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Evaluating Entrepreneurial Skills Needed by Business Education Students for Self-employment in Colleges of Education, Kano State

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Abstract. This study evaluates the entrepreneurial skills needed by business education students for self-employment in colleges of education in Kano state. Two research questions guided the study. The population for the study was 913 final-year, business education students across the three selected colleges of education in Kano State. The sample size for the study was 256 final-year students in the selected schools. The descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. A 19 items structured four-point rating scale questionnaire, duly validated by experts in the field of business education, measurement and evaluation, and English language was used for the data collection. The instrument was subjected to a pilot test and a reliability coefficient of 0.95 which was taken to reliably determined using the Cronbach Alpha (2020) co-efficient. The data collected for the study were analyzed using percentage scores for the personal data of the respondents and mean scores with a benchmark of 2.50 and above accepting the questionnaire items and the grand mean. The study revealed that

Managerial skills, Word processing skills, and Practical entrepreneurial skills among others were identified as entrepreneurial skills needed by business education students for self-employment. Poor funding, lack of adequate infrastructure, and corruption among others were also identified as the constraints hindering the effective acquisition of entrepreneurial skills by business education students. Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills is necessary for making graduates of business education to be productive and self-reliant after graduation. As a way forward, it was recommended among others Provide mentorship and coaching: Students need guidance and support as they develop their entrepreneurial skills. Governments and schools can provide mentorship and coaching programs that connect students with successful entrepreneurs and business leaders. These programs can provide students with advice, feedback, and networking opportunities that can help them succeed.

Keywords: Business education, entrepreneurial skill, and self-employment.

Introduction

The goal of the business education curriculum is to equip students with relevant skills and abilities such as accounting, technical, managerial, marketing, and entrepreneurial skills and competencies that will prepare them for work in either an employed or self-employed capacity. In line with this, Iwu (2016) claims that business education provides students with the necessary skills and competencies for self-reliance and employment. This implies that it is a discipline that gives students the specialized knowledge and skills they need to enter the workforce and find employment that they are happy with or stand on their own. Based on this assertion, it is obvious that business education helps students to become self-employed, which lessens the need for the government to create jobs for new graduates since the graduates of business education can employ themselves and also create jobs for others.

To Aliyu in Simiku and Oru (2016), business education is a branch of study whose objective is to assist students to gain skills, competencies, attitudes, and traits necessary for efficiency in the economic system. This shows that business education includes the knowledge, attitudes, abilities, and competencies needed to manage one's income and the economic system successfully and efficiently to ensure an ongoing process of income generation. In line with this, The Federal Republic of Nigeria (2013) in her National Policy of Education (NPE) also sees the major objective of business education as the acquisition of appropriate skills; capacities, and competencies that will help individuals to contribute to national development. This shows that the main aim of business education is to during study impart to the students all the necessary skills that will enable them to be productive and become employers of labor after graduation. To achieve the goal of self-reliance after graduation, students of business education require a broad range of entrepreneurial skills.

Skill is thought of as a quality of performance that does not depend solely upon a person's fundamental innate capabilities but must be developed through training, practice, and experience. Martin (2015) states that the 2014 annual report of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) identified three types of skills (entrepreneurial skills) required by an entrepreneur which include; technical skills, business management skills, and personal entrepreneurial skills. Saidu et al. (2017) are also of the opinion that the entrepreneurial skills that are required for sustainable economic development are technical, business management skills and personal entrepreneurial skills. Technical skills include written and oral communication, technical implementation skills, and organizing skills (Henry et al., 2005). In the opinion of Alison (2019),

technical skills are the abilities, capabilities, and expertise required in undertaking specific responsibilities. They are practical and are linked to information technology, mathematics, and scientific tasks. Technical skills comprise technical writing; project management; data analysis; social media experience; ability to proffer concrete decisions; technical proficiency; concentration and communication. In addition to these, Martin (2015) states that technical skills include environment monitoring, problem-solving, and interpersonal skills.

