

# COMBATING SKILL CHALLENGES IN BUSINESS EDUCATION THROUGH ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION IN ANAMBRA STATE.

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## Abstract

*The study was aimed at determining the adequacy of entrepreneurship skills acquired by NCE business education graduates in combating skill challenges in business education. Two research questions were answered and hypothesis was tested at 0.05 significant level. A descriptive survey design was adopted, with a sample of 189 respondents drawn from the population of 227 respondents consisting of 65 business educators and 119 NCE business education graduates in two colleges of education in Anambra State. The main instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire which was validated by experts and with reliability co-efficient of 0.81. The research questions were analyzed using mean with standard deviation while the hypothesis was analyzed using the t-test. It was also revealed that business education graduates were equipped adequately with entrepreneurship skills to combat skill challenges in Anambra State. However, it was revealed that NCE graduates lacked certain entrepreneurship skills. It was recommended that private successful entrepreneurs should be involved in the training so that they could share their practical experiences with the students on how they started. Besides the students should be guided in their placement for Student Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) to their areas of study and in good business enterprises.*

## Introduction

Recently, knowledge, ideas and techniques grow and change so rapidly that they quickly become obsolete (Anikweze, 1995). Coping with such knowledge explosion and change constitutes serious challenge to Nigeria educational sector in general and business education in particular it is known that the implementation of the educational objective in the country and the acquisition of the necessary skills of today have not kept pace with the changing needs of the economy at large. Uzoagulu (2010) noted that the bane of the Nigerian economy was lack of the needed skills and stressed that many lacked the skills, those who seemed to have were half-baked or ill-prepared. Consequently, the country is working tirelessly through its educational

system to equip its citizenry with relevant skills for work.

Despite the introduction of 6 – 3 – 3 – 4 system of education in the country since 1982 many graduates of Nigerian certificate in Education (NCE) and bachelors degree in Technology and vocational Education (TVE), appear not to have fully acquired the needed skills for teaching business education. Aliyu (2006) pointed out that the early Nigerian entrepreneurs pioneered business education in order to meet the needs of their export markets. He emphasized that the missionaries contributed to the evolution of business education. The private (commercial) schools also taught business courses such as book-keeping, type-writing, short-hand, and commerce

Nigeria witnessed a phenomenal growth in the number of institutions offering business courses during the last 20 years. The three component of business education are (i). Accounting Education, (ii) Secretarial Education presently known as office technology and management and (iii) Distributive Education. The three components may not be offered at NCE, Degree, and Higher Degree levels. Business educators are faced with the daunting task of equipping students with the intellectual knowledge and skills adequate for their assignments, making them adaptable to the changing situation globally.

Furthermore, Aliyu (2006) revealed that there was increasing complexity in the business world and only those with good business education knowledge and understanding could grapple with these complexities. Isy (2004) opines that Nigeria is in the era of reforms and things are changing. Consequently, the teacher trainers are to be kept abreast of the changing situations and on going reforms being advocated by the government. Teachers need to be exposed to available innovative learning facilities and methodological approaches in the use of information and communication technology in the learning process. It becomes more obvious in Nigeria because of the earnest desire to catch up with at least some of the developing nations in technology advancement and become globally competitive.

Among the necessary pre-requisite for advancement in business education is the need to equip students with up-to-date skills or what this researcher wishes to call 21<sup>st</sup> century skills. According to Golden (2009), 21<sup>st</sup> century skills encompass everything that students need to succeed in the competitive and increasingly complex world. There is need to understand and

appreciate what is meant by the term skills. Adetokunbo (2009) defined skill to denote expertise or ability developed in the course of training and experience. Skill could be trade or craft skill acquired by apprenticeship. All forms of skill are expected that the performer has to match the demands of a task with the relevant skills.

Uzoagulu (2010) viewed skill to be an art which can be developed with training and practice. It is the ability to do something well. There is need to understand that no one person possesses all the skills required in an enterprise. Everyone has a measure of skill in many areas but a more dominant skill will stand out and mark a person out as skillful in engineering or technology, or whatever field. It is required that a recipient of business education programme should acquire marketable skills and be able to fix the right habits of doing things. The training is carried out to the extent of acquiring productive ability and skills with which to secure employment. Therefore, saleable and manipulative skills are the emphasis in the programme. Thus Lambrecht (2004) defined business education as any programme designed to fit individuals for gainful employment in business and occupations.

A business education graduate teacher is versatile. He is qualified for managerial or administrative position in private and in public sectors and he may decide to be completely on his own. However, the effects of modern technologies on business education are far reaching. Many offices have been and continue to be automated. There are technological innovations in the offices in telecommunications, the computer, word processors, accounting machines and the internet. There is no doubt that graduates of

business education may have employment opportunities in the modern offices but there is doubt as to whether the students are adequately provided with the tools/skills necessary to cope with the challenges in the public and private enterprises.

