

COMPONENTS OF BUSINESS EDUCATION CURRICULUM AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS AMONG UNDERGRADUATES IN NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES

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ABSTRACT

A survey conducted using employers, business education lecturers and undergraduates determined the influence of Business Education curriculum components on the development of entrepreneurial skills among undergraduates in Cross River State, where five specific objectives, research questions and null hypotheses guided the study. A sample size of 243, comprising 25 lecturers, 99 employers and 119 undergraduates responded to Business Education Curriculum Component and the development of entrepreneurial skills Questionnaire (BECCADESQ) with reliability coefficient of .84. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to test all the hypotheses. Findings are that: Theoretical; practical, specialised, general business and education curriculum have positive and significant influence on the development of entrepreneurial skills among business education graduates. It was concluded that development of entrepreneurial skills depend relevance of Business Education Curriculum. It was recommended among others that lecturers, industry-based employers and undergraduates should partake in curriculum review to cater for their entrepreneurial skills needs.

Keywords: Business Education, Practical Component, Theoretical Component, Specialised Component, General Education, Entrepreneurial Skills, Business Education Undergraduates.

INTRODUCTION

Business education as an academic programme provides entrepreneurial skills to undergraduates and prepares them to be self-reliant in today's globalised and competitive economy. However, this mandate can only be achieved when the curriculum of business education is in line with societal needs and realities at national, regional and international levels. Okon (2020) explained that business education is a programme of study, which provides individuals with learning experiences in specific knowledge and skills in identified business areas as well as general education, thus, equipping them with competencies for the business world. Tchombe (2010) stated succinctly that “*education is training students for the wrong kinds of jobs and created a skilled workforce inappropriate to the demands of the job market. Association of Business Educators of Nigeria (2017) explained that business education courses prepare students to work in small business and/or set up their own businesses and develop the requisite entrepreneurial attitudes*”.

National Universities Commission (NUC), a regulatory body for undergraduate programmes provides Bench Mark Minimum Academic Standard (BMAS) with a review in 2023 as Core Curriculum Minimum Academic Standard (CCMAS) for undergraduate's business education. The BMAS or CCMAS provides that business education undergraduates be exposed

to entrepreneurship and other practical oriented courses that meet the need of the 21st Century. Again, ABEN (2017) pointed out that business education courses promote creative thinking in students and develop their requisite entrepreneurial attitudes. Okon (2015) averred that business education represents a broad field of study (classified under vocational education in the formal education system and often described as vocational training in the informal education setting) which offers to every individual opportunity to develop functional skills, abilities and understandings necessary to handle competently his personal business affairs and occupational life. Osuala (2009) explained that business education is a programme of instruction which consist of two parts: office education- a vocational education programme for office careers through initial, refresher, and upgrading education, and general business education – a programme meant to provide students with information and competences which are needed by all in managing personal business affairs and in using the service of the business. The curriculum of business education must have its contents reflective of the labour market demands of the contemporary global society.

Therefore, business education curriculum for undergraduate programme must reflect the following components, which this research focuses:

- a) Theoretical component
- b) Practical component
- c) General education component
- d) General business education component
- e) Specialised (occupational) business education component

It is therefore imperative to determine how these components help in the development of entrepreneurial skills among undergraduates. The theoretical component of business education covers the concepts that students must be exposed to. All courses in business education have theoretical components. Students must have understanding of these concepts and be able to relate them to the contemporary business world.

The practical components on the other hand form an integral part of the business education curriculum. Every course offered in business education has practical component. The practical component gives students opportunity to acquire practical skills for the real work situation.

General education component are those courses that are offered by all students in the university system despite the programme of study. The general education component aims to equip students with general knowledge in specific areas of human endeavour outside of the student's area of specialty. Entrepreneurship in universities is offered as a general course of study. In addition, all Business Education courses have entrepreneurial orientation since the programme promotes self-reliance.

General business education component are those courses that are offered by all business education students irrespective of areas of specialisation. Although business education has specialized areas such as accounting, marketing, management, secretarial studies or office management, undergraduate are expected to study the entire course to gain sound foundation for further studies.

Specialised (occupational) curriculum component of business education covers those courses in the respective areas of specialisation. Those in accounting study accounting courses; that in management, management courses, while those in marketing, study marketing courses. Thus, accounting students are trained to be specialists in accounting; management students are trained to be potential managers and marketing students are trained to be evolutionary in global marketing prospects.

The components highlighted above are basically carried out in the classroom or laboratory. No matter the form these may take, the learning, knowledge or skills acquired are classroom or school-based. There is therefore the need to have a transition from school to the real work experience. It is on this premise that students can have the real work situation; where the inadequacies in the school such as poorly-equipped classroom can be remedied. Industry-based learning in business education is basically done through the Students' Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES). Thus, the students can better be prepared to acquire entrepreneurial skills for self-reliance which business education portrays. Akpan (1999) noted that titles of curriculum should explain present aims and content. The author further explained that development of curriculum and courses of study should be determined by their purpose and contents. The author therefore highlighted criteria for organization of business education. Collective opinion of recognized authorities should be considered. Okon et al. (2013) posited that entrepreneurial education places emphasis on education for work, innovation, creative thinking and self-reliance. This has been structured into the annals of Nigerian educational institution and curricula of schools in Nigeria.

The emerging skills that can make business education students in Africa compete favourably with their counterparts in the world include: entrepreneurship; ICT proficiency; business forecast; data, document and information management; corporate responsibility; Problem-solving, general leadership; effective communication; practice approach and business development (Okon, 2015).

The need for achievement (McClelland, 1976) is a desire for productivity and to reach desirable goals. It is the desire to perform in terms of a standard of excellence or a desire to be successful in competitive situations. Entrepreneurial behaviour is so much significantly attributed to this need that one may just stop short of taking entrepreneurial motivation and achievement motivation as being synonymous. People with high achievement needs have the following characteristics as paraphrased in Peretomode (2009): They want to take personal responsibility for solving problems, therefore will devise ways of solving them; they tend to take moderate risks rather than high or low risks, set moderate realistic and attainable achievement goals and are inclined to take calculated risks; they desire regular and concrete feedback on their performance.

Business education curriculum must be responsive to technological changes in the society. New developments in the area should be incorporated into the curriculum so that graduates can be better equipped to compete for jobs. Equipment, facilities, supplies and instructional resources must be obtained for effective implementation of the curriculum. Esene (2012) also identified university business curriculum as being comprehensiveness and varied in nature and scope, providing an understanding of the business world, ability to acquire the relevant knowledge and skills, correlation of subjects, individualization of instruction, prevention and reduction of drop-outs, constant review, provision for entry into jobs and acceleration at all levels, desirable equipment for maximum productivity and so on. Iseniyi (2009) observed that the present situation of business education curriculum is not meeting employers demand. The author observed that the present curriculum of business education is outdated, theoretically based, no correlation of subjects, as a result, no uniformity in the courses taught, and university business education graduates are not doing well in the entrepreneurial ambitions.

According to Binuomote & Okoli (2017), entrepreneurship education is needed now to tackle severe graduate unemployment and if adopted will help a lot to empower business education students to be self-employed and self-reliant after graduation. No wonder Okute

(2017) espoused that stimulation of small business is by creating enabling environment for business to thrive.

Despite acknowledging that no one can clearly and definitely state when the formal type of Business Education commenced in Nigeria (Ben, 2010). Ben (2010) opined that traces of the formal type of business education were found in the last two decades of the 19th Century when nationals in business partnership with overseas exporters had to learn simple commercial arithmetic, book-keeping, business communication and typing to facilitate business transactions. It is on record that St. Andrew's College, Oyo, now St. Andrew's College of Education founded in 1896, maybe regarded as the cradle of formal Business Education institution in Nigeria. Ben (2010) notes that between 1940 and 1960, the missions, and particularly Roman Catholic, established schools for training girls as Secretaries.