Business management skills are the competencies and capabilities that will lead to the effective performance of management tasks (Okoli & Ezenwafor, 2015). Entrepreneurial skills, on the other hand, are the pieces of training given to people to acquire the skills, ideas, managerial abilities, and capabilities for self-employment rather than paid employment. Entrepreneurial skills are, therefore, the basic skills necessary to enable an individual to start developing, finance, and succeed in their business (Agoba, 2011). Entrepreneurial skills are also seen as the business abilities that one learns in school or via training that allow them to work well as an entrepreneur and enable them to transform and improve business activities within a given society. By acquiring entrepreneurial skills a person would be guided towards the accomplishment of sustainable economic development. Furthermore, Abanyam (2014), Adebisi (2015), and Eze et al. (2016) point out that innovative abilities, high level of self-esteem, creative ability, good problem-solving ability, tolerance for ambiguity, ability to integrate the 5ms (men, machine, materials, money, and management), and goal-orientedness are among the entrepreneurial skills. The authors also add additional entrepreneurial skills, such as the capacity for sound judgment, technical proficiency, problem-solving aptitude, communication, motivation, organizational aptitude, management/administration aptitude, financial management aptitude, marketing aptitude, and capacity for minimizing business failure to the list of entrepreneurial skill

Working for yourself rather than being employed is self-employment. Self-employment is the process through which an individual develops their business enterprise without relying on another person for a living.

Considering the foregoing as well as the findings of the study conducted by Daluba and Odiba (2013) which found out that Nigerian graduates can only work for themselves if they develop crucial skills such as technical know-how, managerial know-how, marketing know-how, and competencies leading to abilities for transferring their education into self-employment, wealth generation, job creation, and fulfillment through entrepreneurship programs, this study aims to evaluate the entrepreneurial skills needed for self-employment by business education students in Colleges of Education in Kano State.

Research Problem

In the past, when students graduate from colleges of education, it used to be easy for them to get employed because jobs were available in both the public and private sectors contrary to what is happening currently. The interactions of the researchers with some unemployed business education graduates revealed that the majority of them were unable to find jobs either in the public or private sector and they cannot stand on their own because they lacked the necessary entrepreneurial skills that would have allowed them to be independent. This study, therefore, intends to solve this problem by evaluating the entrepreneurial skills needed by business education graduates for self-employment.

Research Aim and Research Questions

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the entrepreneurial skill needed for self-employment by business education students in Colleges of Education in Kano State. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Evaluate the entrepreneurial skills needed by Business Education students for self-employment in Colleges of Education in Kano State.

2. Identify the constraints that hinder the effective acquisition of entrepreneurial skills needed by Business Education students for self-employment in Colleges of Education in Kano State.

Based on the purpose of the study, the following research questions were developed to guide the study:

1. What are the entrepreneurial skills needed by Business Education students for self-employment in the Colleges of Education in Kano State.?

2. What are the constraints that hinder the effective acquisition of entrepreneurial skills needed by Business Education students in Colleges of Education in Kano State?

Theoretical framework

The study was based on two theoretical underpinnings. These are the Human Capital Development theory of entrepreneurship which was coined by Shultz (1961) and Becker (1964) and the Theoretical

Education Empowerment Model which was developed by Freire in 1970 (Freire, 1970). The Human Capital Development theory of entrepreneurship is based on two major premises namely; education and experience. Therefore, the knowledge acquired from education and experience is a heterogeneous resource

that is distributed across individuals and it is a key determinant of the underlying differences in opportunity identification and utilization. Theoretical Education Empowerment Model, on the other hand, points out that empowerment and liberating education are processes involving listening, dialogue, critical reflection, and reflective action. These theories are taken to be appropriate for this study because when the potentials of business education students are harnessed through education and the spirit of self-reliance is instilled in them through listening, dialogue, critical reflection, and reflective action, they would strive against all odds to acquire the right entrepreneurial skills and become self-employed.

Methodology

General Background

A descriptive survey research design was used for the study. The study was conducted in two Federal Colleges of Education and one State College of Education in Kano State offering a business education programme. These colleges are; the Federal College of Education (Technical) Bichi, Kano State, Federal College of Education, Kano and Saadatu Rimi College of Education, Kumbotso, Kano State. The choice of the State for this study was necessitated by the adequate number of business education students who made up the respondents for the study and also the growing rate of unemployed among business education graduates who will benefit exceedingly from the findings of the study. The population of the study comprises 913 final-year business education students in the three Colleges of Education in Kano State. The choice of this category of respondents was because of their vast potential

for entrepreneurship. A sample size of 256 business education students representing 28 percent of the population under study was selected based on the view of Gay in Olayiwola (2007) which states that a sample size of 10% is adequate in descriptive research. The samples were thereafter proportionately taken from the three colleges of education. The instrument used for the data collection was a 19 items structured questionnaire titled "Assessing Entrepreneurial Skills Needs Questionnaire" (AESNQ), drafted using a four (4), point rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA)= 4 points, agree (A)= 3 points, disagree (D)= 2 points and strongly disagree (SD)= 1 point. The questionnaire items were subjected to face and content validation by two experts in the Department of Business Education, Faculty of Education, Ahmadu Bello University; Zaria. In addition, one in each of the Measurement and Evaluation and English Language experts from Federal College of Education (Technical) Bichi and Bayero University Kano respectively also validated the instrument. The instrument was subjected to a pilot study which was conducted at the Federal College of Education Katsina, Katsina State using 30 respondents. The pilot study gave rise to a reliability coefficient of 0.95 determined using the Cronbach Alpha () coefficient. This implies an excellent internal consistency among the responses and thus, making the instrument suitable for use. The data collected concerning the research questions were analyzed using mean scores with the benchmark of 2.50 and above considered as being accepted while mean scores from 2.49 downward were considered as rejected.

