

STRATEGIES FOR MANAGING ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS ACQUISITION AMONG TERTIARY INSTITUTION BUSINESS EDUCATION STUDENTS FOR SELF-RELIANCE IN DELTA STATE**Mary. U. Okonkwo.,**

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Abstract

The study focused on strategies for managing entrepreneurial skills acquisition among tertiary institution business education students for self-reliance in Delta State, Nigeria. Two research questions guided the study, and two null hypotheses were tested. Skill acquisition theory developed by Robert Dekeyser in 2007 was used for the study. A descriptive survey research design was used. The population consisted of 114 business educators from the study area. No sample was conducted since the population is manageable. A 17-item structured questionnaire was validated by three experts and used for the study. Test re-test method was used to ascertain the instrument's reliability calculated through the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient and yielded a coefficient value of 0.89. Mean, and standard deviation was used to answer the research questions, while a t-test was used to test the null

hypotheses at a 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that respondents agreed that entrepreneurial skills acquisitions and creative technique strategies would be needed to improve self-reliance among tertiary institution business education students in Delta State, Nigeria. The findings also revealed no significant difference in the mean ratings of business educators in university and college of education regarding entrepreneurial skills acquisition and creative techniques needed to improve self-reliance among tertiary education students in Delta State, Nigeria. The study concluded that entrepreneurship has relevance today not only because it helps business education students to better their personal needs but because of the economic contribution of self-employment. It was recommended, among others, that tertiary institutions continue to teach and develop a proper value for the survival of the individual in society.

Keywords: Entrepreneurial skills acquisition, self-reliance, tertiary institution, business education students.

Introduction

Today the competitive business environment, shortened product life cycle, global competition, increased market segmentation, and re-structured industry creates a unique educational opportunity for students to get a targeted skill for self-reliance. The Federal Government of Nigeria is aware of the need for a technology-based environment among the Nigerian citizenry and has designed tertiary education to train people who can apply scientific knowledge to solve environmental for the convenience of man (Usoro & Ogbuanyia, 2012). Hence they produce all workforces for the various sector of the economy (Usoro & Ogbuanyia, 2012). Following the objectives of the tertiary education programme in Nigeria, there is a need for quality instruction at the level of education, especially to be oriented towards the training and impartation of the necessary skills to individuals who shall be self-reliant economically. This implies that the training environment should transform students from less sophisticated and less mature to more experienced and less dependent students in the business education programme.

Business education is one of the aspects of vocational education that focuses on skills and knowledge acquisition for the recipients (Edokpolor & Owenubiugie, 2017). The goal of business education, according to Nwazor and Udegbunam in Udegbunam, Igomu, Enenchukwu and Igbinothodua (2019), is the production of manpower that possesses the requisite knowledge, skills and attitudes for harnessing other resources and bring them into

co-operative relationships yielding goods and services demanded by society for satisfaction of different wants and needs for national development. However, business education has been skill acquiring discipline that must teach the recipients to have knowledge and skill of ICT. This could be achieved through teaching by teachers of business education.

According to Mbanefo and Eboka (2017), business education teachers at tertiary institutions train graduates for employment in particular occupations or clusters of professions or trades. This makes business education at the tertiary institution a unique educational programme that equips students with marketable skills for entry into the business as employees in the world of work or as self-employed. Baryam, Rhoades and Sweeny (2010) asserted that the key insight from a complex, demanding environment is to improve methodology in university and college of education through transmitting knowledge with entrepreneurship goal which emphasises the development of the individual student for self-reliance.

Fatoki and Oni (2014) agreed that the immense scientific, technological and socio-economic development envisaged within the present era should be given globalisation and entrepreneurship education. University and college of education will continue to gear toward life-long education. According to Usoro and Ogbuanya (2012), globalisation marks a paradigm shift in both economic/educational thinking. One often hears that the world is a global village thanks to narrowing down the geographical distances and barriers in thinking patterns between developing and developed countries. From the technological perspective, globalisation is the fast and significant technological process in communication that has permitted entrepreneurs to access and exchange information at any time and anywhere in the world. To achieve the above viewpoint, an entrepreneur needs to improve different strategies.