According to Esu et al. (2016), the content component of the curriculum process is made up of the knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes that the curriculum seeks to achieve in learners. Tyler in Etim (2010) defines learning experience as the interaction between the learner and the external conditions in the environment to which students react. Learning takes place through action behaviour of the students; it is what students do, they learn and not what the teacher does. The knowledge and skills acquired have to be demonstrated practically or theoretically. Therefore, Learning experiences are activities planned by teachers and learners but performed by learners.

Business education promotes entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurship according to Walter in Osuala (2009) can be defined in terms of the following three essentials and linked attributes: Ability to perceive profitable business opportunities; willingness to act on what is perceived; the necessary organizing skills associated with the project. Entrepreneurship development is concerned with the study of entrepreneurial behaviour, the dynamics of business set-up, development and expansion of enterprise. Entrepreneurship Development (ED) refers to the process of enhancing entrepreneurial skills and knowledge through structured training and institution-building programmes. Basically, entrepreneurship is aimed to enlarge the base of entrepreneurs in order to hasten the pace at which new ventures are created. An entrepreneur can therefore be said to be a person that is determined: To be self-employed instead of a paid job; to operate alone in business; to take risk of losing or succeeding in business; to combine other factors of production; to finance his business alone, and to be creative and innovative (Osuala, 2009). A study Adekeyo (2004) examined the influence of practical skill acquisition and socio-economic experiment of youths in Nigeria using random sample of 150 students. The findings revealed that youth's practical skills acquisition significantly influences their socio-economic empowerment in the larger society. Obanya (2012) pointed out that the most disturbing manifestation of the challenge is the increasing un-employability of graduates of higher education. Ineme & Arikpo (2013) investigated the relationship between the undergraduate students' perception of the arts course contents, behavioural outcomes and entrepreneurial skills among the undergraduate students of the two universities in the Cross River State. The results showed that there is a statistical relationship between undergraduate students' perception of arts course content curriculum, and entrepreneurial skills. In the same vein, Uwatt et al. (2006) in their study opined that basic skills in arts developed the intellectual and increased visual sensitivity while enabling students solve problems more effectively. Kasika (2006) examined the nexus between socialization and the education curricular and youth employability. He wrote that the curriculum should be able to instil knowledge, skills, attitudes and values, habits, creative and lifelong skills into our youths for onward success in employment, employability and self-

employment. Nte (2012) carried out a study on exposure of students of educational administration to entrepreneurial education for post-graduation job creation ability with two hundred students in the Department of Educational Administration, Faculty of Education, Ebonyi State University, Abakiliki. The result of the analysis revealed that entrepreneurial education is relevant to the students with regards to equipping them with skills for post-graduation job rather than job seekers. However he advised that courses that only can improve employability like science, technology, business and entrepreneurship should be emphasized. Furthermore he noted that youths who will succeed in employment are those who will shun irrelevant skills and attitudes, will acquire entrepreneurial skills which are relevant for employment. Adokiye et al. (2015) in European scientific journal in a descriptive survey study carried out to investigate the curriculum content organisation and teachers' perception of entrepreneurship education on skills acquisition by basic education students in Rivers East education zone of Nigeria. Results of the study revealed a significant positive relationship between curriculum content organization and teachers' perception of entrepreneurship education on the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills by students.

The objectives as revised by National Universities Commission (2007) and entrenched in Benchmark Minimum Academic Standards for undergraduate Programmes in Nigerian Universities (2017) are as follows: The programme objectives for B.Sc. (Ed.) shall be to assist the education sector by producing a committed and efficient breed of Business Education teachers for the junior and senior sections of the Nigerian Secondary Schools; it is aimed at producing the manpower endowed with analytical and critical knowledge of the major factors in contemporary business world to influence the development of a virile economy; it is to provide a course of instruction and all necessary facilities and exposure for the pursuit and acquisition of learning and knowledge for services to humanity; it shall also provide adequate educational foundation for interested graduates to pursue higher degree in Business Education or other relevant areas in education.

The practical contents of Business Education refer to courses which provide undergraduates with skills that will make them to be self-reliant. Duruamaku- Dim (2004) described skill as the ability to use one's knowledge effectively and readily in execution or performance, the dexterity or coordination especially in the execution of learned physical task. It is the basic education and knowledge, the experience and necessary training required of a business manager or a school administrator to become efficient on the job which includes muscular coordination and dexterity. Skills are valued in making decisions, communicating orders and instructions, motivating subordinates, resolving interpersonal conflicts and taking effective disciplinary action. Business Education students need practical skills which could be attained through several approaches within and outside the formal school system as well as private – public sector partnership.

Industrial work experience scheme is a typical learning experience in our tertiary institutions especially for the final year students. This scheme is aimed at helping students acquire practical skills in addition to the theoretical knowledge gained in the classroom. In a study on acquisition of entrepreneurial skills by polytechnic students in Osun State, Nigeria, Tajudeen (2015) noted that entrepreneurial skills could be acquired using 300 participants from purposefully selected three government polytechnics, result showed availability of relevant skills training facilities was lacking. Oyekan (2015) stated that teaching practice aim at inculcating in the students various practical skills and habits that will facilitate learning and achievements. Teacher education should brace up their efforts to impact adequate, knowledge, skills and habits

necessary to nurture enterprising responsible teachers. According to Emerole (2000), teaching practice embraces all the learning experiences of student teachers in Universities. Imart (2003), in his study on two base mechanisms of organizational learning in schools confirmed that teaching practice is an experience guided teaching in which the trainee teacher assumes increased responsibility for directing and learning of a group for over a period of time and also the period for practical experience for the development of practical skills.

Field work is an organized visit by lecturers and student teachers to places of educational interest outside of school. This is a learning experience carried out by teachers and students to places where knowledge can be acquired from community resources, (Ofogebu 2009). It provides the most realistic means to study real things. Field trip creates opportunities for students to interact with experts and this enhances the development of reactive and interactive skills.

Research on the effects of instructional approach and achievement conducted by Effiong (2012) compared the performance of career and technical education students on the Stanford high stake test in Arizona. They asserted that, in vocational and technical education where acquisition of practical skill is the focus, that characteristic change must be seen in the learner as a display of skill in the use of machine and tools. According to the researchers, one Chinese parable stated thus: *“Tell me, I forget, show me, I remember, and involve me, I understand”*. Also describing a preferred vocational and technical education curriculum, Finch and Okala (2006), proposed that the success of vocational and technical education curricula is not only measured by students’ achievement in school, but also through the result of their achievement in the world of work. Their study suggests that curricula must simultaneously be justified by the industry while remaining pedagogically focused. Udo & Bako (2014) reported that the acquisition of the requisite skills is a means of increasing the productive power of any nation.

Consequently, they added that the Nigerian society should recognize the fact that every citizen should be equipped to contribute effectively to the welfare of the country. The acquisition of such practical skills is important because when efficient and skilful hands are employed in any field of human endeavour, high productivity is usually achieved. Economically, maximum skills acquisition by Vocational Business Education (VBE) students and others will help to enrich the Nigerian society and in this way, tend to make possible sustainable development. Udo & Bako (2014) equally opined that a rich nation is one that is capable of meeting the economic, social, moral and political needs of the citizenry. Nigeria as a nation will enjoy sustainable development if VBE students in particular and all other students in general acquire maximum skills and competencies in their specialties.