Research Results

The results of the study were presented in the tables below:

Table 1

Distribution of Respondents Based on their Departments

Department	Frequency	Percent
Accounting Education	142	55.5%
Office Technology and Management Education	88	34.4%
Marketing Education	18	7.0%
Entrepreneurship Education	8	3.1%
Total	256	100.0%

Source: field survey data 2023.

Table 1 shows the distribution of the respondents based on their departments. Based on the findings, it was reported that 55.5% of the total respondent were from Accounting Education Department, 34.4% from Office Technology and Management Education Department, 7.0% from Marketing Education Department, and the least (3.1%) were from Entrepreneurship Education Department. This indicates that the majority of the respondents were from Accounting Education Department.

Table 2

Shows Distribution of the Respondents Based on Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	146	57.0%
Female	110	43.0%

Total	256	100.0%
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Source: field survey data 2023.

Table 2 shows the distribution of the respondent. It can be seen from the table that most of the respondents were male taking a proportion of 57.0% while the females take 43.0%. This indicates that the majority of the respondents were male.

Table 3

Age Distribution of the Respondents

Age Group	Frequency	Percent
15-20	70	27.3%
21-25	134	52.3%
26-30	35	13.7%
31-35	17	6.6%
Total	256	100.0%

Source: field survey data 2023.

Table 3 gives the age distribution of the respondents. From the results, as shown in the table, it was reported that 27.3% of the respondents were between the age group of 15-20 years, 52.3% were between the age bracket of 21-25 and they are the highest, 13.7% are between the age-26-30 and 6.6% (the least) were between the age group of 31-35 years. This indicates that the majority of the respondents were between the ages of 21 to 25.

Research Question 1:

What are the Entrepreneurial skills needed by Business Education Students for Self-employment in the Colleges of Education in Kano State?

Table 4

Mean ratings of the Respondents on Entrepreneurial skills needed by Business Education Students in Colleges of Education for Self-employment

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Decision
1	Managerial skills	143	103	6	4	3.50	Accepted
2	Word processing skills	91	150	11	4	3.28	Accepted
3	Practical entrepreneurial and craftsmanship skills	119	101	29	7	3.29	Accepted
4	Information and communication technology skills	107	117	21	11	3.25	Accepted
5	Skills for provision of financial services	114	110	24	8	3.28	Accepted
6	Teaching skills	98	130	26	2	3.26	Accepted
7	Skills for operating office machines	96	114	31	15	3.13	Accepted
8	Time management skills	102	123	19	12	3.23	Accepted
9	Technical skills	105	111	28	12	3.20	Accepted

Grand mean	3.26	Accepted
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Source: field survey data 2023.

Table 4 gives the mean ratings of the respondents regarding their opinion on entrepreneurial skills needed by business education students for self-employment. A four-rating Likert scale was used and based on the results, it could be seen that all the items fall within the range of the benchmark of 2.50 and above which were interpreted as being accepted. The grand mean of 3.26 also falls within the accepted region. These indicate that the respondents agreed that all the items are entrepreneurial skills needed by business education students in colleges of education for self-employment.

Research Question 2:

What are the constraints that hinder the effective acquisition of entrepreneurial skills needed by Business Education students for self-employment in the Colleges of Education in Kano State?

Table 5

Mean ratings of the Respondents on Constraints that hinder the effective Acquisition of entrepreneurial skills needed by Business Education students for Self-employment in Colleges of Education in Kano State

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Decision
1	Poor funding	102	95	42	17	3.10	Accepted
2	Lack of adequate infrastructure	71	119	46	20	2.93	Accepted
3	Corruption	77	102	47	30	2.88	Accepted
4	Recruitment of unqualified teachers	82	103	45	26	2.94	Accepted
5	Insufficiency of learning materials	102	95	41	18	3.09	Accepted
6	Overemphasis on paper qualification	112	82	48	14	3.14	Accepted
7	Poor implementation of the curriculum	80	110	47	19	2.98	Accepted
8	Poor supervision	82	108	40	26	2.96	Accepted
9	Industrial actions (strikes)	87	103	51	15	3.02	Accepted
10	Poor attitude of parents toward skills acquisition programmes	80	109	45	22	2.96	Accepted
Grand Mean						3.00	Accepted

Source: field survey data 2023.

