



# **Determination of Entrepreneurship Skills for Self Reliance of Business Education Students in Tertiary Institutions in Rivers State**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The study determined the entrepreneurship potentials of Business Education students for self reliance in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. The study adopted the survey research design. The population of the study consisted of all final year Business Education students in three tertiary institutions in Rivers State, with a total population as 572. The entire population of students from the three tertiary institutions was used as the sample for the study. A structured research instrument titled: Determination of Entrepreneurship Potentials of Business Education Students for self reliance in higher institutions in Rivers state Questionnaire” (DEPBSSSTIRS) was designed by the researcher. The instrument was validated by two other experts in Business Education and Measurement and Evaluation. The reliability of the instrument was determined using the test-retest method. The coefficient of the responses was computed using Pearson’s’ Product Moment Correlation, which yielded a coefficient value of 0.84. Mean and standard deviation was used to analyze the research questions, while the hypotheses were tested using one way Analysis of Variance at a significance level of 0.05. From the study, it was revealed that Business Education students in tertiary institutions in Rivers State possess the potentials for self reliance in respect of innovative skills and achievement need. Based on the findings, it was recommended that since Business Education Students possess innovative skills and achievement need as entrepreneurship potentials for self reliance; management of tertiary institutions should engage them in diverse innovative processes to generate new business ideas and revenue. They should also be encouraged to seek the help of Business role models and mentors to crystallize their potential.

**Keywords:** Business Education, self reliance, Entrepreneurship

## **INTRODUCTION**

Business Education is a specialized program of instruction designed to provide students with knowledge, skills and attitudes leading to employability and advancement in office occupations as well as teaching business subjects. It is thus a program that equips individual students with functional, suitable attitude and value to operate in a particular work environment for expected self reliance.

Osuala (2009) defined Business Education as a program of study which provides students with information and competencies which are needed in managing personal business affairs. Its courses such as: book-keeping, accounting, shorthand, transcription and typewriting relate to the modern occupational scene. Skills and knowledge learnt in the above subjects are used for the day to day management of business affairs in the society.

Ojeifo (2013) contended that entrepreneurship is determined by the willingness and the ability of an individual, a firm or an organization to identify an environmental change as well as creating opportunity to produce goods and services. This is because entrepreneurship is about taking risks, creating new ventures that did not previously exist. In other words, it is the practice of creating new wealth through implementation of new concepts.

Entrepreneurship potentials as identified by Ojeifo (2013) reflect on offering functional education to students that will enable them to be self-employed and self oriented, creative and innovative, identifying novel business opportunities, graduating with adequate training in risk management as well as creating employment. Thus, this principle became the structural framework on which the entrepreneurship potential is justified. On this note, students need to be provided with the relevant knowledge, skills and motivation to encourage entrepreneurship success in a variety of settings.

Entrepreneurship is the capacity to harness the right quantity, quality and combination of resources that are consistent with profit making under risks and uncertainty (Essien, 2006). In other words, it is the totality of self-asserting attributes that enable a person to identify latent business opportunities, together with capacity to organize needed resources with which to profitably take advantage of such opportunities in the face of calculated risks and uncertainty. It is on this note that entrepreneurship is seen as a key driver of the economy.

Entrepreneurship education focuses on developing understanding and capacity for pursuit of entrepreneurial behaviors, skills and attributes in widely different contexts. It can be portrayed as open to all. The propensity to behave entrepreneurially is not exclusive to certain individuals. Different individuals will have a different mix of capabilities for demonstrating and acquiring entrepreneurial behaviors, skills and attributes. These behaviors can be practiced, developed and learned; hence it is important to expose all students to entrepreneurship education.

The National Universities Commission embarked on the promotion of the program in tertiary institutions in Nigeria with the following objectives: Empowerment of the people (students), creation of employment, diversification in business and Individual confidence. The objectives are promising towards reducing unemployment and boosting the economy of the nation. On this note, the researcher discovered that in practice, some universities simply design one or two entrepreneurial courses, taught by some lecturers who have no practical experience of entrepreneurship while students take such courses as a requisite for graduation.

The European Union Commission (EUC 2003) reported that Business Education seeks to provide students with the knowledge, skills and motivation to encourage entrepreneurial success in a variety of settings; variations of entrepreneurship education are offered at all levels of schooling through graduate university program.

Finally, entrepreneurial skills and attributes provide benefits to the society, even beyond their application to business activities. Obviously, this is where the need arises to determine the relevant potentials in course of carrying out daily responsibilities. These relevant technical and business skills need to be provided for Business Education students who choose to be self reliant.

