

# ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS REQUIRED BY BUSINESS EDUCATION GRADUATING STUDENTS IN UNIVERSITIES FOR SELF-RELIANCE

Maria O Ingwe, University of Calabar

Agnes I Okute, University of Calabar

Edet E Okon, University of Calabar

## ABSTRACT

*This study, guided by five objectives was carried in Calabar, Nigeria with 118 business educators and business owners. Questionnaire generated data analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Findings are that: No significant difference exists in the mean rating of respondents on the Information and Communication Technology abilities; significant difference exists in the mean ratings of respondents on the innovative/creative abilities, leadership, marketing skills, and interpersonal skills required by business education graduating students for self-reliance. It is concluded that students need these skills for self-reliance in the present 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Thus, business educators should ensure that students are adequately exposed to ICT skills, innovativeness and creativity, leadership experience; marketing skills, and personal skills before graduation.*

**Keywords:** Entrepreneurship, Creativity, Innovation, Skills, Employability.

## INTRODUCTION

The outset of the new millennium has sparked global concern for prosperity of nations and the global community. Nigeria's quest to attain economic prosperity, like other nations of the world, as envisioned in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that metamorphosed into the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) targets social problems such as poverty, low standard of living, among others. This has prompted the restructuring and redirection of academic programmes in making the largest contribution to national development by requiring all Nigerian universities to teach entrepreneurship skills. Similarly, the objective TVET, the umbrella academic program of business education offers training and impart the required skills to the learners in order for them to be economically self-sufficient. Self-reliance implies the ability of one to rely on his or her own abilities and efforts to be independent, (Okute et al., 2019).

Skill as used here refers to an individual's ability to contribute to himself or herself and society at large; therefore, for this to be achieved, tertiary education, which is the pinnacle of education, should ensure that students acquire these skills at graduation in order for them to live meaningfully in society (Ben, 2010). Entrepreneurial skills considered in this investigation such as Information and Communication Technology (ICT), Innovation and Creativity skills, leadership skills, marketing skills and interpersonal skills are aimed to promote self-reliance, which is the central mandate of business education. These skills are therefore required by students, especially graduating students in public universities. Bassey (2015) described entrepreneurship as a continuous system established and controlled by individuals with the goal

of using innovation to produce new value in the market to meet a specific demand. Entrepreneurship has to do with innovation, according to Okute & Olom (2012). Entrepreneurship is defined as the ability to gather the resources needed to capitalize on new business prospects. It is the act of engaging in a worthwhile endeavour for the purpose of earning money to support oneself. This implies that innovative activity does not involve anything new globally or nationally, but rather taking opportunity of new form of venture, new technology and new enterprises creating goods and services not previously available at a certain place. According to Olajumoke (2011), key elements that are inherent in entrepreneurship activities include: Taking risks; innovation; creating value; identifying an opportunity; being a market stabilization force; being able to start new businesses and manage them effectively; providing resources; profit maximization; and being able to reorganize exploited disequilibrium. Entrepreneurship is concerned with production of an identified business opportunity for profit maximization. The research focuses on the following aspects of entrepreneurial skills need: ICT Skills; Innovation and Creativity Skills; Leadership Skills; Marketing Skills and Interpersonal Skills. Chell (2013) discussed "*skill*" and its relationship with entrepreneurship. Skill refers to efficiency in performance that is enhanced by practise and training. According to Okute (2013), skill is defined as the capacity to accomplish a task in a systematic and efficient manner, as well as experience gained through a rigorous training procedure. Skill here is combination of cognitive-knowledge and ability to learn new information; affective; feeling, emotion and expression of attitude; psychomotor - actions, origination of movement in conscious mental activities. Black & Davidson (2022) observed that levels of students' engagement in online classes can be demonstrated and evaluated.

Entrepreneurship skills are vital link in economic growth of a nation; hence it's imperative for the utilization of opportunity for self-reliance, which is why National University Commission (NUC) deems it necessary as one of its benchmark requirements of graduates in tertiary institution. Entrepreneurship curriculum in tertiary institution will help graduates to acquire increased knowledge and understanding of entrepreneurship, to become work creators and not job seekers. Ememe (2012) stressed the formation of institutions' entrepreneurial development centres, the building of small and medium-sized resource centres, the organization of business plan competitions in tertiary institutions, and the introduction of networking activities. Students that performed well in their practical during site supervision should be rewarded with some type of innovation. This will encourage them to start a business or businesses when they graduate from high school

Theories are bound in support of entrepreneurial skills such as Joseph Schumpeter's entrepreneurship innovation theory (1939); Locke & Latham (2012) goal-setting theory of motivation (1968); and the pedagogical theory by Fiet (2001). Innovation theory of entrepreneurship by Schumpeter (1939) was propounded by Joseph Schumpeter in 1939. The theory stresses on innovation as the engine of any successful entrepreneurship. An entrepreneur must be able to come out with new idea, digest the idea and practice it (innovation).

The Goal Setting Theory of Motivation by Locke & Latham (2012) put forward by Edwin Locke in the year (1968). This theory states that the process of deciding what one wants to accomplish is by drawing a plan to achieve the desired result. He proposed that intention to work towards a goal is the major source of motivation. The relevance of the theory to this study on entrepreneurial skills required is that if graduate of business education are trained in a specific skill, by drawing a plan to achieve the skills required, it will lead to higher acquisition of that skill, rather than leaving them to do their best.

