



## Impact of Entrepreneurship, skills Acquisition on Business Education Undergraduates in Rivers State Universities

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### ABSTRACT

The study ascertained the impact of entrepreneurship skills acquisition on Business Education undergraduates in Rivers State Universities. The descriptive survey research design was adopted. Two research questions and two null hypotheses guided the study. The population of the study consisted of 652 which comprises 245 final year students in Rivers State University and (407) final year students of Ignatius Ajuru University of Education Rivers State 2021/2022 Academic Session respectively. The random sampling technique was adopted to draw a sample size of 196 respondents, which denotes 30% of the population. A self-structured questionnaire titled "Impact of Entrepreneurship Skills Acquisition on Business Education Students Questionnaire (IESABESQ)" was the major instrument for data collection. The instrument was designed on a four-point rating scale. The validation of the instrument was conducted by three experts, one in measurement and evaluation and two from Business Education Department in Rivers State University. A pilot test was used to establish the reliability of the instrument and data collected were analyzed using Cronbach Alpha to obtain reliability co-efficient value of 0.87. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer research questions while t-test was used to test the null hypotheses formulated at 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that students of Business Education in Rivers State University and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education accepted to low extent that they are yet to acquire creative thinking skills that will make them viable entrepreneurs after graduation from the university. They accepted to high extents that, they have acquire managerial skills that will help them in planning, directing and controlling their business enterprise. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others, that Business Education students should be willing to carry out a project that will expose them to creative thinking skills and competencies in the Business Education program that will make them self-reliant upon graduation. Students should be engage in learning activities that will exposed them to practical business management skills needed for a successful entrepreneurs upon graduation.

**Key words:** Entrepreneurship, Skills Acquisition, Business Education

### Introduction

Entrepreneurship is the pertinent aspect of the dynamics of all economies, and it is regarded as the driving force in economic development and the creation of jobs (Ronstadt, 2021). Acs, Szerb, and Audio (2019) argued that entrepreneurship is the driver of national development and reduces poverty levels and the consequence of factors like culture, access to funds, and modern technologies. Entrepreneurship involves searching for techniques to build up a company's ability to adopt new ways of carrying on with its activities, establish innovations and goods, and go into new markets in new organizational forms (Mair & Noboa, 2020). Entrepreneurship growth is regarded as a critical link to the total economic development of a country through its positive influence on economic development, particularly at the lower levels (Doh, 2020). Entrepreneurship assists in wealth creation and decreasing unemployment, lead to creative thinking and discoveries and improves a nation's overall production.

Entrepreneurship is concerned with creating reliable source of income earning, not only to the entrepreneur and labour, but other factor inputs. It can, therefore, be stated that entrepreneurship promotes income empowerment in an economy. Entrepreneurship represents veritable vehicle for the achievement of national economic objectives of employment generation and poverty reduction at low investment cost as well as the development of entrepreneurial capabilities including indigenous technology (Audet, 2018). Entrepreneurship occupies a place of pride in virtually every country or state. Because of their significant roles in the development and growth of various economies, they have aptly been referred to as the engine of growth and catalysts for socio-economic transformation of any country. Entrepreneurship has to do with a system of ideas and values that are not ordinarily treated as part of the curriculum, it is the process of using private initiative to transform a business concept into a new venture or to grow and diversify an existing venture or enterprise with high growth potential (Mkpa, 2014). Entrepreneurship is to create values, which enhances different creative thinking and innovative actions as well as create opportunities needed in the society.

Entrepreneurial skill acquisition is when an individual acquires or discovers a particular skill or kind of behavior required for business through training or education to identify and exploit entrepreneurial opportunities for self-employment (Button, Seifert, Chow, Davids & Araujo, 2020). It likewise assists business owners in getting self-confidence and self-esteem and taking part in making decisions at family and community levels. Skill training and higher

education can lead to business opportunities and influence entrepreneurship. The exploitation of entrepreneurial opportunity additionally relies on the business owner's level of education, abilities, or knowledge gained through training, work experience and social network. Training or education generates a prior experience that prepares for entrepreneurial activity (Eunice Abdul, 2018). Entrepreneurial skills are business skills, which an individual acquires personally to function effectively in business as an entrepreneur and be self-reliant (Umunadi, 2014). The skills consist of effective utilization of ideas, information, and facts that help a learner develop competencies, services, or become productive employees of organizations.

