



Evaluation of Business Education Curriculum and 21st Century Entrepreneurial Skills in Business Education Undergraduates Students

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ABSTRACT

This study assessed the Business education curriculum and 21st-century entrepreneurial skills acquisition among Business education students. Creativity, communication, risk management, and digital marketing skills were examined. The reliability coefficient was 0.76, showing the strong instrument. The research methodology employed was descriptive statistics of correlational type, purposive sampling techniques were used to select the sample size for the study, research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation, while the hypotheses were tested using Pearson product-moment correlation. There is a significant mean rating in the Business education curriculum and Creativity skills. There is a significant mean rating in the Business education curriculum and Communication skills, same with risk management skills and Digital marketing skills. The curriculum should fit the knowledge of risk management and digital marketing skills to increase both theoretical and practical knowledge. Moreover, Lecturers of Business education should know the importance of these skills mentioned above in 21st-century entrepreneurial competency.

ARTICLE INFO

Article History:

Submitted/Received 02 Feb 2023

First Revised 19 Mar 2023

Accepted 09 May 2023

First Available online 11 May 2023

Publication Date 01 Sep 2023

Keyword:

Business education,
Business,
Curriculum,
Entrepreneurial skill,
Evaluation.

1. INTRODUCTION

Globally, the philosophy of Business Education is not only to train the student to be a teacher but also a high caliber of Businessman. Business education is recognized to be a program that brings about sustainable development to a Nation by developing its recipients with the appropriate skills needed to be self-reliant. In most of the developed countries, attention has been shifted to vocational training as against theoretical training common in the curriculum of developing and underdeveloped Nations. In Nigeria, the Business education curriculum was structured to tackle the myriad of problems posed by unemployment to produce a graduate who will be self-reliant (Ademiluyi, 2007; Agwumezie, 1999). However, most business education graduates after the completion of their programs still lack saleable skills and employability skills because of default in the curriculum that fails to teach the courses needed to impact the appropriate skills necessary to become an effective entrepreneur (Akpotowoh & Amahi, 2005; Aliyu, 1999; Atakpa, 2011). Generally, the minimum academic standard for Business education was to provide high-caliber professionals in teaching, marketing, accounting, management, secretarial, and other business areas. Not only that, but the philosophy of business education also aims at the complete development of individual student teachers to make them effective business teachers and high-caliber professionals in the business establishment.

With the above general statement of objective, one can say, Business education is an all-encompassing program that teaches marketing skills, accounting skills, management skills, and other business skills to make students self-employed (Njoku, 2001). In standard, the Business education curriculum in both NCE and universities comprises those courses that prepare its recipient with sound knowledge in business and entrepreneurial activities (Akinola, 2001). For instance, Word processing and keyboarding will provide an understanding of Data processing and computer literacy. Introduction to entrepreneurship education will prepare business education students to build interest in establishing their businesses and becoming effective entrepreneurs. Other subjects such as accounting, office practice, economics, and business law to mention but they will inculcate a particular skill in students if appropriately handled by a well-grounded lecturer. Moreover, Student Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) was established to expose and prepare students for work situations that they will meet after graduation. In actual practice, the Business education curriculum in most schools does not align with the minimum standard with which to achieve the objective stated, many obsolete courses such as shorthand and typewriting are still in the curriculum of some schools while the updated courses needed to teach 21st-century skills that will make one to be a successful entrepreneur are not included in the curriculum.

Business education that is supposed to be practically oriented is full of theory in most schools, all the facilities needed to supplement classroom teaching are not provided, and SIWES that will also expose the student to reality is not being done as expected. Identified vocational and technical skills and competence as critical success factors in the actualization of Nigerian Vision 20:2020 which is about Nigeria becoming one of the first 20 economies in the world by the year 2020. A good curriculum should be geared towards helping the students to acquire knowledge, attitudes, and values that would enable them to function efficiently in the world of work. To this end, subjects that would meet the objectives or set goals must be included in the curriculum. A balanced curriculum for business graduates is required to instill the necessary functioning skills needed to survive as a 21st-century entrepreneur in a highly competitive world (Okpan, 2006; Okoro, 2007). The concept of entrepreneur has been described by many authors, which have been equally viewed from the roles they played in