Strategies are activities implemented to achieve stated, measurable objectives (Olowe, cited in Nwazor & Udegbumam, 2016). They describe the actions to be taken to accomplish each goal. In this study, strategies refer to specific ways or action plans that could be improved to promote entrepreneurship ventures. Thus, the study looked at entrepreneurship skills acquisition strategy and creative strategy.

Entrepreneurship is creating something new with value by devoting the necessary time and effort, assuming the accompanying financial, physical, and social risks and receiving monetary and personal satisfaction and independence rewards. Jiang and Cao (2021) ascertained that entrepreneurship education consists of all activities that foster entrepreneurial mindsets, attitudes, and skills covering idea generation, startup, growth, and innovation. Fayolle and Gailly (2015) ascertained that entrepreneurship training is rapidly expanding. It drives job creation with economic growth through accelerating innovation and promoting the full use of human, financial and other resources. The ability to run a business has been important in checking graduate unemployment and self-reliance. For this reason, all business education curricula should include entrepreneurship education. The objectives of entrepreneurship education in tertiary education, according to Fretschner and Weber (2013), is to empower graduates, irrespective of their course of study, with skills that will provide them with the opportunity to engage in income-yielding business, whether they are able or not able to secure paid employment whether in the public or private sector.

In addition to these objectives, Usoro and Ogbuanya (2012) asserted that there is an array of entrepreneurial skills for students to be self-reliant, which includes marketing skills, financial resource skills, self-motivation skills, soft skills, critical thinking skills, time management skills, administrative skills, innovative skills, professional skills, practical skills, creative skills, risk-taking skills among others. Entrepreneurship helps prepare students to enter the business world with the knowledge and application of balance sheets, income statements, discount cash flow, capital budgeting, opportunity recognition, market segmentation, target market, sales, business planning, public speaking, teamwork and

leadership (Usoro & Ogbuanya, 2012). The starting point of any successful new venture is the basic idea that can be generated internally or externally through various strategies like creativity.

According to Hisrich et al. in Usoro and Ogbuanya (2012), creative strategy is a method of obtaining new ideas, focusing on certain parameters. This is all about trying some methods with a few colleagues. By practising innovative strategies and attitudes, students will gain confidence and skills to build a company. Other creative ways that generate ideas and stimulate creativity include brainstorming, problem-solving, a checklist of related questions, free association, free notebooks, and the big dream approach. These can be acquired through a business education programme.

However, the influencing factor on the strategies for managing entrepreneurial skills acquisition in business education among tertiary education students could be based on their type of institutions. This study's type of institution means university and college of education with business education as a department with students offering business education courses. Mbanefo and Eboka (2017) revealed no significant difference regarding the strategies for managing entrepreneurial skills acquisition in business education among university and college of education students due to their institution type. Thus, this study sought strategies for managing entrepreneurial skills acquisition in business education among tertiary institution students for self-reliance in Delta State, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Business education is a vital pivot in preparing an individual to positively fit into the ever-increasing complexity of life as a self-employed. In disagreement, Usoro and Ogbuanya (2012) noted that the story has not changed partly because the teaching/learning environment has not supported the practical-based curriculum, intensification of Industrial training is poor, the training tools and equipment are obsolete, and the training institutions are still disseminating skills of the 19th century, students are half baked with skills that would have provided them with occupational abilities for self-employment, and affective domain has not been given a fair place in business education.

