



## BUSINESS EDUCATION STUDENTS' ENTREPRENEURSHIP SKILL ACQUISITION FOR SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN OYO STATE

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### Abstract

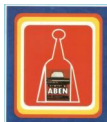
*The study examined business education students' entrepreneurial skill acquisition for sustainable economic development in Oyo state. Descriptive research design was adopted for the study. The population for the study includes all business education students and lecturers in tertiary institutions in Oyo state, while 295 students and 75 business education lecturers were randomly selected from five state owned tertiary institutions in Oyo state. The opinion and perception of the business education students and lecturers were elicited through questionnaire distributed. The instrument was face and content validate by three experts from business and management department, Ladoke Akintola University of Technology, Ogbomoso and a reliability co-efficient of 0.75 made the instruments reliable. Mean was used to answer the formulated research questions. Findings indicated that business education students did not acquire entrepreneurial technical skills and personal skills needed for sustainable economic development but they acquire business management skills needed for sustainable economic development. Based on their findings the researchers recommended that there should be effective acquisition of entrepreneurial technical skills particularly in the area of efficient technical writing, delegation, web development coding and programming because these technical skills are highly needed in the present entrepreneurial environment, business education students should aspire to possess problem solving skills before leaving their training institutions, business education students should develop their information seeking, risk taking and persistence skills because these skills are to be acquired for sustainable economic development.*

**Keywords:** *Business education, entrepreneurship skills acquisition, sustainable economic development*

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### Introduction

The standard of living and economic policies of a state are measured in terms of the sustainability of the development of her economic activities. Babangida and Udo



(2017) maintained that an economically balanced nation is the one that is capable of meeting the economic, social, moral and political needs of her citizen. This could not be achieved without sustainable economic development.

Sustainable economic development according to Grimsley (2019) is the attempt or act of satisfying humans' needs in a manner that sustains natural resources and environment for future generations. It is the process of managing economic resources such as land, labour, natural resources and capital in a manner that they will not be depleted and will remain useful for future generations. Yasmin (2015) argued that sustainable economic development is characterized by sustained increase in real per capita income and economic welfare, rational use of resources and resources preservation for incoming generation. Sustainable economic development is very important because it does not consider only the present benefit for present generation but also taken into consideration the benefit required by the future generation (Daga, 2019).

The United Nations,(2017) noted that there are three major components of sustainable development and these include social component, economic component and environmental component. According to Babangida and Udo (2017), these components are explained in the table below:

**Table 1: Components of Sustainable Development**

S/N	Social	Economic	Environment
1.	Service	Equity	Clean water
2.	Household needs	Participation	Clean air
3.	Industrial growth	Empowerment	Natural resources
4.	Agricultural growth	Social mobility	Bio diversity
5.	Efficient use of labour	Cultural preservation	Ecosystem intergrity
6.			Carrying capacity

The main focus of this paper is the aspect of sustainable economic development. This is because it is the aspect that determines how limited economic resources can be applied to improve people live. This could be done through effective participation of business education graduates in entrepreneurship activities. It is obvious that one cannot discuss sustainable economic development without mentioning entrepreneurship skills.

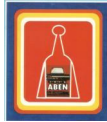
Entrepreneurship according to Afolabi (2015) emanated from the abilities of producers to concentrate on the production of certain goods and services with the



intent of exchanging them with what they needed. Ezeami (2012) citing Lee and Foster (2003) defined skill as the art of having the power, authority and competency to carry out the required task in a job or profession by individuals. It has to do with acquisition and application of acquired capabilities and competencies to solve problems in a chosen career or profession. Therefore entrepreneurship skills has to do with the effective application of knowledge, capabilities and competencies required in the dynamic process of creating wealth by an individual who takes the risks that may arise from the production of certain goods and services needed to satisfy human needs and sustainable economic development.

The importance of Entrepreneurship skills could not be over emphasised as an instrument of sustainable economic development. This is because it plays the roles of providing skills needed for employment generation, increase in production through innovation, facilitation of technological transfer, increase resource allocation and utilization, reinforcing large scale production and enforcing effective and efficient use of individual potentials and energies (Ogedengbe, Okhakhu & Adekunle, 2015). It then follows that proper acquisition of entrepreneurial skills will lead to attainment of sustainable economic development. To this end, there are certain entrepreneurship skills for sustainable economic development as maintained by Saidu, Dahiru and Suleiman (2017) to include technical skills, business management skills and personal entrepreneurial skills.