The pedagogical theory by Fiet (2001) propounded by Fiet in 2001 is concerned with entrepreneurship education theory building, method of teaching this theory and its related challenges. Therefore, the teacher must involve the students to practice specific skills. The relevant of the theory to this research is that it will help to stimulate their zeal towards a particular skill acquisition, hence entrepreneurial skills are not merely talk, but it involves active participation in entrepreneurial activities. Educators would engage their students in skills acquisition activities in order to develop entrepreneurial mind set, to become job creators rather than job seeker.

### **Statement of the problem**

Business education is a programme that equips learners with practical skills for self-reliance. It aims to produce youths with skills to enable them be self-reliance, create jobs, wealth and enhance economic development. This is because the cardinal objectives of business education centre on: Acquisition of skills and competencies, training in general knowledge of business, occupational intelligence etc. However, it is observed that graduates of Nigerian tertiary institutions including those of Business education prefer white collar job in establishments where they are given monthly pay. Unfortunately, the jobs seem not to be available as evidenced in the high level of unemployment. Successive governments have done much to eradicate the problem of lack of self-reliance, by making entrepreneurship education a compulsory course in tertiary institution. Hence, public universities in Cross River State have contributed immensely to the development of entrepreneurial centres to assist students in the institution to acquire the right skill for job creation for themselves on graduation. Still, much has not been achieved on the part of students. This is evident in the increased rate of unemployment graduate roaming the street with files looking for government or private paid job. Graduates of vocational education/business education in public universities, who are supposed to be job creator are now job seeker irrespective of entrepreneurial aims and objectives. In the circumstances, the questions that arose are: why are business education graduates seeking for paid employment rather than self-employment? Were these graduates exposed to entrepreneurial skills, while undergoing courses in business education?

The alarming rate of unemployment among business education graduates and the lack of entrepreneurial skills it portrays among these graduating students constitute a problem for this study. In light of these observations, the researcher intends to investigate entrepreneurial skills such as information and communication technology skills, innovation/creativity skills, leadership skills, marketing skills, and interpersonal abilities among business education graduating students in Cross River State.

### **Objectives of the study**

1. To determine Information and Communication Technology (ICT) skills required for self-reliance by business education graduating students in public Universities in Cross River State.
2. To determine innovation and creativity skills required for self-reliance by business education graduating students in public Universities in Cross River State.
3. To determine leadership skills required for self-reliance by business education graduating students in public Universities in Cross River State.
4. To determine marketing skills required for self-reliance by business education graduating students in public Universities in Cross River State.
5. To determine interpersonal skills required for self-reliance by business education graduating students in public Universities in Cross River State.

### **Research questions**

1. What are the ICT skills required for self-reliance by business education graduating students in public Universities in Cross River State?
2. What are Innovation/Creativity skills required for self-reliance by business education graduating students in public Universities in Cross River State?
3. What are the leadership skills required for self-reliance by business education graduating students in public Universities in Cross River State?
4. What are the marketing skills required for self-reliance by business education graduating students in public Universities in Cross River State?
5. What are the interpersonal skills required for self-reliance by business education graduating students in public Universities in Cross River State?

### Statement of hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference in the mean rating of business education lecturers and business owners on the ICT skills required for self-reliance by business education graduating students in public universities Cross River State.
2. There is no significant difference in the mean rating of business education lecturers and business owners on the Innovation and creativity skills required for self-reliance by business education graduating students in public universities Cross River State.
3. There is no significant difference in the mean rating of business education lecturers and business owners on the Leadership skills required for self-reliance by business education graduating students in public universities Cross River State.
4. There is no significant difference in the mean rating of business education lecturers and business owners on the marketing skills required for self-reliance by business education graduating students in public universities Cross River State.
5. There is no significant difference in the mean rating of business education lecturers and business owners on the interpersonal skills required for self-reliance by business education graduating students in public universities Cross River State.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Training to acquire Information and Communication Technology (ICT) skill is of critical importance. Information and communication technology focuses more on technologies that deal with communication devices like cell phones, computers, the internet and wireless networks among others. According to Ukwungwu & Oyedepo (2012), students can learn communication, creativity, commercial, coordinating, calculating, concentration, and cognitive skills through using computers. Information and communication is the bedrock of entrepreneurial development. Technology had contributed immensely to the development of man (Oluka & Onyebuanyi, 2017). Communication, according to Okute (2013), is concerned with the generation, transmission, interpretation, and use of information. Guile & Unwin (2022) observed that occupational expertise has always been constituted and afforded recognition and status in work contexts that are interconnected and interrelated, underpinned by intangible assets.

Entrepreneurs need to be good communicators, in order to effectively communicate within and outside their enterprises to become successful. ICT abilities are vital for the process of entrepreneurship in graduating students of business education and help to establish trade relations and compete in the market, nationally and globally. Good Communication Skills are very important to one's success for self-reliance (Abassi et al., 2011). Okolocha (2012) stated that business education trains her students in business skills and knowledge necessary for office career that will enable them become self-reliant on graduation. Huang et al. (2022) noted that in professional training programmes, how to help learners fully understand the contexts and problem-solving procedure in the workplace is a crucial challenging issue due to the

advancements of computer and multimedia technology. Huang, Hwang and Jong further explained that such training help learners gain knowledge and improve their higher order thinking, as well as in applying what they had learned to solve real problems.