### **The Problem**

The problem of the study centers on the noticeable large-scale unemployment situation staring graduates of Nigerian universities in the face in recent times. According to Osuala (2009), unemployment is one of the most disturbing problems facing Federal, State governments and unemployed graduates. It is observed that Nigerian graduates and youths do not have access to entrepreneurship training, and equipment. Entrepreneurial learning environment and support tools are not available in our schools. Adequate teachers to provide the needed appropriate skills and attitude are not available and where available, they are in short fall (Ude, 1999). The situation has been exacerbated by large number of graduates and school leavers from primary, secondary and tertiary institutions without any commensurate arrangement for their gainful employment (Essien, 2006). This situation further requires a way-out through the introduction of entrepreneurship education in Nigerian tertiary institutions, with the hope of improving the challenge of unemployment prevalent among Nigerian university graduates.

The unemployment situation in Nigeria is rising at a geometrical proportion largely due to unfriendly environment which repels investment. Despite various intervention programmes such as National Directorate of Employment (NDE) and National Poverty Alleviation Program (NAPEP) by the Federal Government of Nigeria, the problem of unemployment remains unabated. Realizing the failure of Federal Government in creating employment, several States and Local governments introduced schemes in which people are trained to acquire one skill or the other and the participants are given a stipend or an interest

free loan to start a cottage or small business at the end of the program (Ebiringa, 2011). The main purpose of these schemes is to reduce the rate of unemployment in their respective states. Higher institutions of learning are not left out of this quest for solution to the unemployment problem. Theirs is geared toward entrepreneurship education.

However, in this exercise, it is observed that students face the challenge of maximizing their potentials; they narrow their dreams to finding employment rather than gaining skills for self reliance and these inhibit them from fully delving into entrepreneurship, and developing their own businesses. This further translates to a situation where students are not being as involved as expected, amidst all the capacity building. Based on this observation, the researcher intended to inquire how many students have actually developed entrepreneurship potentials to enable them successfully start their own businesses. Hence, the problem of this study was to generate empirical data to determine the entrepreneurship potentials of Business Education students for self reliance in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study is to determine entrepreneurship potentials for entrepreneurship skills needed for self reliance among Business Education students in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. Specifically, the objectives of the study are to:

1. Determine potentials for innovative skills for self reliance among Business Education students in tertiary institutions.
2. Determine potentials for achievement need for self reliance among Business Education students in tertiary institutions.

### **Research Questions**

1. To what extent do Business Education students in tertiary institutions in Rivers State possess potentials for innovative skills for self reliance?
2. To what extent do Business Education students in tertiary institutions in Rivers State possess potentials for achievement need for self reliance?

### **Hypotheses**

1. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of Business Education students in Rivers State University, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education and Federal College of Education (Technical) Omoku in respect of potentials for innovative skills for self reliance.
2. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of Business Education students in Rivers State University, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education and Federal College of Education (Technical) Omoku in respect of achievement potentials for self reliance.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This study adopted the descriptive survey research design. The population of the study consisted of five hundred and seventy two (572) final year Business Education students in three tertiary institutions in Rivers State. The entire population was used as sample for the study since the population was small enough to manage. The instrument used in obtaining primary data was a questionnaire; it was designed using a four-point rating scale with four response options of: Very High Extent (VHE), High Extent (HE), Moderate Extent (ME) and Low Extent (LE). To determine the content and face validity of the questionnaire, it was submitted to two experts in Measurement and Evaluation in Rivers State University. Their comments and responses were used to effect corrections on the final copy of the questionnaire. The reliability of the instrument was determined using test-re-test method. The questionnaire was administered twice to Business Education students in Federal University Otuoke, Bayelsa State, from which the two sets of scores were obtained. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) was used to correlate the two sets of scores as a way of testing the reliability of the instrument. A coefficient of 0.84 was obtained which indicates high level of reliability. A total of five hundred and seventy two (572) copies of the questionnaire were administered while four hundred and eighty eight (488) completed copies were retrieved which is 85.3 percent retrieval. The data collected which were based on the research questions that guided the study were analyzed using the mean statistics and standard deviation while the hypotheses were tested using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA).

