



TRAINING NEEDS OF TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN SOUTH EAST NIGERIA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

This study adopted a descriptive survey design. Two research questions and two hypotheses guided this study. The population which also served as sample comprised 270 entrepreneurs in south east Nigeria. A 20-item questionnaire was the instrument used for data collection. The data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation while the null hypotheses were tested with z-test statistical tool at 0.05 level of significance. The findings among others were that training on entrepreneurial and information and communication technology skills are very highly needed by business education graduates for sustainable development. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that, business education students should be exposed to training on entrepreneurial and ICT skills for sustainable development and government should give maximum support to tertiary institutions to enable them procure state of the art ICT and entrepreneurial equipment and facilities needed in ICT and entrepreneurial laboratories.

KEYWORDS: *Training needs, sustainable development.*

Introduction

Every country tries to maintain a sustainable development. According to Business Dictionary (2017) sustainable development is economic development characterized by low growth rate, absence of pollution and greatly diminished environment impact. In other words, sustainable development is the development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generation, to meet their own needs. It contains within it two key concepts: the concept of needs, in particular the essential needs of the world's poor, to which overriding priority should be given; and the idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organisation on the environment's ability to meet present and future needs (Mark, 2016). Sustainable development means all round development of individuals. It concerns not only personality development but also nation building which goes beyond the construction of bridges, roads, skyscrapers and provision of other social amenities.

Sustainable development of any nation cannot be achieved without adequate training of the human resources. Training is the process of gaining skills, competences and knowledge to perform an action effectively (Ekoh, 2016). Training is given to ensure that an individual performs effectively the desired task. But when an individual fails to perform as expected, it is an indication that the training given has not yielded the desired results. Therefore a training need is the difference between actual attributes and desired attributes. Yenkwu (2004) noted that the fourth National Development Plan reiterates that real development must mean the development of



man, the unfolding and living realization of the creative potentials, enabling him to improve his material condition of living through the use of resources available to him.

In line with the contemporary needs of the society, business education needs to revise its goals to educate future business leaders new set of skills, sustainable global thinking, entrepreneurial and innovative talents and decision making based on practical wisdom. These skills are embeded mostly in Entrepreneurship and information and communication technology areas. Entrepreneurship is all about preparing people especially youths to be responsible and functional individuals in the society. Entrepreneurship is the ability to identify opportunities or ideas and mobilize the needed resources to turn such opportunities into viable ventures that satisfy people's needs and wants. According to Ada (2012) entrepreneurship is the innovation utilized by an individual idea which is turned into commercial for the ultimate realization of profit. Individuals can be trained to acquire the entrepreneurial skills and competencies needed to become entrepreneurs through entrepreneurship education. This kind of education enables individuals to be aware of various entrepreneurial activities around their environment. Entrepreneurship education according to Ordu (2013) is used in reference to the teaching and learning process that equips learners with knowledge, skills and competencies needed to recognise business opportunities and services in the business world.

Skill is the ability to make or otherwise bring into existences something new, whether a new solution to a problem, a new method or devise, or a new artistic object or form. Skill is a cluster of related knowledge, traits, attitudes, competencies that affect a major part of ones job; that correlate with performance on the job; that can be measured against well accepted standards; and that can be improved through training and development. Similarly, entrepreneurship skills are those skills that individuals acquire in order to function appropriately in performing entrepreneurial activities. These skills include; management skills, marketing skills, human relations skill, communication skills, innovative skills, technical know-how skills, risk management skills, accounting skills and creativity skills.

On the other hand, information and communication technology skills will help an individual in information processing, mangement and dissemination when such skills are acquired through business education. Agbamu in Oyagiri and Ekoh (2013) stated that ICT is the use of electronic computers and software to convert, store, process, transmits and retrieve information. It is concerned with systems for creation, processing, storage, retrieval, selection, transformation, dissemination and use of vocal, pictoral, textual and numerical information. In line with the above statement, information and communication technology skills encompass of computer, wordprocessing, internet, email, and spreadsheet skills.

Business education is a component of vocational education that prepares an individual for career in business and also to be an intelligent consumer of economic goods and services. Ugwuoke in Utoware and Kren-Ikidi (2014) asserted that business education provides students with needed competencies, skills, knowledge, understanding and attitudes to perform as workers in industries, civil service and also as proprietors of business. Business education is simply work-focused, skill-based, result-oriented and technology-based. Similarly, Awojobi (2011) stated that business



education is a course of study which equips individuals with functional and salable skills, knowledge, attitudes and values which enables fresh graduate to operate in the environment he finds himself such that he is self reliant and become a job creator rather than a job seeker. According to Igberaharam (2012), business education aims at transmitting business knowledge, skills, ideas, aptitudes and technical know-how to recipient which are required in business world. Apagu, Obunadike, and Ekpo (2015) while appraising the skills of entrepreneurship acquired through business education affirmed that business education has all it takes to make its products self-reliant and contribute to sustainable development. Business education students also need to be upgraded in their ICT skills. According to Asonibare (2015) ICT includes the whole range of equipment used in the manipulation, storage and communication of information electronically. This is necessary as most of the activities in the global world are done online namely recruitment, examination, and visa, settlement of bills, buying and selling, to mention but a few.

