

**ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILL NEEDS OF GRADUATES OF COLLEGES
OF EDUCATION FOR SELF-RELIANCE**

BY

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Abstract

The study was carried out to determine the entrepreneurial skill needs needed by secretarial education graduates of colleges of education for self-reliance in Oyo State. Four research questions and two null hypotheses guided the study. The study adopted a descriptive research design that made use of 40 items structured questionnaire. The population for the study was 238 respondents. The questionnaire was face-validated by three experts. Cronbach Alpha method was used to determine the reliability of the items and a coefficient of 0.75 was obtained. The questionnaire was administered on 238 respondents by the researcher. Two hundred and thirty-eight copies of the questionnaire were returned and considered valid. The analysis was done using mean and standard deviation for research questions and t-test statistic for the hypotheses. The findings revealed that the 40 entrepreneurial skills needs were needed by the secretarial education graduates for self-sustainability. Based on these findings, the researcher recommended among others that secretarial education graduates should be encouraged to acquaint themselves with all the relevant entrepreneurial skills that will enable them to be sustained in the society.

Keywords: *Entrepreneurial Education, skill, Secretarial Education, Self-Sustainability.*

Introduction

The higher educational programmes in Nigeria had fallen short of expectations, and as a result, many of the graduates of these institutions lack basic skills needed in the world of work. The shortfall of basic skills needed has caused mass unemployment among the graduates. The pace in technological changes in the field of business and education has affected the labour market. The educational programmes at all levels should be made relevant to provide graduates with the needed entrepreneurial skills that will make them to engage profitably in any economic activities which will in turn accelerate the growth and development of the country.

To be able to teach entrepreneurship education, the lecturers themselves, especially the secretarial education programme of colleges of education should be well equipped with entrepreneurial skills to enable them develop an entrepreneurial orientation needed for employability. The secretarial education is a course of study offered in colleges of education that equip its graduates with practical, professional and entrepreneurial skills. It is also an aspect of vocational business education programme that gives training and imparts necessary skills that will provide the recipients adaptable to changing situations in the economy. This is in line with the National Policy on Education (2004) that one of the objectives of vocational and technical education was to give training and impart the necessary skills leading the production of craftsmen.

A skill is any established habit of performing a task in a way that is acceptable by a worker in his specialization. It is the ability to use one's knowledge effectively and readily in performing an act or a habit of doing particular task competently (Okorie, 2000). The concept of

entrepreneurship has been defined by academics according to their orientation and understanding of the subject matter. Osborne (2000) defined entrepreneurship as a process of creating new systems, processes, mobilizing men, materials, machines and financial resources so as to produce new product or serve new materials. Jain (2013) defined entrepreneurship as a behaviour, attitude and an approach to the way people create new values in the market, technology consumption, habit, build sustainable institutions and organisations. The author noted that by developing resources and people in a unique way to develop a new organisation, entrepreneurship involves creating new products, new markets, new business and technology. The person involved in these activities is an entrepreneur. Arogundade (2011) defined an entrepreneur as a person who had developed an ongoing business activity where none existed before. UNESCO (2006) defined an entrepreneur as someone who starts or operates a business venture and assumes the responsibility for it. In the same vein, Anyakoha (2009) defined an entrepreneur as a person who chooses or assumes risks, identifies business opportunity, gathers resources, initiates actions and establishes an organisation or enterprise to meet such market opportunities. Entrepreneurial skills are those activity skills that will enable an entrepreneur to manage his own enterprise. By this study, the entrepreneurial skills are the knowledge, creativity and transform ideas into practical and economic activities for sustainable livelihood. These skills are needed to perform activities such as managerial, accounting, marketing, human relations, technical and information and communication skills to run an enterprise successfully. Hisrich in Etonyeaku (2011) stated that managerial skills are needed for planning, decision making, human relationship, innovative changes, visionary leadership and ability to manage change.

Anyakoha (2009) stated that accounting and financial skills are needed to be able to interpret financial statements, knowledge of costing and ability to understand gross and net profit of any business outfit. The knowledge skill will enable the entrepreneur (Graduate) to grasp the understanding of business management while the technical know – how skills will enable him to run the day-to-day activity of this enterprise. Therefore, for the secretarial education graduate to be able to achieve self-employment status, requires entrepreneurial skills which will enable him to establish small scale business for self-sustainability.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the entrepreneurial skills needed by secretarial education graduates for self-sustainability in Oyo State. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Determine the managerial skills needed by secretarial education graduates for self-sustainability;
2. Determine the managerial skill needed by secretarial education graduates for self-sustainability.
3. Determine the marketing skills needed by secretarial education graduate for self-sustainability
4. Determine the ICT skills needed by secretarial education graduates for self- sustainability.