According to Osuala (1998) accounting is the process by which data relating to the economic activities of an organisation are measured, recorded and communicated to interested parties for analysis and interpretation. He pointed out that accounting had its root on the need to keep the records of business transactions and that the chief reasons for keeping accounts are the need of the trader to know how much he owes, how much he owns, how much profit has been made and what his financial position is at a given time. Udo (2012) defines accounting as the process of identifying, measuring, sorting and communicating financial information to permit informed judgments and decisions by users of the information. He added that the role of accounting activities in the operation of business enterprises entails recording, classifying and summarising the enterprise monetary transactions and interpreting the results for both the internal and external end users of such information.

On the personal uses of accounting to VBE students, Udo (2012) opined that it helps: To develop in the VBE students the ability and desire to keep records for personal use; to develop in

the VBE students the ability to interpret and analyse business papers and records in the capacity of a final consumer; to give the VBE students preliminary training for the advanced study of accounting; to develop in the VBE students an understanding of some of the problems and characteristics of a business enterprise; to equip the VBE students with knowledge of records keeping necessary to carry out a small business; to train the VBE students to become book-keepers, cashiers or accountants in the business enterprises or in their self-established business ventures. The above listed skills and competencies assist the VBE students to live and contribute meaningfully to sustainable development in Nigeria.

Another component of Vocational Business Education (VBE) programme is economics education skills component. This component provides VBE students with the following skills and competencies which can be used to enhance sustainable development in the country: Equips them with the basic principles of economic literacy necessary for useful living and for higher education; prepares and encourages them to be prudent and effective in the management of scarce resources; raises their respect for the dignity of labour and their appreciation of the economic, cultural and social values of Nigerian society; and enables them to acquire knowledge for the practical solution of the economic problems of society; and that of Nigeria as a developing country and the world at large (Udo, 2012).

Distributive Education/Marketing Skills is another skill component of Vocational Business Education programme. The word “*distribution*” has much to do with exchange of goods and services and as such refers to the various hands and agencies through which commodities pass from the manufacturers to the final consumers (Udo, 2012). The curriculum objectives here state that distributive education was designed to give students an overview of the world of business and to enable them to develop a better understanding of the individual’s relationship with business and the place of business in a developing economy (Ekpenyong, 1998). The general objectives of education here at the senior secondary school level are to: Enable the student to have a broader understanding of the importance of commercial activities; enable the student to cultivate the right attitude to commercial activities; provide useful general notions and commercial skills necessary for those who will immediately enter into the world of work; provide commercial knowledge for personal use and for further education; develop the habit of the wise use of the services offered by commercial institutions (Udo, 2012).

The above objectives lay emphasis on commercial activities, skills and knowledge (Udo, 2012). Therefore Commerce was designed to equip the students with the marketable knowledge and skills inherent in commercial education and in the context of this study, commercial activities are more likely to be seen as performed by women rather than men (Udo, 2012). According to Udo (2012) distributive education is a programme of vocational instruction in marketing, merchandising and related management, which is designed to meet the needs of persons who have entered or are preparing to enter a distributive occupation. The American Marketing Association (1968) defines marketing as the performance of business activities that direct the flow of goods and services from producers to consumers or users. Udo (2012) defined marketing as getting the right goods and services to the right people at the right place and at the right time, at the right price, with the right communication and promotion. Marketing is also defined as the performance of business activities that direct the flow of goods and services from the producer to consumer or user in order to satisfy customers. However, a market is a process of exchange between individuals and/or organisations which is concluded on the mutual benefit and satisfaction of their parties. According to Osuala (1987) marketing is considered from a broad based context to mean a total system of interacting business activities designed to plan, price,

promote and distribute want-satisfying products and services to present and potential consumers. According to him, the marketing manager will need to perform the functions of planning, organising, staffing, directing and controlling. Osuala (1987) went on to state that the general objective of distributive education is to prepare students for gainful employment in distribution and marketing. Therefore, the objectives of marketing education should meet the social, vocational and personal needs of the business students.

Office Technology and Management Education (OTME) Skills is the fourth component of Business Education skills and competencies inherent in the programme. It was formerly known as secretarial education (Udo, 2012). According to Ekpenyong (1988) a secretary is defined as an executive assistant who possesses a mastery of office skills and who demonstrates the ability to assume responsibility without direct supervision. He/she can exercise initiative and good judgments in decision making. The definition given above describes a special class of secretaries who by virtue of their training, experience and scope of responsibility have become assistants to their bosses. Ekpenyong (1988) describes secretarial work as involving the following activities: General Office Work – relieving executives and other company officials of minor executive and clerical duties; taking down dictation from the boss using shorthand or stenotype machine; transcribing dictation or the recorded information reproduced on a transcribing machine; making appointments for the executive and reminding him or her of them, that is, the appointments; interviewing people coming into the office, and directing to other workers those who do not need to see the chief executive; handling personal and important mails, writing routine correspondence on his/her own initiatives; making and answering telephone calls; supervising other clerical workers; keeping personnel records of events in the offices.

According to Ekpenyong (1988) the secretarial profession is remarkable for its appeal to men and women who have obtained post-secondary education. This is so because the secretary often works with important people and the remuneration is always very attractive. However, the secretarial profession provides a challenging job after graduation from institutions of higher learning because of changes in business technology. Ekpenyong (1988) said that even with the advanced technology now in use in the developed countries like UK, USA, China, Japan and Australia, there is yet to be found a good substitute for the secretary. The present day secretaries are exposed to the use of information and communication technology (ICT) in their day-to-day training and working lives. Information technology is the acquisition, processing, storage and dissemination of vocal, pictorial, textual and numerical information by a microelectronics-based combination of computing and telecommunication. The National Policy on Information Technology (2001) describes information technology as the bedrock for national survival and development in a rapidly changing global environment. Additionally, ICT can be defined as recording and use of information and communication by electronic means. It is not just the use of computers in business. For example, machines can be used to transmit documents overseas and information technology has a variety of applications.

Entrepreneurship education skills component is another skill component of vocational Business Education programme. According to Telsang (2007), the word “*entrepreneur*” has its origin in the French Language “*Entrepreneur*” which means to undertake or organise. An entrepreneur is one who organises, manages and assumes the risk of an enterprise. An entrepreneur visualises a business opportunity, takes bold steps to establish the undertaking, co-ordinates various factors of production and gives a start to the business (Telsang, 2007). Entrepreneurs are the owners of businesses who contribute the capital and bear all the risks of the businesses. Entrepreneurship refers to a process of doing new things or doing things that are

already being done in a new way (Telsang, 2007). It can also be described as a creative and innovative response to the environment. It constitutes the circle of activities starting from the conception of the investment opportunity to successfully transforming the activity into viable business reality.

These skills are inherent in the Business Education programme of schools, colleges and the universities. In fact, the Nigerian workers and students should learn to acquire the entrepreneurship skills so that they will help them in planting business ventures of their own choice at designated places in their community. This will go a long way to make them self-reliant and self-sufficient. Adewole (2010) in his work on Entrepreneurship education and curriculum development in Nigerian universities stated that there is already in place a draft curriculum on entrepreneurial studies by NUC. The emphasis is on practice and equipping of students with various relevant entrepreneurial skills. It must be stated clearly that entrepreneurship studies (education) is part of Business Education curriculum.

The draft curriculum has a list of thirty-seven (37) ventures among which are Soap/detergent, tooth brushes and toothpaste making; Photography, brick, nails, screws making; cloth dyeing/textile, blocks making; rope making, plumbing, vulcanizing, brewing and others. The draft curriculum requires undergraduate to select two or three of the ventures, master the peculiar skills and set up such business on graduation instead of searching for paid employment. Adewole (2010) also noted that the curriculum envisaged by NUC is bedevilled by a myriad of problems such as: Time constraint; the curriculum is already overloaded.

