

Research Article

Business Educators' Rating of Entrepreneurial Skills for Effective Implementation of Office Education Curriculum in Colleges of Education in South-South, Nigeria

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Abstract

The study ascertained business educators' ratings of entrepreneurial skills for effective implementation of office education curriculum in colleges of education in South-South, Nigeria. A research question guided the study. Two null hypotheses were tested. The study adopted descriptive survey research design. The population of the study comprised 234 business educators in the nine public colleges of education in South-South, Nigeria. The entire population was studied because the population size was manageable. The instrument for data collection was 11-item structured questionnaire. The instrument was validated by three experts. Cronbach's alpha was used to determine the reliability of the items instrument and obtained coefficient value of 0.78. Data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer research question, while t-test and analysis of variance were used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that business educators rated entrepreneurial skills highly effective for implementation of office education curriculum in colleges of education in South-South, Nigeria. Gender and years of teaching experience significantly influenced the business educators' ratings of entrepreneurial skills for effective implementation of office education curriculum in colleges of education in South-South Nigeria. Based on the findings, the study concluded that the ratings of business educators proved that entrepreneurial skills are highly effective for the implementation of office education curriculum in colleges of education in South-South Nigeria in order to prepare the students for self-employment and self-reliance on graduation, thereby achieving the objective of the programme. It was therefore recommended among others that there should be conscious efforts by school management in organizing capacity building seminar and workshop for business educators on effective teaching of entrepreneurship courses in office education curriculum that will best equip their students for gainful employment and self-reliance on graduation.

Keywords: Business Educators, Entrepreneurial Skills, Office Education Curriculum, Implementation, Colleges of Education.

Introduction

Colleges of education is one of the tertiary education institutions in Nigeria that is charged with the responsibility of producing teachers for primary and junior secondary schools and awarding Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) after successful completion of the three year programme. These NCE graduates can teach business related subjects at primary and junior secondary schools level; work in other sectors of the economy or be self-employed. The Nigerian Academy of Management Administration (NAMA, 2014) defined colleges of education as an educational programme created to prepare individuals to be leaders and practitioners in education and related human service fields by expanding and deepening understanding of education as a fundamental human endeavour in helping society define and respond to its educational responsibilities and challenges. The goals of colleges of education include to encourage further the spirit of enquiry and creativity in teachers, provide teachers with the intellectual and professional background adequate for their assignment and make them adaptable to changing situations, to provide the

technical knowledge and skills necessary for agricultural, industrial, commercial, economic and educational development of Nigeria, give training and impart the necessary skills for the production of technicians, technologists and other skilled personnel who shall be self-reliant and enterprising (FRN, 2014).

In effort to achieving the above mentioned goals, there is a paradigm shift from show me your certificate syndrome to practical demonstration of what one can do in the field of endeavor. This partly informed the decision of curriculum planners in incorporating entrepreneurship in business education programme (office education inclusive) in Nigerian tertiary institutions. This is to enable the students acquire occupational skills for self-reliance on graduation and in turn contribute to social-economic development of Nigeria. Most African nations are social-economically backward and the resultant effects have been devastating. Nigeria as a nation is characterized with ugly trends such as poverty, hunger, unemployment, religious intolerance, education inequality, moral decadence and zeal for quick money. The restiveness of idle, hungry and poverty-driven youths now yielded to political thuggery, cultism, Boko-haram insurgency, banditry, kidnapping, robbery, money rituals, internet fraud and other forms of social vices as a means of survival. All these are happening because majority of the citizenry seem not have possessed entrepreneurial skills that could set them up to be self-reliant. This means being job creators rather than job seekers. Amesi (2018) rightly noted that skill is like a key used in opening doors of fortune whereas lack of it is a major cause of unemployment and corruption. This could be as a result of citizenry inability to possess entrepreneurial skills for them to become self-reliant.