Research Questions

The following research questions were answered by the study.

1. What are the managerial skills needed by secretarial education graduates for self-sustainability?
2. What are the technical skills needed by secretarial education graduates for self- sustainability?
3. What are the marketing skills needed by secretarial education graduates for self-sustainability?

4. What are the ICT skills needed by secretarial education graduates for self- sustainability in Oyo State?

Hypotheses

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

Ho₁: There is no significant difference in the mean responses of lecturers and students on managerial skills needed by secretarial education graduates for self-sustainability.

Ho₂: There is no significant difference in the mean responses of lecturers and students on the technical skills needed by secretarial education graduates for self-sustainability in Oyo State.

Methodology

A descriptive survey descriptive research design was adopted for this study. A descriptive survey design is concerned with specifying the properties of educational and other phenomena. The design is appropriate for this study because it sought the representative view of the lecturers and the students on the entrepreneurial skills needs needed by secretarial education graduate for self-sustainability. The study was carried out in Oyo State. The state has three colleges of education offering secretarial education programme, namely Oyo State College of Education (Lanlate), Emmanuel Alayande College of Education, Oyo and Federal College of Education (Sp), Oyo. The choice of the state for this study was necessitated by the adequate number of NCE secretarial education graduates who constituted the respondents for the study and also the growing number of unemployed NCE secretarial graduates who will benefit immensely from the finding of the study. The population for the study was 238 respondents, made up of 54 business education lecturers and 184 second year students offering secretarial education programme for 2019/2020 academic session in Oyo State. The choice of lecturers was because the lecturers were believed to be knowledgeable enough in this field while the students would make use of the skills for lifelong sustainability. The questionnaire was the instrument used for eliciting responses from the respondents. The questionnaire was divided into four sections. A, B, C and D, which consisted 40 generated items. Section A: sought information on managerial skill needs needed for self sustainability of secretarial education graduates. Section B was on technical skill needs, Section C on marketing skills while Section D has to do with ICT skills for self sustainability.

The instrument utilized a five points rating scale of very high needed (VHN) 5 points, highly needed (HN) 4 points, slightly needed (SN) 3 points, fairly needed (FN) 2 points and not needed (NN) one point. The class boundary limit for interpreting the result was as follow: Very highly needed (4.5 – 5.00), highly needed (3.5 – 4.49), slightly needed (2.5 – 3.49) fairly needed (1.5 – 2.49) and not needed (0.05 – 1.49). The instrument was face-validated by three experts in entrepreneurial education, two from the Department of Vocational Education, Emmanuel Alayande College of Education, Oyo and one from Federal College of Education (Sp) Oyo, Oyo state. The comment and corrections were effected and used for the final development of the instrument. The internal consistency of the instrument was determined using test retest with the use of Cronbach Alpha method, which yielded a co-efficient of 0.84 showing the instrument was reliable for the study. All the 238copies of the questionnaire was administered by the researcher.

The completed questionnaire to ensure a high percentage return rate of the questionnaire. The data collected were collated and analysed using mean to answer the research questions while t-value was greater than the table value for the given degree of freedom the null hypothesis was regarded as significant otherwise not significant.

Results

The results are presented in tables in accordance with the research questions and hypotheses.

Research Question 1

What are the managerial skills needed by secretarial education graduates for self-sustainability in Oyo State?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation Responses on managerial skills needed for self-sustainability

S/ N	Managerial Skills	Lecturers			Students		t-cal	Remarks
		Xg	X ¹	SD1	X ¹	SD1		
1.	Adapting basic steps in setting up business	4.37	4.49	0.88	4.25	0.70	0.06	NS
2.	Planning and co-ordinating business resources	4.39	4.50	0.77	4.28	0.86	0.89	NS
3.	Taking decisions as at when due	4.18	4.38	0.72	3.99	1.04	1.41	NS
4.	Bringing in Innovative Ideas and Changes in the Business	3.89	3.99	1.16	3.79	1.17	1.02	NS
5.	Able to receive and attend relevant	4.19	4.00	0.98	4.39	0.91	0.75	NS
6.	Knowledge of human relations and communicative ability	4.27	4.29	0.92	4.24	0.74	1.15	NS
7.	Setting up appropriate business plans	4.24	4.15	0.99	4.32	0.65	0.9	NS
8.	Able to determine risks and risk management	4.43	4.47	0.92	4.92	4.39	0.91	NS
9.	Able to create, maintain and sustain customers	3.83	3.87	1.38	3.78	1.17	0.78	NS
10.	Able to appraise employees performance	4.13	4.43	0.85	3.52	1.01	1.02	NS

The data presented in Table 1 showed that all the items listed in the table had their grand mean above 3.50. This signifies that all items listed were accepted by all the respondents. All the items had their calculated t-value less than 1.96 at 0.05 level significance indicating that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of the responses of the two groups on managerial skills needed by secretarial education graduates for self- sustainability in Oyo state.