Oosterbeek, Van Praag and Ijsselstein (2021) reported that worldwide entrepreneurship skill acquisition program in learning institutions provide the level of education or knowledge required to exploit entrepreneurial chance, which usually assists the economic growth of those nations. Different researches have revealed that skill acquisition is one of the primary and critical aspects of using entrepreneurship opportunities for self-employment. Government has implemented numerous entrepreneurship development programs by bringing in entrepreneurship training courses and developing various departments dealing with Entrepreneurship in numerous tertiary institutions to equip aspiring entrepreneurs with relevant skills.

The goal of those programmes is to impact skills, attitudes, knowledge, and expertise mainly in the young people and give micro-credit to make them able to practice entrepreneurship or create self-employment and assist in generating employment for others.

Skill therefore, is a well-established habit of doing something. It involves the attainment of performance capability. Omidiji and Ogwu (2019) defined skill acquisition as a systematic and sequential development of skills that promotes efficiency and effectiveness in the performance of a specified job. To acquire or possess a skill is to demonstrate the habit of acting, thinking and behaving until a process becomes natural to the individual through reverberation or practice. Skill can be looked at as the ability to acquire an expert knowledge in the formation of a process and it is usually expected that the acquisition takes the process of learning (Olateju, 2013). Skill is a manual dexterity through repetitive performance of an operation. This implies mastery, but the acquisition of mastery or skill requires training to be competent towards the accomplishment of a task; requires focused consistency on the intended technique in achieving the skill or attaining mastery relevant to the given task. Oluwadare (2019) saw skill acquisition as the ability to learn a skill, which can be intellectual such as learning to listen, speak, read and write or manual such as learning to build or make something.

Skill acquisition is the ability to be trained on a particular task or function and become expert in it. Some of the needed skills in business education for one to be self-reliant include communication skills, reading skills, and manipulative skills. Skill acquisition has been describe by many as the recipe for eradicating extreme poverty and hunger by creating avenue for employment, thereby creating job opportunities and wealth creation. Skill acquisition is the process of developing capacities through all levels of education and training, occurring in formal, non-formal, and on-the-job settings, which enable individuals in all areas of the economy to be fully and productively engaged in livelihoods and to have the capacity to adapt their skills to meet the changing demands and opportunities of the economy and labour market especially in the e-world (Enang & Okute, 2019).

Adikwu (2015) opined that inculcating entrepreneurial skills in students at the basic level, which includes: Students-oriented, teacher-oriented, assignment-oriented, games and stimulation methods that will help students explore opportunities for innovation and creative ideas through Practical and involvement in the activities of industries. Obasi & Ohio (2014) also stated that entrepreneurship education was practically oriented, designed, and packaged to equip the students (beneficiaries) with practical skills, knowledge, and orientation for entrepreneurial life, which was geared toward job creation. It was, therefore, a special training given for the acquisition of vocational, technical skills, management skills, and capacity for self-reliance and employment. Thus, it created job and wealth and reduced unemployment, poverty, corruption, and crime, which the youths were prone to as a result of unemployment.

Effective entrepreneurship training program in Nigerian higher education institutions will present many graduates lots of opportunities of starting small scale businesses while waiting to be employed in one's field of study. The entrepreneurship training must be focused on training students to gain skills even in areas outside their school curriculum for graduation in their respective departments. Entrepreneurship is a process of bringing together creative and innovative ideas, combining them with management and organization skills in order to meet an identified need and thereby creating wealth (Mamman, Ugwoke & Ezhim, 2021). Entrepreneurship is the ability to seek opportunities and establish an enterprise based on identified opportunities. It is also the creation of a skill in order to produce something new for a living. For entrepreneurship to thrive well and successfully, entrepreneurs must adequately possess the required entrepreneurial skills. The entrepreneurial skills include: creativity and innovation; a high degree of self-confidence; ability to scan environment; good problem-solving ability; tolerance for ambiguity; ability to integrate the 5ms (men, machine, materials, money and management); and goal-oriented (Eze, Ezenwafor & Igberaharha, 2016).