Entrepreneurship skills as defined by Ademiluyi (2022) are business skills which an individual acquires to enable the individual function effectively in the turbulent business environment as an entrepreneur. These skills include human relations skills, time management skills, creativity skills, innovative skills, persistence and perseverance skills, technical skills, business management skills, personal entrepreneurial skills, and self-motivation skills. Therefore, entrepreneurial skills acquired through office education is capable of equipping the graduates with abilities in creating diverse job prospects, operative functions, crime reduction as well as promotes self-reliance.

Office Technology and Management Education (OTME) (Office Education) is formally known as secretarial studies. As a result, secretarial studies curriculum was reviewed and renamed Office Technology and Management (OTM) by the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE, 2004). Since then, polytechnics and universities have adopted the name OTM while OTME hereby referred to in this study as office education includes the addition of education for colleges of education being a pure teacher-training institution. Office education is used in place of OTME to maintain the character limit exceeded by the use of OTME in the title of this study. Office education programme is an aspect of business education offered in tertiary institutions which include colleges of education. Nwosu (2022) asserted that office education programme in colleges of education has been structured to equip its recipients with the necessary knowledge, attitude and practical skills toward achieving economic development and ensuring self-reliance among its graduates. Hence, office education is that aspect of business education programme that enable students to learn a variety of computer applications and office skills required to work as secretary, teaching of business subjects, entrepreneurial and administrative support positions. Ojohwoh (2014) described office education as an effective, efficient, productive and functional educational programme which prepares graduates for self-employment, paid employment and self-realization.

The objectives of office education as imbedded in business education programme includes: to produce competent NCE graduates who will teach business subjects in secondary schools and other related educational institutions; to produce competent NCE graduates who will commence the development of the much-desired revolution in vocational and entrepreneurial skills from the primary through secondary schools; to equip graduates with the right business competencies for a life of work in the office as well as for self-employment among others (NCCE, 2020). It could be deduced from the aforementioned objectives that the programme was packaged to equip students with knowledge, competencies and specific skills to enable them function as business studies teachers in public and private sectors of the economy; successfully hold positions as secretaries, office managers, administrative assistants, entrepreneurs as well as being self-reliant on graduation. Thus, Okoli (2019) stated that office education avails its learners with the acquisition of skills, knowledge and competencies that could make them proficient in secretarial profession.

The accomplishment of aforementioned objectives is mostly traceable to business educators who are the programme implementers and specialist in business education, which office education is a part. Though, in the context of this study, business educators will be used interchangeably with business education lecturers

who are core certificated business education specialists or associates, who teaches business education courses in colleges of education. As such, they must be knowledgeable, skillful and competent enough to teach and be able to transfer the skills to the students. This is because, the field of office education is built around functional skills leading to efficiency, effectiveness and productivity of the recipients, especially now that technology innovation has influenced every aspect of human endeavour including education sector and has launched the world into a knowledge based economy with new ways of doing things. Nnaji (2018) asserted that educators are the instruments through which skills are developed in students. Therefore, business educators have to be dynamic and updated as they learn, unlearn and re-learn new skills to be abreast with innovations, mechanizations and automations as captured in the office education curriculum.

Curriculum is the totality of all that is required to be learnt by a learner in a school setting. According to Oluwadare *et al.*, (2022), a curriculum is an embodiment of all knowledge, skills and attitudes which a nation, through her schools, impart to her citizens; emphasizing that knowledge in the definition covers facts, theories, principles, generalizations and rules needed to be acquired to be certified as competent in the field. The curriculum in context of this study is for office technology and management education (office education) at the college of education level. Hence, its effective implementation will guarantee the production of quality manpower for the teaching, industry, practicing secretaries, entrepreneurs and responsible citizens of the society. Azih and Ama (2018) stated that implementation is the vehicle that drives curriculum plan into practice. Thus designing a curriculum does not bring about the desired end until the implementation stage which is based on the set objectives is achieved. Nwosu (2022) asserted that the objective of any education cannot be achieved if the planned programme for such level of education is not well implemented. Azih and Ama (2018) reported that the challenges of office education are the implementers not being updated with appropriate skills, since nothing can compensate for a poor teacher. Hence educators, according to Uzoka (2022), are the real implementers of educational programme and that without them; the other resources will be unable to make any meaningful impact on the students. Importantly, business education graduates with Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) are expected among other occupational prospects, to teach business studies in junior secondary schools, which is the foundation of skills' acquisition for future employment or self-reliance.