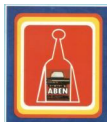
Technical skills according to Alison (2019) are the abilities, capabilities and expertise needed in the performance of specific tasks. They are practical and are related to information technology, mathematics, scientific tasks etc. It include technical writing, project management, big data analysis and social media experience. Also, Neil (2016) maintained that entrepreneurs need to have technical skills which will assist in promoting their business in the present electronic business world. These skills according to the author include conversion rate optimization which is abilities to turn website visitors into customers, search engine optimization, content marketing which has to do with marketing business contents and is capable of making successful entrepreneurs, user experience which has to do with providing improvement in the usability, accessibility and pleasure in the interaction between user and the product, infact, facebook, uber and many other organizations have used this skills to achieve remarkable growth in their business.



Other technical skills according to Craig (2018) include e-mail marketing, data analytics social media (facebook, twitter, etc), writing which enables entrepreneurs to think critically in order to make sound and profitable business decisions. The authors concluded by stating that outsourcing or delegation is another technical skill needed in business because one cannot do it all alone hence there is need for finding talented and well trained employees and put them to work in order to achieve success.

Mamabolo, Kerrin and Kele (2017) defined business management skills as skills needed for day to day running of the business and these include planning, problem solving, legal skills, decision making, developing and executing a business model, strategic model, delegation and business development. Lisa (2019) listed business management skills needed to become successful entrepreneurs to include time management skills, business planning skills, employee management skills, customer management skills, sales management skills and financial management skills. The author posited further that business management skills has to do with understanding all facets of business operations including legal and regulatory requirement of the industry, labour, employment and tax laws together with changes in market trends.

Personal entrepreneurial skills according to Ryan (2018) refer to the key attributes that should be possessed by successful entrepreneurs so as to be able to perform entrepreneurial functions effectively and efficiently. According to Alusen (2016), there are many personal entrepreneurial skills and competencies and these include opportunity seeking, persistence, commitment to work or contract, risk taking, demand for efficiency and quality, goal setting, information seeking, systematic planning and monitoring, persuasion and networking and self confidence. Supporting this claim, Gordon (2017) maintained that personal skills to be possessed by entrepreneurs include ambition, willingness to learn, ability to listen, creativity, assertiveness, confidence, perseverance, courage and risk taking. The authors argued further that ambition has to do with getting going even when the going gets tough. Willingness to learn has to do with continuous and lifelong education while ability to listen deals with being an effective communicator. Creativity has to do with doing things in a new or uncommon way while courage and risk taking has to do with having courage and be ready to face the consequence of an action or a decision whether positive or negative consequences. These skills are very needed if business education graduates will become entrepreneurs that will move the country to sustainable economic development.



Business education is regarded as one of discipline that trains its recipients to be intelligent consumers and rational producers in the society. Edokpolor and Owenvbiugie (2017) asserted that business education is one of the occupational area that are readily provided through vocational and technical education in Nigeria and it refers to a set of instruction that provides various competencies in accounting, marketing and distribution; and office technology and management (OTM). Also Adeagbo and Oluwafemi (2018) opined that learning and training in business education is gaining more prominent attention nowadays. This may be due to advantage to be derived from discipline if well taught in tertiary institutions. Furthermore, Edokpolor and Egbri (2017) asserted that one of the major goals of business education is to equip learners with required skills for job creation and entrepreneurship activities that could lead to sustainable economic development.

Ajisafe, Bolarinwa and Edeh (2015) maintained that major topics being taught in business education include office practice, business mathematics, bookkeeping, business communication, secretarial duties, word processing and advertising. But Igbokwe (2015) argued that the curriculum of business education has been reviewed to include ICT and entrepreneurial studies. This is because there is an increase in the rate of graduate unemployment in Nigeria hence the need to train graduates in the act of self-reliance. To this end, there are certain entrepreneurial skills required by business education graduates and these have been discussed in the earlier part of this paper. Therefore, this paper attempted to empirically discover the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills for sustainable economic development by business education graduates in Oyo state.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Business education is seen as a discipline that equips her graduates with necessary skills needed for gainful employment and self reliance. The philosophy of business education is based on the production of rational consumer and intelligent producers which in turn leads to sustainable economic development since one of the sustainable development goals is poverty eradication.

