

Evaluating Entrepreneurial Skills Acquisition for Self-Reliance among Business Education Students in Colleges of Education in Kwara State

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Abstract

This study evaluated the acquisition of entrepreneurship skills for self-reliance for business education students in Colleges of Education in Kwara State. A descriptive survey study approach was used, with a population of 903 final-year (NCE III) business education students, of which 270 participants were selected. A structured questionnaire called Questionnaire on Evaluating Entrepreneurial Skills for Self-Reliance (QEESR) was employed as the instrument for the study. Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient calculated 0.8 as the value. Descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) and the null hypotheses tested at 0.05 levels of significance were employed for the analysis of the collected quantitative information. Results showed that business education students are well endowed with entrepreneurship and management skills such as creativity, innovation, risk management, financial management, business planning, leadership, decision-making, and communication skills to a high extent, while results showed that there was no significant difference between males and females on their self-perception of acquiring entrepreneurship skills. It was concluded that business education students in colleges of education in Kwara State have been well-endowed with entrepreneurship and management skills to make them self-reliance oriented after graduation. It was recommended that, aside utilizing their skills, students should engage in entrepreneurship ventures, while the government and other stakeholders should empower the business education graduates through programs such as financing, business registration, and so forth, to make them self-reliance oriented.

Keywords: Entrepreneurial Skills, Managerial Skills, Business Education, Self-Reliance

Introduction

Currently, the level of unemployment among the number of graduates is becoming a cause of concern not only to the graduating students but to their parents, relatives, and of course, to the government as well. This is becoming a problem that can be related to the economy of the nation since unemployment is becoming a

challenge in the social and political life of the nation. The enthusiasm in pursuing tertiary education is gradually being discouraged as a result of the current debilitating state of unemployment. Market relevant education training programs that will make undergraduate students have the capability to make themselves more employable will be important in

improving unemployment. In addition, students can be able to obtain certain elementary ideas, knowledge, skills and attitudes, which are vital for a new business creation. Unemployment is one of the most pressing issues in Nigeria that is both economically and socially challenging (Olawale, 2023; Nwankwo and Chigbo, 2022). One of the social responsibilities of government is the provision of employment opportunities to its citizenry. The employment opportunities offered by the government cannot match the increasing number of youths leaving the secondary and higher institutions of learning to seek employment in the job market annually. Onuegbu (2006), indicated the rate of growth of the number of students may be said to be in geometric progression, while the growth rate of job opportunities has been in arithmetic progression. However, it would be imperative for the aspiring entrepreneur to have a certain useful knowledge and skills in being successful in his or her business that is where entrepreneurship education plays its significant role. The important attributes that must be acquired and utilized by entrepreneurs to engage in self-employment are the following: Innovation and creativity skills, business planning, marketing and sales and negotiation skills. These attributes are important for business education graduates in colleges of education to be job creators and not job seekers. According to Adewumi and Adeniyi (2021), business education graduates in colleges of education lack the needed experience in entrepreneurship despite the theories acquired. Olorunfemi (2019), the scope and teaching methodology tend to be hampered

and restricted in the area of skill acquisition. Ezeani and Yusuf (2013), mentorship and incubation centers should be integrated into the colleges of education. Innovation and creativity in the area of entrepreneurship education refer to the ability to transform challenges into new possibilities that lead to the innovations and self-reliance refers to the extent to which they are satisfied in self-employment and skills acquisition refers to the ability to act on knowledge to achieve the desired performance (Manyahaya and Adamu 2025).

Entrepreneurship management skills are the skills that make the entrepreneur capable to plan, organize, direct, and control to ensure business success. Entrepreneurship management skills are essential to ensure that the entrepreneur is able to manage people, operations, and finances when operating in a competitive business setting (Byun et al., 2018; Adebayo et al, 2020). In business, entrepreneurs will be required to monitor the performance of their employees, financial performance, as well as monitor their customers to identify areas to improve (Eze, 2021). Igbo cited in Akinkuolie (2014) stated that accounting skills, are the skills to interpret financial statements, as well as skills to engage in the preparation of books of account, required by business education students. In another study, Robinson (2018) stated that lack of skills to manage finances expose one to a risk of being unsuccessful, as well as bankruptcy, as a result of regret. Akpotowoh and Amahi, (2016) stated that skills obtained within the functional areas of business program related activities enhances training within entrepreneurship as

well as provides business education graduates with the needed potentials to establish small business ventures. However, Ademiluyi (2017) states that entrepreneurship skills are no other than skills to conduct business which enables an individual to get along within the business world as an entrepreneur or self-employed.

