Findings

Research Question 1: To what extent does entrepreneurship education influences entrepreneurial skills acquisition of business education students in Colleges of Education and Polytechnics?

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation of responses on the influence of entrepreneurship Education on entrepreneurialskills Acquisitionof business education studen

The Intuition

S/N	Item Statements	\bar{X}	SD	Remark
1.	Entrepreneurship education has helped students to operate leadership ability.	2.93	1.05	High Extent
2.	Entrepreneurship education has helped me to be creative.	3.09	1.00	High Extent
3.	Entrepreneurship education has helped me to think critically.	3.24	0.98	High Extent
4.	Entrepreneurship education has helped me to solve problems.	3.31	0.95	High Extent
5.	Entrepreneurship education has helped students to integrate and have truthful skills.	3.31	0.87	High Extent
6.	Entrepreneurship education has helped students to have the ability to generate new ideas.	3.00	0.99	High Extent
7.	Entrepreneurship education has helped me to have goal-setting ability.	3.04	1.07	High Extent
8.	Entrepreneurship education has helped me to have self-control ability.	3.00	1.05	High Extent
9.	Entrepreneurship education has helped students to have funding and structuring ability.	3.08	1.00	High Extent
10.	Entrepreneurship education has helped students to be tolerance and adaptability to a variety of problems.	3.05	1.05	High Extent
11.	1. Entrepreneurship education has helped me on how to stand out as an organization's image maker.	3.12	1.03	High Extent
12.	2. Entrepreneurship education has helped students on how to recognize societal and market needs.	3.18	1.01	High Extent
13.	Knowledge of entrepreneurship education has helped students on how to turn concepts into business opportunities.	3.20	0.87	High Extent
14.	My study in entrepreneurship has exposed me to new ideas for being an entrepreneur in the future.	3.00	1.04	High Extent
15.	With my knowledge of entrepreneurship education, I have confidence in being a successful entrepreneur.	3.19	0.99	High Extent
Weighted average		3.12	1.00	High Extent

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Data in Table 1 shows the mean and standard deviation of responses on the influence of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial skills acquisition of business education students in colleges of education and polytechnics. Respondents indicated that entrepreneurship education has helped students to operate leadership ability, it has helped them to be creative, it has helped students to think critically and it has helped students to solve problems to high extent. These were supported by mean score of 2.93, 3.09, 3.24 and 3.31 respectively. The respondents also indicated that entrepreneurship education has helped students to integrate and have truthful skills, it has helped students to have the ability to generate new ideas, it has helped them to have goal-setting ability and it has helped students to have self-control ability to high extent by students of business education. These were supported by mean score of 3.31, 3.00, 3.04 and 3.00 respectively. In addition, the respondents indicated that entrepreneurship education has helped students to have funding and structuring ability, it has helped students to be tolerance and adaptability to a variety of problems, it has helped them on how to stand out as an organization's image maker and it has helped students on how to recognize societal and market needs which fall within the range of high extent. These assertions were supported by mean scores of 3.08, 3.05, 3.12 and 3.18 respectively. The respondents indicated that knowledge of entrepreneurship education has helped students on how to turn concepts into business opportunities, my study in entrepreneurship has exposed me to new ideas for being an entrepreneur in the future and with my knowledge of entrepreneurship education, I have confidence in being a successful entrepreneur to high extent by students of business education as evidence in the mean scores of 3.20, 3.00 and 3.19 respectively. The grand mean is 3.12 and the standard deviation is 1.00 which fall within ranges of high extent.

Test of Hypotheses

Ho₁: There is no significant difference in the mean responses of business education students from Federal and State Institutions on the extent to which entrepreneurship education influence entrepreneurial skills acquisition.