Innovation in education and training process demand that in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, they must include entrepreneurship education. Nwabuona (2004) views entrepreneurship education as the identification of the general characteristics of entrepreneurs and how potential entrepreneurs can be trained in management techniques needed for effective performance of persons for long time survival of an organization. Entrepreneurship education is considered one of the core courses that must be taught in technology and vocational education. It is a vital tool for making individuals creative and innovative in all areas of work. Small businesses established by entrepreneurs are expected to generate the greatest number of jobs in the modern economy and an increasing vital role in economic development. Entrepreneurship education has the potential when utilized in bridging the gap in skill development in business education. It is an indispensable tool in preparing students for self-employment in business education. According to Nwobasi(2011), many graduates have remained economically dependent on their parents. This is because they lacked the necessary occupational skills to be self employed and effectively function in today's world of work. The old approach where by trainees aim at only paid employment is strongly discouraged as paid employment situation has been exacerbated by the army of graduates of various institutions of learning who hunt

for jobs yearly.

Further Aladekomo (2004) observed that the concern for acquisition of knowledge and skill in Nigeria's tertiary institutions are so enormous to the almost neglect of its implication for employment (or unemployment). He pointed out that the way Business Education, Accountancy, Business Administration are taught in some universities and polytechnics gives little or no justification that the skills and knowledge may prove useful to students after schools as self-employed. The education of entrepreneurs in our schools is now very important, particularly in view of the fact that about 80 percent of the graduates of current education and training programmes may likely secure wage-employment. Self-employment offers the highest economic independence for most young people in many developing countries. Isy(2004) pointed out that among the reforms; the government is advocating is that graduates of TVE should have skills in innovation and entrepreneurship. Consequently the new course GSE 224 entitled "Entrepreneurship Education" is currently being taught at NCE level, irrespective of the student's field of specialization.

This study determined the adequacy of entrepreneurship education acquired by NCE business education graduates in combating skills challenges in Business Education. It becomes necessary to ascertain the opinions of NCE graduates on the utilization of entrepreneurship education in business education.

#### **Research Question 1**

This study was guided by two research questions (1). How adequate are

the graduates of business education equipped with the entrepreneurship skills necessary for self employment as perceived by the business educators in Anambra State?

### Research Question 2

How adequate are the graduates of business education equipped with the entrepreneurship skills necessary for self-employment as perceived by the NCE graduates in Anambra State?

### Hypothesis 1

A null hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance. There is no significant difference between mean scores of business educators and the graduates on the adequacy of entrepreneurship education for self employment of the graduates.

### Method

The study was a descriptive survey, with data gathered through a structured questionnaire administered to a sample of 184 respondents consisting of business educators, teaching in two Federal College of Education (Technical), Umuoze and Nwafor Orizu College of Education, Nsugbe in Anambra State and 119 NCE graduates that have worked but registered for Degree Programme. The

total population was 227. The data analysis and results were based on questionnaire returns of 184 out of 189 representing 97.35 percent. Respondents were required to tick in the appropriate columns very Adequate (VA), Adequate (A), Inadequate (IA) and Very Inadequate (VIA). The mean with standard derivation was used to answer the research questions while the t-test, was used to test the hypothesis. Reference to the research questions, the necessary decision was made according to the adequacy revealed by the results, mean score below 2.50 was inadequate otherwise adequate for mean of 2.50 and above while the null hypothesis would be rejected when the t-calculated was greater than or equal to t-tabulated other wise would not be rejected.

Where VA = Very Adequate = 4  
 A = Adequate = 3  
 IA = Inadequate = 2  
 VIA = Very Inadequate = 1

### Results

**Table I**

Entrepreneurship skills adequately acquired by students for combating skill challenges after graduation as perceived by Business Educators.

S/N	Entrepreneurship Skills	VA	A	IA	VIA	$\bar{X}$	SD	Decision
1.	Business education graduates possess adequate information & communication knowledge & skills for entrepreneurship.	5	20	30	10	2.23	0.34	Disagreed
2.	Business education graduates possess adequate technical skills for entrepreneurship.	10	20	35	-	2.62	0.74	Agreed
3.	Business education graduates possess sufficient managerial skills which are necessary for entrepreneurship success.	5	25	35	-	2.54	0.64	Agreed

