

**INFLUENCE OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP SKILLS ACQUISITION ON JOB CREATION
AMONG BUSINESS EDUCATION UNDERGRADUATES IN ANAMBRA STATE**

¹Onyiorah, B.O.
Department of Vocational Education
Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University Igbariam Campus
Anambra State-Nigeria
winrandy@yahoo.com

²Eneasoba, Nneka Charity (PhD)
Department of Agricultural and Vocational Education
(Business Education Programme)
Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike
Abia State – Nigeria
nnekaemeasoba@yahoo.com

³Orah, Patricia Azuka
Department of Vocational Education
Abia State University, Uturu
Abia State – Nigeria

ABSTRACT

The study sought to determine the influence of entrepreneurship skills acquisition for job creation among Business Education undergraduates in Anambra State. It made use of descriptive survey method. The study was guided by three research questions and three null hypotheses. Population for the study comprised all the 931 Business Education undergraduates from public tertiary institutions in Anambra State that offer the programme. A sample of 93 undergraduates was drawn using simple random sampling technique. A 27 items structured questionnaire validated by two experts in the field of Business education and one expert in measurement and evaluation was used for the study. The reliability of the instrument, using the Cronbach alpha yielded an overall reliability co-efficient value of .81. Data were analyzed using mean, standard deviation and t-test. Findings showed that entrepreneurship skills acquisition has a significant positive influence on job creation among Business education undergraduates in Anambra State. The researcher then concluded that people who want to survive unemployment must strive to acquire entrepreneurship skills that will make them employable, self-reliant and job creators. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended among others that government should adequately provide relevant equipment in all institutions offering Business Education to facilitate acquisition of entrepreneurship skills by the undergraduates which would enable them create jobs upon graduation.

Keywords: *Entrepreneurship, Skills Acquisition, Business Education, Undergraduates, Job Creation*

Introduction

Education serve as a cornerstone for any form of development. It is a veritable tool for enhancing economic growth and national development because it forms the basis of literacy skill acquisition, technological advancement, knowledge acquisition and ability to harness the natural resources of the environment. Antai and Anam (as cited in Obereh and Nnebe, 2019) asserted that education creates better citizens and helps to upgrade the general standard of living in a society. In addition, Ezeani, (2014) stated that education empower the youths to live, function as productive members of the society, earn a living and contribute to societal progress. Education develops critical thinking, interaction, logical decision-making and other cutting edge skills in individuals to enable them secure and succeed in paid-employment or become self-employed and job creators through entrepreneurship. in a person and teaches him the use of logic decision making and interaction. It helps individuals meet basic job qualifications and impacts in them skills for securing of jobs through entrepreneurship education.

Entrepreneurship education is a national and international issue and a tool for reduction of unemployment. The teaching and learning of entrepreneurship education in higher institutions is of paramount interest to all stake holders, hence it's inclusion in the curriculum of tertiary education in Nigeria. According to Obidile (2018), entrepreneurship is defined as a process of designing, innovating, creating, launching and running a new business which offers a product, process or services for sale or lease. Obidile also affirmed that entrepreneurship can be seen as the ability and willingness to develop, organize and manage a business venture with its risks in order to make profit. Entrepreneurship is acknowledged nationally and internationally as a veritable tool for job creation and reduction of unemployment. Entrepreneurship education, on the other hand is the type of education which imparts knowledge and skills in learners and motivates them to venture into self-employment by creating and managing their own enterprises after graduation instead of waiting endlessly for very scarce paid-employment opportunities. This is why entrepreneurship education was included in the curriculum of tertiary education in Nigeria and its effective teaching and learning for skills acquisition for enterprise development has assumed a paramount interest to all stake holders in higher education.

Skill acquisition is the main focus of business education programme with entrepreneurship as a key component for promoting entrepreneurship mindset for self-reliance in learners. Omidigi

and Ugwu (2019) defined skill acquisition as a systematic and sequential development of skill that promotes efficiency and effectiveness in the performance of a specified job. It is a vital tool for Nigeria to grow economically, particularly now the country is facing greater economic difficulties. Similarly, Uchendu (2015) noted that skill is the abilities, capacities, aptitude and expertise acquired through deliberate, systematic and sustained training necessary to perform job functions effectively and efficiently. A skill is learned ability to carry out a task with pre-determined results often within a given amount of time, energy or both.