our economic, political, or social lives. Entrepreneurship is the process of creating something new, with value and devoting the necessary time and effort assuming the accompanying financial psychic and social risks, receiving the resulting reward of monetary or personal satisfaction and independence (Nwangwu, 2007; Ohaneme, 2009). Further reiterated that entrepreneurship is a process of bringing together creative and innovative ideas, combining them with management and organizational skills to combine people, money, and resources to meet an identified need and thereby create wealth (Agomuo, 2002). Entrepreneurial skills of the 21st century in this research work refer to those skills which can make an entrepreneur adapt competitively among their counterparts in this advanced century these skills include but are not limited to creativity skills, risk management skills, digital marketing skills, communication skills, problems solving skills, technical skills and to mention but a few. The availability of all these skills in an entrepreneur will undoubtedly bring about entrepreneurial success. Creativity skills are the ability to think about a task or a problem in a new or different way, or the ability to use the imagination to generate new ideas. Many scholars have researched the creativity skills of an entrepreneur. Stated that although entrepreneurship creativity and innovation are viewed as the “creation of the future”, little has been done to train entrepreneurs to participate creatively in the innovation economy. Risk management skill is another needed 21st-century entrepreneur skill since an entrepreneurial activity cannot operate in risk isolation, risk is natural circumstances that can never be eliminated but reduced. Risk management is changing rapidly, in terms both tools and techniques that are applied and the governance structures that are being introduced to ensure the successful management of risk. An entrepreneur needs to be more cost-conscious, and this has resulted in the emergence of approaches such as Governance Risk and Compliance (GRC).

Digital marketing has made it possible for a digital revolution has shaken marketing to its core with consumers being offered greater price transparency and often even the chance to dictate the price. The vast growing business now is the social entrepreneurial activity where people transact via social networks, this requires media literacy as any entrepreneur who falls short of this skill in this 21st century will likely find it difficult to survive (Nwosu, 2007). Communication skills are the ability to use different language skills or their sequence for different communicative purposes. Communication skill as a "possession of different types of speech acts as a means of communication at different levels of perfection. In this global world where transactions take place virtually, it may be beyond one's geographical location therefore it behooves a 21st-century entrepreneur to be able to possess appropriate communicative skills.

A balance business education curriculum should be entrepreneurially structured, this will no doubt help to make the students self-reliant or self-employed upon graduation. Business education at its foundation level has an entrepreneurship component. Thus, it is often perceived as education “for and about” business or training in business skills, attitudes, and competencies. Students’ employability skills have been given so much attention that many countries of the world now devise a means by which the students are being tested whether they are equipped with the required skills or not. For instance, the Conference Board of Canada developed a checklist of employability skills that will be needed for one to enter, stay in, and progress in this present era. Employability skills should be embedded in the curriculum; universities employ a range of initiatives to make them more explicit to students for the acquisition of the skill. Employability skills are the non-technical skills and knowledge necessary for effective participation in the workforce. They can include skills such as communication, self-management, problem-solving, and teamwork. They are also sometimes referred to as generic skills, capabilities, enabling skills, or key competencies. Integrate

employability standards into the curriculum, technical educators are required to use innovative teaching techniques. While designing the curriculum, planners should involve the industry partners so that they can incorporate real workplace procedures and systems in instructional strategies so they can be incorporated into the teaching and learning process by using innovative teaching methods and implementing authentic assessment so that students will be able to apply skills in real life situations.

It is based on the background that the study seeks to assess the Business education curriculum and 21st-century entrepreneurial skill acquisition of business education students in Universities in Lagos State.

2. METHODS

The research approach used in this study was descriptive statistics of correlational type, and purposive sampling techniques were used to select the sample size for the study. Purposefully chosen schools were all tertiary institutions offering business Education in Lagos state. The data was collected using the Evaluation of Business Education Curriculum Questionnaire (EBECQ). There were two components to the instrument. The first component contains the participants' biographical information, whereas section B seeks the respondent's perspective on creative skills, communication skills, digital marketing skills, and risk management. In a four-Likert scale format, Section B also contains 20 items. The research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation while the hypotheses were tested using Pearson product-moment correlation (PPMC).

The majority of business education graduates that are supposed to be self-employed are jobless and this is a big problem as these people will resort to all forms of immoralities such as prostitution, rubbery, media misconduct, and cybercrime and thereby having a negative impact on the nation's economy. The business education curriculum does not furnish these students with the appropriate skills needed to be sound and smart entrepreneurs in this competitive 21st century.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. reveals that 47 (46.1%) of the respondents are male, while 55 (53.9%) of the respondents are female. This implies that the female respondents were then the male ones.

Table 1. Percentage distribution of respondents by gender.