Problem of the Study

With this growing trend in business and communication, it is so worrisome to observe that business education graduates are unprepared to deal with the complex problem of the society. They lack meaningful skills of entrepreneurship and ICT that helps them make decision using practical wisdom. They appear not to be making sufficient contribution in national development. Oyagiri and Ekoh (2013) noted that Nigerian educational system has not yet adequately exposed students, teachers and institutions of learning to the realities of ICT tools and skills that will enable them face the challenges of the global world of internet and knowledge sharing. Also Nedum-Ogbede (2016) observed that there is production of learners with lack of entrepreneurial skills for self-reliant thereby causing increment in the already existing unemployed graduates. This problem may be attributed to lack of understanding of areas where training is needed in business education. This necessitates this study on training needs for business education graduates of tertiary institutions in south east Nigeria for sustainable development.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study was to ascertain the training needs for business education graduates of tertiary institutions in south east Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to ascertain the extent;

1. Entrepreneurs consider entrepreneurial skills training as needed by business education graduates for sustainable development.
2. Entrepreneurs consider ICT skills training as needed by business education graduates for sustainable development.

Research Question

The following research questions guided the study;

1. To what extent do entrepreneurs consider entrepreneurial skill training needed by business education student for sustainable development?
2. To what extent do entrepreneurs consider ICT skill training needed by business education graduates for sustainable development?



Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses will guide the study;

1. There is no significant difference in the mean responses of male and female entrepreneurs on the extent entrepreneurial skill training are needed by business education graduates for sustainable development.
2. There is no significant difference in the mean responses of small scale and large scale entrepreneurs on the extent ICT skill training are needed by business education graduates for sustainable development.

Method

Descriptive survey design was adopted in the study. The area of the study was south east Nigeria which was chosen mainly because of the abundance of many tertiary institutions offering business education programme and many entrepreneurs. The population for this study comprised 270 entrepreneurs in south east Nigeria. There was no sampling as the entire population was used. Data was collected with the use of structured questionnaire which was prepared in line with the research questions. The questionnaire contained 20 items which were structured on a 4 point rating scale. Mean and standard deviation were used as instrument for data analysis while the null hypotheses were tested using z-test statistical tool at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

The data collect from the field were analyzed and presented in the table as follows.

Table 1: Mean response of entrepreneurs on the extent entrepreneurial skills training are needed by business education graduates for sustainable development.

S/N	Items on extent entrepreneurial skills training are needed by business education graduates	\bar{x}	SD	Remark
1	Ability to identify business opportunities	3.58	0.65	Very high extent
2	Ability to diversify product	3.57	0.71	Very high extent
3	Ability to adapt business to economic fluctuations	6.65	0.49	Very high extent
4	Ability to take business creative risks	3.68	0.78	Very high extent
5	Ability to assess business plan	3.18	0.97	High extent
6	Ability to communicate effectively	3.65	0.67	Very high extent
7	Ability to manage human and material resources efficiently	3.31	0.73	High extent
8	Ability to withstand stiff business competition	3.00	1.03	High extent
9	Ability to track progress effectively	3.31	0.73	High extent
10	Ability to set achievable goals	3.60	0.50	Very high extent

Data in Table 1 show that out of 10 items, only four items are rated high extent while the remaining six were rated very high extent. The mean ratings of 3.58, 3.57, 3.65, 3.68, 3.65 and 3.60 show that the respondents accepted that entrepreneurial skills training shown in items 1,2,3,4,6, and 10 respectively are needed in a very high



extent. Also, mean ratings of 3.18, 3.31, 3.00 and 3.31 for items 5, 7, 8 and 9 show that the entrepreneurs rated to a high extent that entrepreneurial skills are needed by business education graduates in south east tertiary institutions for sustainable development. The Table also showed that their pull standard deviations ranged from 0.49-1.03. This indicated closeness of their opinions.

Table 2

Mean responses of the respondents on extent ICT skills training are needed by business education graduates for sustainable development.

