

Impact of Entrepreneurship Education on Entrepreneurial Intention and Skills Acquisition of Business Education Students in Tertiary Institutions in North-Eastern Zone of Nigeria

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Abstract

This study examined the impact of entrepreneurship education on the entrepreneurial intentions and skills acquisition of Business Education students in tertiary institutions in North-Eastern, Nigeria. A mixed-methods research design was employed, integrating quantitative data from 269 students using a structured questionnaire and qualitative insights from 11 class representatives through interviews. Independent t-test and One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) statistics were used to analyse the data. The findings revealed that entrepreneurship education significantly enhanced students' technical competencies such as communication proficiency, problem-solving, and ICT application shaped entrepreneurial intentions, including students' desire to start businesses and develop leadership and opportunity-recognition skills. Also there was a significant difference in technical skill acquisition due to gender favouring male students than female students, while state-based analysis showed varied levels of influence on entrepreneurial intention. The study concluded that entrepreneurship education is one of the vital catalyst for job creation, self-reliance, and national development. It was recommended that there should be improved pedagogical approaches and infrastructure support in tertiary institutions to bolster entrepreneurial capacity and reduce youth unemployment in Nigeria.

Keywords: *Entrepreneurship education, entrepreneurial intention, skill acquisition, Business education*

Introduction

Entrepreneurship necessitates being creative in the establishment of new ventures and taking risks to capitalize on possibilities. It also necessitates optimal resource use to generate profit. Entrepreneurship showcases a person's ability to take risks and combine factors of production to produce goods and services. It may also reflect a person's willingness and capacity to search out investment opportunities in their immediate environment and to be strategically positioned to build and manage a business, based on prospects. Entrepreneurship is the process of recognizing, developing, and realizing a vision, which might be an original concept, an opportunity, or simply a better method to do something new. It is the act of establishing a firm, arranging business transactions, and taking risks to profit from developed entrepreneurial abilities. Entrepreneurship education encourages a shift from a take-a-job

mentality to a make-a-job mentality, offering youths pathways to financial independence, job creation, innovation, and economic growth. In Nigeria, higher education institutions provide programs that equip students with opportunities to work for themselves and pursue both self-employment and paid employment. However, many students fail to fully utilized their entrepreneurial potential, which could enhance their skills and expand their career options.

Entrepreneurship education continues to play a vital role in equipping tertiary students with the skills, creativity, and managerial competence needed for self-employment and innovation rather than traditional job-seeking (Okoli & Nwosu, 2023). Recent studies emphasized its capacity to instil entrepreneurial mindsets, problem-solving abilities, and adaptive thinking necessary to thrive in today's dynamic economy (Adewumi & Musa, 2023). In Nigeria, its integration into tertiary curricula is a strategic response to the alarming rate of graduate unemployment, aiming to produce self-reliant, enterprising youths who can contribute meaningfully to economic growth and national development (Ibrahim & Olayemi, 2024). Entrepreneurship education now focuses more on experiential learning, digital entrepreneurship, and sustainability, preparing students to become innovative contributors in a competitive global landscape (Chukwuemeka & Adebayo, 2024). Entrepreneurship education is the formal process of equipping students with entrepreneurial concepts, behaviour, culture, skills, and awareness to enable them to identify opportunities, and start, manage, and grow businesses. It is a critical component of higher education as it inspires confidence and motivation for students to pursue entrepreneurial careers. By fostering relevant abilities, attitudes, and knowledge, it aims to prepare Business Education students for self-employment and labour creation, thereby reducing unemployment and transitioning Nigeria from a consumer to a producer nation (Okah & Odelola, 2025). According to Mullins (2024), entrepreneurship education systematically imparts job-related knowledge and attitudes for effective entrepreneurial performance. It encompasses three dimensions: state of mind (beliefs, values, attitudes), behaviour (skills like decision-making and opportunity recognition), and self-efficacy development.

Entrepreneurial skills encompass the competencies, knowledge, attitudes and practical experience required to effectively manage and run a business. Higher education aims to instil these skills in students across disciplines, enabling them to create value, identify opportunities, and make firm career commitments, whether in self-employment, business ventures, or organizational roles (Ezenwenne, 2018). These skills involve turning ideas into action (Nwabufu, 2019) and include personal qualities such as self-confidence, readiness, bravery, empathy, persistence and vision (Salgado-Banda, 2025). Acquiring entrepreneurial skills enhances students' intention and self-efficacy, preparing them for income-generating or wage-earning projects with specialized technical abilities (Gidado, 2019).