Business education is also one of the fields that make up Vocational and Technical Education. It is aimed at providing the students with theoretical knowledge as well as necessary skills for job-seeking and self-reliance (FGN, 2013). Business education prepares students for employment and advancement in a broad range of office occupations, accounting professions, marketing occupation, teaching profession and entrepreneurship ventures. Some researchers have found some gaps in meeting the expectations for entrepreneurship among students, their preparedness for it (Adebayo et al., 2020; Eze, 2021). For a state like Kwara, which has a number of colleges of education running business education, it is important to evaluate their preparedness for self-reliance in terms of entrepreneurial skills acquisition.

Despite the introduction of entrepreneurship education within the tertiary institutions with the aim of instilling attitudes, values, psychological mind sets, as well as strategies required for the subsequent takeoff within the graduates from the colleges of education, the rate at which it precipitates the attitude of the graduates toward considering entrepreneurship for self-reliance is not encouraging. Consequently, the unemployment rate within the graduates from the tertiary educational

institutions within Nigeria is escalating (Mohammed and Mohammed, 2019). The graduates of the colleges of education in Kwara State are believed to be faced with problems of poverty and unemployment due to the lack of capacity and required productive skills for creative employment in existing establishments as well as self-employment. The situation of business education graduates contributed to the rising rate at which people are joining the unemployment train in Nigeria. This development seems to have showcased a threat to the achievement of the objectives of business and entrepreneurship education among the colleges of education students. The students' failure to develop essential entrepreneurship skills leaves them with nothing much to do for proper survival. However, the required skills are yet to be acquired, thus widening the gap between the rising rates of unemployment. The Nigerian government has therefore made entrepreneurship studies a compulsory subject for all higher institutions to develop entrepreneurship skills among graduates. Okereke and Okoroafor (2011), in their paper "Entrepreneurial Skills: Potentials and Applications in Self-Employment, Employment, and Self-Reliance," claimed that the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills has been recognized as powerful and feasible instruments for self-empowerment, employment, and economic survival. Business education as an area of study aims to make knowledgeable and competent graduates who can perform well in the teaching professions, office administration, or in entrepreneurship. It was, therefore, rather surprising and dismaying

that most of them are circulating their curriculum vitae in response to meager employment opportunities, as they don't seem to possess the required skills in entrepreneurship for self-employment, hence the need to assess the acquisition of the skills for self-reliance/employment of business education students in the Kwara State colleges of education.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to evaluate the entrepreneurial skills acquisition for self-reliance among business education students in colleges of education in Kwara State.

Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Assess the perceived level of entrepreneurial skills acquired for self-reliance among business education students in colleges of education in Kwara State?
2. Determine the extent to which business education students in colleges of education in Kwara State perceived themselves as possessing managerial skills for self-reliance?

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the perceived level of entrepreneurial skills acquired for self-reliance among business education students in colleges of education in Kwara State?
2. To what extent do business education students in colleges of education in Kwara

State perceived themselves as possessing managerial skills for self-reliance?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses guided the study and tested at 0.05 levels of significance:

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female respondents on the perceived entrepreneurial skills acquired for self-reliance among business education students in colleges of education in Kwara State

H₀₂: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female respondents on the perceived managerial skills acquired for self-reliance among business education students in colleges of education in Kwara State

Methodology

A descriptive Survey design was employed in this research. The population of this study was made up of 903 final year (NCE 111) business education students within the 2024/2025 session in the three (3) public Colleges of Education in Kwara State that run Business Education program respectively. These are; Kwara State college of education, (T) Lafiagi, Kwara State college of education, Ilorin and Kwara State College of Education, Oro. The population selection aimed at ensuring that only those that have nearly completed their program and are about to enter the labor market were selected to undertake this study. The sample size used in conducting this research was made

up of 270 students selected from research advisor. A self-structured research questionnaire titled; Questionnaire on Evaluating Entrepreneurial Skills for Self-Reliance (QEESSR) was used as the instrument for data collection. The Questionnaire had 20 items related to the research focus and research questions. The questionnaire was validated by two senior lecturers in the department of business and entrepreneurship education and one senior lecturer in the department of educational management in the Kwara State University, Malete. A pilot test was done in Niger State College of education, Minna to test the reliability of the tools. Cronbach Alpha test was used in testing the internal consistency of the tools with a reliability coefficient of 0.80. All items in the tools had all four hierarchical scales of responsiveness; Response with Very High Extent (VHE-4 points), High Extent (HE-3 points), Low Extent (LE-2 points) and Very Low Extent (VLE-1 point) scales. The data collected were analyzed using mean and

standard deviation in order to provide the answers to the research questions and establish the homogeneity or not of the opinion of the respondent by employing the T-test inferential statistics in testing the null hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. To guide the decision rule, the weighted mean score of 2.50 and above was categorized as having High Extent, and the weighted mean score of 2.49 and below was categorized as having Low Extent. To guide the testing of the null hypothesis one and two, if the observed probability level was equal to or less than the fixed significance level of 0.05, the null hypothesis was rejected, and if the observed probability level was greater than the fixed significance level of 0.05, the null hypothesis was retained.