Research Question 2

What are the technical skill needs needed by secretarial education graduates for self – sustainability?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation Responses on Technical Skills Needed for Self – Sustainability

S/N	Technical Skills	Lecturers			Students		T-cal	Remarks
		Xg	X ¹	SD1	X ¹	SD1		
1.	Operate office machines effectively	3.99	4.10	0.90	3.87	0.81	0.44	NS
2.	Help others to learn needed skills and knowledge	4.42	4.48	0.80	4.35	0.60	1.37	NS
3.	Identify training needs and job information to help others demonstrate	4.41	4.45	0.92	4.37	0.99	0.50	NS
4.	Understanding and adaptability of changes	4.18	4.09	0.98	4.27	0.74	1.33	NS
5.	Exhibit self-confidence to select appropriate reproduction processes in collating/binding document	4.37	4.38	0.72	4.35	0.60	0.69	NS
6.	Proof-reading and preparing mailable documents	4.45	4.47	0.92	4.42	0.78	0.62	NS
7.	Generate innovative ideas and new ways to disseminate information	4.10	4.25	0.91	3.95	1.07	0.94	NS
8.	Use different word processing packages/software manage	3.89	3.79	1.16	3.98	1.18	0.53	NS
9.	Manage materials and facility resources	4.43	4.42	0.99	4.43	0.67	0.70	NS
10.	Communicate ideas, thoughts, information and messages in form of letters, report manuals etc.	4.54	4.50	0.77	4.18	0.92	0.69	NS

The data presented in Table 2 showed that item 10 had the highest grand mean of 4.54. This signifies that communicating ideas, thoughts and information dissemination are very highly needed as a technical skill needed to sustain any business enterprise. Table 2 showed that the t-calculated value ranged from 0.44 to 1.37 at probability level of 0.05 (two tail test) and 236 degree of freedom which are lower than the table value of 1.96. This shows that there is no significant difference in the mean scores of the groups of respondent on the technical skills needed for self-sustainability.

Research Question 3

What are the marketing skill needed by secretarial education graduates for self- sustainability?

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation Responses on Marketing Skills Needed by Secretarial Education Graduates for Self-Sustainability

S/N	Marketing Skills	Lecturers	Students	Remarks			
		\bar{X}_g	\bar{X}^1	SD1	X ¹	SD1	
1.	Protect company name and resources from hackers	4.06	4.03	0.98	4.00	0.75	HN
2.	Segmenting the market according to customers' needs	4.36	4.72	0.71	4.00	0.75	HN
3.	Making good and services available at the right place, price and with right communication	4.09	4.25	0.75	3.92	0.72	HN
4.	Identify the new trends in marketing environments	3.94	3.91	1.06	3.96	0.71	HN
5.	Identify the potential partners	3.62	3.71	0.84	3.53	0.72	HN
6.	Using social networking and direct marketing to market business products	4.00	4.00	0.98	4.00	0.75	HN
7.	Forecasting, estimation and marketing and information research	4.34	4.75	0.75	3.92	0.72	HN
8.	Determine and interpret competitors strengths and weaknesses	4.00	4.04	1.04	3.96	0.70	HN
9.	Knowledge of capturing and retaining customers	3.79	3.98	1.02	3.60	0.96	HN
10.	Knowledge of seasonal fluctuations of goods in the market	3.84	3.89	1.15	3.79	1.04	HN

The responses from the respondents in Table 3 revealed that all the items listed had their grand mean above 3.50. This implies that the respondents in the two groups upheld that marketing skills as highly needed by secretarial education graduates for self-sustainability in the society.