Technical skills are specialized knowledge and competencies that are required to complete difficult actions and tasks. Entrepreneurs with effective technology abilities can use software and other digital approaches to manage projects, track sales and revenue and measure business success, allowing them to have specialized knowledge and procedures needed to execute any function inside an organization. Oral and written communication skills, problem-solving skills, organizational skills, environmental monitoring, technological skills, and the implementation and use of network-building skills, management skills, coaching and team-playing skills are all examples of technical skills. Business Education equips students with the skills, knowledge, attitudes, and competencies necessary for employment, career growth and self-sufficiency, fostering their productivity and societal contribution (Nwokike,

2016). It focuses on preparing learners for business operations and entrepreneurial empowerment, enabling vocational use and job creation.

The teacher education in Nigeria focus on training teachers for certification in education or related fields, while polytechnics train students in technical, applied sciences, and managerial skills. Polytechnics offers a two-year National Diploma (ND) and a Higher National Diploma (HND) after completing a four-year program, preparing students for self-employment and job creation, aligned with Nigeria's economic and industrial needs. Higher institutions aim to provide students with knowledge, skills, and quality education for future readiness. However, not all North-Eastern Nigerian schools offer Business Education programs, so the study includes Office Technology and Management students.

Entrepreneurial intention significantly influences the likelihood of starting a new venture, especially as it reflects an individual's cognitive orientation and readiness to engage in entrepreneurial behaviour (Adegbite & Salisu, 2023). It encompasses the mental state that channels attention, experience, and behaviour toward recognizing and acting on business opportunities. Recent research underscores that entrepreneurial intention is shaped by various factors such as self-efficacy, perceived behavioural control, attitude toward entrepreneurship, and exposure to entrepreneurship education (Ojo & Ibrahim, 2023). It serves as a precursor to entrepreneurial action, guiding individuals through the stages of business ideation, planning, and execution (Nwachukwu & Ahmed, 2024). In the contemporary context, the integration of digital skills and innovation has further intensified the link between intention and successful entrepreneurial outcomes among youth (Eze & Alabi, 2024).

Statement of the Problem

Emerging countries, including Nigeria, face the challenge of finding productive employment for graduates. Despite the inclusion of entrepreneurship education as a mandatory course for Business Education students, many graduates in North-Eastern Nigeria remain unemployed and fail to utilize entrepreneurial skills, which could help them start businesses. This unemployment has been linked to various social vices, including corruption, terrorism, and cybercrime. Questions arise about whether these students were adequately exposed to entrepreneurship education or simply lacked the willingness or abilities to use it.

The researcher aims to investigate whether entrepreneurship education in North-Eastern Nigeria effectively influences Business Education students' entrepreneurial intention and skills acquisition, as its failure would result to the production of ill-equipped graduates, hinder the students growth and self reliance. The study is hereby seeks to investigate the impact and the potential modifications in teaching patterns and approaches that can enhance the growth of entrepreneurship education among business education students' in promoting self-employment and overall development.

Objective of the study

1. To investigate the impact of entrepreneurship education in fostering technical skills acquisition among Business Education in North-eastern institution in Nigeria
2. To determine the impact of entrepreneurship education in promoting entrepreneurial intention among Business Education students in North-eastern institution in Nigeria

Research Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female on the impact of entrepreneurship education in fostering technical skills acquisition among business education students in North-eastern institution in Nigeria.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference between the responses of Business Education students on the impact of entrepreneurship education in promoting entrepreneurial intention North-eastern institution in Nigeria.

Methodology

The researcher employed an explanatory mixed method, combining a quantitative study as the main component with a qualitative study to better interpret the quantitative results. This approach is especially suitable when quantitative methods alone cannot capture key aspects of the study and help to enhance quantitative findings. It enables researchers to utilize all available resources for richer data and provides a broader perspective on complex problems (Nworgu, 2015; Ademiluyi, 2019). For the quantitative aspect, a descriptive survey research method was applied. This method evaluates and reports the current situation by analyzing individuals' attitudes, perspectives, and behaviours toward various entities and activities (Umoru, 2015). It involves collecting data from the population or a representative sample to assess their beliefs, attitudes, and actions. The study's targeted population consists of 864 NCE III Business Education students of Colleges of Education in North-eastern institution and ND II OTM students in Polytechnics in the North-Eastern, Zone of Nigeria during the 2024/2025 academic session.