Skills most times are developed through training, experience and constant practice. Skill is an attribute of performance which does not rely solely upon a person's fundamental capabilities but must be through training, practice and experience (Ohaka and Tiku, 2020). Ejiogu (2018) noted that skill is the act of possessing the ability, power, authority or competency to do the task required of an individual on the job. Auwal and Abdulkadir (2020) submitted that proper skills acquisition by business education students will assist them, guide and direct them to be self-reliant member of the society.

Entrepreneurial skills are transferable core skills that represent essential functional and commercial understanding required by the 21st century workplace, necessary for career success at all levels of employment and for all levels of education (Akele, 2020). Entrepreneurial skills are required to imbibe and improve self-reliance among office education students on graduation. Njoku *et al.*, (2020) listed entrepreneurial skills very much needed by entrepreneurs to include human relations skills, employability skills, technical skills, conceptual skills, decision making skills, problem-solving skills, high productivity skills, self-esteem skills, leadership skills, creativity skills, marketing skills, time management skills, negotiation skills, self-motivation skills, accounting skills, inter-personal skills and critical thinking skills. Entrepreneurial skills business educators inculcate in their students through office education programme is targeted at enhancing their self-reliance upon graduation; rather than relying on government for employment. But they could start up small scale businesses or even establish private schools for themselves. By this, they have created jobs and could employ other job seekers thereby reducing unemployment and helping to boost the economic state of the nation. Okeke *et al.*, (2020) put forward the rationale behind students' inability to acquire entrepreneurial skills for self-reliance upon graduation to include the following: teaching and learning environment has not really supported the practical based curriculum; training institutions are still disseminating skills of the 19th century; intensification of industrial training is poor; training tools and equipment are obsolete; students are half-baked with skills that would have provided them with occupation abilities for self-employment and affective domain has not been given a fair place in office technology education.

Consequently, given the above factors, business educators who implement the office education curriculum must brace up and harness other resources to groom office education students with entrepreneurial skills, for them to competently apply them in work situations on graduation. This will also help to avert the stories

that touch the heart, as reported by Umoru and Yakubu (2018), that higher education programme in Nigeria had fallen short of expectations and as a result, many graduates of those institutions lack basic skills required by the labour market. Emphasizing the short fall in required skills has also resulted to mass unemployment among the graduates. Importantly, business educators are in good position to acquire entrepreneurial skills for effective implementation of the curriculum so as to achieve the mandate of business education programme as enshrined in the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE, 2020).

Despite the relevance of 21st century skills for effective implementation of office education curriculum, employment opportunities still appear to be eluding NCE business education graduates which office education graduates is inclusive. This could be attributed to skill dearth or failure on the part of business educators to inculcate in the students required skills inherent in course specifications of the revised curriculum of colleges of education (NCCE, 2020). Ado (2014) explained that most employers of labour in the nation consider the graduates half-baked, unemployable and unsuitable without further training. Lending credence to this assertion, Umoru and Zakka (2019) reported that secretarial graduates are believed not to possess the requisite work skills. Ementa (2021) observed that especially in business education, there appears to be high rise in the number of unemployed graduates. Thus, acquiring requisite skills by business educators for effective implementation of office education curriculum is critical to addressing the aforementioned challenge. However, the need for acquisition of entrepreneurial skills for effective implementation of office education curriculum could vary with business educators' gender and years of teaching experience.

Gender of business educators is a factor that could influence their acquisition of requisite entrepreneurial skills for effective implementation of office education curriculum. To some persons, male business educators could be more apt to acquire skills than their female counterparts given that they appear to be more practical-oriented than the females. To some others, females tend to be more disposed than their male counterparts in the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills for effective implementation of office education curriculum because, in vast majority of cases, females are more preferred for secretarial jobs than the males. Oyinloye and Umoru (2022) observed slight difference with male lecturers having higher mean response ratings than their female lecturers on online pedagogical skills needed for effective online teaching and learning of office technology and management courses. Similarly, Ademiluyi (2022) reported that gender has a significant positive influence on polytechnic graduating students' rating of entrepreneurship education on motivation, self-efficacy and intentions. Njoku *et al.*, (2020) reported that gender and years of teaching experience has had a significant positive impact on entrepreneurial aspirations. Sorlie *et al.*, (2021) discovered that there is significant influence of gender and school-related factors on the level and growth of social skills and girls received higher scores than boys.