A study by Saidu et al. (2014) found out that ICT promotes sustainable development in developing countries, Ibelegbu (2013) in a study on ICT abilities required of business studies instructors revealed that business studies professors were expected to get all computer abilities. Findings further revealed that business professors lack proper training and facilities in modern information and communication technology (ICT); training they got is unrelated to the current curriculum. Similarly, Ofili & Idris (2012) carried out an investigation on ICT skills acquired by vocational and technical education students towards self-sufficiency and found that students need basic internet skills such as the ability to protect websites from hijackers as well as the ability to build websites and conduct business transactions. In a study by Emesini (2015) to determine the system of ICT-based skills by student-teachers and its implications for education in Nigeria in the digitalization era, findings were that students enrolled in vocational-based courses such as business education need ICT skills to boost their entrepreneurial abilities. Also, Leo (2010) conducted an investigation to determine how information technology can be used to facilitate the acquisition and development of skills, competence, attitudes and attributes in business education found out that ICT is a new trend necessary for maximum performance and learning in their various career fields in the future. Abdullahi & Sadiq (2018) in a study found out gross inadequate ICT skills among learners.

The importance of ICT in providing the required skills for self-reliance is emphasized in a study by Al Mamun, et al. (2022) with the revelation that prior online experience influence students' behavioural effort and that prior subject knowledge influences students' cognitive effort. There is therefore the need to explore learner-content interactions and learning as this contribute to understanding the nature and diversity in student interactions that inform the instructional design of self-directed online environment.

Innovation is associated with self-reliance which is important for our economy and way of living. Innovation entails an association to growth, (Denicolo & Zanchetlin, 2016). In others words, innovation and creativity is seen as an "*Idea practice or object that is perceived as new by an individual or other unit of adoption*" (Daugherty et al., 2011). Thus innovation is the implementation of creative inspiration, it is a process of transforming opportunities into fresh ideas that can be widely used in practice. Ezeanwu (2010) defined innovation as the successful launch of a new product or process. Ezeanwu (2010) developed a study that investigated six different types of innovative activity: - opening up new market; developing new product; developing new methods of services delivery; and developing new ways of organizing business activities. Okpara (2009) conducted research to investigate the impact of innovativeness on the survival of businesses in a hostile business climate using 161 businesses from various developing economies. Findings showed that the component of entrepreneurial abilities necessary, such as innovativeness, has a significant beneficial influence to a company's survival in a volatile business environment. In a similar study, Fadahusi (2012) found positive strategies via innovativeness and enterprises survival, the researcher postulated that for businesses to survive, and to adapt to a fast changing external environment, businesses require unique talents and ongoing development, as well as the ability to reconfigure their skills and abilities. Umunadi (2014) equally found business abilities of individuals to be effective in making entrepreneurs self-reliant. Cavalcante et al. (2022) investigated the influence of entrepreneurial education on the relationship between entrepreneurial intentions and its antecedents of low-income students

and found that entrepreneurial education exerts no moderating effect on the relationship between entrepreneurial intentions and its antecedents on students coming from low-income contexts. This finding further strengthens the ongoing policy in the Nigerian university system that emphasises the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills as the basis for graduation.

New ideas have been characterized as technological and administrative by certain academics. Administrative innovation encompasses changes to policy, resource allocation, and other elements linked with the corporate organization, whereas technological innovation refers to the adoption of a new ideal that directly effects the provision of essential utilities (Deaton, 2009). Innovation encompasses "*The processes by which business designs and business processes that are new*" (Desai, 2011). The impact of innovation is important for self-reliance, being innovative, an entrepreneur can contribute in several ways to the development of the nation's economy. Cachia (2010) went on to say that innovation, in its broadest sense, is the process through which individuals seek to acquire, utilise, and disseminate information in order to attain individual and social goals. Ajoke & Nna (2012) evaluated the impact of demonstration method in teaching creativity levels through scientific process for self-reliance among students in senior secondary school SS2, where 140 students and found that teachers should embrace demonstration approach in teaching for self-reliance. Similar study by Eze & Ekemezie (2015) revealed that entrepreneurial abilities such as originality and invention are in high demand among university students, and that these talents will go a long way toward assisting them in becoming self-sufficient after graduation. Mbanefo & Ebokab (2014) in a study on acquisition of innovative and entrepreneurial skills which was focus on what will become of the students after graduation in labour market revealed that innovative and entrepreneurial abilities are core demands of business school students upon graduation, according to the study's findings. Mbanefo (2015) sees the variables described in the study by Mbanefo & Ebukab (2014) as making entrepreneurial businesses more likely to flourish. However, there is still a need for a comprehensive explanation of success in this regard (Di Zhang & Bruning, 2011). Nwafo (2013) claims that well-known Nigerians do not create a forum for reaching out to young entrepreneurs and offering advice, nor do they serve as mentors.

Leadership is one of the most important predictors of an organization's success or failure. It is a crucial talent that every business requires. Students in business education require this talent to be self-sufficient after graduation. According to Chen (2013), effective leadership knowledge is the consequence of essential aspects such as altering attitudes, personnel development, enhanced business, and leadership competence. Leadership is a social influence mechanism that maximizes other people's efforts toward a common objective (Kruse, 2013). Philips & Gully (2012) stated that leadership inspires and motivates employees to work hard towards organization objectives and help the organization to succeed. Furthermore, according to Zeitchik (2012), leadership entails inspiring people to pursue your goals based on the constraints you set, and attaining success as a collaborative effort. Successful leaders recognize that in order for their teams to function properly, they must cooperate effectively. According to Harms & Crede (2010), leadership is a skill that needs to be continuously develop; business education students need to develop their leadership skill in order to be effective leaders on graduation.