In the same vein, skill acquisition is the process of developing capacities through all level of education and the job setting which enable individuals in area of the economy to be fully and productively engaged in livelihood and to have changing demands and opportunities of all the economy and labour market (Enang & Okute, 2019). Skill acquisition is the ability to be trained on a particular skill or function and become expert who can harness raw materials and as well manipulate and transform them into finished products that satisfy societal needs. According to Udo and Bako (2014) the requisite skills required by business education undergraduates for job creation include such entrepreneurship skills as accounting skills, communication skills, information and communication technology (ICT) skills and marketing skills among others. This study covered the influence of accounting skills, ICT skills and marketing skills acquisition on job creation among Business Education undergraduates in Anambra State.

Review of Literature

Entrepreneurship skills for job creation include accounting skills, ICT skills and marketing skills. Accounting is defined by Ezeani (2014) as the process of expressing the economic activities of everyday life in monetary terms in order to estimate the cost of creating goods and services, make decisions about production on the basis of these estimates, compare the actual costs as they occur with the estimate originally made and adjust the output and price of goods and services accordingly. Business education undergraduates who desire to become entrepreneurs should have a sound appreciation of the financial implications for their plans and actions. Udo and Bako (2014) enumerated some accounting skills business education undergraduates should be conversant with to include inventory taking skills, skills in preparation of profit and loss account, bank statement reconciliation skills, balance sheet skills, skills in posting to journals, preparation of ledger account skills, trial balance account skills and preparation of partnership account skills. It is important that

business education undergraduates should acquire such accounting skills for pay-roll clerk, purchasing clerk, audit clerk, book-keepers and cashiers in order to excel in job creation. Business education graduates are expected to work with financial documents efficiently and accurately organize large data and set them properly. Therefore, the undergraduates should be familiar with a range of financial management skills and budgeting software skills as well as Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and accounting processes. Business education undergraduates also need to acquire skills in Information and Communication Technology.

Information and communication technology (ICT) has become a vital tool for setting up and successfully achievement of the objectives of a business enterprise in Nigeria and other parts of the world. Anyanwu (2014) defined ICT as the physical structure of network of computer based system (Hardware, software and media) for the purpose of organizing, processing, communicating, assessing, presenting, storing, retrieving and simplifying information in the desired form. In addition, Evans (as cited in Arhueremu and Ojohwoh, 2013) viewed ICT as the acquisition, processing, storage and dissemination of vocal pictorial, textual and numerical information by microelectronic based which are needed in a rapidly changing global environment. Furthermore, Onwuchekwa in Okute (2013) posited that ICT is computer-based tools used by people to work on the information and communication processing needs of their organizations. It is evident from the above that ICT has changed the way business organizations operate hence, Business Education undergraduates need the ICT skills associated with information access and management, problem solving, decision making, communication and others for self-employment and job creation. Marketing is another skill that is required among business education undergraduates to excel in job creation.

According to Chartered Institute of Marketing (n.d) marketing is the management process of anticipating, identifying and satisfying customer requirements profitably. In addition, Theodore (as cited in Usen, Edet, Udokang, 2018) also defined marketing as the process of planning and executing the conception, pricing, promoting and distribution of ideas, goods and services to create exchanges that satisfy individual and organizational goals. Marketing is one of the three major options in the Business Education programme known as distribution and marketing education. Usen et al (2018) posited that marketing is present in any occupation, whether it is industry, agriculture, direct services or commerce. According to the authors, marketing skill are needed by practicing and prospective entrepreneurs in any sector to achieve success. Successful businesses

are built around effective marketing because it does not just enable producers to know the taste of consumers, but ensures good research into products preferred by consumers. Therefore, Business Education undergraduates require marketing skills to succeed as job creators.