Regarding years of teaching experience, there is the tendency of business educators with long years of teaching experience to be so accustomed to the use of analogue ways of office management, that they display unfavourable disposition towards the need to upgrade their skills for effective implementation of office education curriculum. On the other hand, there is the likelihood of business educators with long years of teaching experience who have become used to the traditional style of office management to wish to try something novel unlike their counterparts with lesser years of teaching experience. However, Okoli, *et al.*, (2023) found no significant difference on the opinions of male business educators and their female counterparts on instructional strategies for improving the utilization of online platforms for teaching and learning of word processing in colleges of education. It will be interesting to find out if gender and years of teaching experience moderated business educators' skills acquisition need for effective implementation of office education curriculum in South-South, Nigeria. Thus, the focus of this study is to ascertain business educators' rating of entrepreneurial skills for effective implementation of office education curriculum in colleges of education in South-South, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

One major objective of business education is to equip graduates with skills to function as successful entrepreneurs and create jobs instead of being job seekers. This is as a result of change from traditional office practices (shorthand and typewriting courses) with replacements which include computer keyboarding, desktop publishing, entrepreneurship and online marketing. The inclusions of these courses are to further enrich office education curriculum to meet up the modern day occupational prospects of Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE), Office Technology and Management Education (OTME) graduates. Despite this development, OTME NCE graduates appear not to have possessed requisite entrepreneurial

skills adequate to establish and manage their own office/business, teaching industry and for self-reliance. It is rather worrisome given that positions that NCE OTME graduates are supposed to occupy are being dominated by graduates in other disciplines who possess the entrepreneurial skills.

Consequently, the trend of unemployment or under-employment among graduates of NCE OTME appears to have continued unabated. Thus, business educators who teach in office education programme are to rate the right entrepreneurial skills effective for the implementation of office education curriculum that would best equip the students with occupational and self-employment abilities amongst others on graduation. Therefore, the study is to ascertain business educators' ratings of entrepreneurial skills for effective implementation of office education curriculum in colleges of education in South-South, Nigeria.

Research Question

One research question guided the study:

- 1) What are business educators' ratings of entrepreneurial skills for effective implementation of office education curriculum in colleges of education in South-South, Nigeria?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

- 1) Male and female business educators do not significantly differ in their mean ratings of entrepreneurial skills for effective implementation of office education curriculum in colleges of education in South-South, Nigeria.
- 2) Business educators do not significantly differ in their mean ratings of entrepreneurial skills for effective implementation of office education curriculum in colleges of education in South-South, Nigeria based on their years of teaching experience.

Method

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population of the study comprised all 234 (134 males and 100 females) business educators in the nine public colleges of education in South-South, Nigeria. All the 234 business educators were used because the population size was manageable. A structured questionnaire having two sections: section 'A' was on demographic data of respondents; while section 'B' contained 11-item question statements with a 5-point rating scale and weighted as: Very Highly Effective (VHE, 4.50-5.00), Highly Effective (HE, 3.50-4.49), Moderately Effective (ME, 2.50-3.49), Lowly Effective (LE, 1.50-2.49), Very Lowly Effective (VLE, 1.00-1.49) was used for data collection. The instrument was validated by three experts. Cronbach's alpha reliability test was used to determine the internal consistency of the instrument which yielded coefficient value of 0.78. The instrument was administered with the help of nine research assistants. Out of the 234 copies of the questionnaire distributed to the respondents through direct approach, 226 copies (representing 97 percent) were retrieved with an attrition rate of 8 copies (representing 3 percent) and used for data analysis. The data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research question while t-test and ANOVA were used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level. In taking decisions, any mean score of 3.00 and above was regarded as effective while mean score less than 3.00 was regarded as not effective respectively. A null hypothesis was rejected where the calculated p-value was less than the 0.05 alpha level as it meant that there was significant difference. Conversely, where the calculated p-value was equal to or greater than the 0.05 alpha level, it meant that there was no significant difference and the hypothesis was not rejected. However, where there was a disagreement among the three groups, the Scheffe post-hoc test was conducted to determine the group in which such disagreement relates.