4.	Business education graduates are equipped with adequate administrative skill for Entrepreneurship ventures.	5	30	20	10	2.46	0.85	Agreed
5.	Business education graduates acquired adequate human relation skills for life challenges.	15	35	5	10	2.85	0.96	Agreed
6.	Business education graduates acquired adequate decision making skills for life challenges.	10	35	15	5	2.77	0.81	Agreed
7.	Business education graduates are provided with sufficient enterprising skills for life challenges.	5	30	25	5	2.54	0.75	Agreed
8.	Business education graduates are equipped with adequate competitive skills for life challenges.	10	25	20	10	2.54	0.94	Agreed
9.	Business education graduates are equipped with adequate problem solving skills for successful entrepreneurial venture.	-	30	35	-	2.34	0.30	Disagreed
10.	Business education graduates are equipped with adequate accounting skills to become successful entrepreneurs.	11	44	10	-	3.02	0.57	Agreed
11.	Business education graduates are equipped with adequate supervisory and guidance skills to be successful entrepreneurs.	5	25	35	-	2.54	0.64	Agreed
12.	Business education graduates are equipped with adequate communicating skills necessary to be successful entrepreneurs.	15	40	10	-	3.08	0.62	Agreed
13.	Business education graduates are equipped with adequate conceptual skills for life challenges.	5	35	25	-	2.70	0.61	Agreed
14.	Business education graduates are trained to be able to Identify business opportunities to combat life challenges.	10	40	15	-	2.32	0.32	disagreed
15.	Business education graduates possess adequate critical and creative thinking skills for successful entrepreneurship venture.	-	35	30	-	2.34	0.30	disagreed

16	Business education graduates are equipped with risk tolerance skill to face entrepreneurship challenges.	10	10	35	10	2.31	0.92	disagreed
17	Business education graduates are provided with negotiation skills for successful entrepreneurship venture.	-	35	30	-	2.54	0.50	Agreed
18	Business education graduates are provided with practical skills for entrepreneurship.	5	40	20	-	2.77	0.58	Agreed
19	Business education graduates are provided with ethical skills to become good entrepreneurs.	5	40	20	-	2.77	0.58	Agreed
20	Business education graduates are trained to be optimistic.	15	40	10	-	2.08	0.32	disagreed
	Grand					2.57	0.61	

N = 65

**Results in Table I** Entrepreneurship skills adequately acquired by NCE business education graduate for combating skill challenges as perceived by business education in Anambra State.

Table I indicates that 14 out of 20 items were identified as entrepreneurial skills adequately acquired by business education students for combating skill

challenges.

These items are 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 17, 18, 19. Also the table reveals that six out of 20 entrepreneurship skill are not adequately acquired by students. These items are numbered 1, 9, 14, 15, 16, 20.

S/N	Entrepreneurship Skills	VA	A	IA	VIA	$\bar{X}$	SD	Decision
21.	Business education graduates possess adequate information & communication knowledge & skills for entrepreneurship.	37	14	42	26	2.24	0.54	Disagreed
22.	Business education graduates possess adequate technical skills for entrepreneurship venture.	56	49	7	7	3.29	0.83	Agreed
23.	Business education graduates possess sufficient managerial skills which are necessary for entrepreneurship success.	14	91	14	-	3.00	0.49	Agreed
24.	Business education graduates are equipped with adequate administrative skill for Entrepreneurship ventures.	63	42	14	-	3.41	0.69	Agreed
25.	Business education graduates acquired adequate human relation skills for life challenges.	42	77	-	-	3.35	0.48	Agreed
26.	Business education graduates acquired adequate decision making skills for life challenges.	49	70	-	-	3.41	0.49	Agreed
27.	Business education graduates are provided with sufficient innovating/enterprising skills for life challenges.	14	91	14	-	3.00	0.49	Agreed

28.	Business education graduates are equipped with adequate competitive skills for life challenges.	42	56	21	-	3.18	0.71	Agreed
29.	Business education graduates are equipped with adequate problem solving skills for successful entrepreneurial venture.	28	7	84	-	2.14	0.41	disagreed
30.	Business education graduates are equipped with adequate accounting skills to become successful entrepreneurs.	42	57	20	-	3.18	0.70	Agreed
31.	Business education graduates are equipped with adequate supervisory and guidance skills to be successful entrepreneurs.	28	77	14	-	3.12	0.58	Agreed
32.	Business education graduates are equipped with adequate communicating skills necessary to the successful entrepreneurs.	28	77	14	-	3.12	0.58	Agreed
33.	Business education graduates are equipped with adequate conceptual/planning skills for life challenges.	21	71	27	-	2.95	0.64	Agreed
34.	Business education graduates are trained to be able to Identify business opportunities to combat life challenges.	43	7	69	-	2.22	0.33	disagreed
35.	Business education graduates possess adequate critical and creative thinking skills for successful entrepreneurship venture.	49	-	70	-	2.41	0.39	disagreed
36.	Business education graduates are equipped with risk tolerance skill to face	8	81	23	7	2.76	0.66	Agreed
37.	Business education graduates are provided with Negotiation skills for successful entrepreneurship venture.	49	56	14	-	3.29	0.67	Agreed
38.	Business education graduates are provided with practical skills (Goal setting) for Entrepreneurship.	35	63	14	7	3.06	0.81	Agreed
39.	Business education graduates are provided with Ethics skills to become good entrepreneurs.	45	63	11	-	3.29	0.63	Agreed
40.	Business education graduates are trained to be optimistic.	50	49	14	6	3.20	0.84	Agreed
	Grand					2.98	0.60	Agreed

