

# Assessment of Entrepreneurial Skill Needs of Business Education Students for Self Sustainability in Bayelsa State, Nigeria

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**Abstract:** The main purpose of this study was to determine the entrepreneurial skills needed by business education students for self sustainability in Bayelsa State. The design adopted for the study was descriptive survey. The study was carried out in Niger Delta University, Bayelsa state. The population for the study comprised of four hundred and fifty (450) students in the department of Vocational and Technology Education studying business education. The total sample size of one hundred (180) business education students in Niger Delta University, Bayelsa state was randomly selected for the study. Based on the findings of this study, it could be concluded that entrepreneurial skills are required for effective business operation. Lack or absence of these skills affects graduates in embarking on any business venture. The entrepreneurial skills would enable the students to handle all types of documents for their customers and thereby meet their customers' satisfaction successfully. The skills could serve both as operational guidelines for those in the business as well as training package for new entrants. Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made: Business education students should endeavour to acquaint themselves with all the relevant skills necessary to create, and maintain customers' needs. The findings of this study should also be made available to skills acquisition centres as a training manual.

**Keywords:** Entrepreneurial Skill, Needs, Business Education, Self Sustainability

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## 1. Introduction

Entrepreneurship according to [3] is a process of bringing together creative and innovative ideas, combining them with management and organizational skills in order to combine people, money and resources to meet an identified need and thereby create wealth. It is the willingness and ability of an individual to seek out investment opportunities, established and run an enterprise successful [13]. Entrepreneurship is thus, the process of learning the skills needed to assume the risk of establishing a business and sustaining it. [5] opined that the skills required in any of the area of business related programme promotes training in entrepreneurship as well as equip graduates with requisite skills establish and run small businesses of their own. [8] defined an entrepreneur as a person who has developed an ongoing business activity where none existed before. [37] defined an entrepreneur as

someone who starts or operates a business venture and assumes the responsibility for it. In the same vein, [7] defined an entrepreneur as a person who chooses or assumes risks, identifies business opportunity, gathers resources, initiates actions and establishes an organization or enterprise to meet such market opportunities. Entrepreneurial skills are those activity skills that will enable an entrepreneur to manage his own enterprise. In the context of this study, the entrepreneurial skills are the knowledge, attitudes and behaviours that will enable an entrepreneur to identify business opportunities, stimulate creativity and transform ideas into practical and economic activities for sustainable livelihood. These skills are needed to perform certain activities such as managerial, accounting, marketing, human relations, technical and information and communication

technology skills to run an enterprise successfully. [10] stated that managerial skills are needed for planning, decision making, human relationship, innovative changes, visionary leadership and ability to manage change.

According to [3] entrepreneurship skills are simply business skills which individuals acquire to enable them effectively function in the turbulent environment as an entrepreneur or self employed. [4] also pointed out that it takes special skills to succeed as an entrepreneur. [9] also noted that most entrepreneurial skills come by learning and practicing. Nevertheless, the various skills embedded in business related programmes need to be explored and learn by small scale business operators for them to succeed as entrepreneurs.

### 1.1. Statement of the Problem

Entrepreneurship deals with the process of recognizing a business opportunity, operating and maintaining that business though people engage into it without acquiring much skills and competences that will enable them to effectively operate the business [5]. As a result of this attitude, failure followed instead of success.

Their failure according to [13] is not because they do not have the necessary capital and machines to stay afloat, but because they lack prerequisite skills needed to grow from a small position to a bigger one, and as well to remain in the business. In Nigeria, many financing policies were designed and implemented by successive government to boost the sector but the results contradicted expectations. Virtually no comparative study ever place Nigeria ahead of any of her co-developing countries in terms of small scale businesses performance and growth.

The situation now is that most businesses related graduates make little or no attempt to established small scale business of their own despite the abundant business opportunities in the country. Instead, they continue to besiege ministries and government offices in search of jobs that are either extremely few in supply or even non-existent. Those that have even established one cannot even stand the test of time. The question now is what entrepreneurial skills are needed by business education students for self sustainability? This paper therefore aimed at examining the entrepreneurial skills required by business education students for self sustainability in Bayelsa state.

### 1.2. Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to determine the entrepreneurial skills needed by business education students for self sustainability in Bayelsa State. Specifically, the study sought to:

- i. determine the managerial skill needs required by business education students for self sustainability in Bayelsa State;

- ii. determine the technical skill needs required by business education for self sustainability in Bayelsa State;
- iii. determine the marketing skill needs required for self sustainability in Bayelsa State;
- iv. determine the ICT skills required by business education for self sustainability in Bayelsa State.