Effective leadership skills in Business Education will influence effectiveness by motivating and inspiring the workforce, hence this will enable students at graduation to create jobs and be self-reliant. Consoy (2017) conducted study on the efficiency of leadership skills development program for Karubuk university students. The study's major goal was to see how effective a leadership skills education program for students in higher education. According to the

study's findings, learners who participated in the education program improved significantly from a moderately sufficient level. Conclusion was drawn that the study on leadership skill development programs has a positive effect and positive outcome were observed in the cognitive behavioural areas. Second study on the development of entrepreneurship skills in Team Leaders' higher education courses. It was established that higher education courses require a higher level of leadership development, and there are substantial links between perceived entrepreneur leadership skills growth and students' employment performance. A study conducted by Philip & Gavrilova (2022) on how digital transformation help organisations revitalize business processes and customer relationships noted that industry professionals and academicians recognise that leadership skills and technology skills are complimentary when managing digital workplace. The method employed involved using classroom exercise administered in multiple semesters, where students' perceptions of leadership skills and competencies that were deemed important in leading a company through a digital transformation. Summary of findings was that younger generations recognise digital literacy for corporate leaders as a key skill alongside conventional leadership skills. In view of the findings, it is imperative that graduates and undergraduates' business curricula be enhanced to provide students the opportunity to examine and develop leadership skills to confidently lead amidst the complexities of a digital workplace.

Marketing skills are essential skills which determine the extent of success or failure of a business. These skills are: communication skill, creativity skills, leadership skill, self-motivation skills, organizational skills, salesmanship skills, personal skills, etc. Marketing, activity, collection of institutions, and process of creating, delivering, and exchanging value-added products and services for customers, clients' partners, and society in general. In support of marketing skills, Ajaero (2009) states that "*If you cannot sell, you will be sold*". Ezeanwu (2010) noted that technical skills, business management skills and personal skills are part of the marketing skills that the entrepreneurs need to possess to make their products available and affordable to the customers. Business education students need to get acquainted with these marketing skills to become self-reliant. Furthermore, according to Scarborough (2011), marketing is the act of generating and providing desirable goods and services to clients. Eze et al. (2016) conducted a study in Delta State to examine the entrepreneurial skills needed for self-employment by business education graduates. Findings included that business education graduates in require moderate marketing skills for self-employment. Akpotohwo et al. (2016) conducted a study in Bayelsa State to investigate the skills required by Business Education students in Nigeria for self-sustainability and obtained a sample size of 180 students from the business education unit. According to the findings of the study, marketing abilities are necessary for effective business operation, and a lack of marketing abilities will impact students' ability to start a firm after graduation.

Similarly, Abanyam (2014) carried out a study on self-employment skills possessed by business education students for sustainable development in COEs in Cross River State Nigeria. Findings revealed that students at the colleges of education slightly possess ability to determine products that are needed in the market, budget and forecast sales, identify target market and use direct selling strategy in marketing of products. Another study by Ogbonna (2013) on 118 teachers revealed that teachers are still lacking in basic marketing abilities. Ezeanwu (2010) conducted a study to investigate the entrepreneurial skills needed by business graduates for the successful operation of a business enterprise in Enugu commercial centres and found that business-related enterprises demand marketing competencies.

Interpersonal skills are vital when interacting with other people, either individual or groups to enhance the success of any business. Business education students required these skills to enhance their entrepreneur success to create jobs and be self-reliant. Students at graduation will be in a good position to effectively communicate personally or professionally if these skills are acquired. Good interpersonal skills will allow students to network effortlessly and effectively. An entrepreneurship needs interpersonal skills to be able to satisfy their customers. Business education students require this skill to be able to relate well with their customers when they become self-reliance. Having good interpersonal skill means relating well to others and being sensitive to their needs, giving a good listening ear, and being empathic (Ezeh, 2011). Agboola & Ademiluyi (2011) noted that, communication in interpersonal relations is the system of sharing and exchanging of ideas, attitudes, opinions feelings, information etc. A study conducted by Rajesh & Chandrasekaran (2014) on interpersonal skills on college students found that there is a considerable variation in college students' interpersonal skills based on personal variables such as degree of study, medium of instruction, home location, and family type. It was further revealed that there was no significant difference in interpersonal skills among college students when it came to the following personal variable: - Academic major, college kind, management, and number of siblings. Sarigul & Sengelen (2022) in a study on the curricula of undergraduate business schools in Turkey found differences in clusters of curricula of course groups and with the application of Post hoc tests found significant differences between the clusters and students' workload for each course group. Stainbank (2022) in a study to report students' perspectives as to the extent integrated teaching strategy addressed the learning outcomes for professional skills in a South African university came out with the revelation that many of the professional skills are addressed by integrated teaching strategy with interpersonal and communication skills rated as the highest skills required; and followed in this order by teamwork and communication skills; organisational skills; intellectual; and personal skills. Findings further revealed differences when these skills were sorted on a gender and of course, language bases.

In all these skills required for competence among graduates, collaboration between educational institutions and industry can enhance the development of entrepreneurial skills among learners. This brings these stakeholders together in planning the teaching process. The process can take the form of team teaching. A study by Okon (2022) revealed significant relationship between administration of team teaching and content delivery and suggested that team members be given the opportunity to participate in planning and organising team teaching. Entrepreneurs from the economic sector can be encouraged to bring their practical experience to bare in the classroom as resources persons.

Entrepreneurial skills can be enhanced through intensive entrepreneurial education, especially in the university system. Anwar et al. (2022) in a study revealed that entrepreneurial education, opportunity recognition not only influences entrepreneurial intention directly through the mediating effect of self-efficacy. Findings further unearthed that entrepreneurial attitude moderates the relationship between opportunity recognition, entrepreneurial education, and entrepreneurial intention. A study carried out by Mulugeta et al. (2016) analysed skills of micro and small enterprises operators in Dire Dawa City in Ethiopia. Findings showed that interpersonal skills were seen more critical for MSE's success. Okon & Dijeh (2022) observed that the labour market demands a workforce that can use technology as a means to increase productivity and creativity.