Finance – entrepreneurship studies being an aspect of Business Education curriculum is practical oriented. Although the NUC report in 2004 on Labour Market Expectations of Nigerian Graduates which includes “*High level of theoretical knowledge to the neglect of practical skills and ignorance in the use of instruments/equipment due to inadequate practical experience*”. The federal government allocation is still far below 26% recommended by UNESCO: Capital – some of the ventures maybe too capital intensive to venture into by graduates; need for internship. Though the draft curriculum stated the need for internship during vacation, the university unstable calendar may not permit this; staffing of the programme. The draft curriculum envisaged the incubation of small-scale business within the vicinity of the university manned by a competent person. This depends on availability of such person and the amount of time he is willing to spend. Adewole (2010) recommended adequate funding to universities, co-operative ventures among graduates, soft loan arrangement by government through the National Directorate of Employment among others. Tchombe (2010) stated that an important challenge for the 21st Century in all levels of education system therefore is to revitalize African knowledge systems and pedagogies through self-sustaining networks of local researchers, whose research must be compatible with community values, aspirations and goals. Education, in African context was based on apprenticeship, practicality and functionalism.

Again, writing on “*Partnership between educational institutions and industries for developing quality entrepreneurial skills among business education students in Delta state*”, Onajite (2010) stated that for effective implementation of Business Education curriculum, Nigeria should emulate the examples of developed countries of the world. He stressed that countries like United States of America and Britain, many industrial concerns provide schools with valuable teaching aids, literature, films, visiting speakers to give career talks to students and restricted teacher-industry fellowship as well as allowing students and teachers to visit the industries to see various industrial processes Okoli, in Onajite (2010). He found out that link between the tertiary institutions and industries in Nigeria is very weak and that there is several

research reports on the lack of necessary resources to carry out practical exercise. Igbo as quoted by Akpotowoh (2010:5) in Imoh (2010), identified some of the accounting and financial skills required by entrepreneurs in business related areas for successful operation of business enterprises to include: Knowledge of costing; knowledge of accounts; ability to interpret financial statement; ability to acquire the skill of preparing financial statements; a knowledge of federal, state and local government levies, taxes and regulations; a knowledge of factors involved in decision to grant loan by financial houses; ability to process inventories and others. Isineyi (2008) identified the following as communication skills: Listening skills; non-verbal communication; clarity and concision; friendliness skills; confidence skills; empathy skills; open-mindedness; respect; feedback; picking the right medium

A study conducted on “*Professional skills required for successful management of small scale Business in Calabar Municipality*”, Cross River State by Jemialu & Abeng (2017:9) shows that communication skills are required by business education graduates who are would-be entrepreneurs for management of any business. This is because he needs to communicate with his workers and customers. Wrong use of words by business owner can scare away customers and demoralize workers. This is also supported by Alyssa (2006) and Kotler (2006) that communication has been widely accepted by scholars and academics as the livelihood of an organisation, because communication is needed for exchanging information, opinions, making plans and proposals, reaching agreement, executing decisions, sending and receiving orders and conducting sales.

Management education skill is another area of specialty in Business Education. Management is the art of getting things done by orders. Akintola (2001) pointed out that one of the problems facing entrepreneurs is lack of managerial skills and experience and thus, suggested that entrepreneurs should have good training in the art of management. Anyakoha (2009) identified some important skills required by the entrepreneur – Business Education graduates to successfully establish, run and manage a business enterprise to include but not limited to the following: Set appropriate business goal; taking long and short term planning; purchase goods, tools and equipment; factors involved in overhead control; acquisition of management supervisory skills’ manage time and meet job schedules; identify opportunities and generate ideas suitable to the opportunities; confidence to make a decision and act upon it and others

According to Bassey et al. (2017) learning is defined as “*the process by which we acquire and retain attitudes, knowledge, understanding, skills and capabilities that cannot be attributed to inherited behaviour patterns or physical growth*”. Bassey et al. (2017) opine that learning occurs whenever the activity of an organism brings about a relatively permanent change in its behaviour. Many other definitions of learning abound in literature. Facts implicit in various definitions of the concept are: Learning is a process; learning leads to permanent change in behaviour; learning cannot be directly observed but manifest in activities of the individual; learning depends on practice and experience.

Learning experience refers to the activities the learner engages in order to bring about learning. It is distinct from the activities of the teacher. It involves the covert and overt interaction of the learner with the environment. The experiences gathered in this process are used to shape behaviour. Onwuka (1996) observes that such interaction can be mental such as contemplating, questioning, judging or discussion.

It could be physical as in construction, painting or writing. He therefore defines learning experiences as any activity the learner engages in which results in a change in behaviour. Tyler in Esu et al (2016) defines learning experience as the interaction between the learner and the

external conditions in the environment to which he can react. Learning takes place through the action behaviour of the student; it is what he does, he learns, not what the teacher does. In the Glossary of Education (2016), learning experience is defined as any interaction, course, programme or other experience in which learning takes place, whether it occurs in classroom or in and outside school. The philosophic notion of experience as expressed by John Dewey states that for an individual to have an experience, it would be necessary for the learner to engage himself in activities from which he has not learnt before. Merriam Webster dictionary (2017) noted that the process of doing, seeing things and having things happen to one is the skill or knowledge acquired in doing something. Olaitan (2007) maintained that learning experiences are useful for skill development in thinking and problem solving, acquiring information, developing social attitudes and interest. These skills are no doubt entrepreneurial and are employable skills needed in today's world of work. Gatchalian (2010) in his studies basing his findings on the grounded theory approach found that both teachers and students are strongly in support of experiential methods. Martin & Romita (2014) indicated that learning experiences for entrepreneurial skill development should involve methods such as exploratory learning, cooperative learning, simulations, field work, experiment, research, project and role playing. Adman and Rahman (2004) opined that experiment is a test, trial or tentative procedure, an act of operation for the purpose of delivering something unknown as testing is a principle to prove something.

In another study on “*Critical appraisal of the mode of implementation of Nigerian secondary school curriculum towards socio economic empowerment of youth*” by Ofuha et al. (2010), the broad aim was to assess how the curriculum was to identify the root cause of the problem. Some of the specific objectives include: determine the appropriateness of Nigeria secondary education curriculum; find out type of teaching method used in implementing the curriculum; determine the number of skill-based subjects taught in school; identify practical (entrepreneurial) skills students have learnt in school with which they can create self-employment, etc. The study revealed remarkable findings some of which include: the curriculum was appropriate in terms of goals and content but found weak in its method of implementation; teaching method used in implementing the curriculum was mainly theoretical; students' entrepreneurial capability was significantly low as there were no significant production of marketable goods and services to show for their practical knowledge.

In a study on the influence of secondary school on teacher education curriculum on goal of Nigeria education by Akande (1999) using 120 students as sample and application of independent t-test statistical tool at .05 alpha level to check whether there was a significant influence of secondary school curriculum on the goals of education which provides the recipients with the basic knowledge and practical skills needed for entry into the world of work as employees or as self-employed found that the nation lacks quality vocation-technical education programmes in technical institutions. He however suggested the need to establish good vocational and technical institutions to provide the required training and impart the necessary skills leading to the production of craftsmen, technicians and other skilled personnel who will be enterprising and self-reliant.

General Education (skill) contents of business education include courses that provide general knowledge and skills which can be applied in all areas of Business Education. The acquisition of general skill component helps Business Education graduates to fit into the society. Knowledge and skills acquired in ICT courses are good examples. A study conducted by Okon & Okon (2013) determined the relationship between ICT utilisation by Business Education

Lecturers and Students and the teaching - learning of business education in tertiary institutions in Cross River State. The findings of the study show that ICT utilisation by lecturers and students has a significant positive relationship with teaching and learning of Business Education in tertiary institution.