### 1.3. Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study.

- i. What are the managerial skill needs required by business education students for self sustainability in Bayelsa State?
- ii. What are the technical skill needs required by business education students for self sustainability in Bayelsa State?
- iii. What are the marketing skill needs required by business education students for self sustainability in Bayelsa State?
- iv. What are the ICT skill needs required by business education students for self sustainability in Bayelsa State?

## 2. Methodology

The design adopted for the study was descriptive survey. The study was carried out in Bayelsa State which is situated between latitude 4.30°N in the Equator and Longitude 6.00°E of the Greenwich Meridian. The population for the study comprised of four hundred and fifty (450) students in the Department and Vocational and Technology Education studying Business Education. The total sample size of one hundred (180) business education students in Niger Delta University, Bayelsa state was randomly selected for the study representing 40% of the population. The instrument for the study was a structured questionnaire; titled "Questionnaire on Entrepreneurial Skill Needs of Business Education Students of Niger Delta University for Self Sustainability in Bayelsa State" (QESNBESNDUSSBS) was used to elicit the opinions of the respondents on the subject matter. The instrument was face validated by three experts in measurement and evaluation unit of the Department of Teacher Education, Niger Delta University, Bayelsa state and was tested to be highly reliable using Cronbach alpha formula and a reliability of 0.87 was obtained. The questionnaire items were rated using a four point Likert scale and nominal values were assigned thus; Strongly Agree (4) Agree (3) Disagree (2) Strongly Disagree(1). The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation. The level of agreement with each questionnaire items was determined based on the midpoint for the scale, which is 2.50. Mean scores of 2.50 and above were regarded as accepted while mean scores below 2.50 were regarded as unacceptable.

## 2.1. Presentation of Results

**Table 1.** Research question one: What are the managerial skills needs required by business education students for self sustainability in Bayelsa State?

Managerial skills needs required by business education students for self sustainability in Bayelsa State

S/N	Items	X	S.D	REMARKS
1.	Adapting basic steps in setting up business	3.55	0.45	Agreed
2.	Planning and co-ordinating business resources	3.38	0.62	Agreed
3.	Taking decisions as at when due	3.35	0.65	Agreed
4.	Bringing in innovative ideas and changes in the business	3.2	0.8	Agreed
5.	Able to receive and attend to relevant	3.5	0.50	Agreed
6.	Knowledge of human relations and communicative ability	3.61	0.39	Agreed
7.	Setting up appropriate business plans	3.55	0.45	Agreed
8.	Able to determine risks and risk management	3.38	0.62	Agreed
9.	Able to create, maintain and sustain customers	3.35	0.65	Agreed
10.	Able to appraise employees performance	3.2	0.80	Agreed

The data presented in the table above showed that all items have their mean value ranging from 3.20 to 3.61 indicating that all the respondents agreed that all the items are managerial skills needs required by business education students for self sustainability in Bayelsa State. The items had a standard deviation range of 0.83 to 0.39 which shows that the respondents were close together in their responses to each items and were not far from the mean.

**Table 2.** Research Question two: What are the technical skills needs required by business education students for self sustainability in Bayelsa State?

Technical skills needs required by business education students for self sustainability in Bayelsa State

S/N	Items	X	S.D	REMARKS
1.	Operate office machines	3.56	0.61	Agreed
2.	Help others to learn needed skills and knowledge	3.23	0.76	Agreed
3.	Use different word processing packages/software	3.20	0.80	Agreed
4.	Communicate ideas, thoughts, information and messages in form of letters, reports manuals etc.	3.50	0.83	Agreed
5.	Exhibit self-confidence to select appropriate reproduction processes in collating/binding documents	3.20	0.80	Agreed
6.	Manage materials and facility resources	3.56	0.61	Agreed
7.	Proof-reading and preparing mailable documents.	3.38	0.73	Agreed

The data presented in the table above showed that all the seven items have their mean value ranging from 3.20 to 3.56 indicating that all the respondents agreed that all the items

are technical skills needs required by business education students for self sustainability in Bayelsa State. The items had a standard deviation range of 0.83 to 0.61 which shows that the respondents were close together in their responses to each items and were not far from the mean.

**Table 3.** Research question three: What are the marketing skills needs required by business education students for self sustainability in Bayelsa State?