Results

Research Question One: What is the perceived level of entrepreneurial skills acquired for self-reliance among business education students in colleges of education in Kwara State?

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation of responses on the level of perceived entrepreneurial skills acquired for self-reliance.

S/N	Entrepreneurial Skills for Self-Reliance	$\bar{X}$	SD	Remark
1	I have acquired adequate entrepreneurial skills during my training in business education.	3.25	1.36	High Extent
2	I can identify viable business opportunities within my environment.	3.87	1.03	High Extent
3	I have developed creativity and innovation skills useful for starting a business.	3.48	0.76	High Extent
4	I can take calculated risks in entrepreneurial activities.	3.68	1.23	High Extent
5	I am confident in my ability to establish and manage a small-scale business after graduation.	3.78	1.10	High Extent
6	I have been trained to prepare a simple business plan.	3.36	0.61	High Extent
7	I can effectively mobilize resources needed to start a business.	3.26	0.63	High Extent
8	My training has equipped me with problem-solving skills for entrepreneurial ventures.	2.83	0.72	High Extent
9	I possess the skills required to market and promote business products or services.	3.30	0.71	High Extent
10	I believe my entrepreneurial training is sufficient to make me self-reliant after school.	3.52	0.56	High Extent
Weighted Mean		3.82	1.05	High Extent

Source: Field Survey, 2025

The results in table one showed that business education students possessed entrepreneurial skills to a high extent. It was revealed that all the identified entrepreneurial skills recorded had mean scores of above 2.50 which is the cut-off point. This implied that all the identified skills were well acquired by business education students for self-reliance. Based on the obtained grand mean score of 3.82, it showed that most of the respondents

agreed that the listed skills are possessed, to a high extent, for the promotion of entrepreneurial skills that can enhance self-employment of business education students in colleges of education in Kwara State.

Research Question Two: To what extent do business education students in colleges of education in Kwara State perceived themselves as possessing managerial skills for self-reliance?

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation of responses on the extent to which business education students possess managerial skills for self-reliance

S/N	Managerial Skills for Self-Reliance	$\bar{X}$	SD	Remark
1	I have acquired leadership skills necessary for managing people in a business.	3.33	0.79	High Extent
2	I can organize and coordinate business operations effectively.	3.72	1.06	High Extent
3	I have been trained in decision-making skills needed for self-reliance.	3.57	0.76	High Extent
4	I can manage financial records and accounts of a small business.	3.24	1.02	High Extent
5	I have skills in planning and setting goals for business growth.	3.50	0.56	High Extent
6	I can effectively delegate duties in a team or business setting.	3.33	0.79	High Extent
7	I can evaluate the performance of business activities and make improvements.	3.72	1.06	High Extent
8	I possess conflict management skills required in business management.	3.43	0.62	High Extent
9	I have communication skills that are important for business success.	3.31	0.72	High Extent
10	I believe the managerial skills I have acquired will make me self-reliant after graduation.	3.53	0.58	High Extent
Weighted Mean		3.41	0.79	High Extent

Source: Field Survey, 2025

The results in table two showed that all the items on the table were rated high extent by colleges of education business education students which means the respondents possessed managerial skills to a high extent. It was revealed that all the identified managerial skills recorded had mean scores of above 2.50 which is the cut-off point. This implied that all the identified managerial

skills were well acquired by business education students for self-reliance. Based on the obtained grand mean score of 3.41, it showed that most of the respondents agreed that the listed managerial skills are possessed, to a high extent by business education students in colleges of education in Kwara State.

Hypotheses Testing

Ho₁: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female respondents on the perceived

entrepreneurial skills acquired for self-reliance among business education students in colleges of education in Kwara State.

Table 3: Summary of t-test difference between the mean responses of male and female business education students on the perceived entrepreneurial skills acquired for self-reliance.