General education in universities is any cross-cutting course offered as a general requirement for all departments, irrespective of academic programmes offered. Each of these courses centres on specific area of human endeavour that is contemporary. For instance, Ogah & Emesini (2013) conducted a study on “*Appraisal of the General Studies (GST) Entrepreneurship Skills Acquisition Curriculum for University Undergraduates in Nigeria: Challenges and the Way Forward*”. The study analyzed entrepreneurship skills acquisition content of GST curriculum for undergraduates in Nigerian Universities. Findings showed that the students could not properly identify the content of general entrepreneurship curriculum, and were not exposed to the practical aspect of the skills; hence the low percentage recorded for those who are ready to practice the skills. They equally agreed that they would face the enlisted challenges in the practice of the skills. Based on the findings of the study, recommendations were made.

Entrepreneurship education is a new programme introduced by Nigerian University Commission (NUC) into Nigerian universities. According to Okojie (2011), the Federal Government in 2002 decided that entrepreneurship studies be injected into the curriculum of university education in Nigeria, and since then, it has been introduced as General Studies (GST). The objective was to empower students to be able to harness opportunities, and be self-reliant and become job-creators and not job-seekers. Entrepreneurship education tends to make the curriculum more functional. Functional curriculum, according to Esu (2010) is designed to teach students skills that will equip them to function as competent and accepted adults in the society. Izedoni & Okafor (2010) reiterate that entrepreneurship education equips youths with passion and multiple skills to operate a successful business on their own. Introduction of entrepreneurship education curriculum into Nigerian universities is timely especially now that the rate of graduate unemployment is rising on a geometrical progression. Adejimola & Tayo-Olajubutu (2009) observe that it is a common experience that about 80% of the graduates from Nigerian universities find it difficult to get employment every year. This is partly due to the curricula of the universities and other tertiary institutions which train students for white-collar jobs.

As a follow up, a number of initiatives like the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP), and the establishment of Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria, (SMEDAN) were introduced (Osibanjo, 2006; Okojie, 2008). However, despite these efforts, the situation has not really changed. Adeyemi (2006) opined that the problem might be from the method of teaching the students. He pointed out that in developed economies, the education system emphasizes the trail of inquiry–discovery–application in teaching, and students are meant to perceive problems, (including societal problems) as challenges and opportunities that can be turned into goods and services of commercial value. Entrepreneurship education has been introduced in the nation’s university curricula for the past sixteen years, and the first batch of entrepreneurial graduates are about to emerge. It is now pertinent to ascertain the journey so far; hence the need for the study based on the appraisal of the GST entrepreneurship skills acquisition curriculum for Nigerian universities, its challenges and the way forward.

The importance of general studies in Nigerian universities led to the establishment of centre for general studies in all universities. In University of Ibadan for instance, the Centre for General Studies (CGS) was formerly known as General Studies Programme (GSP). The unit was

established in the University of Ibadan in 1986. It also enables students acquire a body of relevant knowledge outside their respective fields of specialization for successful living (University of Ibadan, 2018). Odunaike & Amoda, (2013) viewed business education as relevance to national development.

Basic Business Education affords to every individual an opportunity to develop the skills, abilities and understanding that will enable him to handle competently his personal business affairs; to develop an understanding of the vocational opportunity available in the broad field of business and to assume his citizenship responsibilities through enlightened participation in, as well as an understanding and appreciation of the business system (Osuala, 2005).

Business education in the domain of Technical and Vocational Education (TVE) in Nigeria is captured in the National Policy on Education (NPE). According to FRN (2014), TVE is used as a comprehensive term referring to those aspects of the educational process involving, in addition to general education, the study of technologies and related sciences and the acquisition of practical skills, attitudes, understanding and knowledge relating to occupations in various sectors of economic and social life. From the definition, TVE is further understood to be: an integral part of general education; a means of preparing for occupational fields and for effective participation in the world of work; an aspect of lifelong learning and a preparation for responsible citizenship; an instrument for promoting environmentally sound sustainable development; and a method of alleviating poverty.

Office Technology Management (OTM) – concerns with the practice and procedures in business management with devotion to the use of technologies in business operation as well as the promotion of sound management practices for effective business decision making. Decision making is an important aspect of business operation. Its effectiveness or otherwise is indicative of the attainment of profit-maximising motive of any business. This area of Business Education is also integrative of the Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and the knowledge economy.

Marketing/Distributive Education – concerns with issues, techniques, channels, skills and challenges of making goods and services relevant to those who need them and broadening demand using appropriate pricing skills and strategies, market research, development issues, among others within and outside the demand audience. Okoro (2013) found out that quality university Business Education curriculum should be comprehensive, varied in nature, provide an understanding of business world, ability to acquire relevant knowledge and skills, correlation of subjects, individualized instruction, constant review and provision for entry into jobs among others which are required for successful graduates' employment. It was recommended that university authorities should provide adequate teaching facilities and constant curriculum review to make the Business Education programme functional and relevant to the world of work. A worthwhile business education curriculum should be dynamic and relevant, possessing the following characteristics as outlined by Isyaku (2003).

The specialized Business Education curriculum contents are the different specific (professional) areas such as Accounting, Management, Marketing, which students major depending on their interest. Business Education represents a broad field of study (classified under Vocational Education in the formal education system and often described as vocational training in the informal education setting) which offers to every individual an opportunity to develop functional skills, abilities and understandings necessary to handle competently his personal business affairs and occupational life. Okon (2015) quoted Daughtrey (1965) who remarked that Business Education has a two-fold philosophy: first, Business Education offers to

every individual an opportunity to develop those skills, abilities, and understandings that will enable him to handle competently his personal business affairs; to develop an understanding of the vocational opportunities available in the broad field of business; and to assume his citizenship responsibilities through enlightened participation, understanding and, appreciation of the enterprise system of any nation.

Secondly, it offers to the student who wishes to pursue a career in business those skills, abilities, and understandings that will enable him to enter, perform and progress in a business occupation after graduation from school and provides him with the occupational intelligence to enable him to fit into and find job satisfaction in the labour force of our complex and dynamic economy. Similarly, Osuala (2009) noted that business education is a programme of instruction which consists of two parts: Office education, a vocational education programme for office careers through initial, refresher, and upgrading education; and general business education, a programme meant to provide students with information and competencies which are needed by all in managing personal business affairs and in using the services of the business. Okon (2011) posits that business education programme is one of the products of government's constant quest for the type of education needed to achieve economic prosperity in Nigeria. In the university, the program is designed primarily to prepare competent and professionally qualified business educators who are capable of promoting and enriching Business Education at all levels of the educational system, in the public service, organized private sector and for self-reliance.

Accounting area of vocational business education – exposes graduates to skills related to business financial analysis, book-keeping and business planning skills in relation to sources and appropriation of funds to meet business expenditure such that the income accruing from business operation results in break-even for the achievement of profit-maximising motive of business.

Specialised component of business education curriculum enhance the acquisition of specific skills for occupational life. Udo & Bako (2014) opined that the acquisition of the requisite skills is a means of increasing the productive power of any nation. Consequently, Udo & Bako (2014) added that the Nigerian society should recognize the fact that every citizen should be equipped to contribute effectively to the welfare of the country. The acquisition of such practical skills is important because when efficient and skilful hands are employed in any field of human endeavours, high productivity is usually achieved. Economically, maximum skills acquisition by VBE students and others will help to enrich the Nigerian society and in this way, tend to make possible sustainable development. Okorie and Ezeji (1988) opined that a rich nation is one that is capable of meeting the economic, social, moral and political needs of the citizenry. Nigeria as a nation will enjoy sustainable development if VBE students in particular and all other students in general acquire maximum skills and competencies in their specialties.