The above limitation indicates less emphasis on entrepreneurship education, which resulted in a lack of self-employment skills as a graduate of business education from university and college was still roaming the street for white-collar jobs, sometimes joining kidnapping and militancy business. If there were not enough, co-operate arrangements between the schools and industries to intensify entrepreneurship education, the concept of self-reliance as enshrined by the Federal Republic of Nigeria through National Policy on Education (2013 rev. ed.) would not be achieved. Aladejebi (2018) studied the proper training in business education students for skill acquisition. Tertiary institutions that are supposed to equip students with marketable skills continue to produce graduates lacking self-reliance skills. If this problem is not solved, business education students will continue to besiege government offices and other establishments, searching for jobs that are either extremely few in supply or even non-existent and unemployed. The problem of this study was to ascertain strategies for managing entrepreneurial skills acquisition among tertiary institution business education students for self-reliance in Delta State, Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The study aimed to ascertain strategies for managing entrepreneurial skills acquisition among tertiary institution business education students for self-reliance in Delta State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study determined:

- Entrepreneurship skills acquisition strategy needed among tertiary institution business education students for self-reliance in Delta State, Nigeria.
- Creative strategy needed among tertiary institution business education students for self-reliance in Delta State, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

- What entrepreneurship skills acquisition strategies are needed among tertiary institution business education students for self-reliance in Delta State, Nigeria?
- What creative strategies are needed among tertiary institution business education students for self-reliance in Delta State, Nigeria?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 level of significance:

- There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of business educators in universities and colleges of education regarding entrepreneurship skills acquisitions strategies needed among tertiary institution business education students for self-reliance in Delta State, Nigeria
- There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of business educators in universities and colleges of education regarding creative strategies needed among tertiary institution business education students for self-reliance in Delta State, Nigeria.

Theoretical Framework Work

This study is strengthened by the skill acquisition theory developed by Robert Dekeyser in 2007. The theory holds that development in knowledge has three stages: declarative, procedural and automatic. Declarative knowledge refers to explicit knowledge about a topic; procedural knowledge is implicit knowledge related to behaviour, and automaticity occurs towards the end point of extensive practice when the individual has become an expert in performing a task. From the perspective of skill acquisition theory, the sequence of these stages is crucial as an appropriate "combination of abstract rules and concrete examples" at the declarative stage. The theory is related to this study because skill acquisition is task-oriented, and there is a need to segregate tasks into different components for effective feedback. When it is impossible to segregate a task, feedback might be difficult to achieve. If adopted when teaching skill subjects, the theory will be helpful to learners as it follows the stages of learning a skill. The cognitive phase requires identifying and developing component parts of the skills, which involves formatting a mental picture of the skills. Then through practice, the various components of the skills will be linked together, and constant practice will make the skills automatic. In the light of the above, the skill acquisition theory is therefore considered the best in this work.

Method

For this study, a descriptive survey design was used. The researchers considered this design appropriate for the study survey since it used a questionnaire to collect data from practising business educators regarding entrepreneurial skills acquisition needed among tertiary institution business education students for self-reliance in Delta State, Nigeria. The population for this study consisted of 114 business educators from Delta State University, Abraka; University of Delta, Agbor; Federal College of Education (Technical), Asaba; State College of Education, Umukoro-Warri and Sorhue Ufuoma College of Education. Two experts validated the instrument in business education from Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. Their criticism and comments improved the content validity of the instrument. The test re-test method was used to establish the reliability, and the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to test the instrument's reliability. The analysis yielded a coefficient value of 0.89, indicating that the instrument was reliable for the study using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21. The questionnaire was structured on a four-point scale, with response categories as "Strongly Agree", "Agree", "Disagree", and "Strongly Disagree".

The researchers carried out the instrument's administration with the help of four research assistants. The spot completion and retrieval method were adopted to avoid loss or misplacement by some respondents. Where on-the-spot completion and retrieval were not possible, the researcher and assistants re-visited the respondents at an agreed date to retrieve the complete copies of the questionnaire. The researcher and assistants maintained contact with the respondents through phone calls and text messages to remind them and to know when to return for collection. This procedure was adopted to facilitate a high response rate. The exercise lasted for one week. These procedures facilitated a high response rate, and out of the 114 copies of the questionnaire distributed, 112 documents (representing 98 per cent) were retrieved and used for data analysis. One copy was not properly filled and thus discarded, while another copy was not recovered, representing 2 and 2 per cent respectively. Data collected concerning the research questions were analysed using mean and standard deviation.