Table 5 shows the responses of the respondents regarding the Constraints that hinder the effective acquisition of entrepreneurial skills needed by Business Education students for self-employment. Based on the results, it was observed that all the items fall within the range of the benchmark mean of 2.50 which is interpreted as being accepted. The grand mean of 3.00 which also falls within the range is also interpreted to be accepted. These indicate that the respondents agreed that all the items are constraints that hinder the effective acquisition of entrepreneurial skills by Business Education students for self-employment in colleges of education for self-employment.

Discussion

The Findings of the study presented in Table 4 indicated that all the identified entrepreneurial skill needs are needed by business education students for self-employment. The reason is that the skills will help students to achieve self-reliance and self-employment after graduation. It is, therefore, the view of the researchers that if business education students can be skillful in the identified entrepreneurial skills they will be self-reliant and also, in the long run, become employers of labor. The findings corroborate the views of Igbo (2009) and Ezeh (2012) which revealed that the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills prepares and develops students' potential for the attainment of self-reliance, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

Managerial skills are crucial for students of Business Education who intend to become self-employed. Effective management is key to the success of any business, and students who understand the principles of management are better equipped to run their own businesses. Managerial skills include the ability to plan, organize, control and direct resources towards the achievement of organizational goals. A good manager must also have leadership skills, which involves the ability to motivate and inspire employees to work towards a common goal. Additionally, managerial skills include the ability to make sound decisions, solve problems, communicate effectively, negotiate, and manage time efficiently. All of these skills are essential for the success of any self-employed individual.

In today's digital age, word processing skills are essential for students of Business Education who intend to become self-employed. Effective communication is key to the success of any business, and students who understand how to use word processing software can create professional-looking documents, reports, and presentations. Additionally, word processing skills enable students to communicate effectively through email and other digital platforms. In today's business world, many transactions take place online, and the ability to write and communicate clearly and professionally is essential for the success of any self-employed individual.

Practical entrepreneurial and craftsmanship skills are essential for students of Business Education who intend to become self-employed. These skills include the ability to identify a market niche, develop a product or service that meets the needs of the target market, and create a brand that stands out in a crowded marketplace. Additionally, entrepreneurship involves the ability to manage finances, market products and services, and build relationships with customers. Craftsmanship skills, on the other hand, involve the ability to create high-quality products or services that meet the needs of customers. Both practical entrepreneurial and craftsmanship skills are essential for the success of any self-employed individual, as they enable the individual to create and deliver products and services that meet the needs of the market.

In summary, managerial skills, word processing skills, and practical entrepreneurial and craftsmanship skills are important and highly needed by students of Business Education for self-employment. These skills enhance students to effectively manage resources, communicate effectively, create high-quality products and services, and build successful businesses that meet the needs of the market.

The findings as presented in Table 5 revealed that constraints such as poor funding, lack of adequate infrastructure, corruption, recruitment of unqualified teachers, and insufficiency of learning materials, among others as the hindrances to the effective acquisition of entrepreneurial skills by business education students for self-employment. These are in line with the opinion of Kayode (2010) which states that the majority of teachers teaching entrepreneurship are yet to acquire some practical

entrepreneurial skills needed to impart to students as well as develop and adopt new teaching methods that will enhance skill delivery.

Poor funding is one of the major constraints that hinders the effective acquisition of entrepreneurial skills by students of business education in colleges of education Kano state. Adequate funding is essential for providing necessary resources such as textbooks, reference materials, and other learning resources. Without adequate funding, colleges of education may not be able to provide the necessary resources that are essential for effective learning. This can hinder the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills by students, as they may not have access to the necessary resources and support needed to develop their skills.

Another factor that can hinder the effective acquisition of entrepreneurial skills is a lack of adequate infrastructure. Entrepreneurship education requires practical learning experiences, which can only be achieved through the provision of adequate infrastructure such as computer labs, entrepreneurship workshops, and other facilities. Without adequate infrastructure, students may not have access to the necessary tools and equipment needed to develop their skills. This can limit their ability to acquire entrepreneurial skills, as they may not have the opportunity to apply theoretical concepts to real-world situations.