Gender	Frequency	percentage %
Male	47	46.1
Female	55	53.9
Total	102	100.0

Table 2 reveals that the Business Education program enable me to create new entrepreneurial ideals with a mean score of 2.42, the Business Education program equipped skills in generating techniques of operating new ways with 2.57, and studying Business Education allows us to find out the source of information when others do not, 3.10, Business Education program enhanced my skills of creativity, 3.11 and Business Education program taught me the skills of combining different elements into a complete project 3.75. A grand mean score of 2.99 which is greater than a benchmark of 2.50 implies that the Business Education curriculum instills creativity skills in Business Education students in universities.

Table 3 shows that the reveals that the Business Education program for enhancing communication skills in business education students in universities.

Table 2. Business education curriculum instills creativity skills in business education students in universities.

S/N	CREATIVE SKILLS	Mean	SD	Remarks
1	A business Education program enables me to create new entrepreneurial ideals	2.42	0.02	Rejected
2	The Business Education program equipped me with skills in generating techniques for operating new ways	2.57	0.01	Accepted
3	Studying business education allows me to find out the source of information when others do not	3.10	0.01	Accepted
4	The Business Education program enhanced my skills of creativity	3.11	0.03	Accepted
5	The Business Education program taught me the skills of combining different elements into a complete project	3.75	1.12	Accepted
Average Mean		2.99		

Table 3. Business education curriculum inculcate good communication skills in business education students in universities.

S/N	COMMUNICATION SKILLS	Mean	SD	Remarks
1	A business Education program enhances communication skills as an entrepreneur	2.34	0.01	Rejected
2	I can create a clear and interesting introduction and conclusion for every meeting through business education	2.67	0.01	Accepted
3	The business education program enables me to use body language when presenting	2.60	0.12	Accepted
4	One or two of the courses in Business Education taught me how to present all information, consciously, and logically	2.71	0.11	Accepted
5	The Business Education program equipped me with skills in using visual aids such as presentation slides, animation, and other media to present findings.	2.75	0.02	Accepted
Average Mean		2.61		

Business Education program for enhancing communication skills as an entrepreneur with a mean score of 2.34, creating a clear and interesting introduction and conclusion of every meeting through Business Education 2.67, Business Education program enable me to use body language when presenting, 2.60, One or two of the courses in Business Education taught me how to present all information clearly, consciously, and logically, 2.71 and Business

Education program equipped me with skills of using visual aids such as presentations slides, animation, and other media to present findings, 2.71. A grand mean score of 2.61 which is greater than a benchmark of 2.50 implies that the Business Education curriculum instills communication in Business Education students in universities.

Table 4 shows that the Business Education program allow me to know the importance of risk management as an entrepreneur with a mean score of 2.72, taught different strategies to reduce risk through the Business Education curriculum, 2.71, there is a course that teaches risk management in Business Education curriculum, 2.63, Risk management skills was instilled in through Business Education program, 2.61 and none of Business Education courses teach me how to manage risk as an entrepreneur 2.32. A grand mean score of 2.59 reveals that the Business Education curriculum embedded risk management skills for Business Education students.

Table 4. Business education curriculum embedded risk management skills for business education students.

S/N	RISK MANAGEMENT	Mean	SD	Remarks
1	The Business Education program allows me to know the importance of risk management as an entrepreneur	2.72	1.02	Accepted
2	I am taught different strategies to reduce risk through the Business Education curriculum	2.71	1.13	Accepted
3	There is a course that teaches risk management in the business education curriculum	2.63	1.02	Accepted
4	Risk management skills were instilled through a business education program	2.61	0.03	Accepted
5	None of the business education courses teach me how to manage risk as an entrepreneur	2.32	0.01	Rejected
	Average Mean	2.59		

Table 5 shows the responses of students on the Business Education curriculum instilling digital marketing skills in business. The results revealed that 38.8% of media literacy skills were enhanced through Business Education study as a course. 36.64% of the Business Education curriculum promotes my understanding of computer literacy, 48.98% trained to be a good digital entrepreneur through the study of Business Education, 44.9% one or two courses in Business Education that teach online business literacy, and 36.74% of Business Education program instill digital marketing skills students.

Table 6 shows the extent to which Business Education students acquire 21st-century entrepreneurial skills. The results revealed that 72.4% of Business Education students acquire skills that prepare them for a future career while 27.6% do not, 71% of Business Education offers 21st-century skills to Business Education graduates while 29% do not, 74.6% of Business Education students are equipped with sound practices of business while 25.4% does not, 69.5% Business Education students possess critical thinking skills while 30.5% do not and 63.4% Business Education students are well prepared for industrial work while 26.6% does not.