Statement of the Problem

Introduction of entrepreneurship courses in Nigerian Universities was received with the hope that students would acquire entrepreneurial knowledge and skills to enable them explore the world of work. But graduates from Universities are constantly criticized by employers of labour for lack of skills for entrepreneurship, modern world of work and business demand. Issues of great concern are that critics seem to have a consensus those undergraduates, especially those on internship lack management skills, marketing skills, accounting skills, computer skills, information and communication technology (ICT) skills and others.

Despite the fact these challenges have been identified, efforts to address them so far seems to have yielded very little or no result. This is because, very scanty researches have been

found, most of which have not been in this direction. The absent of research evidences in this area implies that the problem need to be addressed, otherwise the future of Business Education especially at the undergraduate level and beyond is threatened. This further implies that entrepreneurial development as well as skill proficiency for national development will be slowed down. “*Wastage in education was enormous and academic education seen as vocational education*”. It is on this premise that the researcher embarked on the study to determine the influence or contribution of business education curriculum components on the development of entrepreneurial skills among undergraduates in universities.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to determine the influence of Business Education curriculum components on the development of entrepreneurial skills among undergraduates in Cross River State. Specifically, the study sought to determine the influence of:

1. The theoretical component of Business Education Curriculum on the development of entrepreneurial skills among undergraduates.
2. The practical component of Business Education Curriculum on the development of entrepreneurial skills among undergraduates.
3. The general education component of Business Education Curriculum on the development of entrepreneurial skills among undergraduates.
4. General Business Education component of Business Education Curriculum on the development of entrepreneurial skills among undergraduates.
5. The specialised (occupational) component of Business Education Curriculum on the development of entrepreneurial skills among undergraduates.

Research Questions

The study sought the answers to the following research questions:

1. What is the influence of theoretical component of Business Education curriculum on the development of entrepreneurial skills among undergraduates?
2. What is the influence of practical component of Business Education curriculum on the development of entrepreneurial skills among undergraduates?
3. What is the influence of general education component of Business Education curriculum on the development of entrepreneurial skills among undergraduates?
4. What is the influence of general Business Education component of Business Education curriculum on the development of entrepreneurial skills among undergraduates?
5. What is the influence of specialised (occupational) component of Business Education curriculum on the development of entrepreneurial skills among undergraduates?

Statement of Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were postulated to guide the study:

- H₁:** *There is no significant difference in the mean responses of lecturers, industry-based employers and undergraduates on the influence of the theoretical components of Business Education curriculum on the development of entrepreneurial skill among undergraduates.*
- H₂:** *There is no significant difference in the mean responses of lecturers, industry-based employers and undergraduates on the influence of practical components of Business Education curriculum on the development of entrepreneurial skill among undergraduates.*
- H₃:** *There is no significant difference in the mean responses of lecturers, industry-based employers and undergraduates on the influence of general education components of Business Education curriculum on the development of entrepreneurial skill among undergraduates.*
- H₄:** *There is no significant difference in the mean responses of lecturers, industry-based employers and undergraduates on the influence of general Business Education components of Business Education curriculum on the development of entrepreneurial skill among undergraduates.*

H₅: *There is no significant influence difference in the mean responses of lecturers, industry-based employers and undergraduates on the influence of specialised (occupational) components of Business Education curriculum on the development of entrepreneurial skill among undergraduates.*

RESEARCH METHODS

The survey research design was used for the study. The choice of the survey research design enabled the researchers to use survey instrument, especially questionnaire to generate data for the study. Again, the study was carried out in large geographical area using a sample size drawn from a large population. Ndiyo (2005) opined that survey research typically employs questionnaires and interviews in order to determine the opinions, attitudes, preferences, and perceptions of persons of interest to the researcher. Also, Osuala (2005) explained survey research studies both large and small populations by selecting and studying samples chosen from the populations to discover the relative incidence, distribution, and interrelations of sociological and psychological variables.

This study was carried out in Cross River State. The choice of Cross River State allowed the researchers contributes to the development of Business education in the state. Cross River State is bordered in the North, South, East, and West by Niger Republic, Atlantic Ocean, Republic of Cameroun, and Benin Republic respectively. The state has its capital in Calabar, where the two public universities under investigation are located. The State is classified as educationally disadvantaged state despite its early contact with the Europeans, who introduced Western Education in Calabar. However, the first university in Cross River State, the University of Calabar (2016), came as a Second Generation University (SGU) in 1975, when the then University of Nigeria Campus, established in 1973 became a full-fledged university. The second university, the Cross River University of Technology was established in 2002. Both institutions offer Business Education as an academic programme. The major tribes are Efik, Ejagham, Efuts, Nubue, Boki, with about 250 other minor tribes, with different dialects. Peaceful disposition of which the State is known for makes it to play host to a large population of non-indigenes within and outside Nigeria for educational, commercial, religious purpose, amongst others.

A population size of 550, comprising 25 lecturers, 131 undergraduates and 394 industry-based employers was used for the study. Information on number of Business Education students and lecturers was obtained from Office of the HODs of CRUTECH and UNICAL). The researchers' decision to use students, lecturers and employers is based on the fact that the three groups are directly involved in the teaching-learning and training in business education hence, their opinion on how well each component of the Business Education contributes to entrepreneurship development cannot be overemphasised. The multi-stage random sampling approach was used for the study. The multi-stage random sampling technique combines other sampling techniques which this research intends to adopt. Azuka (2011) averred that by combining different sampling methods, we are able to achieve a rich variety of probabilistic sampling method.

A sample size of 243, comprising 25 lecturers, 99 employers and 119 undergraduates formed the respondents used for the study. The sample size was based on Krejcie & Morgan (1970) table for determining sample size for finite population. This study made use of a structured questionnaire for data generation. Questionnaire is deemed fit for data generation because of its sustainability to the respondents who are involved in the teaching and learning process in Business Education. The items were derived from interview and the literature reviewed. The questionnaire was tagged: "*Business Education Curriculum Component and the*

development of entrepreneurial skills Questionnaire (BECCADESQ)". The questionnaire was designed with 35 items covering the five independent variables and one dependent variable. It was rated in a 4 point scale reflecting the degree of influence of the different components of Business Education Curriculum thus:

1. Very High Influence (VHL)-4 points
2. High Influence (HI)-3 points
3. Low influence e (LI)-2 points
4. Very Low Influence (VLI)-1 point

The instrument (questionnaire) tagged, "*Business Education Curriculum Component and the Development of Entrepreneurial Skills (BECCADESQ)*" was given to 3 validate specializing in Business Education, Measurement and Evaluation and Curriculum and Teaching. The instrument (questionnaire) tagged, "*Business Education Curriculum Component and the Development of Entrepreneurial Skills (BECCADESQ)*" was subjected to reliability test using Cronbach reliability technique. The reliability was achieved by sampling 20 respondents and questionnaire administered on them. Data collected was summarized into mean and standard deviation for the analysis. The result showed coefficient of .84, which was seen as very high to reliably access the respondents. The reliability table is shown on Appendix A.

The researchers personally met with the respondents in the premises of the two universities and administered the questionnaire on the spot. This was however made possible after permission was granted by the Heads of Departments (HODs) where Business Education domiciles in the two universities. The HODs equally introduced the researcher to unit coordinators of Business Education who aided immensely by addressing students representatives who served as questionnaire administration assistants. Data generated were coded based on the rating scale after undergoing data clink. Descriptive statistics was used to answer the research questions. On the other hand, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to test all the hypotheses.