But Edokpolor and Owenvbiugie (2017) noted that unemployment and poverty is still prevalent in Nigeria despite the teaching of business skills and literacy. It is observed that many business education graduates cannot own and manage business enterprises that compete favourably in the present ICT based and modern day business environment. Researchers like Saidu, Dahiru and Suleiman (2017) have



submitted that technical skills, business management skills and personal entrepreneurial skills are the entrepreneurial skills required for sustainable development. The concern of the present researchers is to verify whether these skills are acquired by business education graduates in Oyo State hence the need for the study.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are the entrepreneurial technical skills acquired by business education graduates for sustainable economic development?
2. What are the entrepreneurial business management skills acquired by business education graduates for sustainable economic development?
3. What are the personal entrepreneurial skills acquired by business education graduates for sustainable economic development?

### **Methodology**

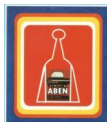
The research employed descriptive research design in which population consisted of all business education students and lecturers in Oyo state tertiary institutions and 360 respondents (students and lecturers) were randomly selected for the study. The study was carried out in Oyo state. The instrument for data collection was a 30-items structured questionnaire developed by the researchers. It was face and content validated by three research experts from LAUTECH, Ogbomosho. The instrument was pilot tested at an interval of two weeks and the result were analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Instrument which yield a coefficient of 0.75 indicating that the instrument was reliable.

The instrument has four response options of strongly Agreed (SA)-4points, Agreed (A)-3points, Disagreed (D)-2points and strongly disagreed (SD)-1point. The data collected were analysed using mean. The decision rule was that any calculated mean scores equal to or greater than ( $\geq$ ) 2.50 was regarded as agreed while any calculated mean scores less than ( $<$ ) 2.50 was regarded as disagreed.

### **Results**

#### **Research Question 1**

What are the entrepreneurial technical skills acquired by business education graduates for sustainable economic development?



**Table 2:** Mean responses of respondents on entrepreneurial technical skills acquired by business education graduates

S/N	Statement	Mean ( $\bar{X}$ )	Remarks
1	Ability to turn website visitors to customers	2.70	Agreed
2	Contents marketing	2.74	Agreed
3	Ability to provide accessibility and pleasure in the interaction between user and product	2.10	Disagreed
4	e-mail marketing	2.74	Agreed
5	Efficient technical writing	2.20	Disagreed
6	Out sourcing/delegation	2.40	Disagreed
7	Social media	2.86	Agreed
8	Web development	2.10	Disagreed
9	Data analysis	2.10	Disagreed
10	Coding and programming	2.10	Disagree
<b>Grand Mean</b>		<b>2.40</b>	<b>Disagreed</b>

Table 2 shows that respondents agreed that business education students acquired technical skills in the area of ability to turn website visitors to customers, content marketing, E-mail marketing and social media (mean ranging from 2.70 to 2.86) while they disagreed that business education students acquired technical skills in the area of provision of accessibility and pleasure in the interaction between users and products, efficient technical writing, delegation, web development, data analysis and coding and programming (mean ranging from 2.10 to 2.40). The grand mean of 2.40 indicated that the respondents are of the opinion that business education students do not acquire entrepreneurial technical skills needed for sustainable economic development.

### Research Question 2

What are the entrepreneurial business management skills acquired by business education graduates for sustainable economic development?

**Table 3:** Mean responses of respondents on entrepreneurial business management skills acquired by business education graduates

S/N	Statement	Mean ( $\bar{X}$ )	Remarks
1	Time management skills	2.86	Agreed
2	Business planning skills	3.10	Agreed
3	Employees management	3.15	Agreed
4	Decision making skills	3.20	Agreed
5	Customer management skills	2.84	Agreed
6	Sales management skills	2.74	Agreed
7	Financial management skills	2.80	Agreed
8	Problem solving skills	2.10	Disagreed
9	Legal skills and requirement in business	2.72	Agreed
10	Skills to understand changes in market trends	2.62	Agreed
<b>Grand mean</b>		<b>2.81</b>	<b>Agreed</b>



Table 3 shows that all the items listed had their mean ratings ranging from 2.62 to 3.20 except item 8 with mean value of 2.10 indicating that the respondents agreed that all the entrepreneurial business management skills are acquired by business education graduates except problem solving skills. The grand mean of 2.81 indicated that business education graduates acquired entrepreneurial business management skills for sustainable economic development.