Creativity is the generation of imaginative new ideas (Mamman, Ugwoke and Ezhim, 2021), involving a radical newness innovation or solution to a problem, and a radical reformulation of problems. According to Mamman, Ugwoke and Ezhim (2021) creative thinking involves not only a cognitive dimension (the generation of new ideas) but also motivation and emotion, and is closely linked to cultural context and personality factors. Creativity involves some form of display of ability to do something and most often in a new way. Therefore, due to the high rate of unemployment in Rivers State, the numerous graduate youths roaming the streets seriously need creative thinking skills. Creativity involves the generation of new ideas or the combination of known elements into something new to provide valuable solutions to a problem. Creative Thinking skills could help the business education graduates in harnessing their potentials in business management to enable them to be successful entrepreneurs.

Aside from creativity skills, graduates of Business Education need managerial skills. The term management is the art of getting things done through people. All entrepreneurs have goals or objectives. Therefore, they plan, organize, direct and control in order to achieve these objectives. Management equally involves good planning, organizing, directing and controlling of workers and materials to effectively and efficiently meet the set objectives of an enterprise. Management skills, according to Ezeani (2012) include: Planning and goal setting, decision making, human relationship, marketing, finance, accounting, management, control, negotiation, venture, launch and managing growth. To Ezeibe, and Edafiogho (2014), management skills are required

by Business Education graduates in starting, developing and managing an enterprise. In the same vein, Eze, Ezenwafor and Igberaharha (2016) stated that entrepreneurs in an organization perform the following functions: making decisions, focus on objectives plan and set policies, organize and staff, communicate, direct and supervise by securing actual performance from subordinates, and control organizational activities.

The entrepreneurial skills could be acquired or developed through business education and training in the colleges of education, universities and other related skill acquisition training centres. According to Iwu (2016) Business Education is the study that equips the individual with the occupational skills and knowledge that will enable him/her fit into, and finds job satisfaction in the labour market. It is a program that prepares its students with skills and competencies needed for self-reliance and employment. Umezulike (2015) defined business education as education for the development of skills/competencies, attitudes and attributes which are necessary for the efficiency of the economic system. Business education generally refers to the plethora of courses designed to provide students with any number of skills needed for success in business, especially those related to launching and running businesses.

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## Statement of the Problem

The goals of Business Education programme are the acquisition of both practical and intellectual skills which will enable individuals to be self-reliant and useful members of the society. It is the statutory duty of the Nigerian higher education to groom the required human capital through relevant manpower training, abilities, attitudes, entrepreneurship skills and knowledge. An Outstanding human capital assumption is that after finishing formal tertiary education, graduates should be able to make a successful transition from these institutions of higher learning to become productive workers, self-reliant entrepreneurs, responsible parents, good citizens, selfless leaders, and live healthy lives. It is assumed, also that on graduation, young people could have developed additional skills through training and experience that could further enhance their opportunities, capabilities and success in their life Endeavour as entrepreneurs in creating jobs for themselves and others instead, contributing to the high rate of unemployment in Rivers State.

Entrepreneurship skills become the answer in addressing the unemployment issues in the State. Ironically, most people engage in self-employment without acquiring much skills and competences in creative thinking skills and management skills. However, it has been widely reported that Business Education graduates' that most graduates of Business Education lack entrepreneurial skills and remain idle in the absence of white-collar jobs after graduation (Ukata, Wechie, & Nmehielie, 2017). It is not certain whether creative thinking skills and management skills acquisition of the entrepreneurship skills that is lacking from the Business Education undergraduates in Rivers State. This is the research gap this study sought to fill empirically.