The study sample of 269 respondents was selected using morgan table sampling techniques, made up of 46 students from Federal College of Education, Yola, 46 students from College of Education Zing, 30 students from Federal College of Education (Tech) Gombe, seven students from Aminu Sale College of Education, Azare, 21 students from Federal College of Education Potiskum, 11 students from Federal Polytechnic, Mubi, four students from Adamawa State Polytechnic, Yola, 20 students from Federal Polytechnic, Bali, 17 students from Federal Polytechnic, Bauchi, eight students from Yobe State Polytechnic, Damaturu, 61 students from Ramat Polytechnic, Maiduguri. A self design questionnaire titled: Impact of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial intentions and skills acquisition of business education students in tertiary in North-eastern institution (QIEEESI) was prepared by the researcher and was used to gather the quantitative data for the study. The questionnaire is divided into two sections and contains 89 items. on the perceived influence of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial skills, intention, and self-efficacy were analysed using content analysis. Section A contains three items about the respondents' demographic characteristics, while section B items were used to elicit further responses from the respondents on research questions and were grouped into seven parts based on the research pattern. The questionnaire was designed to elicit the ratings of respondents on a 4-point modified Likert-Type Rating Scale with response possibilities of Very High Extent (VHE-4 points) High Extent (HE- 3 points) Low Extent (LE- 2 points) and Very Low Extent (VLE – 1 points) respectively.

Hypothesis one was tested using the independent samples t-test. Hypothesis two was tested using One-Way Analysis of (ANOVA). The research instrument was created in a way that allowed for the interpretation of each item's mean rating to determine the degree of each competency and quality. Additionally, the research questions were assessed using the item-by-item and cluster choice criteria for real limitations of numbers are as follows; 3.50–4.00. Very high extent, 2.50–3.49 High extent, 1.50–2.49. Low extent, 0.00 -1.49. Very low extent.

The taped recorded interviews were transcribed and used as the qualitative data. The respondents' comments on the impact of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial intentions and technical skills of business education students in North-eastern institution.

Results

Research Question one: Questionnaire content analysis on impact of entrepreneurship education in foresting the acquisition of technical skills among Business Education students in Nigeria North-eastern institution

Table 1: *Response ratings on the impact of entrepreneurship education on the acquisition of technical skills of business education students in Nigeria northern-eastern institution*

S/ N	Item Statements	\bar{X}	SD	Remark
1.	Entrepreneurship education has helped me to demonstrate proficiency with Microsoft Word.	3.38	0.82	V. High Exten
2.	Entrepreneurship education assists students to operate qualitatively with minimal or no supervision.	3.14	0.95	High Extent
3.	Entrepreneurship education has assisted students to have communication skills proficiency.	3.12	0.98	High Extent
4.	Entrepreneurship education has helped me to solve problems by manipulating a computer system.	2.68	1.13	High Extent
5.	Knowledge of entrepreneurship education has assisted me in operating different business machines to meet societal needs.	3.12	1.04	High Extent
6.	Entrepreneurship education has helped students to keep up with the latest information and technological trends.	3.04	1.00	High Extent
7.	Knowledge of entrepreneurship education has helped students to write mailable letters.	3.06	1.01	High Extent
8.	Knowledge of entrepreneurship education has helped students to accurately process information on the job.	3.03	1.11	High Extent
Weighted average		3.07	1.01	High Extent

Source: Field Survey, 2025

The data in Table 1 reveal the mean and standard deviation of responses on the impact of entrepreneurship education on the acquisition of technical skills among business education students in north-eastern institution. The result revealed that entrepreneurship education had helped them demonstrate proficiency with Microsoft Word to a very high extent mean scores of 3.38, assisted them in operating qualitatively with little or no supervision and helped students of business education to have communication skills proficiency to a high extent. This statement is supported by mean scores of 3.14, and 3.12, respectively. The respondents also stated that knowledge of entrepreneurship education had assisted them in problem-solving by using a computer system, the respondents also stated that entrepreneurship education has always equipped the students with required skills needed in operating various business machines to meet societal needs which has greatly aided students of business education in keeping up with the most recent information technological trends to high extend. The mean score for these constructions was 2.68, 3.12, and 3.04, respectively. The respondents further stated that knowledge of entrepreneurship education had helped students compose mailable letters and had greatly aided them in effectively processing information on the job as business education students. These assertions were backed up by mean scores of 3.06 and 3.03, respectively.