## RESEARCH METHODS



The survey design was used for this study carried out in Calabar Metropolis in the south-south geo-political zone of Nigeria. The population consists of 118 which are made up of 29 lecturers (Business Educators) and 89 business owners in public University in Cross River State that was purposively used as sample size. These public Universities are: University of Calabar and Cross River University of Technology (CRUTECH). Population/sample frame is shown as Table 1.

S/N	Institution	No. of lecturers	No. of business owners
1	University Of Calabar	21	58
2	Cross River University of Technology	8	31
	Total	29	89

**Source:** Based on survey by researchers in the registry of the institutions

The instrument for data collection was a researcher made questionnaire titled “*Entrepreneurial skill required by graduating students for self-reliance of (ESRSRG)*”. Part 1 was designed to collect information on demographic variables such as name of institution and gender. Part 2 contained questionnaire items designed to ascertain the influence of entrepreneurial skill required on self-reliance of graduating students of business education students in public universities in Cross River State, which focused on the independent variables: ICT skills, innovation and creativity skills, leadership skills, marketing skills and interpersonal skills. The items were structured on a 4-point response scale; using the Likert Scale Model. Each of the items was measured using 8 items. a total of 40 items were used in measuring the variables of the study.

Highly Required (HR), Required(R), Slightly Required (SR).

The instrument was validated by three lecturers, two in Business education and one in Measurement and Evaluation unit, Department of Educational Foundation, University of Calabar. Similarly, the reliability of the instrument was determined using appropriate technique. This was achieved through a trial run with 12 lecturers and 18 business owners. The instrument was administered to business educators and business owners in University of Uyo. The Cronbach Alpha analysis yielded a grand coefficient of .80. Summary of coefficients based on the five sub-variables are shown in Table 2.

S/N	Variables	N	X	S.D	A
1	Information and communication skills	8	24.76	3.21	0.77
2	Innovation /creative skills	8	25.62	3.13	0.71
3	leadership skills	8	26.98	4.11	0.84
4	Marketing skills	8	26.53	4.12	0.88
5	interpersonal skills	8	24.54	4.13	0.78

**Source:** Analysis by researchers

Data obtained was analysed using mean and standard deviation to provide answers the research questions earlier raised. Similarly, all null hypotheses earlier postulated were tested using the independent t-test statistical analysis technique Table 3.

<b>variables</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
ICT Skills	108	26.34	4.15
Innovative Skills	108	27.82	4.64
Leadership Skills	108	26.12	5.10
Marketing Skills	108	24.66	5.80
Interpersonal Skills	108	26.93	5.67

## RESULTS

### Research Question One

What are ICT skills required by business education graduating students for self-reliance in public Universities in Cross River State? To answer this research questions, item analysis was used using mean and standard deviations vis-a vis the criterion means or cut off mean. The result is presented in Table 4.

<b>S/N</b>	<b>Information and Communication Technology Skills: -Ability To:</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>S.D</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
1	Use the internet as an indispensable means for information and communication system.	3.69	0.69	Required
2	Use the telecommunication gadgets effectively to communicate clearly to customers	3.34	0.84	Required
3	operate the on-line business	3.32	0.86	Required
4	Use social media in transmitting information clearly about a business	3.03	1.02	Required
5	Transmit ideas using voice on the internet	3.01	0.96	Required
6	transmit information through E-mail to create awareness of a business	3.10	0.92	Required
7	Communicate in a language to entice customers using internet	3.19	0.89	Required
8	Decode business ideas as transmitted using the E-mail	2.97	0.86	Required

The result showed that for item 1-8 the mean values of 3.68, 3.34, 3.32, 3.02, 3.00, 3.04, 3.18 and 2.97 are greater than 2.5 which is the cut off mean when taken individually. More so, on aggregation, the obtained mean of 3.19 is still greater than 2.5. This implies that an information and communication skill is desired by business education graduating students for self-reliance in Public universities in Cross River State.

### Research Question Two

What are the innovative and creative skills required by business education graduating students for self-reliance in public Universities in Cross River State? To answer this research questions, item analysis was used using mean and standard deviations vis-a vis the criterion means or cut off mean. The result is presented in Table 5.

<b>Innovative and Creativity Skills:-Ability To:</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>S.D</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
Identify business opportunities where others see risk	3.28	0.92	Required

Learn using failure as a learning experience in a positive way.	3.08	0.90	Required
Building on other people's idea to create something new.	3.07	0.92	Required
Translate ideas into wealth-creating ventures	3.17	0.92	Required
Manage people effectively.	3.17	1.00	Required
Develop innovative new approaches to the new concept.	3.20	0.93	Required
Create new and worthwhile ideas.	3.52	0.79	Required
Provide useful ideas that will bring innovation.	3.52	0.72	Required

The result showed that for item 9-16 the mean values of 3.39, 3.08, 3.06, 3.16, 3.16, 3.20, 3.51 and 3.52 are greater than 2.5 which is the cut off mean when taken individually. More so, on aggregation, the obtained mean of 3.24 is still greater than 2.5. This implies that graduating students in public universities must have innovative and creative skills in order to be self-sufficient.

### Research Question Three

What are the leadership skills required by business education graduating students for self-reliance in public Universities in Cross River State? To answer this research questions, item analysis was used using mean and standard deviations vis-a vis the criterion means or cut off mean. The result is presented in Table 6.

