



ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILL ACQUISITION REQUIRED BY BUSINESS EDUCATION GRADUATES FOR EMPLOYMENT GENERATION IN IMO STATE

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Abstract

The study was designed to determine entrepreneur skill acquisition on employment generation of business education graduates in Imo State. This study adopted a descriptive survey design. The population of the study comprised 48 Business educators from Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education Owerri and Imo State Polytechnic Umuagwo. There was no sampling since the population was manageable. Three research questions and three hypotheses was raised and tested. The study utilized a validated four point scale questionnaire with a reliability coefficient of 0.78 using cronbach alpha analysis, mean and standard deviation was used to analyze the data collected to answer the research questions while the hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance using t-test statistic. The findings of the study revealed that entrepreneurs skill of planning, communication, management, goal setting, problem solving, risk bearing among others are needed for employment generation by business education graduates. The study also identified some challenges such as poor infrastructure and facilities, poor teaching methods, lack of finance among others affect the abilities of the graduates in utilizing the skills for employment generation. The study further proffered solution to the challenges identified.

Keywords: Entrepreneur, Skill Acquisition, Employment Generation and Business Education.

Introduction

Skill is very essential in the life of every individual. The ability to be trained on a particular task or function should be the concern of the government and academic institutions. Onuoha (2014) noted that it is increasingly important that individuals be equipped with self sustaining capabilities especially now that the Nigerian economy is moving towards a direction where only individuals with skills for self reliant can survive. Skill means proficiency or capacity acquired and displayed by a person in a chosen trade (Usoro, 2010).

According to Igbo (2012) skill refers to individuals ability or abilities to perform specific task or assignment successfully. While skill acquisition is a process through which



a person attains mastery of a task. Skill acquisition is the art of learning to do something in order to earn a living and or to survive. National Policy on Education (FRN, 2004) emphasized a united strong and self reliant nation. It further stressed the need for acquisition of appropriate knowledge and skills necessary for generating employment. In the same line, the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme (1999) contains a comprehensive program designed to inculcate in people the necessary attributes that enhances acquisition of the appropriate skills, ethical, moral and civic values needed for laying a solid foundation for living. In other to achieve this, entrepreneurship courses were introduced in the curriculum of every program including business education.

Entrepreneurial skills are business skills acquired in the course of education that enables individuals to function effectively in changing business environment as entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurs are the organizers and coordinators of the major factors of production, such as land, labour and capital. Entrepreneurs are resourceful and creative and contribute greatly to the economy by developing new markets, discovering new sources of materials, mobilize capital resources, introduction new technologies and as well as generate employment. Entrepreneurs are equipped through entrepreneurship education. (Obi, 2011) noted that entrepreneurship education programme offer students the opportunity to think creatively and to be effective problem solves. Entrepreneurship education provides students with enough training that will make them to be creative and innovative indentifying new business opportunities. Ibezie (2015) added that entrepreneurship provide student with enough training in risk management to make uncertainty bearing more possible and easy and also provide the students opportunity for acquiring skills that will enable them meet the manpower needs of the society. These entrepreneurial skills are acquired in business education.

Business education is a part of vocational education that helps its recipients to be self reliant. Business education is basically education for skill acquisition, vocational and competency. According to Alozie (2010) business education is a component of vocational education that involves acquisition of skills, knowledge and competencies which make the recipient proficient. Business education comprises activities that are aimed at planning, teaching, and developing through a variety of experiences that provide and implore the individual with the ability of influencing the environment and enhancing living by generating employment that boost self-reliance.

Generally, business education encompasses knowledge, attitudes, skills and competencies needed to effectively manage their income and their economic system to ensure continuous earning of income. Adiele (2016) noted that one of the major objectives of business education is to provide technical skills that will enable graduates of business education be equipped with knowledge, skills and techniques arguably indispensable to start up and manage small business effectively. Skill acquisition can serve as a career path diverging from employment provided that prior skills set in the area of self employment have been inculcated (Igwe, 2015). Equipping business education student to be self employed is one of the effective solutions to the issue of lack of employment knowing the labour market in Nigeria economy cannot absorb the entire graduates in the capacity of professionals.