**RESULTS**

**Research Question 1:** *To what extent do Business Education students in tertiary institutions in Rivers State possess potentials for innovative skills for self reliance?*

**Table 1: Mean rating of the extent to which Business Education students in the three tertiary institutions in Rivers State possess innovative skills as entrepreneurship potential for self reliance**

| S/N                   | Questionnaire Items                                      | (RSU)       |             | (IAUOE)     |             | (FCOE)      |             | Decision |
|-----------------------|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|----------|
|                       |  | $\bar{X} 1$ | SD1         | $\bar{X} 2$ | SD2         | $\bar{X} 3$ | S.D3        |          |
| 1.                    | Ability to introduce changes                             | 3.28        | 0.90        | 3.55        | 0.72        | 3.20        | 1.05        | Agreed   |
| 2.                    | Ability to look at things differently at different times | 3.54        | 0.67        | 3.58        | 0.70        | 3.30        | 0.03        | Agreed   |
| 3.                    | Ability to adapt to changes                              | 3.33        | 0.85        | 3.48        | 0.82        | 3.39        | 0.96        | Agreed   |
| 4.                    | Ability to turn things around for better                 | 3.44        | 0.75        | 3.25        | 0.99        | 3.47        | 0.90        | Agreed   |
| 5.                    | Ability to experiment with new ideas                     | 3.11        | 1.01        | 3.17        | 0.99        | 3.72        | 0.64        | Agreed   |
| 6.                    | Ability to constantly generate new ideas                 | 3.29        | 0.85        | 3.44        | 0.78        | 3.26        | 1.02        | Agreed   |
| 7.                    | Ability to be unique in one's taste and orientation      | 3.16        | 0.93        | 3.07        | 1.01        | 3.05        | 1.11        | Agreed   |
| <b>Grand Mean/S.D</b> |  | <b>3.31</b> | <b>0.85</b> | <b>3.36</b> | <b>0.86</b> | <b>3.34</b> | <b>0.82</b> | Agreed   |

**Source: Survey Data, 2018**

The result of Table 1 indicated that ability to introduce changes, Ability to look at things differently at different times, ability to turn things around for better, Ability to adapt to changes, ability to experiment with new ideas; all have a mean set value  $\geq 2.50$ . Further analysis indicated that ability to adapt to changes and ability to be unique in one's taste and orientation, ability to constantly generate new ideas and ability to look at things differently at different times also have a mean value  $\geq 2.50$ . Thus, it was generally observed that in the three institutions, respondents accepted all the items and agreed that Business Education students in the three tertiary institutions in Rivers State possess potentials for innovative skills for self reliance with grand mean scores of 3.31, 3.36 and 3.34 respectively.

**Research question 2:** *To what extent do Business Education students in tertiary institutions in Rivers State possess achievement need as entrepreneurship potential for self reliance?*

**Table 2: Mean rating of the extent to which Business Education students in the three tertiary institutions in Rivers State possess achievement need as entrepreneurship potential for self reliance**

| S/N | Questionnaire Items   | (RSU)       |             | (IAUOE)     |             | (FCOE)      |             | Decision |
|-----|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|----------|
|     |   | $\bar{X} 1$ | SD1         | $\bar{X} 2$ | SD2         | $\bar{X} 3$ | S.D3        |          |
| 8.  | Ability to find enjoyment in something just to prove that you can do it.      | 3.22        | 0.89        | 3.52        | 0.75        | 3.20        | 1.03        | Agreed   |
| 9.  | Ability to compete  | 3.05        | 1.00        | 3.43        | 0.91        | 3.38        | 0.81        | Agreed   |
| 10. | Ability to seek confrontation to get needed results                           | 3.13        | 0.97        | 3.46        | 0.87        | 3.28        | 0.96        | Agreed   |
| 11. | Ability to engage in odd jobs at early age                                    | 3.08        | 0.97        | 3.45        | 0.88        | 3.06        | 0.98        | Agreed   |
| 12. | Ability to have personal satisfaction that goes beyond money to spend on self | 3.24        | 0.82        | 3.37        | 0.80        | 3.50        | 0.79        | Agreed   |
| 13. | Ability to identify opportunities from bad situations                         | 3.24        | 0.89        | 3.48        | 0.82        | 3.30        | 0.96        | Agreed   |
| 14. | Ability to engage in tasks without knowledge of all the potential problems    | 3.09        | 0.99        | 3.51        | 0.80        | 3.25        | 0.94        | Agreed   |
| 15. | Ability to make independent decisions   | 3.16        | 0.90        | 3.46        | 0.87        | 3.29        | 0.94        | Agreed   |
| 16. | Ability to accept failure without admitting defeat                            | 3.12        | 0.94        | 3.51        | 0.77        | 3.23        | 0.96        | Agreed   |
| 17. | <b>Grand Mean/S.D</b>   | <b>3.80</b> | <b>0.93</b> | <b>3.46</b> | <b>0.83</b> | <b>3.27</b> | <b>0.93</b> |          |

**Source: Survey Data, 2018**

From the analysis of table 2, it was shown that Ability to make independent decisions, ability to find enjoyment in something just to prove that you can do it, ability to seek confrontation to get needed results and Ability to accept failure without admitting defeat have a mean set value  $\geq 2.50$  and were considered agreed. Also, it was confirmed that from the findings that Ability to have personal satisfaction that goes beyond money to spend on self , Ability to engage in odd jobs at early age and Ability to identify opportunities from bad situations were subscribed to as they all have a mean set value  $\geq 2.50$ . It is thus inferred that the respondents from the three tertiary institutions, agreed that Business Education students in tertiary institutions in Rivers State possess potentials for achievement need for self reliance with grand mean scores of 3.80; 3.46 and 3.27 respectively.