The 8-item constructs had a standard deviation that ranged from 0.82 to 1.13. This indicates that the responses were not widely distributed since they are near the mean. Table 6 displays a total calculated weighted mean and standard deviation of 3.07 and 1.01, respectively, indicating that all eight components in the construct have a significant influence on technical skills. This suggests that business education students' technical skills are favourably influenced by entrepreneurship education to a high extent. (mean = 3.07, SD =1.01).

Research Question 2: To determine the impact of entrepreneurship education in promoting entrepreneurial intention among Business Education students in North-eastern institution in Nigeria

Table 2:

Questionnaire content analysis impact of entrepreneurship education in promoting entrepreneurial intention among business education students in colleges of education in North-eastern institutions in Nigeria

S/ N	Item Statements	\bar{X}	SD	Remark
9.	With knowledge of entrepreneurship education, I want to become a business owner.	3.22	1.01	High Extent
10.	Owning my business is very appealing and important to me.	3.15	1.07	High Extent
11.	Entrepreneurship education has helped prepare me to be my boss.	3.17	0.97	High Extent
12.	Entrepreneurship education has helped students to have the necessary leadership abilities to be entrepreneurs.	3.31	0.97	Very High Extent
13.	With knowledge of entrepreneurship education I intend to start my business as soon as possible.	3.26	0.85	Very High Extent
14.	With different training in entrepreneurial skills, students are equipped with skills needed for identifying business opportunities.	3.03	0.95	High Extent
15.	With knowledge of entrepreneurship education has helped students to leverage commercial ideas in society.	2.93	1.06	High Extent
16.	Knowledge of entrepreneurship education has helped me to be attracted to becoming an entrepreneur as a career.	3.20	0.94	High Extent
17.	Entrepreneurship education has helped students to realize their business potential.	3.13	0.94	High Extent
18.	For me, being an entrepreneur has more benefits than drawbacks.	3.26	0.96	Very High Extent
19.	With knowledge of my entrepreneurship education, I will have a high probability of success.	3.06	1.00	High Extent
Weighted average		3.10	0.87	High Extent

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Data in Table 2 shows the responses on the impact of entrepreneurship education in promoting entrepreneurial intention of business education students in North-eastern

institution in Nigeria. The table reveals that the respondents indicated that with knowledge of entrepreneurship education, they want to become a business owner, owning my business is very appealing and important to me, and entrepreneurship education has helped in preparing me to be my boss to a high extent (mean = 3.22, 3.15 and 3.17 respectively). Also, the respondents indicated that entrepreneurship education has helped students to have the necessary leadership abilities to be entrepreneurs, with knowledge of entrepreneurship education, they intend to start their business as soon as possible and with different training in entrepreneurial skills to a very high extent. These positions were supported by mean scores of 3.31 and 3.26, respectively. In the same way, the respondents indicated that students are equipped with skills needed for identifying business opportunities to a high extent by students of business education with knowledge of entrepreneurship education has helped students to leverage commercial ideas in society, and knowledge of entrepreneurship education has helped me to be attractive of becoming an entrepreneur as a career and entrepreneurship education has helped students to realize their business potential to a high extent by students of business education. These are supported by mean scores of 3.03, 2.93, 3.20 and 3.13 respectively. In addition, the respondents indicated that for me, being an entrepreneur has more benefits than drawbacks and with knowledge of my entrepreneurship education, I will have a high probability of success to a high extent (mean = 3.26 and 3.06).

All the 11-item constructs have standard deviations ranging from 0.85 to 1.07. This means that the responses of the respondents are not dispersed but cluster around their means. This implies that entrepreneurship education positively impact the entrepreneurial intention of business education students in North-eastern institution in Nigeria to a high extent (mean = 3.10, SD = 0.87).

Hypotheses

H₀₁: there is no significant difference between the responses of Business Education students on the impact of entrepreneurship education in promoting entrepreneurial intention North-eastern institution in Nigeria.