To determine the strategies for managing entrepreneurial skills acquisition needed among tertiary institution Business education students for self-reliance in Delta State, Nigeria, decisions on the items and research questions were based on a mean cut-off score of 3.00. Where an article or the mean score is 3.00 or above, it means to agree, and where the item or mean score is below 3.00, it means disagree by the respondents. A t-test was used to test the null hypotheses at a 0.05 level of significance. A null hypothesis was rejected where the calculated p-value was less than the 0.05 level of significance, which means a significant difference. Conversely, where the calculated p-value was greater than or equal to the 0.05 level of significance, there was no significant difference, and the hypothesis was not rejected.

Results

Research Question 1:

What entrepreneurship skills acquisition strategies are needed among tertiary institution business education students for self-reliance in Delta State, Nigeria?

Table 1: Respondents' mean rating of entrepreneurship skills acquisitions strategies needed among tertiary institution business education students for self-reliance in Delta State, Nigeria N= 112.

S/N	Entrepreneurship skills	\bar{X}	SD	Decision
•	Soft skills	3.53	0.73	Agree
•	Critical thinking skills	3.10	0.57	Agree
•	Time management skills	3.76	0.64	Agree
•	Marketing skills	3.51	0.40	Agree
•	Financial resource skills	2.02	0.61	Agree
•	Self-motivation skills	2.19	0.50	Agree
•	Administrative skills	3.64	0.67	Agree
•	Innovative skills	2.23	0.45	Agree
•	Professional skills	3.58	0.68	Agree
•	Practical skills	3.08	0.59	Agree
•	Creative skills	3.16	0.54	Agree
•	Risk taking skills	3.32	0.43	Agree

Data in Table 1 show that respondents agreed on all the items as entrepreneurship skills acquisitions strategies needed among tertiary institution business education students for self-reliance in Delta State, Nigeria and had the mean scores ranging from 3.53 to 4.51. Its mean score was above 3.00, the cut-off point or the real boundary limit. The standard deviations for all the items fall within the same range of 0.40 to 0.73. This shows that the respondents were not wide apart in their mean ratings.

Research Question 2:

What creative strategies are needed among tertiary institution business education students for self-reliance in Delta State, Nigeria?

Table 2: Respondents' mean rating on the creative strategies needed among tertiary institution business education students for self-reliance in Delta State, Nigeria N= 112.

S/N	Creative strategies	\bar{X}	SD	Decision
•	Begin by trying to be creative	3.93	0.68	Agree
•	Experiment with what is best for you	3.88	0.71	Agree
•	Provide advice to students about becoming creative	3.68	0.73	Agree
•	Decide on issue that need fresh thinking	4.25	0.63	Agree
•	Encourage students as they improve	3.57	0.77	Agree

Data in Table 2 show that respondents agreed on all the items as creative strategies needed among tertiary institution business education students for self-reliance in Delta State, Nigeria and had mean scores ranging from 3.57 to 4.25. Its mean score was above 3.00, the cut-off point or the real boundary limit. The standard deviations for all the items fall within the same range of 0.66 to 0.77. This shows that the respondents were not wide apart in their mean ratings.

Testing the Hypotheses**Hypotheses 1**

There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of business educators in universities and colleges of education regarding entrepreneurship skills acquisitions strategies needed among tertiary institution business education students for self-reliance in Delta State, Nigeria.

Table 3: Summary of t-test analysis difference between the mean ratings of business educators in universities and colleges of education regarding entrepreneurship skills acquisitions strategies needed among tertiary institution business education students for self-reliance in Delta State, Nigeria.