It is imperative that business education graduates be equipped with the needed skills that will help them to generate employment. Ndubuisi (2009) identified the entrepreneur skill acquisition to include; planning skill, creative ability, management ability, financing management skill, thinking skill, problems solving skill. According to Eke (2012) planning skill involves ability to bring together the ideas and activities required to set up a business. Management involves planning, organizing, coordinating and controlling of the activities of an establishment. It is the process of achieving, organizing, communicating, controlling of activities of a business venture. Bassey (2015) also identified entrepreneur skills to include; ability to communicate, take decision, survey an environment for business, learn new things, and set goals. Acquisition of the above mentioned



entrepreneur skills helps business education graduate to see business opportunities, mobilize necessary capital, labour and other inputs operating together and successful know how to generate employment when the need arises. Oborah (2011) added that entrepreneurs skill acquisition equips business education graduates to discover new business opportunities that are lucrative.

Furthermore, the findings of the study revealed that poor teaching method, organization of class, poor motivation, poor infrastructure and facilities, are problems that affect effective teaching of entrepreneurship which affects the students ability to practicalize what has been taught. This is in line with the view of Ibezie (2015) who noted that poor teaching method hinders the students from acquiring competencies for entrepreneur activities, Ndubuisi (2009) added that lack of entrepreneur skills leads inability to be self-reliant. The t-test analysis indicated that the null hypothesis was not rejected which showed that the business educators irrespective of their sex accepted the entrepreneur skill acquisition as effective tool for employment generation.

Statement of the Problem

Business education is a programme of study that prepares individual with multiple skills for teaching and for entrepreneurial competencies for self reliance. Over a period of time, the recipients of the programme are expected to utilize the acquired skill to generate employment putting into practice the entrepreneurial skills acquired from the programme. This seems not to be the same with the graduates of the programme as several skills remain without jobs after graduation. Osondu (2013) noted that business education graduates roam the street looking for white color jobs because the lack of skills needed to generate employment. The unemployment situation is one of the causes of rapid growth in crime in many parts of the world including Nigeria. Uzo (2015) stated that increasing number of graduates who are still unemployed seems to be as a result of lack of entrepreneur skill acquisition. Haven known that entrepreneur education has been introduced into every school curriculum. It is believed that the introduction of entrepreneur education could have become a very good solution to the lack of job situation, yet the problems still exist.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are the entrepreneur skill acquisitions required by business education graduates for employment generation?
2. What are the likely challenges of entrepreneur skill acquisition for employment generation?
3. What are the likely solutions to the challenges of entrepreneur skill acquisition for employment generation in the study area?

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference in the mean responses of male and female business educators on the entrepreneur skill acquisition required by business education graduates for employment generation.
2. There is no significant difference in the mean responses of male and female business educators on the challenges of entrepreneurial skill acquisition required by business education graduates for employment generation.
3. There is no significant difference in the mean responses of male and female business educators on the likely solutions to the challenges of entrepreneurial skill acquisition required by business education graduates for employment generation.



Methods

The study adopted a descriptive survey research which involved gathering data through the use of questionnaire. The population of the study consisted of 48 business educators from Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education Owerri and Imo State Polytechnic Umuagwo. The study utilized a validated four point scale questionnaire with a reliability of 0.78. Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient was used to test the reliability of the instrument and a coefficient of 0.78 was obtained. The researchers with the help of two research assistants administered and collected the instrument from the respondents.

The data collected for the study were analyzed using the arithmetic mean to answer the research questions and t-test statistics to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Any item with a mean rating of 2.50 or above was regarded as accepted while mean rating less than 2.50 was regarded as not accepted. For the hypotheses, any item with t-calculated value greater than critical value was rejected, otherwise the hypothesis of no significant difference was accepted.