Gender	N	Mean	SD	t-cal	Df	p-value	Decision
Male	144	3.54	1.04	0.048	228	1.861	Accepted
Female	126	3.39	0.96				

The data in Table three revealed that there are 144 male and 126 female business education students, the t-test in table 3, the calculated value is 0.048 while the t-critical value is 1.861 at 0.05 level of significance. The t-cal value is less than t-critical value; the null hypothesis is therefore accepted. This implies that there was no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female respondents on the perceived

entrepreneurial skills acquired for self-reliance among business education students in colleges of education in Kwara State.

Ho₂: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female respondents on the perceived managerial skills acquired for self-reliance among business education students in colleges of education in Kwara State.

Table 4: Summary of t-test difference between the mean responses of male and female business education students on the perceived managerial skills acquired for self-reliance.

Gender	N	Mean	SD	t-cal	Df	p-value	Decision
Male	144	3.45	0.94	0.234	228	1.861	Accepted
Female	126	3.34	0.84				

From the t-test in table four, the t-cal. value is 0.234 while the t-crit. value is 1.861 at 0.05 levels of significance. The t-calculated value is less than t-crit. value; the null hypothesis is therefore accepted. This implies that there was no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female business education students on the perceived managerial skills acquired for self-reliance among business education students in colleges of education in Kwara State.

Discussion of Findings

Research question one: Tried to ascertain the perceived level of entrepreneurial skills acquired for self-reliance among business education students in colleges of education in Kwara State. The finding revealed that all the identified entrepreneurial skills recorded had mean scores of above 2.50 which is the cut-off point. This implied that all the identified skills were well acquired by business education students for self-reliance to a high extent. Based on the obtained grand mean score, it showed that most of the students

possessed the listed skills to a high extent, for the promotion of entrepreneurial skills that can enhance self-employment of business education students in colleges of education in Kwara State. The finding is in line with assertion of Adebayo, et al (2020) that business education graduates are well equipped with entrepreneurial skills that can be used to become an entrepreneur instead of roaming around the streets in search of paid or white-collar jobs.

Research question two: Focused on finding out the extent to which the business education students in the colleges of education perceived themselves to possess managerial skills required for self-reliance. The finding part of this study also showed that all the ten items revealed on the possession of managerial skills required by the business education students for self-reliance were possessed to a higher level. The required managerial skills to manage people in a business, the skills to organize and coordinate business operations, as well as the skills required in decision-making for self-reliance. The grand mean analysis indicated that the possession of good managerial skills is very important in achieving success in being an entrepreneur, by managing financial records and accounts, as well as skills in planning to achieve goals for business expansion. This tends to confirm the stand by Byun, Sung, and Park, et al (2018), which based on importance performance analysis, business feasibility analysis, entrepreneurship accounting, finance, entrepreneurship marketing and venture growth strategy to importance performance analysis IPA. Also, this study is in consonance with the findings by Akinkuolie, (2014), which reported that by

acquiring accounting skills, it enables the business education students to develop an understanding for recording simple transaction, interpreting, and preparing a simple statement on financial accounting statements such as the trading, profit and loss account, as well as statement for income & expenditure, amongst others.

The null hypothesis one: was that there was no significant difference between male and female respondents on the mean ratings concerning the entrepreneurial skills they perceived that were acquired for self-reliance among business education students in colleges of education. The result also made it clearer that there was no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female on the perception concerning the entrepreneurial skills acquired for self-reliance among business education students in colleges of education ($t_{228}=0.048$; $P=1.861>0.05$).

Null hypothesis two: asserted that there was no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female respondents on the perceived managerial skills acquired for self-reliance among business education students in colleges of education. The results also showed that there was no significant difference in the mean responses of male and female business education students on the perceived managerial skills acquired for self-reliance among business education students in Colleges of Education ($t_{228} = 0.234$; $P=1.861 > 0.05$).

Conclusion

Based on the findings and discussion made, the researchers concluded that entrepreneurial skills and managerial skills were highly

possessed by Business Education students in Colleges of Education in Kwara State to a high extent. The required entrepreneurial skill and managerial skills to manage people in a business, the skills to organize and coordinate business operations, as well as the skills required in decision-making for self-reliance were possessed. Therefore, entrepreneurship management skills are essential to ensure that the entrepreneur is able to manage people, operations, and finances when operating in a competitive business setting.

Recommendations

On the basis of the conclusion of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. That the skills obtained in business education should be put into practice through entrepreneurial engagement by students in business education after graduating.
2. That managerial skills obtained by business education students should serve as guideline on how to spend and what to spend, when establishing business outfits after completion of the programme
3. Government and other stakeholders should empower students through empowerment programs after graduation in registration of business, finance, and equipment. These may be in the form of grant or loan through Bank of Industry (BOI), Micro Finance banks, among others.

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