Table 7 reveals that the students have a mean score of 35.52 and SD of 19.53 in creative skills and 42.88 and SD of 4.12 in communication skills. In the table, it is seen that there was

a significant relationship between creativity skills and communication skills in the Business Education curriculum ($r = 0.252$, $p = 0.002$). Thus, there is significant evidence to reject the null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between creativity skills and communication skills in the Business Education curriculum.

Table 5. Business education curriculum instills digital marketing skills in business education students.

S/N	DIGITAL MARKETING SKILLS	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Remarks
1	My media literacy skills were enhanced through business education study as a course	38.8	33.7	21.4	8.1	Accepted
2	The business education curriculum promotes my understanding of computer literacy	36.64	30.62	19.38	15.3	Accepted
3	I am trained to be a good digital entrepreneur through the study of Business Education	48.98	27.56	15.3	10.16	Accepted
4	There are one or two courses in business education that teach online business literacy	44.9	32.66	17.34	7.1	Accepted
5	Business Education programs instill digital marketing skills in students.	36.74	28.54	22.44	14.28	Accepted

Table 6. Extent to which business education students acquire 21st-century entrepreneurial skills.

S/N	21st-century SKILLS	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Remarks
1	Business Education students acquire skills that prepare them for future career	31.8	40.6	15.3	12.3	Accepted
2	Business Education offers 21st-century skills to Business Education graduates	30.6	40.4	14.8	14.2	Accepted
3	Business education students are equipped with sound practices of business	47.1	27.5	15.3	10.1	Accepted
4	Business Education students possess critical thinking skills	36.9	32.6	11.4	19.1	Accepted
5	Business Education students are well-prepared for industrial work	36.7	26.7	22.4	14.2	Accepted

Table 7. The relationship between creativity skills and communication skills in the business education curriculum.

Items	Mean	SD	N	r	P
Creativity Skills	35.52	19.53	102	0.212	0.00
Digital marketing skills	22.18	02.14			

Table 8 reveals that the students have a mean score of 35.52 and SD of 19.53 in creativity skills and 22.18 and SD of 2.14 in risk management. In the table, it is seen that there was a significant relationship between creativity skills and risk management in the Business education curriculum ($r = 0.221$, $p = 0.002$). Thus, there is significant evidence to reject the null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between creativity skills and risk management in the Business Education curriculum.

Table 8. The relationship between creativity skills and risk management in business education curriculum.

Items	Mean	SD	N	r	P
Creativity Skills	35.52	19.53	102	0.221	0.00
Risk management	21.11	03.24			

The results from the findings revealed that the Business Education curriculum teaches creativity and communication skills for the successful establishment of small and medium enterprises (SMEs). The study confirms the finding of [Scheers \(2011\)](#) which established that a positive correlation exists between a lack of creative skills and the failure rate of SMEs. This is because the implication of the findings of [Scheers \(2011\)](#) is that the use of creative skills would promote success in SMEs. Therefore, to be successful in the business world, the Business Education curriculum should strengthen the teaching of creativity and communication skills.

The findings also show that for a business to succeed effectively, the Business Education curriculum must acquire communication skills to help set business-attainable goals and objectives. This finding implies that with proper interpersonal skills, Entrepreneurs are bound to be successful. This study conforms to [Yahya et al. \(2011\)](#) who holds the view that communication skills are critical for the success of an entrepreneur. They also reported that since a business operates in a multicultural environment, communication skills are essential for an entrepreneur to continue to compete and be successful in an unstable environment. The findings also show that business education students have learned skills needed for them to be functional entrepreneurs. This agrees with [Awodiji and Oluwalola \(2021\)](#) who found out that the business education curriculum teaches soft skills to students for self-reliance.

4. CONCLUSION

The results from the findings revealed that Creativity and communication skills are required for the successful establishment of SMEs. The findings also show that for a business to succeed effectively, business owners must acquire creativity and communication skills to help set attainable goals and objectives. An enterprise without these basic skills will surely crumble among its competitors as these skills are essential for the survival and growth of business enterprises in achieving organizational goals and objectives. Therefore, business education students should be adequately equipped with the risk management and digital marketing skills which is needed for the establishment of SMEs in Lagos State.

5. AUTHORS' NOTE

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article. Authors confirmed that the paper was free of plagiarism.

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