Results

The results of data obtained from the respondents are shown below:

Research Question One: What are the entrepreneur skill acquisitions required by business education graduates for employment generation in Imo State.

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation of respondents on the entrepreneur skill acquisition required by business education graduates for employment generation.

S/N	Item statement	\bar{X}	SD	Remark
1	Skill of management	3.57	1.37	Required
2	Creative skill	3.14	1.32	Required
3	Planning skill	3.40	1.46	Required
4	Opportunity identification skill	2.94	1.28	Required
5	Cooperative skill	3.57	1.43	Required
6	Communication skill	3.38	1.36	Required
7	Goal setting skill	3.53	1.44	Required
8	Critical thinking skill	3.27	1.26	Required
9	Problem solving skill	2.40	1.36	Required
10	Decision making skill	2.40	1.36	Required
11	Marketing strategy skills	3.88	1.87	Required
12	Financial management skill	2.57	1.25	Required
13	Conflict prevention and resolution skill	2.54	1.23	Required
14	Stress management skill	2.52	1.11	Required
15	Good customer relationship skill	3.08	1.31	Required



16	Department recovery skill	3.65	1.29	Required
17	Risk bearing skill	2.60	1.05	Required
18	Motivation skill	3.65	1.29	Required
19	Technical skills	3.55	1.03	Required
20	Innovative skills	3.47	1.33	Required
21	Self management skill	3.53	1.33	Required
22	Integrity/honesty skill	2.52	1.21	Required

The data presented in table 1 above revealed that all the items on entrepreneur skill acquisition required for employment generation showed high mean scores which agree with all items as being entrepreneurial skills. A study by Obi (2009) revealed great needs of business education graduate to display the required entrepreneur skills acquisition. The result of the present study implies that the needs still exist.

Research Question Two: What are the challenges of entrepreneur skill acquisition for employment generation?

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation of respondents on the challenges of entrepreneur skill acquisition for employment generation.

S/N	Item statement	\bar{X}	SD	Remark
23	Poor organization of entrepreneurship classes by schools.	3.02	0.97	Required
24	Inadequate infrastructures and facilities.	3.15	1.78	Required
25	Poor teaching method.	3.43	0.78	Required
26	Wrong placement of entrepreneur unit head.	3.33	1.58	Required
27	Poor curriculum planning.	2.89	1.81	Required
28	Lack of finance	2.93	1.74	Required
29	Poor motivation of teachers.	3.11	1.71	Required
30	Lack of interest by students.	3.35	0.75	Required
	Grand Mean	3.17		Required

Table 2 shows that all the items in the table are identified problems that hinder effective utilization of entrepreneur skill acquisition for employment generation in the study area.

Research Question Three: What are the likely solutions to the challenges of entrepreneur skill acquisition for employment generation in the study area?



Table 3: Mean and standard deviation of respondents on the likely solution to challenges of entrepreneurial skill acquisition in the study are.

S/N	Item statement	\bar{X}	SD	Remark
31	Utilize small group system for good organization of students.	2.61	1.57	Required
32	Provide efficient and effective infrastructures and facilities.	3.23	1.40	Required
33	Utilize effective and appropriate teaching method.	3.49	1.67	Required
34	Business educator should head entrepreneurship unit.	2.85	1.69	Required
35	Plan curriculum to accommodate the needed practicals.	3.11	1.51	Required
36	Provision of adequate finance.	3.50	1.72	Required
37	Students should be motivated.	2.40	1.51	Required
38	Skill acquisition centres should be established for practicals.	2.53	1.46	Required
Grand Mean		3.21		

Table 3 reveals that all items in the table are seen as solution to likely challenges of entrepreneurial skill acquisition needed for employment generation in the study area.

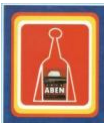
Hypotheses 1:

There is no significant difference in the mean responses of male and female business educators on the challenges of entrepreneurial skill acquisition required by business education graduates for employment generation.