Research Question 4

What are the ICT skills needs needed by Secretarial Education graduates for self-Sustainability

Table 4: Mean and Standard Deviation Responses on ICT skill Needed by Secretarial Education Graduates for Self–Sustainability

S/N	ICT Skills Requirement	Lecturers	Students	Remarks			
		\bar{X}_g	\bar{X}^I	SD1	X^{I-}	SD1	
1	Operate the computer effectively	3.94	3.96	0.94	3.91	1.02	HN
2.	Create, format, save and print documents	4.27	4.27	0.71	4.27	0.74	HN
3.	Create a website	4.29	4.61	0.75	3.96	0.70	HN
4.	Access the internet through the use of mobile phones/telephones	3.81	3.91	1.06	3.71	1.28	HN
5.	Use scanning machines to send messages	3.97	3.96	0.92	3.97	1.06	HN
6.	Produce text documents	3.37	3.43	1.61	3.31	1.05	HN
7.	Browse and download information from the internet	4.33	4.00	0.77	4.66	0.66	HN
8.	Conference calls/video conferencing for staff meetings	3.35	3.60	1.45	3.10	1.17	HN
9.	Database Microsoft access for storage and administration of staff data	3.94	3.91	1.06	3.96	0.74	HN
10.	Spreadsheets like-Microsoft excel to manage the company’s budget	3.59	3.97	1.06	3.20	1.20	HN

The data presented in Table 4 showed that eight out of the ten item listed had their grand mean above 3.50 while item 6 and 8 had their grand mean below 3.50. The result further revealed that all the items fall within the response category of highly needed and slightly needed. Table 4 also showed that the standard deviation (SD) of the items ranged from 0.66 to 1.61, indicating that the respondents were not too far from one another in their responses on the ICT skills needed by the secretarial education graduates for self-sustainability in Oyo state.

Discussion of the Findings

The findings revealed that forty (40) entrepreneurial skills needs items for self-sustainability by secretarial education graduates were highly needed for them to function effectively in the business enterprises in Oyo State. The result of this study agreed with the findings of Meredith, Nelson and Neck (1996) and Uko (2009) that entrepreneurial skills are needed to manipulate input resources effectively within a particular enterprise to achieve the production goal. This implies that skills possessed by an entrepreneur will enable him to undertake an enterprise. This

is in conformity with Schumpeter in Etonyeaku (2011) that entrepreneurial skills are potentials needed by workers through training, which ensures proficiency and competency in the performance of occupational tasks for economic benefits.

The findings in Table 1 revealed that all the managerial skills are highly needed to achieve self-sustainability. Osborne (2000) noted 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 Ezech and Eze (2011) 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 needed by secretarial education graduates for self-sustainability. This is in line with Odu (2009) that technical skills are needed for successful enterprise because the skills are necessary for securing and holding employment in a recognized occupations. Also, technical skills are needed to enable the graduates to perform effectively in their enterprises. The result also support Whetten and Camoron (2005) that technical skills are mainly on work settings because the major goal of any skill is to help prepare the workers to improve on his competency in managerial role. The result of the null hypothesis showed that there was no significant difference between the opinion of lecturers and students as regards the technical skills needed for self-sustainability.

Data presented in Table 3 revealed that marketing skills are highly needed for any effective enterprise. The finding revealed that marketing skills are needed to identify new trends in the environment, knowledge of seasonal fluctuations and segmenting marketing according to customers' needs. This is in line with Kotler and Keller (2010) that marketing is meeting customers' needs profitably and satisfying them by communicating marketing ideas to the customers. It was found that overall marketing skills were highly needed for with Okafor, Okeme and Oketobo (2010) that entrepreneurial skills are needed by women retirees for marketing fruit juice as a sustainable business in all the 10 marketing skills identified were above the cut off mean, indicating that all the rated skills were needed by the graduates in marketing their products.

The findings on ICT skills in Table 4 revealed that all the skills indicated in the study are needed by secretarial education graduates to achieve success in business enterprise. These findings are corroborated by the findings in the work of Ojukwu and Ojukwu (2002) that ICT skills should include: word processing skills such as formatting, editing, keyboarding, ability to use scanning machines, to select reproduction activities. According to Osuala (2004), 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.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it could be concluded that entrepreneurial skills are needed for effective business operations. Lack or absence of these skills affects graduates in embarking on any business venture. The entrepreneurial skills would enable the graduates 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 needed for sustainable business operation. Therefore, the secretarial education graduates need to combine all the skills identified or listed therein for effective business management.

Recommendations

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

- 1) Secretarial education graduates should endeavour to acquaint themselves with all the relevant skills necessary for them to create and maintain their customers' needs;
- 2) Skills acquisition centres should make use of the findings of this study and include them in their training manual.
- 3) It is recommended that all those who are not ICT complaint should acquire the skills to be relevant in the society.

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