N = 119

On the average, business educators agree that students are equipped adequately with greater entrepreneurship skill to combat life challenges as indicated by the grand mean of 2.7

Results in Table 2 indicate that 16 out of 20 items are identified as entrepreneurship skills adequately acquired by students for combating skills challenges as considered by NCE graduates. These items are 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20. Also the table reveals that four out of 20 entrepreneurship skills are not adequately acquired by NCE graduates to combat

skill challenges. These items are numbered 1, 9, 14, 15. On the average, the NCE graduates agree that they are equipped adequately with greater entrepreneurship skills to combat skill challenges as indicated by the grand mean of 2.98

**Table 3**

The t-test result of comparison between the responses of Business educators and students on the extent to which the utilization of entrepreneurship education has helped graduates of business education to combat skill challenges. S = Significant, NS = Not Significant

Groups	No. of Cases	$\bar{x}$	SD	DF	T-Cal	T-Crit	Decision
Business Educators	65	2.57	0.615	182	4.10	1.65	S
Business students	119	2.98	0.59				

Significant at 0.005 level of significance.

Results in Table III reveals that the calculated t-value (4.1) is greater than the critical t-value (1.645) at 182 degree of freedom and 0.05 level of significance. Since the calculated t-value is greater than the critical t-value, the null hypothesis (H<sub>01</sub>) is rejected. Therefore, the researcher did not uphold the null hypotheses and concludes that significant difference exists between the opinions of the business educators and the business NCE graduates on the adequacy of which the entrepreneurship education acquired by graduates in combating skill challenges in colleges of education of Anambra State.

**Discussion of the Findings**

Research question one addressed the issue of entrepreneurship skills adequately acquired by (NCE) business education graduates for combating skills challenges as perceived by NCE graduates. While Research question two also addressed the same issue of entrepreneurship skills adequately acquired by NCE business graduates for combating skills challenges as perceived by business educators. Results showed that the two groups of respondents on the average considered 14 suggested entrepreneurship skills to be adequately acquired by NCE graduates to combat skill challenges as perceived by business educators. This finding was in line with Nwobasi(2011) view that many graduates have remained economically dependent on their parents because they



lacked the necessary occupational skills to be self employed and effectively function in today's world of work. The result also was in agreement with other prior works calling for equipping students with entrepreneurship skills. Aladekomo(2004) noted that the concern for acquisition of knowledge and skill in Nigeria's tertiary institutions is so enormous to the almost neglect of its implication for self employment. According to Aladekomo the skills and knowledge proved more directly useful to NCE graduate as self employed.

In the same vein, Arogundade(2011) stated that Nigeria government seemed to have woken up to the reality that the country needed to break away from the vicious cycle of poverty, infra structural neglect, corruption, and are now trying to achieve entrepreneurship education that would enhance sustainable development. There was the need to reduce youth, unemployment in Nigeria through entrepreneurial education.

Result of t-test revealed that there was significant difference between the responses of business educators relative to the NCE graduates on the adequacy of entrepreneurship education in combating skill challenges in Anambra State. The current finding was in line with Uzoagulu (2010) observation that the bane of Nigeria was lack of the needed skills and those who seemed to have were ill-prepared.

Consequently, the skills may not be utilized to combat life challenges among other factors. The result was suggestive of the need to consider the utilization of the entrepreneurship education in combating life challenges. Factors like inappropriate environment such as poor markets, lack infra structural facilities,

politicized bank loans, etc.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the findings made, the following conclusions were made. Business education graduates are adequately equipped with entrepreneurship skills to combat skill challenges after graduation. Entrepreneurship education has not being adequately used to combat skill challenges by NCE business education graduates after graduation.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study the researcher proffered the following recommendations.

1. For more effective entrepreneurship skill development, private successful entrepreneurs should be involved in the training so that they can share their practical experiences with the students on how they started.
2. Besides the students should be guided in their posting/placement for student Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) to their area of study and in good business enterprises. The skills may not be adequately provided in some tertiary institutions.
3. Review of the curriculum to emphasize practical skills and deemphasize theory in our school would help so that the student be will sufficiently be equipped with the needed skills in the economy of today.

4. School-based enterprise should be provided. This will help students to identify potential business, plan, create and operate small business using the school as mini-incubators.
5. Creating an economic friendly political environment so that the young graduates can survive.

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