Table 4: T-test analysis of the mean responses of male and female business educators on entrepreneurial skill acquisition required by business education graduates for employment generation in Imo State.

S/N	Group	N	X	SD	DF	t-cal	t-tab	Lev. of sign.	Remark
1	Male	19	2.92	0.61	55	1.88	1.98	0.05	NS
2	Female	29	3.61	0.78					

Table 4 shows that there is no significant difference in the mean responses of male and female business educators in Imo State on entrepreneurial skill acquisition required by business education graduates for employment generation. As the calculated value of 1.88 is less than the table value of 1.98 at 0.05 lev. of sign. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted.



Hypotheses 2:

There is no significant difference in the mean responses of male and female business educators on the challenges of entrepreneurial skills required for employment generation.

Table 5: T-test analysis of the mean responses of male and female business educators on challenges of entrepreneurial skills required for employment generation.

S/N	Group	N	X	SD	DF	t-cal	t-tab	Lev. of sign.	Remark
1	Male	19	2.90	0.60	55	1.89	1.97	0.05	NS
2	Female	29	3.58	0.76					

Table five shows that there is no significant difference in the mean responses of male and female business educators in Imo State on challenges of entrepreneurial skills acquisition required by business education graduates for employment generation. As the calculated value of 1.89 is less than the table value of 1.97 at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore the null hypotheses is accepted.

Hypotheses 3:

There is no significant different in the mean responses of male and female business educators on the likely solution to the challenges of entrepreneurial skill acquisition required by business education graduates for employment generation.

Table 6: T-test analysis of the mean responses of male and female business educators on the likely solution to the challenges of entrepreneurial skill acquisition required by business education graduates for employment generation in Imo State.

S/N	Group	N	X	SD	DF	t-cal	t-tab	Lev. of sign.	Remark
1	Male	19	2.62	0.61	55	1.59	1.75	0.05	NS
2	Female	29	2.58	0.64					

Table six shows that there is no significant difference in the mean response of male and female business educators on the challenges of entrepreneurial skill acquisition required by business education graduates for employment generation in Imo State. Calculated value of 1.59 is less than the table value of 1.75 at 0.05 level of significant. Therefore the null hypothesis was accepted.

Discussion of Findings

The results of the study revealed in table 1 among others, management skill, creative skill, planning skill, cooperative skill, innovative skill, goal setting skill, planning skill are very imperative entrepreneur skills needed to succeed in business venture as well as generate employment. These findings are in agreement with Ubaka (2012) who noted that an entrepreneur possess skills of innovation, planning, communication, management to effectively establish business enterprise for self-reliant. Akaranu and Baba (2011) sees



in entrepreneur as one who chooses or assumes risk, identified business opportunities, gathers resources to meet demand of the people thereby create market for the idea or product. A study by Obi (2009) revealed great needs of business education graduates, to display the required entrepreneur skills. The result of the present study shows that the need for skill still exist.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that acquiring entrepreneur skills places business education graduates on a platform of generating employment which leads to economic growth and development from the findings of this study, entrepreneurial skill acquisition required by business education graduates includes; skill of management, creative skill, planning skill, opportunity identification skill, cooperative skill, communication skill, goal setting skill, critical thinking skill, problem solving skill, decision making skill, marketing strategy skill, financial management skill, conflict prevention/resolution skill, stress management skill, good customer relationship skill, motivation skill, technical skill, innovative skills.

The findings found out that the identified entrepreneurial skill are useful instrument for creating jobs.

Recommendation

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made;

1. Government and school management should establish skill acquisition centres in schools and outside of the school where practical skills will be taught to students.
2. Entrepreneurship unit should be supervised by business education department to ensure required entrepreneur skill acquisitions are properly taught to students while skill in school.
3. Business education teachers should mentor business education students on entrepreneur ventures where will be mentored on entrepreneurial skills.
4. Government should organize seminars and workshop from time to time where entrepreneurs which includes business education graduates will be trained.
5. Business education teachers should utilize appropriate teaching method to teach entrepreneurship courses.

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