S/N	Leadership Skills :-Ability To:	Mean	S.D	Remarks
1.	Plan a business and prosper in it.	3.50	0.70	Required
2.	Work with diligently and find creative way to limit weakness in a business.	3.41	0.72	Required
3.	Take effective decision when problem arise in the firm	3.29	0.85	Required
4.	Tolerate subordinates irrespective of their characteristics.	3.31	0.91	Required
5.	Take the stance that everyone's opinion counts when taking decision about a business	3.31	0.82	Required
6.	Give directives on the activities of others working as a team to achieve a goal	3.28	0.90	Required
7.	Implement plans for goals attainments	3.29	0.86	Required
8.	Cooperate with others to succeed in every project deemed necessary.	3.29	0.95	Required

The result showed that for item 17-24 in the instrument, the mean values of 3.50, 3.41, 3.29, 3.31, 3.31, 3.28, 3.29 and 3.29 are greater than 2.5 which is the cut off mean when taken individually. More so, on aggregation, the obtained mean of 3.34 is still greater than 2.5. This implies that business education graduates with leadership skills are sought after for self-sufficiency in public universities.

### Research Question Four

What are marketing skills required by business education graduating students for self-reliance in public Universities in Cross River State? To answer this research questions, item analysis was used using mean and standard deviations vis-a vis the criterion means or cut off mean. The result is presented in Table 7.

<b>BUSINESS EDUCATION GRADUATING STUDENTS FOR SELF-RELIANCE IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN CROSS RIVER STATE. N=108</b>				
<b>S/N</b>	<b>Marketing Skills:-Ability To:</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>S.D</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
1	Persuade customers to buy the organizational products	3.18	0.948	Required
2	Have a better rapport with customers	3.23	0.87	Required
3	Identify the interest of both sides	3.06	0.94	Required
4	Capture and retain the attention of customers	3.20	0.96	Required
5	Analyze demand and supply situation	3.09	0.93	Required
6	Identify areas of disagreement to the satisfaction of both parties	3.12	0.99	Required
7	Manage emotions during negotiation	3.22	0.91	Required
8	Identify customers needs that can be satisfied	3.26	0.89	Required

The result showed that for item 17-24 in the instrument, the mean values of 3.18, 3.28, 3.06, 3.20, 3.09, 3.12, 3.22 and 3.26 are greater than 2.5 which is the cut off mean when taken individually. Furthermore, even after aggregation, the obtained mean of 3.17 is greater than 2.5. This implies that marketing skills are required for self-sufficiency in Cross River State public universities for business education graduates.

### Research Question Five

What are the interpersonal skills required by business education graduating students for self-reliance in public Universities in Cross River State? To answer this research questions, item analysis was used using mean and standard deviations vis-a vis the criterion means or cut off mean. The result is presented in Table 8.

<b>Table 8</b>				
<b>ITEM BY ITEM ANALYSIS ON INTERPERSONAL SKILLS REQUIRED BY BUSINESS EDUCATION GRADUATING STUDENTS FOR SELF-RELIANCE IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN CROSS RIVER STATE</b>				
<b>S/N</b>	<b>Interpersonal Skills:-Ability To:</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>S.D</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
1	Be self-confidence in making investment decision.	3.28	0.88	Required
2	Understand and manage emotion of others.	3.25	0.93	Required
3	Interpret and pass information to others effectively	3.22	0.98	Required
4	Lead a group of persons with diverse culture.	3.24	0.94	Required
5	Have a high emotional intelligence to interact positively to get along with all types of people	3.30	0.92	Required
6	Accept constructive criticism	3.33	0.85	Required
7	Self-confidence to achieve defined goals.	3.31	0.91	Required
8	Have a good listening habit	3.43	0.91	Required

The result showed that for item 17-24 in the instrument, the mean values of 3.27, 3.30, 3.21, 3.24, 3.30, 3.33, 3.31 and 3.43 are greater than 2.5 which is the cut off mean when taken individually. More so, on aggregation, the obtained mean of 3.28 is still greater than 2.5. This implies that business education graduates in Cross River State require interpersonal skills in order to be self-sufficient.

*H<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant difference in the mean rating of business education lecturers and business owners on Information and Communication Technology (ICT) skills required by business education graduating students for self-reliance.*

Entrepreneurial; skills	Status	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	df	t-cal	p-val
ICT Skills	Lecturer	24	25.29	3.76			
					106	-0.120	0.905
	Business owners	84	25.39	4.21			

The independent variables are mean rating of business education lecturers and business owners while the dependent variables are ICT skills required for self-reliance. To test the hypotheses, the independent t-test was used, and the results are shown in Table 9 which showed that the mean value ( $X=25.29$ ) for lecturers' responses is not too different from the mean value ( $X=25.39$ ) of the responses of business owners in terms of ICT skills required for self-reliance. This suggests that the responses of lecturers and business owners in terms of the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) skills required by business education graduates for self-reliance are not dissimilar. When mean differences were compared, the t-test revealed ( $t=0.120$ ,  $p>0.05$ ). Because  $p$  (0.000) is greater than  $p$ , there is no significant difference in the mean rating of business education lecturers and business owners on the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) abilities required for self-reliance by business education graduating students (0.05). As a result, the null hypothesis holds true.

**H<sub>2</sub>:** *There is no significant difference in the mean rating of business education lecturers and business owners on the innovation/creative abilities required by business education graduating students for self-reliance.*

Entrepreneurial skills	Status	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	df	t-cal	p-val
Innovation/Creativity Skills	Lecturer	24	27.51	3.32			
					106	2.18	0.012
	Business owners	84	25.12	4.64			

The independent variables are mean rating of business education lecturers. The t-test was used to test the hypothesis and the result presented in Table 10 showed that the mean value ( $X=27.51$ ) for lecturers' responses is different from the mean value ( $X=25.21$ ) of the responses of business owners in terms of innovation/creative abilities required for self-reliance. This indicates that the responses of lecturers and business owners differ in terms of the innovation/creative skills required by business education graduates for self-sufficiency. When mean differences were compared, the t-test revealed ( $t=2.18$ ,  $p.05$ ). Because  $p$  (0.012) is less than  $p$ , there is a significant difference in the mean ratings of business education lecturers and business owners on the innovative/creative abilities required by business education graduating students for self-reliance (.05). As a result, the hypothesis is ruled out.