Results

Research Question 1

- 1) What are business educators' ratings of entrepreneurial skills for effective implementation of office education curriculum in colleges of education in South-South, Nigeria?

Data in Table 1 shows the cluster mean score of 4.03 indicating that business educators rated entrepreneurial skills highly effective for the implementation of office education curriculum in colleges of education in South-South, Nigeria. The analysis of the items further indicates that business educators rated one item out of the 11 listed items as very highly effective. The mean rating for the one item ranged of 4.70. The remaining 10 items were rated by business educators as highly effective with mean ratings ranging from 3.50 to 4.30. The standard deviation of 0.45 to 0.62 showed that respondents are not wide apart in their mean ratings which indicate homogeneity.

Table 1. Business educators' mean ratings of entrepreneurial skills for effective implementation of office education curriculum in colleges of education in South-South, Nigeria (N =226).

| S/N | Entrepreneurial skills | \bar{x} | SD | Remarks |
|--------------|--|-----------|------|-----------------------|
| 1 | Ability to explore and teach self-employment skills to students | 4.30 | 0.48 | Highly effective |
| 2 | Ability to lead students in experimental and practical works | 4.20 | 0.55 | Highly effective |
| 3 | Ability to match entrepreneurship theory with practice in instructional delivery | 4.70 | 0.45 | Very highly effective |
| 4 | Ability to teach ways of exploring business opportunities for profit making | 3.64 | 0.57 | Highly effective |
| 5 | Ability to be innovative and add value to products | 3.54 | 0.58 | Highly effective |
| 6 | Ability to be creative and ahead of competitors | 4.24 | 0.53 | Highly effective |
| 7 | Ability to take timely and right decisions | 4.20 | 0.55 | Highly effective |
| 8 | Ability to take risks associated with business | 3.50 | 0.62 | Highly effective |
| 9 | Ability to organize resources for business start-ups | 3.54 | 0.58 | Highly effective |
| 10 | Ability to persevere in the face of oppositions | 4.24 | 0.53 | Highly effective |
| 11 | Ability to motivate people to achieve business objectives | 4.20 | 0.55 | Highly effective |
| Cluster mean | | 4.03 | | Highly effective |

Hypothesis 1

Male and female business educators do not significantly differ in their mean ratings of entrepreneurial skills for effective implementation of office education curriculum in colleges of education in South-South, Nigeria.

Table 2. Summary of t-test analysis on the male and female business educators' mean ratings of entrepreneurial skills for effective implementation of office education curriculum in colleges of education in South-South, Nigeria.

| Gender | N | \bar{x} | SD | α | df | t-cal | p-value | Decision |
|--------|-----|-----------|------|----------|-----|-------|---------|-------------|
| Male | 131 | 3.12 | 0.12 | 0.05 | 224 | 1.151 | .002 | Significant |
| Female | 95 | 3.10 | 0.10 | | | | | |

Table 2 shows that mean score of male business educators ($M = 3.12$, $SD = .12$) was significantly greater than that of female business educators ($M = 3.10$, $SD = .10$). Table 2 showed t-calculated value of 1.151, at degree of freedom of 224 and the p-value of .002. Testing at alpha level of 0.05, the p-value is significant, since the p-value is less than the alpha value (0.05). This implies that male and female business educators differ significantly in their mean ratings of entrepreneurial skills for effective implementation of office education curriculum in colleges of education in South-South, Nigeria. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Hypothesis 2

Business educators do not significantly differ in their mean ratings of entrepreneurial skills for effective implementation of office education curriculum in colleges of education in South-South, Nigeria based on their years of teaching experience.