Table 3:

T-test result for the difference between responses of male and female respondents on the impact of entrepreneurship education in foresting technical of technical skills acquisition among business education students in North-eastern institution in Nigeria

Group	N	Mean	SD	t-cal	Df	p-value	Decision
Male	146	3.83	0.28	26.30	267	0.00	Rejected
Female	123	2.17	0.69				

Source: Field survey, 2025

P<0.05

Data in Table 3 reveals that there were 146 male respondents and 123 female respondents in the North-Eastern zone. The male and female respondents' responses show that entrepreneurship education positively influences the technical skills of business education students to a high extent ($\bar{x} = 3.83$; SD = 0.28) and ($\bar{x} = 2.17$; SD = 0.69). Their responses were close to the mean as the standard deviations were very low. The table reveals a significant difference between the male and female students response on the impact of entrepreneurship education in foresting technical skills of business education students ($t_{267} = 26.30$, $P < 0.05$). The outcome suggests that female students might be encountering certain structural or situational challenges that hinder them from gaining the full benefits of entrepreneurship education, particularly in the area of technical skill acquisition. Such

challenges could stem from restricted opportunities for practical engagement, limited involvement in hands-on entrepreneurial experiences, or subtle gender-related biases in how lessons are delivered. If these issues remain unaddressed, they may reinforce persistent gender inequalities in employability and preparedness for entrepreneurial ventures among business education graduates.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference between the responses of Business Education students on the impact of entrepreneurship education in promoting entrepreneurial intention among business education students in North-eastern institution in Nigeria.

Table 4:

Result of the Analysis of variance on difference between responses based on states on the impact of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial Intention among business education students in North-eastern institution in Nigeria

Group	N	Mean	SD	t-cal	Df	p-value	Decision
State A	140	3.15	0.28	26.30	267	0.00	Rejected
State B	129	0.94	0.69				

Source: Field survey, 2025

P<0.05

The analysis of variance result, presented in table 4 indicates the observed probability value of 0.00 and the calculated value of 26.30, which is higher than the fixed probability value of 0.05. This indicates that the hypothesis, related to which there is barely any variation in the response of business education students on the extent to which entrepreneurship education impacts entrepreneurial intention according to location. The hypothesis was therefore rejected (26.30; P<0.05). By implication, respondents based on states differ significantly in their responses regarding their response of the impact of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial intention of business education students in North-eastern Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

Findings on research question one revealed that entrepreneurship education positively impact the acquisition of technical skills among business education students in tertiary institution in the North-Eastern, Nigeria to a high extent. This implies that, entrepreneurship education provides learners with the necessary technical skills, as it provides them with the knowledge and mindset to take productive activities, innovate, and become entrepreneurs. According to Ezeji and Okorie (2018), technical skills are "knowledge and competency in a certain activity, particularly one that involves methods, processes, procedures, and techniques." The method of creating stimulators to improve the skills of various professions or activities in a business endeavour is known as technical skills.

Findings on research question two and hypothesis two revealed that entrepreneurship education positively impact the entrepreneurial intention of business education students in North-Eastern institution, Nigeria to a high extent. This indicates that respondents based on states differ significantly in their responses regarding the impact of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial intention of business education students in North-eastern institution, Nigeria. The study confirms the report of Ajzen (2025), pedagogies that encourage learning by doing, by experience, by experiment, by risk-taking, by making mistakes, by problem-solving, by feedback through social interaction, by role-playing, by exploring role models, and by interaction with the instructors which are the most effective. This is in line with the report of Zain et al (2024) who affirm that entrepreneurial intention

reflects an individual's state of mind targeted at new venture creation, development of new business models, and value addition within existing business models.

Conclusion

The study concluded that entrepreneurship education positively influences entrepreneurial skills and entrepreneurial intention as perceived by business education students in tertiary institutions. This demonstrates unequivocally how entrepreneurship education helps to reduce the high rate of unemployment among business education students and turns into a tool for generating employment chances. The implication is that business education students need to acquire more than the core skills and characteristics that are stressed in entrepreneurship lectures. It is hinted that the students need to develop more than the fundamental abilities and traits that are frequently emphasized in entrepreneurship training. Business education students need to be motivated to comprehend the value of different abilities and traits as a tool for promoting success as an entrepreneur. Therefore, entrepreneurship education must continue to be a priority in tertiary institutions to prepare graduates to create jobs rather than to seek employment; otherwise, graduates will continue to be unemployed and become involved in criminal activity due to inadequate knowledge and skills of entrepreneurship education in the Nigerian educational systems.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made.

1. Polytechnic administrators and colleges of education should push for the development of student's technical skills and competencies to prepare them for entrepreneurial endeavours. This can be achieved through an entrepreneurship education curriculum.
2. Authorities of colleges of education and polytechnics should set up facilities to improve the teaching of entrepreneurship education to guarantee that students receive the necessary instruction and reinforcement while they are in school and to change the perception of the students about their entrepreneurial intention.

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