Marketing skills needs required by business education students for self sustainability in Bayelsa State

S/N	Items	X	S.D	REMARKS
1.	Protect company name and resources from hackers	3.55	0.45	Agreed
2.	Making goods and services available at the right place, price and with right communication	3.38	0.62	Agreed
3.	Identify the new trends in marketing environments	3.35	0.65	Agreed
4.	Using social networking and direct marketing to market business products	3.2	0.80	Agreed
5.	Forecasting, estimation and marketing and information research	3.55	0.45	Agreed
6.	Knowledge of seasonal fluctuations of goods in the market	3.38	0.62	Agreed
7.	Knowledge of capturing and retaining customers	3.35	0.65	Agreed

The data presented in the table above showed that all items have their mean value ranging from 3.20 to 3.55 indicating that all the respondents agreed that all the items are marketing skills needs required by business education students for self sustainability in Bayelsa State. The items had a standard deviation range of 0.80 to 0.45 which shows that the respondents were close together in their responses to each items and were not far from the mean.

**Table 4.** Research question four: What are the ICT skills needs required by business education students for self sustainability in Bayelsa State?

ICT skills needs required by business education students for self sustainability in Bayelsa State

S/N	Items	X	S.D	REMARKS
1.	Access the internet through the use of mobile phones/telephone	3.55	0.45	Agreed
2.	Conference calls/video conferencing for staff meetings	3.38	0.62	Agreed
3.	Database Microsoft access for storage and administration of staff data	3.35	0.65	Agreed
4.	Spreadsheets like-Microsoft excel to manage the company's budget	3.2	0.8	Agreed
5.	Browse and download information from the internet	3.5	0.50	Agreed
6.	Produce text documents	3.61	0.39	Agreed
7.	Use scanning machines to send messages	3.55	0.45	Agreed
8.	Create, format, save and print documents	3.38	0.62	Agreed

The data presented in the table above showed that all items have their mean value ranging from 3.20 to 3.56 indicating

that all the respondents agreed that all the items ICT skills needs required by business education students for self sustainability in Bayelsa State. The items had a standard deviation range of 0.83 to 0.39 which shows that the respondents were close together in their responses to each items and were not far from the mean.

## 2.2. Discussion of the Findings

The findings in Table 1 revealed that all the managerial skills are highly required by business education students in Niger Delta University to achieve self-sustainability on graduation.

[29] opined that managerial skills are the various steps needed by an entrepreneur to mobilize men, money, machine, material and financial resources in order to produce new products. The findings of the study were in line with the findings of [15] that managerial skills include adopting basic steps in starting a business, delegate authority and monitor performance, determine risks and risk management, among others.

The findings of the study in Table 2 revealed that all the ten technical skills were highly required by business education students' for self sustainability. The result also support [38] that technical skills are mainly on work settings because the major goal of any skill is to help prepare the worker to improve on his competency in managerial role.

Data presented in Table 3 revealed that marketing skills are highly required for any effective enterprise. The finding revealed that marketing skills are required to identify new trends in the environment, knowledge of seasonal fluctuations and segmenting marketing according to customers' needs. This is in line with [23] that marketing is meeting consumers' needs profitably and satisfying them by communicating marketing ideas to the consumers.

The findings on ICT skills in Table 4 revealed that the ten skills are required by business education students to achieve success in business enterprise. These findings are corroborated by the findings in the work of [25] that ICT skills should include; word processing skills such as formatting editing keyboarding, ability to use scanning machines, to select reproduction activities. According to [33] business operators use word processing for memos, reports, and correspondence, among others. ICT skills are necessary tools for business operators because many people, who do not own personal computers, go to business centres to type their documents.

## 3. Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it could be concluded that entrepreneurial skills are required for effective business operation. Lack or absence of these skills affects graduates in embarking on any business venture. The entrepreneurial skills would enable the students to handle all types of documents for their customers and thereby meet their customers' satisfaction successfully. The skills could serve both as operational guidelines for those in the business as

well as training package for new entrants. The study has provided information on entrepreneurship skills that are required for sustainable business operation. Therefore, the business education students need to combine all the skills identified or listed therein for effective business management.

## Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

- 1) Business education students should endeavour to acquire themselves with all the relevant skills necessary for them to create, and maintain their customers' needs;
- 2) The findings of this study should also be made available to skills acquisition centres as a training manual;
- 3) It is recommended that all those who are not ICT compliant should acquire the skills to be relevant in the society.

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