**H<sub>3</sub>:** *There is no significant difference in the mean rating of business education lecturers and business owners on the leadership skills required by business education graduates for self-reliance.*

Table 11 INDEPENDENT T-TEST ANALYSIS ON THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN BUSINESS EDUCATION LECTURERS AND BUSINESS OWNERS ON THE LEADERSHIP SKILLS REQUIRED FOR SELF-RELIANCE							
Entrepreneurial skills	Status	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	df	t-cal	p-val
Leadership Skills	Lecturer	24	26.78	3.98			
					106	3.70	.002
	Business owners	84	24.85	4.54			

The independent variables are the mean ratings of business education lecturers and business owners, while the dependent variables are self-reliance leadership skills. The hypothesis was tested using the T-test, and the results shown in Table 11 show that the mean value ( $X=26.77$ ) for lecturers' responses differs from the mean value ( $X=24.85$ ) for business owners' responses in terms of leadership skills required for self-reliance. This means that lecturers' and business owners' responses to the leadership skills required by business education graduates for self-reliance differ. When mean differences were compared, the t-test revealed ( $t=3.70$ ,  $p.05$ ). Because  $p$  (0.002) is less than  $p$ , there is a significant difference in the mean ratings of business education lecturers and business owners on the leadership skills required by business education graduating students for self-reliance (0.05). As a result, the null hypothesis is ruled out.

**H<sub>4</sub>:** *There is no significant difference in the mean rating of business education lecturers and business owners on the marketing skills required for self-reliance by business education graduating students.*

Table 12 INDEPENDENT T-TEST ANALYSIS ON THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN BUSINESS EDUCATION LECTURERS AND BUSINESS OWNERS ON THE MARKETING SKILLS REQUIRED FOR SELF-RELIANCE							
Entrepreneurial skills	Status	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	df	t-cal	p-val
Marketing skills	Lecturer	24	26.22	4.98			
					106	2.19	0.03
	Business owners	84	23.87	6.05			

The independent variables are the mean ratings of business education lecturers and business owners, while the dependent variables are the marketing skills needed for self-sufficiency. The hypothesis was tested using the T-test, and the results shown in Table 12 show that the mean value ( $X=26.54$ ) for lecturers' responses differs from the mean value ( $X=23.86$ ) for business owners' responses in terms of marketing skills required for self-reliance. This means that lecturer' and business owners' reactions to the marketing skills required for self-sufficiency by business education graduates differ. To compare the mean differences, an independent t-test was used, and it was discovered that ( $t=2.19$ ,  $p.05$ ). Because  $p$  (0.030) is less than  $p$ , there is a significant difference in the mean rating of business education lecturers and business owners on the marketing abilities required by business education graduating students for self-reliance (0.05). As a result, the null hypothesis is rejected.

**H<sub>5</sub>:** *There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of business education lecturers and business owners on the interpersonal abilities required by business education graduates for self-reliance.*

<b>Entrepreneurial skills</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>t-cal</b>	<b>p-val</b>
Interpersonal skills	Lecturer	24	26.22	4.99			
					106	2.32	0.027
	Business owners	84	24.65	5.51			

The independent variables are the mean ratings of business education lecturers and business owners, while the dependent variables are the interpersonal abilities required for self-sufficiency. The hypothesis was tested using an independent t-test, and the results shown in Table 13 show that the mean value ( $X=26.22$ ) for lecturers' responses differs from the mean value ( $X=24.65$ ) for business owners' responses in terms of interpersonal abilities required for self-reliance. This means that lecturers' and business owners' responses to the interpersonal skills required by business education graduates for self-reliance differ. When mean differences were compared, the t-test revealed ( $t=2.34$ ). Because  $p$  (0.027) is less than  $p$ , there is a significant difference in the mean ratings of business education lecturers and business owners on the interpersonal skills required by business education graduating students for self-reliance (0.05). As a result, the null hypothesis is rejected.

### Discussion of findings

Hypothesis one stated no significant difference in the mean rating of business education lecturers and business owners on the ICT skills required by business education business education graduating students for self-reliance was retained. This could be due to fact that the world has gone global and everybody irrespective of profession understands the relevance of ICT in the prevailing Nigeria Economy. Thus, irrespective of profession, the business education students require these skills in order to make them sellable in the world of work. Thus, most business operators and lecturers are conscious of this all important skills to aid their students in acquiring jobs or creating one that can enhance their self-reliant.

The findings of the study are consistent with the findings of Ibelegbu (2013), who investigated the ICT skills required by business studies teachers in Adamawa's junior secondary schools. Business studies teachers were required to have all computer skills, according to the study's findings. There was no statistically significant difference in the mean responses of business teachers based on their educational qualification for information and communication technology (ICT) skills for self-reliance.

The study's findings are also consistent with those of Ofili & Idris (2012), who conducted a study on the ICT skills possessed by vocational and technical education students in Edo State for self-sustenance. The findings revealed that students require basic online skills such as the ability to protect websites from hijackers and the ability to create websites and conduct business transactions, among other things. According to the researcher, learning ICT skills will assist business education students in achieving economic growth and self-sufficiency, improving their quality of life, and contributing to the economy.