Table 3. Summary of analysis of variance on the business educators' mean ratings of entrepreneurial skills for effective implementation of office education curriculum in colleges of education in South-South, Nigeria based on their years of teaching experience.

| | Sum of squares | df | Mean square | F | P-value | Remarks |
|----------------|----------------|-----|-------------|--------|---------|-------------|
| Between groups | 3.336 | 2 | 2.168 | 15.029 | .000 | Significant |
| Within groups | 4.839 | 223 | 2.025 | | | |
| Total | 8.175 | 225 | - | | | |

As shown in Table 3, the F-ratio (df: 2/223) is 15.029 and the P-value (.000) was less than the stipulated 0.05 level of significance (P-value < alpha level). It was therefore revealed that there is a significant difference in the business educators' mean ratings of entrepreneurial skills for effective implementation of office education curriculum in colleges of education in South-South, Nigeria based on their years of teaching experience. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Table 4. Scheffe post-hoc test on the business educators' mean ratings of entrepreneurial skills for effective implementation of office education curriculum in colleges of education in South-South, Nigeria based on their years of teaching experience.

| Years of working experience | Years of working experience | Mean difference | P-value | Remarks |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|---------|-------------|
| 1-5 years | 6-10 years | -.17474* | .000 | Significant |
| | Above 10years | -.19234* | .000 | |
| 6-10 years | 1-5years | .17474* | .000 | |
| | Above 10years | -.01261 | .680 | |
| Above 10 years | 1-5 years | .19234* | .000 | |
| | 6-10 years | .01261 | .680 | |

As indicated by the post-hoc test (Scheffe test) in Table 4, there is a significant difference on the entrepreneurial skills for effective implementation of office education curriculum in colleges of education as rated by business educators who had 1-5 years of teaching experience and those who had 6-10 years of teaching experience and above 10 years of teaching experience. There is also a significant difference between those who had 6-10 years of teaching experience and those who had above 10 years of teaching experience.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of the study on research question one revealed that business educators rated entrepreneurial skills highly effective for implementation of office education curriculum in colleges of education in South-South, Nigeria. This finding agrees with Njoku *et al.*, (2020). The authors listed entrepreneurial skills very much needed by entrepreneurs to include human relations skills, employability skills, technical skills, conceptual skills, decision making skills, problem-solving skills, high productivity skills, self-esteem skills, leadership skills, creativity skills, marketing skills, time management skills, negotiation skills, self-motivation skills, accounting skills, inter-personal skills and critical thinking skills. This implies that effective implementation of office education curriculum no doubt, will equip office technology and management education (OTME) students with entrepreneurial skills for employment generation and self-reliance on graduation. The findings also showed that gender and years of teaching experience significantly influenced business educators' mean ratings of entrepreneurial skills for effective implementation of office education curriculum in colleges of education in South-South, Nigeria. The finding on gender difference agrees with that of Njoku *et al.*, (2020) who reported that gender and years of teaching experience has had a significant positive impact on entrepreneurial aspirations. However, it disagrees with Okoli *et al.*, (2023) who found no significant difference on the opinions of male business educators and their female counter-parts on instructional strategies for improving the utilization of online platforms for teaching and learning of word processing in colleges of education. The implication of the finding was that gender and years of teaching experience of the business educators had influence on the entrepreneurial skills needed for effective implementation of office education curriculum in colleges of education in South-South Nigeria.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that, the ratings of business educators proved that entrepreneurial skills are highly effective for the implementation of office education curriculum in colleges of education in South-South Nigeria in order to prepare the students for self-employment and self-reliance on graduation, thereby achieving the objective of the programme.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

- 1) There should be conscious efforts in organizing capacity building seminar and workshops for business educators to acquire entrepreneurial skills for effective teaching of entrepreneurship courses in office education curriculum that will best equip their students for gainful employment and self-reliance on graduation.
- 2) Management of colleges of education should not relent in enforcing quality assurance practices in ensuring that practical oriented courses such as entrepreneurship education are taught as stipulated in the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) academic minimum standards.

Declarations

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