### *Purpose of the Study*

The purpose of the study was to examine entrepreneurship skills acquire by Business Education undergraduates in Rivers State universities, Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Determine the extent to which creative thinking skills impact on Business Education undergraduates in Rivers State Universities.
2. Ascertain the extent to which managerial skills impact on Business Education undergraduates in Rivers State Universities.

### *Research Questions*

The following research questions would guide the study:

1. To what extent to which creative thinking skills impact on Business Education undergraduates in Rivers State Universities?
2. To what extent to which managerial skills impact on Business Education undergraduates in Rivers State Universities?

### *Hypotheses*

The following hypotheses formulated would guide the study:

1. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of students of Business Education in Rivers State University and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education on the extent to which creative thinking skills impact on Business Education undergraduates in Rivers State Universities.
2. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of students of Business Education in Rivers State University and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education on the extent to which managerial skills impact on Business Education undergraduates in Rivers State Universities.

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## Methodology

### **Research Design**

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design which sought to determine Entrepreneurship skills acquire by Business Education undergraduates in Rivers State universities, without the researcher-manipulating the independent variables. The population of the study was 652 which comprises Two hundred and forty five (245) final year students in Rivers State University and (407) four hundred and seven final year students of Ignatius Ajuru

University of Education in Rivers, 2021/2022 academic session. At the time of the study University of Port Harcourt was Asuu strike, hence two institutions that is offering Business Education were used for the study. The sample size of the study will be 326 which represent 50% of the entire population, 123 students for Rivers State University and 203 for Ignatius Ajuru University of Education. The simple random technique was used to select students of Rivers State University and students of Ignatius Ajuru University of Education that was used for the study.

The instrument for data collection is Questionnaire on Entrepreneurship Skills Acquisition on Business Education Undergraduates (QESABEU). Questionnaire on Entrepreneurship Skills Acquisition on Business Education Undergraduates (QESABEU) were determined by expert in Business Education and Measurement and Evaluation. The experts scrutinized the instruments in terms of quality, relevance and appropriateness of the items. The internal consistency reliability coefficients of the instruments used for data collection for the study were estimated using the Cronbach Alpha method. The reliability index was 0.82. The instrument was therefore adjudged

reliable and suitable enough for the study. A total of 326 instruments were distributed and all the copies were retrieved in good condition and used for the analysis. The data collected for the study were analysis using descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) at the acceptable mean score bench mark of 2.50 and above, as well as Z-test at 0.05 level of significance. **Research Question 1**

To what extent to which creative thinking skills impact on Business Education undergraduates in Rivers State Universities?

**Table 1: Mean Ratings of Creative Thinking Skills Impact on Business Education**

Statement: Creative Thinking Skills		RSU (n = 123)		IAUE (n = 203)		Aggte RKS	
		$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}$	
1	Ability to identify business opportunities	2.14	1.12	2.33	1.13	2.37	LE
2	Set appropriate business goals	2.36	1.16	2.11	1.09	2.24	LE
3	Generation of ideas suitable to the opportunities	2.37	1.12	2.20	1.11	2.29	LE
4	Take decisions and act upon them	2.44	1.17	2.36	1.14	2.40	LE
5	Organize resources for goals attainment	2.95	0.99	2.62	1.17	2.79	HE
6	Evaluate all activities based on set goals	2.47	1.14	2.31	1.13	2.39	LE
7	Make appropriate use of feedback	2.60	1.06	2.56	1.15	2.58	HE
8	Ability to work under pressure	2.52	1.15	2.42	1.20	2.47	LH
9	Ability to cope with uncertainty	2.46	1.14	2.47	1.17	2.47	LH
10	Ability to reason analytically and synthetically	2.35	1.14	2.24	1.12	2.30	LH
	<b>Grand mean</b>	<b>2.49</b>	<b>1.12</b>	<b>2.36</b>	<b>1.14</b>		