RESULTS

Research Question One

What is the influence of theoretical component of Business Education curriculum on the development of entrepreneurial skills among undergraduates in Cross River State?

A structured questionnaire tagged, Questionnaire on the "*Business Education Curriculum Component and the Development of Entrepreneurial Skills (BECCADESQ)*" generated data with items 1 – 5 covering theoretical component supplied data for answering research question one. Summary data is shown in Table 1.

Table 1 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF THE INFLUENCE OF THEORETICAL COMPONENT OF BUSINESS EDUCATION CURRICULUM ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS				
	N	Mean	STD	
Lecturers	25	12.08	1.55242	0.31048
	99	12.0404	1.30868	0.13153
	119	11.8655	1.04901	0.09616
Total	243	11.9588	1.21558	0.07798

The result presented in Table 1 shows that theoretical component of business education

curriculum has positive influence on the development of entrepreneurial skills among business education graduates. Also, the mean difference in responses of business education lecturers, employers and graduates were 12.0800, 12.0404 and 11.8655 respectively, indicating slight difference.

Research Question Two

What is the influence of practical component of Business Education curriculum on the development of entrepreneurial skills among undergraduates in Cross River State? A structured questionnaire tagged, “*Business Education Curriculum Component and the Development of Entrepreneurial Skills (BECCADESQ)*” generated data with items 6–10 covering practical component supplied data for answering research question two. Summary data is shown in Table 2.

Table 2 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF THE INFLUENCE OF PRACTICAL COMPONENT OF BUSINESS EDUCATION CURRICULUM ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS					
	N	Mean	STD	STD Error	Remark
Lecturers	25	12.5600	1.63503	0.32701	Positive Influence
Employers	99	12.6364	1.56136	0.15692	
Undergraduates	119	12.1008	1.26488	0.11595	
Total	243	12.3663	1.44943	0.09298	

The result presented in Table 2 shows that practical component of business education curriculum has positive influence on the development of entrepreneurial skills among business education graduates. Also, the mean difference in responses of business education lecturers, employers and graduates were 12.5600, 12.6364 and 12.1008 respectively, indicating a very slight difference.

Research Question Three

What is the influence of general education component of Business Education curriculum on the development of entrepreneurial skills among undergraduates in Cross River State? A structured questionnaire tagged, Questionnaire on the “*Business Education Curriculum Component and the Development of Entrepreneurial Skills (BECCADEQ)*” generated data with items 11 – 15 covering general education component supplied data for answering research question three. Summary data is shown in Table 3.

Table 3 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF THE INFLUENCE OF GENERAL EDUCATION COMPONENT ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS						
	N	Mean	STD	Std. Error		Remark
Lecturers	25	11.2000	1.47196	0.29439	10.5924	Positive Influence
Employers	99	11.5657	1.26299	0.12693	11.3138	
Undergraduates	119	11.9580	0.85762	0.07862	11.8023	
Total	243	11.7202	1.13358	0.07272	11.5769	

The result presented in Table 3 shows that general education curriculum component has positive influence on the development of entrepreneurial skills among business education graduates. Also, the mean difference in responses of business education lecturers, employers and graduates were 11.2000, 11.5657 and 11.9580 respectively, indicating a very slight difference.

Research Question Four

What is the influence of general Business Education component of Business Education curriculum on the development of entrepreneurial skills among undergraduates in Cross River State? A structured questionnaire tagged, Questionnaire on the “*Business Education Curriculum Component and the Development of Entrepreneurial Skills Questionnaire (BECCADECQ)*” generated data with items 16 – 20 covering general business education component supplied data for answering research question four. Summary data is shown in Table 4.

Table 4 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF THE INFLUENCE OF GENERAL BUSINESS EDUCATION COMPONENT ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS					
	N	Mean	Std.	Std. Error	Remark
Lecturers	25	11.0000	1.44338	0.28868	Positive Influence
Employers	99	11.7778	1.19996	0.12060	
Undergraduates	119	11.7647	1.00596	0.09222	
Total	243	11.6914	1.15682	0.07421	

The result presented in Table 4 shows that general business education curriculum component has positive influence on the development of entrepreneurial skills among business education graduates. Also, the mean difference in responses of business education lecturers, employers and graduates were 11.0000, 11.7778 and 11.7647 respectively, indicating a very slight difference.

Research Question Five

What is the influence of specialised (occupational) component of Business Education curriculum on the development of entrepreneurial skills among undergraduates in Cross River State? A structured Questionnaire tagged, Questionnaire on “*Curriculum Component and the Development of Entrepreneurial Skills Questionnaire (BECCADESQ)*” generated data with items 21 – 25 covering specialised business education component supplied data for answering research question four. Summary data is shown in Table 5.

Table 5 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF THE INFLUENCE OF SPECIALISED (OCCUPATIONAL) COMPONENT OF BUSINESS EDUCATION CURRICULUM ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS					
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std Error	Remark
Lecturers	25	11.1600	1.37477	0.27495	Positive Influence
Employers	99	11.5758	1.20451	0.12106	
Undergraduates	119	11.7311	1.03086	0.09450	
Total	243	11.6091	1.14967	0.07375	

The result presented in Table 5 shows that specialized (occupational) component of business education curriculum has positive influence on the development of entrepreneurial skills among business education graduates. Also, the mean difference in responses of business education lecturers, employers and graduates were 11.1600, 11.5758 and 11.7311 respectively, indicating a very slight difference.

Test of Null Hypotheses

Hypothesis one: There is no significance difference in the theoretical components of Business Education curriculum on the development of entrepreneurial skill among undergraduates in Cross River State. A structured questionnaire tagged, Questionnaire on the “*Business Education Curriculum Component and the Development of Entrepreneurial Skills Questionnaire (BECCADESQ)*” generated data with items 1 – 5 covering theoretical component supplied data for testing hypothesis one. Summary data is shown in Table 6.

Table 6 ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE OF INFLUENCE OF THEORETICAL COMPONENT OF BUSINESS EDUCATION ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS					
	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2.061	2	1.031	0.696	0.500
Within Groups	355.527	240	1.481		
Total	357.588	242			

N = 243; Critical F-Ratio = 2.99; Level of Significant = 0.05

Result presented in Table 6 shows that the calculated F – Ratio of .696 at .05 level of significance; degrees of freedom 2 and 240 and N = 243, is by far less than the critical F – Ratio of 2.99, therefore, the null hypothesis, was retained.

Hypothesis two: There is no significant difference in the practical components of Business Education curriculum on the development of entrepreneurial skill among undergraduates in Cross River State. A structured questionnaire tagged, Questionnaire on the “*Business Education Curriculum Component and the Development of Entrepreneurial Skills Questionnaire (BECCADESQ)*” generated data with items 6 – 10 covering practical component supplied data for answering research question two. Summary data is shown in Table 7.

Table 7 ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE INFLUENCE OF PRACTICAL COMPONENT OF BUSINESS EDUCATION ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS					
	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	16.544	2	8.272	4.036	0.019
Within Groups	491.859	240	2.049		
Total	508.403	242			

N = 243; Critical F-Ratio = 2.99; Level of Significant = 0.05

Result presented in Table 7 shows that the calculated F – Ratio of 4.036 at .05 level of significant; degrees of freedom 2 and 240 and N = 243, is greater than the critical F – Ratio of 2.99, therefore, the hypothesis, was rejected. This implied that there was significant influence in the mean responses of lecturers, industry-based employers and undergraduates in the practical components of Business Education curriculum on the development of entrepreneurial skill among undergraduates in Cross River State.