Corruption is also a significant constraint that can hinder the effective acquisition of entrepreneurial skills by students of business education in colleges of education. Diverting fund meant to develop entrepreneurial centers for a personal use, buying of low branded equipment's for teaching and learning. Corruption can affect the quality of education by undermining the credibility of the institution and its programs. When students perceive that their teachers or administrators are corrupt, they may lose faith in the institution and its programs, which can hinder their motivation to learn and develop their entrepreneurial skills.

In conclusion, poor funding, lack of adequate infrastructure, and corruption among others are major constraints that can hinder the effective acquisition of entrepreneurial skills by students of business education in colleges of education in Kano state. To overcome these challenges, it is essential to provide adequate funding to support the development of entrepreneurship education, invest in infrastructure, and promote transparency and accountability to reduce corruption in the education system.

Conclusions and Implications

The findings of the study bring to the fore, the skills that are needed for self-employment by business education students in colleges of education as well as the hindrances to effective acquisition of the skills.

Based on the research and literature available, it can be concluded that business education students need to develop a range of entrepreneurial skills, including Managerial skills, Word processing skills, Practical entrepreneurial and craftsmanship skills, Information and communication technology skills, Skills for provision of financial services , Skills for operating office machines, Time management skills, Technical skills. These skills are essential for identifying and capitalizing on new business opportunities, developing effective business strategies, and managing resources efficiently and to enable them fit into the world of work effectively.

To improve their entrepreneurial skills, business education students should take advantage of opportunities to gain practical experience through internships, networking events, and entrepreneurship programs. They should also seek out mentors and role models who can provide guidance and support as they navigate the challenges of starting a new business.

The implications of these findings include the fact that the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills paramount for making business education students self-employed after graduation, efforts should be made toward ensuring that skills are effectively acquired thereby making the graduates of business education to be productive and extension bringing about sustainable development in Kano State and Nigeria at large.

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Conferences, seminars, and workshops should be held regularly to sharpen the knowledge of lecturers teaching business education.
2. An adequate teaching period should be allocated for teaching and learning entrepreneurship education for in-depth coverage of the scheme and goal attainment.
3. Provide access to funding and resources: Starting a business requires capital and resources. Governments and schools can provide access to funding and resources through grants, interest-free loans, and other financial support programs. They can also provide access to business incubators, accelerators, and other resources that can help students start and grow their businesses.
4. Foster a culture of innovation and creativity: Governments and schools can foster a culture of innovation and creativity by creating an environment that encourages experimentation and risk-taking. This can be achieved by promoting entrepreneurship as a viable career option, celebrating entrepreneurial success stories, and providing funding opportunities for innovative projects.
5. Provide mentorship and coaching: Students need guidance and support as they develop their entrepreneurial skills. Governments and schools can provide mentorship and coaching programs that connect students with successful entrepreneurs and business leaders. These programs can provide students with advice, feedback, and networking opportunities that can help them succeed.
6. Encourage experiential learning: Business education students need practical experience to develop their entrepreneurial skills. Governments and schools can facilitate this by providing opportunities for students to participate in start-up competitions, business plan competitions, and other entrepreneurial events. Such opportunities allow students to practice their skills and receive valuable feedback from experienced entrepreneurs.
7. Stakeholders involve in education sector should be as a matter of urgency, provide adequate funding to support the development of entrepreneurship education, invest in infrastructure, and promote transparency and accountability to reduce corruption in the education system.
8. The curriculum should be reviewed in line with entrepreneurship education, this should serve as a strong educational policy by government at all levels and the evaluation should be given a top priority.

Suggestions for Future Research

In terms of the topic's actuality the following suggestions for future research are the next:

1. To evaluate the impact of entrepreneurship education: an assessment can be conducted in order to determine the impact of entrepreneurship education on the entrepreneurial skills and intentions of business education students in Kano State.
2. To explore technology role: the role of technology in entrepreneurship can be explored, particularly in terms of technology use for businesses creation and scaling.
3. To identify the best practices: the best practices in entrepreneurship education can be investigated and identified, particularly those that have been successful in similar contexts.
4. To conduct a needs assessment: a needs assessment can be conducted in order to determine the specific entrepreneurial skills that business education students in Kano State need to acquire to become successful entrepreneurs.
5. To analyse the current business education curriculum: an analysis of the current business education curriculum can be conducted in terms of the adequate students' preparation for the self-employment.
6. To explore the role of government policies: the role of government policies in supporting entrepreneurship in Kano State can be explored, particularly in terms of how these policies can facilitate the development of a conducive environment for entrepreneurship.
7. To conduct case studies: case studies can be conducted on successful entrepreneurs in Kano State in order to identify the key factors that contributed to their success.

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