**Undergraduates in Rivers State Universities N = 326**

*Field study 2022: Acceptable mean score (mean cut-off point is 2.50 and above)*

Table 1 shows item by item analyses of mean scores and standard deviation of the respondents (RSU and IAUE) on extent to which creative thinking skills impact on Business Education undergraduates in Rivers State Universities. From the result it can be observed that the mean scores and standard deviation of the respondents (RSU and IAUE) on items 5 and 7 are above the decision mean of 2.50, while all other items are below the decision mean of 2.50. With the grand mean of 2.49 and 2.36 for RSU and IAUE are less than the acceptable mean score (mean cut-off point) of 2.50 and above. Since the mean scores of the respondents are below the acceptable mean of 2.50 and above set by the researcher, it can therefore be concluded that Business Education students in the two institutions do have acquire the requisite competency in creative thinking skills.

#### **Research Question 2**

To what extent to which managerial skills impact on Business Education undergraduates in Rivers State Universities?

**Table 2: Mean Ratings of Creative Managerial Skills Impact on Business Education**

Statement: Managerial Skills		RSU (n = 123) IAUE (n = 203) Aggte RKS					
		$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}$	
11	Ability to make decisions and act on such decisions	2.46	1.12	2.62	1.14	2.54	HE
12	Ability to manager time and resources	2.54	1.10	2.72	1.11	2.63	HE
13	Ability to employ quality staff	2.59	1.08	2.82	1.05	2.71	HE
14	Wise sourcing and use of finances	2.60	1.06	2.77	1.17	2.69	HE
15	Proper and adequate keeping or records	2.74	1.07	3.00	1.08	2.87	HE
16	Preparing simple budget and forecasting sales	2.78	0.98	3.04	0.99	2.91	HE
17	Take stock of goods at times	2.80	1.04	2.84	1.02	2.82	HE
18	Keep debtors and creditors' ledgers	2.98	0.97	2.97	1.02	2.98	HE
19	Keeping sales and purchases records daily	2.93	0.99	3.12	0.91	3.03	HE
20	Ability to negotiate effectively	2.87	1.01	2.92	1.06	2.90	HE
	<b>Grand mean</b>	<b>2.73</b>	<b>1.04</b>	<b>2.88</b>	<b>1.06</b>		

**Undergraduates in Rivers State Universities N = 326**

Table 2 shows item by item analyses of mean scores and standard deviation of the respondents (RSU and IAUE) on extent to which managerial skills impact on Business Education undergraduates in Rivers State Universities. From the result it can be observed that the mean scores and standard deviation of the respondents (RSU and IAUE) on all items 5 and 7 are above the decision mean of 2.50. It was observed from the table that all the items mean scores are above the decision mean of 2.50 for RSU and IAUE, this shows that the Business Education students in the both institutions have the ability to managed time and resources with a mean scores of 2.54, 2.74, ability to employ quality staff with a mean scores of 2.59, 2.82, wise sourcing and use of finances with a mean scores of 2.60, 2.77, proper and adequate keeping Of records with a mean

scores of 2.74, 3.00, take stock of goods at all times with a mean scores of 2.80, 2.84, keep debtors and creditors' ledgers with a mean scores of 2.98, 2.97, keeping sales and purchases records daily with a mean scores of 2.93, 3.12 and ability to negotiate effectively with a mean scores of 2.87, 2.92. On the whole the grand mean of 2.73 and 2.88 for RSU and IAUE, it could therefore, be concluded that Business Education students have acquire managerial skills to manage their business effectively for productivity and continuity.

**Hypothesis 1**

There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of students of Business Education in Rivers State University and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education on the extent to which creative thinking skills impact on Business Education undergraduates in Rivers State Universities.