Hypothesis three: There is no significance difference in the general education components of Business Education curriculum on the development of entrepreneurial skill among undergraduates in Cross River State. A structured questionnaire tagged, Questionnaire on the “*Business Education Curriculum Component and the Development of Entrepreneurial Skills Questionnaire (BECCADESQ)*” generated data with items 11–15 covering general education component supplied data for answering research question three. Summary data is shown in Table 8.

Table 8 ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE OF INFLUENCE OF GENERAL EDUCATION COMPONENT OF BUSINESS EDUCATION ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS					
	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	15.858	2	7.929	6.448	0.002
Within Groups	295.113	240	1.230		
Total	310.971	242			

N = 243; Critical F-Ratio = 2.99; Level of Significant = 0.05

Result presented in Table 8 shows that the calculated F – Ratio of 6.448 at .05 level of significant; degrees of freedom 2 and 240 and N = 243, is greater than the critical F – Ratio of 2.99, therefore, the hypothesis was rejected. This implies that there is significant influence in the mean responses of lecturers, industry-based employers and undergraduates in the general education components of Business Education curriculum on the development of entrepreneurial skill among undergraduates in Cross River State.

Hypothesis four: There is no significant difference in the general Business Education components of Business Education curriculum on the development of entrepreneurial skill among undergraduates in Cross River State. A structured questionnaire tagged, Questionnaire on the “*Business Education Curriculum Component and the Development of Entrepreneurial Skills Questionnaire (BECCADESQ)*” generated data with items 16 – 20 covering general business education component supplied data for answering research question four. Summary data is shown in Table 9.

Table 9 ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE OF INFLUENCE OF GENERAL BUSINESS EDUCATION COMPONENT ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS					
	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	13.329	2	6.664	5.151	0.006
Within Groups	310.523	240	1.294		
Total	323.852	242			

N = 243; Critical F-Ratio = 2.99; Level of Significant = 0.05

Result presented in Table 9 shows that the calculated F – Ratio of 5.151 at .05 level of significant; degrees of freedom 2 and 240 and N = 243, is greater than the critical F – Ratio of 2.99, therefore, the hypothesis was rejected. This implies that there is significant difference in the mean responses of lecturers, industry-based employers and undergraduates in the general Business Education components of Business Education curriculum on the development of entrepreneurial skill among undergraduates in Cross River State.

Hypothesis five: There is no significant difference in the specialised (occupational) components skill among undergraduates in Cross River State. A structured Questionnaire tagged, Questionnaire on “*Curriculum Component and the Development of Entrepreneurial Skills Questionnaire (BECCADESQ)*” generated data with items 21 – 25 covering specialised business education component supplied data for answering research question four. Summary data is shown in Table 10.

Table 10 ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE OF INFLUENCE OF SPECIALISED COMPONENT ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS					
	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	6.923	2	3.462	2.655	0.072
Within Groups	312.937	240	1.304		
Total	319.860	242			

N = 243; Critical F-Ratio = 2.99; Level of Significant = .05

Result presented in Table 10 shows that the calculated F – Ratio of 2.655 at .05 level of significant; degrees of freedom 2 and 240 and N = 243, is less than the critical F – Ratio of 2.99, therefore, the hypothesis is upheld. This implies that there is no significant difference in the mean responses of lecturers, industry-based employers and undergraduates in the specialised (occupational) components of Business Education curriculum on the development of entrepreneurial skill among undergraduates in Cross River State.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Findings from test of null hypothesis one revealed that there is no significant difference in the mean responses of lecturers, industry-based employers and undergraduates in the theoretical components of Business Education curriculum on the development of entrepreneurial skill among undergraduates in Cross River State. This finding is an indication of the inadequacy of contents in the business education curriculum and in relation to the current business and entrepreneurial demand as against the original philosophy of business education to train for office occupation of the early days of Nigeria's independence. For instance, Iseniyi (2009) observed that the present situation of Business Education curriculum is not meeting employers demand.

Findings from test of null hypothesis two revealed that there was significant difference in the mean responses of lecturers, industry-based employers and undergraduates in the practical components of Business Education curriculum on the development of entrepreneurial skill among undergraduates in Cross River State. Business education has as one of the core mandate, the production of graduates with practical skills for self-reliance. This finding further explains the assertion by Onajite (2010) that for effective implementation of Business Education curriculum, Nigeria should emulate the examples of developed countries of the world. He stressed that countries like United States of America and Britain, many industrial concerns provide schools with valuable teaching aids, literature, films, visiting speakers to give career talks to students and restricted teacher-industry fellowship as well as allowing students and teachers to visit the industries to see various industrial processes (Binuomote & Okoli, 2017). He found out that link between the tertiary institutions and industries in Nigeria is very weak and that there exists several research reports on the lack of necessary resources to carry out practical exercise.

Findings from test of null hypothesis three revealed that there was significant difference in the mean responses of lecturers, industry-based employers and undergraduates in the general education components of Business Education curriculum on the development of entrepreneurial skill among undergraduates in Cross River State. Business education has a general education component (either general education or university mandated courses as what students of business education must undergo during their undergraduates' programme.

Findings from test of null hypothesis four revealed that there was significant difference in the mean responses of lecturers, industry-based employers and undergraduates in the general Business Education components of Business Education curriculum on the development of entrepreneurial skill among undergraduates in Cross River State. The findings of this study further highlight the importance of general business education component. Odunaike and Amoda, (2013) in a study on Examination of the relevance of Business Education in the Development of Entrepreneurship in Nigerian Universities; A Case Study of Tai Solarin University of Education had earlier found that Business Education is a vocational programme that enables individuals to develop skills, abilities and understanding to handle business affairs.

Findings from test of null hypothesis five revealed that there is no significant influence in the mean responses of lecturers, industry-based employers and undergraduates in the specialised (occupational) components of Business Education curriculum on the development of entrepreneurial skill among undergraduates in Cross River State. This finding may have been the evidence of lack of adequate skills in specialized areas of business education. For instance, the issue of whether business education graduates in accounting, marketing and management can compete favourably with their counterparts in the management sciences comes to play here. Okorie and Ezeji (2015) opined that a rich nation is one that is capable of meeting the economic, social, moral and political needs of the citizenry. Nigeria as a nation will enjoy sustainable development if VBE students in particular and all other students in general acquire maximum skills and competencies in their specialties.

CONCLUSION

Based on the finding made, it was concluded that practical, general education and general business education curriculum components significantly influences the development of entrepreneurial skills. It is further concluded that there is no significant influence in the theoretical and specialized component of Business Education. This underscores the need for curriculum review. Therefore, the developments of entrepreneurial skills depend on the ability of Business Education Curriculum in providing the relevant skills and knowledge needed by undergraduate.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the conclusions drawn, the following recommendations were made:

1. Lecturers, industry-based employers and undergraduates should contribute their input during business education curriculum review to enable them enrich the curriculum based on their field experience on the development of entrepreneurial skills.
2. Lecturers, industry-based employers and undergraduates should update their skills through training periodically in line with the emerging practical components of Business Education curriculum for the development of entrepreneurial skill in today's contemporary society.
3. Business education stakeholders, including course lecturers, employers and graduates managing small-scale businesses should evaluate the general education component of business education in order to indicate those areas that are needed in managing small-scale businesses and other societal needs.
4. University management should recruit lecturers that are professionals in the general Business Education curriculum component as they possess the requisite professionalism and knowledge to guide business education undergraduates while undergoing their studies.
5. The specialised (occupational) components of Business Education curriculum should be enriched to reflect core courses in those specialized areas to enhance the development of entrepreneurial skill among undergraduates.

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