S/No	Item on extent ICT skills training are needed by business education graduates for sustainable development	\bar{x}	SD	Remarks
11	Ability to use software that adapts to customers needs	3.65	0.67	High Extent
12	Ability to use computers and computer packages for data processing	3.56	0.69	Very High Extent
13	Ability to design and utilize websites for businesses	3.48	0.75	High Extent
14	Ability to create products awareness using the internets	3.60	0.60	Very High Extent
15	Ability to browse and download data from the net	3.24	1.06	High Extent
16	Ability to use micro spread sheet software	3.25	0.91	High Extent
17	Ability to protect documents with password	3.96	0.87	Very High Extent
18	Ability to use internet for e-mail and communication	3.65	0.67	Very High Extent
19	Ability to interpret electronic data	3.65	0.67	Very High Extent
20	Ability to contract business through the internet	0.68	0.78	Very High Extent

In Table 2, the respondents accepted that ICT skills training are needed by business education graduates for sustainable development. This is indicated by the mean ratings of 3.65, 3.56, 3.60, 3.70, 3.96, 3.65 and 3.68 for items 11, 12, 14, 17, 18, 19 and 20 respectively. The pull mean response of 3.48, 3.24 and 3.25 for items 13, 15 and 16 respectively indicate that the respondents agreed that ICT skills training are needed by business education graduates in tertiary institutions in south east Nigeria at a high extent. Also, the pull standard deviation range of 0.47 to 1.06 indicated closeness of their opinions.

Hypothesis 1

There is no significant difference in the mean responses of male and female entrepreneurs on the extent entrepreneurial skills training are needed by business education graduates for sustainable development.

Table 3: Summary of z-test analysis of the mean responses of male and female entrepreneurs on the extent entrepreneurial skills training are needed by business education graduates for sustainable development.

Variables	N	Sd	A	df	z-cal	z-crit	Remark
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Male	175	3.70	0.47	0.05	227	0.79	1.94	Not Rejected
Female	95	3.68	0.78					

Table 3 shows that male entrepreneurs have mean responses of 3.70 and standard deviation of 0.47 while female entrepreneurs have mean responses of 3.68 and standard deviation of 0.78. The z-calculated value of 0.79 is less than the z-critical at 227 degree of freedom and 0.05 level of significance. This shows that there is no significant difference in the mean responses of the respondents on the extent entrepreneurial skills training are needed by business education graduates for sustainable development. Hence, there is enough reason not to reject the null hypothesis.

Hypothesis 2

There is no significant difference in the mean response of small and large scale entrepreneurs on the extent ICT skills training are needed by business education graduates for sustainable development.

Table 4: Summary of z-test analysis of the mean responses of small and large scale entrepreneurs on the extent ICT skills training are needed by business education graduates for sustainable development.

Variables	N		Sd	A	df	z-cal	z-crit	Remark
Small scale entrepreneurs	168	3.51	0.80	0.05	227	1.12	1.95	Not Rejected
Large scale entrepreneurs	102	3.62	0.63					

Table 4 shows that small scale entrepreneurs in south east Nigeria have mean response of 3.51 and standard deviation of 0.80 while large scale entrepreneurs have mean response of 3.62 and standard deviation of 0.63. The z-calculated of 1.12 is less than the z-critical of 1.95 at 227 degree of freedom and 0.05 level of significance. This indicates that, there is no significant difference in the mean response of small and large scale entrepreneurs on the extent ICT skills training are needed by business education graduates for sustainable development. This is enough reason not to reject the null hypothesis.

Discussion

The findings of this study were organized and discussed according to the two research questions answered and the two null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that entrepreneurial skill training are needed at a very highly extent by business education graduates of tertiary institutions in south east Nigeria for sustainable development. These skills include among others; the ability to identify business opportunities, diversify products, adapt to economic fluctuation, take business creative risks, assess business plan, communicate effectively, manage resources efficiently, withstand stiff business competitions, track progress effectively and set achievable goals. These skills are in line with the assertions of Okoli (2013) that business education should inculcate in the learners the ability to face real life problems.



Furthermore, the findings of this study revealed that ICT skills training are needed by business education graduates as the respondents agreed that it is needed at a very highly extent. This is in line with Ekoh and Okwuanaso (2008) which asserted that business education graduates should be equipped with relevant ICT skills to enable them adapt to the changing global communication noticeable in the 21st century.

The z-test analysis indicated that the two null hypotheses were not rejected which showed that the entrepreneurs irrespective of their sex or sizes of business accepted that entrepreneurial and ICT skills training are needed by business education graduates for sustainable development. This is in line with Ezenwafor and Olaniyi (2016) which found out that entrepreneurial and ICT skills are needed by business education graduate for sustainable development.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it was discovered that entrepreneurship skills and ICT skills which are embedded in management, marketing and accounting skills; computer, wordprocessing, internet and spreadsheet skills are highly needed as training need of tertiary institutions for sustainable development. It was concluded that business education graduates of tertiary institutions in south east Nigeria need entrepreneurial and ICT skills training for sustainable development.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the researchers here recommend the following;

1. Business education students should be exposed to training on entrepreneurial and ICT skills for sustainable development
2. Government should give loans to business education graduates to enable them start their own business ventures after graduation.
3. Government should give maximum support to tertiary institutions to enable them procure state of the art ICT and entrepreneurial equipment and facilities needed in the ICT and entrepreneurial laboratories.
4. More emphasis should be laid on skill acquisition rather than on paper qualification of students.

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