Table 2: Summary of t-test of the difference between the mean responses of respondents from federal and state institutions on the influence of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial skills acquisition

Group	N	Mean	SD	t-cal	Df	p-value	Decision
Federal	131	3.93	0.17	23.74	267	0.00	Rejected
State	138	2.34	0.75				

Source: Field survey, 2023

P<0.05

Data in Table 2 reveals that there are 131 respondents from the Federal and 138 respondents from the State Institutions. The federal and state respondents' responses shows that entrepreneurship education positively influences entrepreneurial skills acquisition of business education students to high extent ($\bar{x} = 3.93$; $SD = 0.17$) and ($\bar{x} = 2.34$; $SD = 0.75$). The table reveals that there was significant difference between the mean responses of business education students from Federal and State institutions on the extent to which entrepreneurship education influences acquisition of entrepreneurial skills ($t_{267} = 23.74$, $P < 0.05$). Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected.

Analysis of Qualitative Data

A total of 11 participants were purposefully chosen from tertiary institutions for the qualitative study's component, but only 7 were interviewed because of numerous difficulties beyond the researcher's control. The interview was motivated by the need to gain a deeper understanding of entrepreneurship education in order to provide information that might not be readily apparent in the quantitative data. The interviews were semi-structured. The themes were based on the purposes of the study. Content analysis was used to examine the data. The outcomes were presented in accordance with the following themes:

Entrepreneurial Skills

Four of the seven participants who were interviewed representing 57% of the total suggested that in order to succeed as an entrepreneur, a person must be an expert in his entrepreneurial skills. They made a point of highlighting how innovative and capable of critical thinking they are due to their understanding of entrepreneurship education. Two participants, or 29% of the group maintained that having knowledge of entrepreneurship education would enable them to manage a firm after graduation rather than looking for employment with the government. They would be self-reliant and self-employed. Another interviewee, who made up 14% of the sample, stated that being aware of the various entrepreneurial skills taught in the program of business education enabled him to choose the one he would pursue after graduation. This is consistent with one of the quantitative items which stated that entrepreneurship education has helped students of business education to be

innovative and critical thinkers, the capacity to generate new ideas, the ability to integrate and have truthful skills, the ability to have funding and structuring ability, how to turn concepts into business opportunities, entrepreneurship has exposed me to new ideas for being an entrepreneur in the future, and have confidence in being a successful entrepreneur, which the respondents were on very high extent.

Discussion of Findings

The study was conducted to examine the influence of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial skills acquisition of business education students in tertiary institutions in North-Eastern Zone, Nigeria. Findings on research question 1 as presented in table 1 revealed that entrepreneurship education positively influences entrepreneurial skills acquisition of business education students to high extent in North-Eastern, Nigeria. Result of hypotheses 1 revealed that, the null hypothesis that states that there is no significant difference between the mean responses of business education students from Federal and State institutions on the extent to which entrepreneurship education influence entrepreneurial skills was rejected. Their responses demonstrate that respondents from federal institutions gave the influence of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial skills acquisition a higher rating than respondents from state institutions, with this finding, which is presumably owing to the federal institutions' entrepreneurship centers having better access to training materials and technology than the state institutions have. Fashua (2006), states that business education is the component of education that prepares a person and instils in them the mindset to take the risk of trying something new by using what they have learned in school. This corroborates with the report of Ibezie (2015), entrepreneurship education gives students with sufficient risk management training to make uncertainty bearing more possible and easier, as well as the opportunity to acquire skills that will enable them to meet the society's personnel needs.

Conclusion

The study's findings make it clear that entrepreneurial skills acquisition is crucial for business education students. As it is indubitable that in today's competitive world, self-employment is the best employment. The findings suggest that among the groups of entrepreneurial qualities that were assessed as high extend are the most crucial. Therefore, it is important all factors of entrepreneurial skills that may encourage should be identified and reinforced. Many competencies and skills have been identified by different scholars as necessary to succeed, and to remain successful in business. Additionally, entrepreneurial skills are essential for enabling business education students to engage in profitable economic activity.

Recommendations

With the research concluded, the following recommendations are proffered:

1. In order to ensure that the necessary entrepreneurial skills are properly taught and reinforced to students while in school, authorities of colleges of education and polytechnics should put facilities in place to enhance the teaching of entrepreneurship education.
2. School administration should continue to support lecturers by encouraging conference attendance, seminars, and workshops, to further prepare them for effective lecture delivery, and it is important to make sure students of business education understand that fraud and crime are not forms of entrepreneurship when teaching them the dos and don'ts of actual business

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