Hypothesis two stated no significant difference in the mean rating of business education lecturers and business owners on the innovation/creativity abilities required by business education graduating students for self-reliance was rejected. This implies that lecturers mean

rating is higher than business operators in terms innovative abilities required by business education graduating students for self-reliance. This could be due to the fact that lecturers are more knowledgeable about the dynamics of the world of work and what these students are expected to do in the world of work after school. They also know that this skill is required for the students to not only be employees but employers of labour and such they are positioned to contribute meaningfully to the society.

The study's findings were consistent with those of Okpara (2009), who conducted a study to determine the impact of innovativeness on the survival of enterprises in a hostile enterprise environment. The investigation's findings revealed that the component of entrepreneurial skill requirements contributes to business survival in a turbulent business environment. He also stated that businesses that are innovatively driven outperform businesses that are conservative in their approach to innovation. The findings are consistent with those of Fadahusi (2012), who discovered positive strategies for enterprise survival through innovativeness. The researcher hypothesized that in order for businesses to thrive, they must be able to adapt to a rapidly changing external environment. As a result, innovative businesses have a broader set of skills and knowledge that can help entrepreneurs capitalize on opportunities and overcome barriers that threaten business performance in order to survive in the marketplace.

Hypothesis three stated that no significant difference in the mean rating of business education lecturers and business owners on the leadership abilities required by business education graduating students for self-reliance was rejected. This implies that lecturers mean rating is higher than business operators leadership abilities required by business education graduating students for self-reliance. This could be due to the fact that skills are required to sustain every business that students are going to begin. Without leadership, it may difficult for them to being and sustain a business and this information is well expressed by lecturers in the department who emphasizes this skill in the class and even in the daily interaction of the students. The result could also be due to the fact this skill is a component of what the students do in the school and it is more visible with the lecturers who supervises them and thus ensures that they acquire it for them to be successful after their school.

Consoy (2017) conducted a study on the effectiveness of a leadership skills development program for Karubuk university students, and his findings are consistent with those of this study. The primary goal of the study was to investigate the efficacy of a leadership skills education program for students in higher education. Students who participated in the education program improved significantly from a moderately sufficient level, according to the study's findings. The study on leadership skill development programs was concluded to have a positive effect, with positive outcomes observed in the cognitive behavioural areas.

Hypothesis four stated that no significant difference in the mean rating of business education lecturers and business owners on the marketing abilities required by business education graduating students for self-reliance was rejected. This implies that lecturers mean rating is higher than business operators on the marketing abilities required by business education graduating students for self-reliance. This could be due to the fact that this skill is technical and cannot just be expressed by those who are taught. It goes beyond advertising to a conglomerate of activities that can make the young business educator success in the world of work. Thus, lecturers who are positioned to teach this skill in the class knows that the business educator cannot be successful in the world of work if these skills are not taught and helped to acquire.



Most of the reason that most graduate of business education feel stranded after school could be due to the fact that most of them have the ideas but they do not know how to sell it out. As a result, it makes it difficult for them to be self-sufficient in their job search. The study's findings were consistent with those of Eze et al. (2016), who conducted a study on the assessment of entrepreneurial abilities required for self-employment by Delta State business education graduates. The study found that marketing skills are required to a moderate extent by business education graduates in Delta State for self-employment.

Hypothesis five stated that no significant difference in the mean rating of business education lecturers and business owners on the inter personal abilities required by business education graduating students for self-reliance was rejected. This implies that lecturers mean rating is higher than business operators on the interpersonal abilities required by business education graduating students for self-reliance. This could be due to the fact that most of the reason why most business education students hardly find work is as a result of poor interpersonal relations skills. The lecturers have a higher mean rating because it they know that outside the hard skills that students acquire in the school; these interpersonal skills are vital in maintaining customer relationship as well as help them to be self-reliant.

The study's findings were consistent with Abanyam (2014) findings on self-employment skills possessed by business education students for sustainable development. The study's focus was on colleges of education in Cross River State, Nigeria. The finding from the study reviewed that students at the colleges of education slightly possess the ability to determine products that are for self-reliance in the market, budget and forecast sales, identify target market and use direct selling strategy in marketing of product.

Similarly, the study's findings are consistent with the findings of Ezeanwu (2010), who investigated the entrepreneurial skills required by business-related graduates for the successful operation of a business enterprise. Enugu commercial center and environs will be used as the research area. The study's findings revealed that nine (9) marketing skills are required by business-related enterprises. It was discovered that the capital of the managers makes no significant difference in the marketing skills required for the successful operation of a business enterprise.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, it was found that mean rating of lecturers and business owners did not differ in terms of ICT skills required by business education graduating students for self-reliance. However, there was a significant difference in mean rating of lecturers and business operator's in terms of innovative/creative, leadership, marketing and interpersonal skills required by business education graduating students for self-reliance.

## RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings and conclusion of the study, it was recommended that Business educators who are academic staff should ensure that students are subjected to practical class to acquire information and communication skills that will promote their self-reliance and create jobs for the society.

Academic staff should ensure that business education graduating students apply innovativeness and creativity through participation in class to enable them acquire creative and innovative skills that will promote their self-reliance and create job for the society.

Academic staff should expose business education graduating students to leadership experience to group discussion to enable them acquire leadership skills that will promote their self-reliance and create job for the society.

Academic staff should expose business education graduating students to practical experience in marketing firm to acquire marketing skills that will promote their self-reliance and create job for the society.

Academic staff should give business education graduating students' opportunity to apply personal skills in the class to enable them acquire interpersonal skills that will promote their self-reliance and create jobs for the society.

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