Job creation is a deliberate efforts made by individuals, corporate bodies and government in generating different types of employment opportunities for the unemployed citizens in the economy. The absence of jobs as well as the ability of the three tier of government to create jobs to sustain the ever growing population of this country is a serious concern to everyone. All the politicians that have come into power at the centre in Nigeria have promised to create enough jobs before the end of their tenure yet their tenure ended without any meaningful difference. Making matters worse, the educational system is too formal to equip undergraduates with the required skills to cope in the private sector as a result, the graduates become job seekers instead of job creators. The National population commission NPC (2001) as cited in Ofishe (2016) revealed that more than half of the population of Nigeria are under the age of 30 years, which means that we have a nation with unproductive youths plagued by unemployment, poverty and worse of all non-entrepreneurship mindset to sustain and move the country to next level of economic and social development. Similarly, Zimmer and Scarborough (as cited in Ofishe, 2016) stated that individuals with entrepreneurial spirit drive are those who create new jobs or businesses for the purpose of achieving profit and growth for the society. With entrepreneurship education in business education, students acquire necessary skills to perform well in business world and become job creators upon graduation

Business Education is that aspect of educational training which an individual receives with the primary aim of enabling him to acquire adequate attributes, concepts, knowledge, understanding and skills in careers in the business world (Onyesom as cited in Ugwunwoti & Chukwu, 2019). Similarly Business education is defined by Emeasoba, Ekoh, and Modebelu (2015) as that aspect of the total education programmes that provides the knowledge, skills, understanding and attitude needed to perform in the business world as producers or consumers of goods. In addition, Ezeabii (2017) observed that business education equips individuals with the necessary skill and theoretical knowledge needed for performance in the business world either for job occupation or for self-employment. In the same vein Idulu (as cited in Emeasoba and Enwere, 2016) affirmed that business education is work-focused, skill-base, result-oriented and technology-based. The authors are in agreement that business education is that area of education

which concern itself with the vocational and professional preparation for a career in business, teaching business subjects and provides important information needed to be good citizens and consumers. Business education is concerned with the acquisition and development of entrepreneurship skills and attitude that would enable an individual to function effectively in the society.

Business education undergraduates are those students undergoing first degree programme in universities or the National Certificate in Education (NCE) programme in colleges of education. Acquisition of skills through entrepreneurship education will equip these undergraduates with requisite knowledge, attitude, skills and competencies to succeed in employment as paid workers or job creators upon graduation and reduce the level of youth unemployment in Anambra State.

Problem of the Study

Business education students in tertiary institutions are expected to acquire entrepreneurship skills to become job creators upon graduation but contrary to this expectation, most of them roam the streets for years searching for very scarce white-collar jobs. This is because, they are inadequately equipped with relevant skills probably due to the fact that they are not thoroughly taught entrepreneurship education that equips student with relevant skills. Again, the researcher observed that there is a very high rate of business failure among small enterprise owners in Anambra state which might be due to their lack of accounting skills, marketing skills, communication skills, ICT skills, entrepreneurial skills and others required for entrepreneurial success. Providing quality instruction in entrepreneurship education can help business education undergraduates in the state to acquire requisite skills for job creation. According to the report of National Bureau of statistics (NBS 2020), the unemployment rate in Nigeria has increased from 23.1% in the third quarter of 2018 to 35% in 2021. Considering the high level of unemployment among Business Education graduates of tertiary institutions in Anambra State, it is assumed that the major aim of introducing entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions in Nigeria is far from being achieved. This motivated this study to determine the influence of entrepreneurship education on skills acquisition among Business Education undergraduates in tertiary institutions in Anambra State for job creation.

Purpose of the Study.

The purpose of this study was to determine the influence of entrepreneurship skills acquisition on job creation among business education undergraduates in Anambra State. Specifically, the study determined the influence of

- (1) accounting skills acquisition on job creation among business education undergraduates in Anambra state.
- (2) ICT skills acquisition on job creation among business education undergraduates in Anambra state.
- (3) marketing skills acquisition on job creation among business education undergraduates in Anambra state.

Research Questions.

The following research questions guided the study.