Type of Institutions	N	\bar{X}	SD	α	df	t-cal	p-value	Decision
Universities	38	3.27	.19	0.05	100	-3.77	.10	Not Significant
Colleges of Education	74	3.17	.21					

Table 3 shows that universities and colleges of education business educators' reliance with 3.27(SD=.19) and 3.17(SD=.21) mean do not significantly differ in the mean ratings regarding entrepreneurial skills acquisition strategies needed among tertiary institution business education students for self-. The Table indicated a t-cal value of -3.77, a degree of freedom of 100 and a p-value of .10. Testing at an alpha level of 0.05, the p-value is not significant since the p-value is greater than or equal to the alpha value (0.05). The null hypothesis was not rejected with $\alpha > .05$.

Hypotheses 2

There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of business educators in universities and colleges of education regarding creative strategies needed among tertiary institution business education students for self-reliance in Delta State, Nigeria.

Table 4: Summary of t-test analysis difference between the mean ratings of business educators in universities and colleges of education regarding creative strategies needed among tertiary institution business education students for self-reliance in Delta State, Nigeria.

Type of Institutions	N	\bar{X}	SD	α	df	t-cal	p-value	Decision
Universities	38	3.32	.16	0.05	100	2.18	.20	Not Significant
Colleges of Education	74	3.24	.14					

Table 4 shows that universities and colleges of education business educators with 3.32(SD=.16) and 3.24(SD=.14) mean scores do not significantly differ in the mean ratings regarding creative strategies needed among tertiary institution business education students for self-reliance. The Table indicated a t-cal value of 2.18, a degree of freedom of 100 and a p-value of .20. Testing at an alpha level of 0.05, the p-value is not significant since the p-value is greater than or equal to the alpha value (0.05). The null hypothesis was not rejected with $\alpha > .05$.

Discussion of Findings

The study's findings revealed that respondents agreed on all the items as entrepreneurship skills acquisition strategies needed among tertiary institution business education students for self-reliance in Delta State, Nigeria and had the mean scores ranging from 3.53 to 4.51. This implies that entrepreneurship skills acquisition strategies are needed for self-reliance among tertiary institution business education students. This is agreed with Usoro and Ogbuanya (2012), which revealed that there is an array of entrepreneurial skills for business education students to be self-reliance which include soft skills, critical thinking skills, time management skills, marketing skills, financial resource skills, self-motivation skills, administrative skills, innovative skills, professional skills, practical skills, creative skills, risk-taking skills among others.

The study revealed no significant difference in the mean ratings of universities and colleges of education business educators regarding entrepreneurship skills acquisition strategies needed among tertiary institution business education students for self-reliance in Delta State, Nigeria, based on their different institutions. Therefore, the null hypothesis was not rejected.

The study findings revealed that the respondents agreed on all the items as creative strategies needed among tertiary institution business education students for self-reliance in Delta State, Nigeria and had mean scores ranging from 3.57 to 4.25. This implies that tertiary institutions' business education students need creative strategies for self-reliance. This is agreed with Usoro and Ogbuanya (2012) as they revealed that innovative techniques are a method for obtaining new ideas; focusing on certain parameters enables business education students to improve their entrepreneurial skills acquisition.

The study revealed no significant difference in the mean ratings of universities and colleges of education business educators regarding creative strategies needed among tertiary business education students for self-reliance in Delta State, Nigeria, based on their different institutions. Therefore, the null hypothesis was not rejected.

Conclusion

Based on the study's findings, it was concluded that entrepreneurship is relevant today because it helps business education students to better their personal needs and the economic contribution of self-employment it offers. Therefore, the skills and strategies identified would equip the business education students with job and workplace skills after graduation, helping them to be self-reliant.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher proffers the following recommendations:

- Business education students should not be afraid to take entrepreneurship risks.
- Business education students should be encouraged to be creative and innovative.
- Tertiary institutions should continue to inculcate and develop a proper value for the survival of the individual in society.

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