**Table 3: Z-test Analysis of Students of Business Education in Rivers State University and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education on the extent to which Creative Thinking Skills Impact on Business Education Undergraduates in Rivers State Universities**

Variables	N	Mean	SD	Std Error	Df	Z-calc	Z-crit	A	Remarks
RSU	123	2.49	1.12	0.11	3.24	1.29	1.96	0.05	Accept
IAUE	203	2.36	1.14						

The result of the z-test analysis above shows that the calculated value of z is less than the table value that is (z calc (1.29) > z cri (1.96)). Since the calculated z-value is less than tabulated value, it implies that the computed value is not significant at the 0.05 level. Therefore, the null hypothesis of no significant difference between the mean ratings of students of Business Education in Rivers State University and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education on the extent to which creative thinking skills impact on Business Education undergraduates in Rivers State Universities is accepted. The implication is that there is no significant difference between students of Business Education in Rivers State University and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education on the extent to which creative thinking skills impact on Business Education undergraduates in Rivers State Universities. This suggest that students of Business Education in Rivers State University and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education accepted to low extent that they are yet to acquire creative thinking skills that will make them viable entrepreneurs after graduation from the university.

## Hypothesis 2

There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of students of Business Education in Rivers State University and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education on the extent to which managerial skills impact on Business Education undergraduates in Rivers State Universities.

**Table 4: Z-test Analysis of Students of Business Education in Rivers State University and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education on the extent to which managerial Skills Impact on Business Education Undergraduates in Rivers State Universities**

Variables	N	Mean	SD	Std Error	Df	Z-calc	Z-crit	$\alpha$	Remarks
RSU	123	2.73	1.04	0.10	3.24	1.59	1.96	0.05	Accept
IAUE	203	2.88	1.06						

From the table, it could be observed that the computed value of it (1.59) is less than the critical value (1.96). Since the calculated value is less than the critical value, the null hypothesis is accepted at 0.05 level of significant. The implication is that the difference is no significant that it cannot be due to chance. It could be inferred that both students of Business Education in Rivers State University and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education accepted to high extent that they have acquire managerial skills that will help them in planning, directing and controlling their business enterprise that will make they to independent and also creating jobs for others.

## Discussion of Finding

The finding of this study revealed that students of Business Education in Rivers State University and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education accepted to low extent that they are yet to acquire creative thinking skills that will make them viable entrepreneurs after graduation from the university. The finding of this study is in agreement with the finding of Abanyam (2014) whose findings showed that business education students do not possess very clear creative thinking skills for self-employment and sustainable development. This was supported by Mamman, Ugwoke and Ezhim (2021) they opined that creative thinking involves not only a cognitive dimension (the generation of new ideas) but also motivation and emotion, and is closely linked to cultural context and personality factors. Creativity involves some form of display of ability to do something and most often in a new way. Creativity involves the generation of new ideas or the combination of known elements into something new to provide valuable solutions to a problem.

The finding of this study shows that both students of Business Education in Rivers State University and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education accepted to high extent that they have acquire managerial skills that will help them in planning, directing and controlling their business enterprise that will make they to independent and also creating jobs for others. The finding of this study is in line with the finding of Oko (2011) who found that there is the need for entrepreneurs and employees to acquire the required managerial competencies in order to be successful in their enterprises. In line with this view Odokoro (2014) results revealed that small and medium scale entrepreneurs required resource management competencies for economic success. In the same view Ezeibe, and Edafiohgo (2014) observed that management skills are required by Business Education graduates in starting, developing and managing an enterprise. In the same vein, Eze, Ezenwafor and Igberaharha (2016) stated that entrepreneurs in an organization perform the following functions: making decisions, focus on objectives plan and set policies, organize and staff, communicate, direct and supervise by securing actual performance from subordinates, and control organizational activities.

## Conclusion

Based on the finding it was concluded that Business Education graduates are grossly lacking creative thinking skill that would have enable them to reason analytically and synthetically in identifying business opportunities and generating ideas suitable for the opportunity. Taking prompt and appropriate decision that will enhance business growth. Business Education graduates are capable of decision-making and are also able to act on their entrepreneurial decisions. Taking accurate records of business transaction.

## Recommendations

Based on the finding the following recommendations were made:

1. Business Education students should be willing to carry out a project that Will expose them to creative thinking skills and competencies in the Business Education programme that will make them self-reliant upon graduation.
2. Students should be engage in learning activities that will exposed them to practical business management skills needed for a successful l entrepreneurs upon graduation.

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