1. What is the influence of accounting skills acquisition on job creation among Business Education undergraduates in Anambra State?
2. What is the influence of ICT skills acquisition on job creation among Business Education undergraduates in Anambra State?
3. What is the influence of marketing skills acquisition on job creation among Business Education undergraduates in Anambra State?

Research hypotheses

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

- H₀₁:** There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of Business Education undergraduates from universities and colleges of education regarding the influence of accounting skills acquisition on job creation.
- H₀₂:** A significant difference does not exist between the mean ratings of Business Education undergraduates from universities and colleges of education regarding the influence of ICT skills acquisition on job creation.

H₀₃: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of Business Education undergraduates from universities and colleges of education regarding the influence of marketing skills acquisition on job creation.

Methodology

The researchers adopted a descriptive survey design for the study. The population of this study was 931 Business Education undergraduates (448 students from universities and 493 from colleges of education) in Anambra State. The researcher made use of simple random sampling technique to select 93 respondents representing 10% of the entire population. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled "Influence of Entrepreneurship Skills Acquisition for Job Creation (IESAJC). The questionnaire was divided into two- parts (A and B). Part A contained one item on the institution while part B consists 27 items in three clusters of B1 to B3 structured on a 4-point rating scale of strongly agree (SA), Agree (A), disagree (D), strongly disagree (SD) with weighting numerical values of 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. The instrument was validated by three experts, two in the department of Business and Entrepreneurship Education and one in Measurement and Evaluation in the Faculty of Education all in Enugu State University of Technology, Enugu. It was subjected to a reliability test using Cronbach Alpha, which gave a coefficient of 0.81. The researcher administered the instrument to the study sample with the help of two research assistants who were properly guided on the procedure. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions and determine the spread of the respondents' means while t-test was used to test the hypotheses at .05 level of significance. The decision for research questions was based on item by item mean score of the two groups as well as the grand mean scores using a cut-off mean of 2.50 so that mean scores above 2.50 are agree and those below are disagree. The t-test was used to test the null hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. A null hypothesis was not rejected if the t-calculated is less than the t-critical value and rejected if the t-calculated is equal or higher than the t-critical value.

Results and Discussions

Table 1: Mean rating of male and female business education undergraduates regarding the influence of accounting skills acquisition on job creation.

| S/N | Influence of accounting skills acquisition on job creation: | XF | SDF | XM | SDM | REM |
|-----|---|-------|------|------|------|-----|
| | Underlisted accounting skills support job creation | | | | | |
| 1 | Ability to do financial analyses. | 2.99 | 0.99 | 3.08 | 0.97 | A |
| 2 | Ability to prepare accounting ledgers | 2.96 | 0.98 | 3.00 | 0.91 | A |
| 3 | Ability to handle reconciliation statements | 3.32 | 1.04 | 3.5 | 0.66 | A |
| 4 | Ability to prepare profit and loss account | 3.14 | 0.92 | 3.17 | 0.98 | A |
| 5 | Ability to take proper records of accounting books | 2.96 | 0.99 | 2.75 | 1.03 | A |
| 6 | Ability to handle accounting books and journals | 2..50 | 0.74 | 3.08 | 0.97 | A |
| 7 | Ability to forecast future performance of an organization | 3.57 | 0.78 | 3.50 | 0.83 | A |
| 8 | Ability to prepare financial accounts and reports | 3.96 | 0.89 | 2.75 | 1.07 | A |
| | Grand mean | 3.15 | 0.92 | 3.10 | 0.93 | A |

Table 1 shows that the mean scores of the two groups for all the items ranged from 2.75 to 3.96 with the grand mean scores of 3.15 and 3.10 which are greater than the cut-off mean of 2.50. This indicates that the respondents agreed that accounting skills acquisition will help them in job creation in the society upon graduation.