### Research Question 3

What are the personal entrepreneurial skills acquired by business education graduates for sustainable economic development?

**Table 4:** Mean responses of respondents on personal entrepreneurial skills acquired by business education graduates

S/N	Statement	Mean ( $\bar{X}$ )	Remarks
1	Skills in seeking opportunity	3.00	Agreed
2	Persistence and perception skills	2.30	Disagreed
3	Commitment to work or contract	2.20	Disagreed
4	Risk talking skills	2.10	Disagreed
5	Information seeking skills	1.70	Disagreed
6	Self confidence skills	1.80	Disagreed
7	Willingness and readiness to learn	2.20	Disagreed
8	Creativity and assertiveness skills	2.10	Disagreed
9	Courage and perseverance	2.10	Disagreed
10	Demand for efficiency and quality	2.60	Agreed
<b>Grand mean</b>		<b>2.21</b>	<b>Disagreed</b>

Table 4 shows that all the items had their mean ratings ranging from 1.70 to 2.30 except items 1 and 10 with mean ratings of 3.00 and 2.60 respectively. This implies that the respondents are of the opinion that only skills in seeking opportunity and demand for efficiency and quality are the personal entrepreneurial skills acquired by business education graduates while all other skills are not acquired by them. The grand mean of 2.21 indicated that the business education graduates do not acquired personal entrepreneurial skills for sustainable economic development.

### Discussion of Findings

The study in research question 1 sought to identify entrepreneurial technical skills acquired by business education graduates. The findings revealed that business education graduates do not acquire entrepreneurial technical skills for sustainable development. These findings agreed with earlier opinion of Udo and Babangida



(2017) that business education students do not acquire maximum skills needed for the promotion of sustainable entrepreneurial business in Nigeria. This is seen in this study because technical skill is one of those skills needed for sustainable economic development and this is not acquire by business education graduates.

Also, research question 2 sought information on entrepreneurial business management skills acquired by the business education graduates. Findings showed that business education graduates acquired entrepreneurial business management skills needed for sustainable development except problem solving skills. These findings agreed with earlier findings of Mafikuyomi (2014) that business education graduates acquired management skills needed for entrepreneurial development. This may be due to the fact that these skills are handled properly in the business education classes in schools. The findings also supports the opinion of Janelle (2018) that students acquired business management skills like relationship building strategic thinking (planning), market place knowledge, decision making and goal setting skills on business classes. The study in research question 3 obtained information about personal entrepreneurial skills acquired in business education graduates. The findings indicated that business education graduates do not sufficiently acquire personal entrepreneurial skills for sustainable economic development. These findings agreed with those of Alusen (2016) who reported that management accounting students are weak in acquisition of persuasion and networking skills, risk taking skills and information seeking skills. Although these skills according to Alusen (2016) are highly needed by business education graduates but it is sad to discover that they are not acquired by business education graduates.

### **Conclusion**

The researchers find out in the course of this study that business education graduates only acquired entrepreneurial business management skills needed for sustainable economic development but failed to acquire technical and personal entrepreneurial skills for sustainable economic development. It is the opinion of the researchers that business education graduates should acquire all the three mentioned skills if they will contribute to sustainable economic development and be self-reliant in other to fulfil the goals and objectives of business education.

It is observed that the present curriculum, altitude of government, institution and students may not help in the acquisition of these skills. Therefore, all hands must be on deck to ensure effective acquisition of entrepreneurial skills for sustainable economic development.



## Recommendations

Based on their findings the researchers recommended the following for improvement.

1. There should be effective acquisition of entrepreneurial technical skills particularly in the area of efficient technical writing, delegation, web development coding and programming because these technical skills are highly needed in the present entrepreneurial environment.
2. Business education students should aspire to possess problem solving skills before leaving their training institutions. This could be done through effective application of knowledge and practicals in schools.
3. Business education students should develop their information seeking, risk taking and persistence skills because these skills are to be possessed for sustainable economic development.
4. There should be adequate curriculum review and implementation in business education programmes so as to pave way for the acquisition of technical and personal entrepreneurial skills by upholding more practical learning, internship and simulation of activities.
5. The business educators should encourage students by organising activities that can stimulate the entrepreneurial mindset of students.

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