**Test of hypotheses**

**Ho<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of Business Education students of Rivers State University, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education and Federal College of Education (Technical) Omoku in respect of potentials for innovative skills for self reliance.

**Table 3: Summary of analysis of variance (ANOVA) on the mean response of Business Education students in three tertiary institutions in Rivers State in respect of potentials for innovative skills for self reliance**

| Source of Variation | Sum of squares | Df         | Mean of squares | F.cal | F.crit | Level of sign. | Decision |
|---------------------|----------------|------------|-----------------|-------|--------|----------------|----------|
| Between groups      | 2.32           | 2          | 2.32            | 0.13  | 3.02   | 0.05           | Accepted |
| Within groups       | 202.3          | 486        | 0.41            |       |        |                |          |
| <b>Total</b>        | <b>204.62</b>  | <b>488</b> |                 |       |        |                |          |

**Source: Survey Data, 2018**

The result of table 3 indicated that the calculated F. ratio (0.13) was less than the f-critical value (3.02) at the degree of freedom of 2 and 0.05 significant levels. Hence, the null hypothesis was accepted that there is no significant difference in the mean rating of Business Education students in Rivers State University, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education and Federal College of Education (technical) Omoku in respect of potentials for innovative skills for self reliance.

**Ho<sub>2</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of Business Education students of Rivers State University, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education and Federal College of Education (Technical) Omoku in respect of achievement potential for self reliance.

**Table 4: Summary of analysis of variance (ANOVA) on the mean response of Business Education students in three tertiary institutions in Rivers State in respect of achievement potential for self reliance**

| Source of Variation | Sum of squares | Df         | Mean of Squares | F.cal | F.crit | Level of sign. | Decision |
|---------------------|----------------|------------|-----------------|-------|--------|----------------|----------|
| Between groups      | 0.17           | 2          | -7.02           | -5.65 | 3.02   | 0.05           | Accepted |
| Within groups       | 280.81         | 486        | 0.46            |       |        |                |          |
| <b>Total</b>        | <b>280.98</b>  | <b>488</b> |                 |       |        |                |          |

**Source: Survey Data, 2018**

The result of table 4 indicated that the calculated f. ratio of -4.65 is less than the f-critical value of 3.02 at 0.05 significant level. Hence, the null hypothesis was accepted that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of Business Education students of Rivers State University, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education and Federal College of Education (Technical) Omoku in respect of achievement potential for self reliance.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the findings, it was generally revealed that Business Education students in tertiary institutions in Rivers State possess potentials for innovative skills and achievement need for self reliance. These potentials are linked to performance and growth through improvement in efficiency, productivity, quality and competitiveness as the process provides the medium through which students can convert opportunities into workable, profitable, and marketable ideas. Nevertheless, in agreement with Ude (1999), there are enormous challenges that may seem to inhibit these students from taking up personal interests in entrepreneurship to manage their own businesses from start up to a profitable level. Some of these challenges involve limits to the types of technical trainee positions allowed for Business Education students in course of their training, students' inability to gain access to expertise through exposure to the skill of leadership and business mastery from mentors and role models among others. According to Ford (2004), lack of access to credit for financing businesses also poses another challenge to Business Education students.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following recommendations were made to address the challenges hindering start ups for Business students:

1. Due to the discovery that Business Education students in tertiary institutions in Rivers State possess innovative skills, it is recommended that the management of the higher institutions engage them in diverse innovative processes. Some of these activities can be in form of projects, collaborations with renowned innovators for trade exhibitions among others. In course of this, students can generate new business prospects which can serve as a source of income for the institution. This should in turn be rewarded where necessary to enable the students maximize their innovative skills.
2. Since Business Education students in tertiary institutions in Rivers state possess achievement need as entrepreneurship potential, they should be given guidance and counseling services alongside their entrepreneurial training so as to enable them to gainfully utilize the potential to achieve. They can also be encouraged to seek the help of Business role models and mentors. This is in order to transform their mindsets- from the fear of failure and the belief in the security of white collar jobs to using their potentials for entrepreneurship pursuits which yield self reliance.

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