Table 2: Mean rating of male and female Business Education undergraduates regarding the influence of ICT skills acquisition on job creation.

| S/N | Influence of Information and Communications Technology skills acquisition on job creation: | XM | SDM | XF | SDF | Remarks |
|---|---|------|------|------|------|---------|
| Underlisted ICT skills support job creation | | | | | | |
| 1 | Ability to use internet skills for business development strategies. | 3.39 | 0.78 | 3.04 | 0.99 | A |
| 2 | Ability to use social media platforms like instagram, twitter, facebook for online business services. | 3.39 | 0.59 | 3.25 | 0.68 | A |
| 3. | Ability to make use of different softwares for business activities | 2.96 | 1.29 | 2.92 | .97 | A |
| 4 | Ability to personalize devices to suit your human and work needs. | 2.80 | 0.73 | 2.75 | 1.03 | A |
| 5 | Ability to use cloud computing for storage. | 3.61 | 0.68 | 3.00 | 1.29 | A |
| 6 | Ability to execute on-line financial transactions | 3.34 | 1.06 | 3.58 | 1.37 | A |
| 7 | Ability to create product awareness through the internet. | 3.30 | 0.76 | 2.92 | 2.14 | A |
| 8 | Ability to interact with customers using e-mail. | 2.96 | 1.25 | 3.08 | 1.01 | A |
| | Grand mean | 3.22 | 0.89 | 3.07 | 1.07 | A |

Table 2 shows that the mean scores of the two groups for all the items ranged from 2.75 to 3.58 with the grand mean scores of 3.22 and 3.07 which are greater than the cut-off mean of 2.50. This indicates that the respondents agreed that ICT skills acquisition will help them in job creation in the society upon graduation.

Table 3: Mean rating of male and female Business Education undergraduates regarding the influence of marketing skills acquisition on job creation.

| S/ N | Influence of marketing skills acquisition on job creation: | XF | SD | XM | SDM | Rem |
|---|---|------|------|------|------|-----|
| Underlisted marketing skills support job creation | | | | | | |
| 1 | Ability to determine the extent to which products will sell | 3.32 | 0.85 | 2.96 | 1.08 | A |
| 2 | Ability to supply desired customers goods. | 3.30 | 0.91 | 3.0 | 0.86 | A |
| 3 | Ability to determine current trends in sales of products | 3.23 | 0.99 | 3.25 | 0.74 | A |
| 4 | Ability to determine what customers need. | 3.32 | 0.83 | 2.71 | 1.12 | A |
| 5 | Ability to compete favourably with competitors. | 3.20 | 0.88 | 2.96 | 1.00 | A |
| 6 | Ability to appreciate consumers behavior | 3.25 | 0.98 | 2.96 | 1.08 | A |
| 7 | Ability to advertise a product | 3.95 | 1.18 | 3.58 | 0.82 | A |
| 8 | Ability to determine seasonal fluctuation of goods | 3.39 | 0.78 | 3.0 | 1.18 | A |
| 9 | Ability to negotiate for sales effectively | 3.20 | 0.92 | 3.29 | 0.86 | A |
| 10 | Ability to use sales promotion tools | 3.11 | 0.73 | 3.00 | 1.10 | A |
| | Grand mean | 3.33 | 0.91 | 3.07 | 0.98 | A |

Table 3 shows that the mean scores of the two groups for all the items ranged from 2.71 to 3.95 with the grand mean scores of 3.33 and 3.07 which are greater than the cut-off mean of 2.50. This indicates that the respondents agreed that marketing skills acquisition will help them in job creation in the society upon graduation.

Table 4: Summary of t-test difference in the mean ratings of respondents from universities and colleges of education regarding the influence of accounting skills acquisition on job creation.

| Category | N | X | Sd | Df | t-cal | t-tab | P | Decision |
|--------------|----|------|------|----|-------|--------|------|----------|
| Universities | 44 | 3.10 | 0.93 | 91 | 0.26 | 1.9869 | 0.05 | NS |

| | | | |
|-----------------------|----|------|------|
| Colleges of education | 49 | 3.15 | 0.92 |
|-----------------------|----|------|------|

Table 4 shows that calculated t-value of 0.26 is less than the value gotten from the table 1.9869. This means that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of Business Education undergraduates from universities and colleges of education in Anambra State regarding influence of accounting skills acquisition on job creation.

Table 5: Summary of t-test difference in the mean ratings of respondents from universities and colleges of education regarding the influence of ICT skills acquisition on job creation.

| Category | N | X | Sd | Df | t-cal | t-tab | P | Decision |
|-----------------------|----|------|------|----|-------|--------|------|----------|
| Universities | 44 | 3.07 | 1.06 | 91 | 0.752 | 1.9869 | 0.05 | NS |
| Colleges of Education | 49 | 3.22 | 0.89 | | | | | |

Table 5 shows that calculated t-value of 0.75 is less than the value obtained from the table 1.9869. This means that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of Business Education undergraduates from universities and colleges of education in Anambra State regarding influence of ICT skills acquisition on job creation.

Table 6: Summary of t-test difference in the mean ratings of respondents from universities and colleges of education regarding the influence of marketing skills acquisition on job creation.

| Category | N | X | Sd | Df | t-cal | t-tab | P | Decision |
|-----------------------|----|------|------|----|-------|--------|------|----------|
| Universities | 44 | 3.07 | 0.98 | 91 | 1.321 | 1.9869 | 0.05 | NS |
| Colleges of education | 56 | 3.33 | 0.91 | | | | | |

Table 6 shows that calculated t-value of 1.321 is less than the value gotten from the table 1.9869. This means that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of Business Education undergraduates from universities and colleges of education in Anambra State regarding influence of marketing skills acquisition on job creation.

Discussion

Findings of the study revealed that the acquisition of accounting skills by Business Education undergraduates in Anambra State will positively influence their ability for job creation upon graduation. The report of Nwaiguru and Eneogwe (2013) agreed with this finding that accounting skills equip Business Education undergraduates with the skills to be self-reliant, sustainable development and job creation. There was no significant difference between the mean ratings of respondents from universities and colleges of education regarding the influence of acquisition of accounting skills on their ability for job creation upon graduation. This means that Business Education undergraduates from universities and colleges of education in Anambra State are in agreement that acquisition of accounting skills will positively influence their ability for job creation upon graduation.

Findings of the study also revealed that acquisition of ICT skills by Business Education undergraduates in Anambra State will positively influence their ability for job creation upon graduation. This finding is in consonance with the report of Okoye (2017) that ICT skills have serious roles to play in the effective delivery of entrepreneurship activities such as execution of online financial transactions, interaction with customers using email, creation of product awareness through internet and many others. There was no significant difference between the mean ratings of respondents from universities and colleges of education regarding the influence of acquisition of ICT skills on their ability for job creation upon graduation. This means that Business Education undergraduates from universities and colleges of education in Anambra State are in agreement that acquisition of ICT skills will positively influence their ability for job creation upon graduation.

Findings of the study also revealed that the acquisition of marketing skills by Business Education undergraduates in Anambra State will positively influence their ability for job creation upon graduation. This finding is in consonance with the report of Usen, Edit, and Udokang (2018) that marketing skills are needed for self-reliant and job creation. There was no significant

difference between the mean ratings of respondents from universities and colleges of education regarding the influence of acquisition of marketing skills on their ability for job creation upon graduation. This means that Business Education undergraduates from universities and colleges of education in Anambra State are in agreement that acquisition of marketing skills will positively influence their ability for job creation upon graduation.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that acquisition of accounting skills, information and communication technology skills and marketing skills will greatly assist Business Education undergraduates in Anambra State in job creation upon graduation to reduce the level of graduate unemployment in the State.

Recommendations

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

1. Government should make adequate provision of information and communication technology facilities in tertiary institutions to enable students acquire the skills for gainful employment upon graduation.
2. Government should organize on-the-job training and conferences at intervals for business education lecturers in public tertiary institutions to update their knowledge on modern ICT skills, marketing skills, accounting skills and communication skills so that their products will compete favourably with their counterparts globally.
3. Tertiary institution administrators should establish well equipped entrepreneurial centres in their schools, so that Business Education undergraduates will be adequately equipped with entrepreneurship skills through hands-on practice exercises.
4. Institutions should partner with private business enterprises for effective training of Business Education undergraduates with entrepreneurship skills required in the business world.

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