

Assessment of the Entrepreneurial Skills of Business Education Students in Establishing Small-Scale Businesses in Taraba State, Nigeria

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Article History	Abstract
<p>Original Research Article</p> <p>Received: 02-01-2026</p> <p>Accepted: 15-01-2026</p> <p>Published: 19-01-2026</p> <p>Copyright © 2026 The Author(s): This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY-NC) which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium for non-commercial use provided the original author and source are credited.</p> <p>Citation: Ibelegbu Ngozi A.; James Gods power, David Isaiah, Dawuda Solomon Sendere. (2026). Assessment of the Entrepreneurial Skills of Business Education Students in Establishing Small-Scale Businesses in Taraba State, Nigeria. UKR Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies (UKRJMS), Volume 2(1), 40-54.</p>	<p><i>This study examined the entrepreneurial skills of Business Education students for the establishment of small-scale businesses in Taraba State, Nigeria. Three specific objectives guided the study, alongside three research questions and three null hypotheses. A descriptive survey research design was employed. The study population comprised 479 Business Education students, from which a sample of 230 respondents was selected using the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample size determination procedure. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire titled Entrepreneurial Skills of Business Education Students Questionnaire (ESBESQ). The instrument was validated by three experts in the field of education, while its reliability was established using the Cronbach's alpha method, yielding a coefficient of 0.81. The collected data were analyzed using mean and standard deviation, and the null hypotheses were tested at the 0.05 level of significance. The findings indicated that creativity, marketing, and business management skills are highly required by Business Education students for the successful establishment of small-scale businesses in Taraba State. Based on these results, the study concluded that the acquisition of new skills enhances market development and promotes job creation, thereby contributing significantly to societal socioeconomic advancement. Consequently, it was recommended that adequately funded model entrepreneurship centers be established in all tertiary institutions in Taraba State, Nigeria, with strong emphasis on practical exposure and functional skill acquisition.</i></p> <p>Keywords: Entrepreneur, Skills, Creativity, Small-Scale, Business.</p>

Introduction

Entrepreneurship is an ever-changing process of creating and managing a business venture to introduce innovative products or services that address unsatisfied market needs. It involves combining people, capital, and resources to capitalize on opportunities and generate wealth. As defined by Amadi and Chuku (2021), entrepreneurship is the fusion of creativity, innovation, management, and organizational skills to successfully launch and operate a business. Anorue and Madu (2020) further emphasize the entrepreneurial process as one of identifying, evaluating, and seizing business opportunities while setting new performance benchmarks. Essentially, entrepreneurship is the pursuit of a profitable venture undertaken by entrepreneurs who aim to create value and achieve financial independence.

Entrepreneurs are innovative individuals who identify untapped market opportunities and convert them into

successful ventures. They are risk-takers who utilize any available resources to create novel and valuable products or services. As catalysts for economic growth and societal progress, entrepreneurs play a pivotal role in driving innovation. According to Okute (2020), they are change agents who transform ideas into reality. Building a successful enterprise demands a unique blend of skills, knowledge, and unwavering passion. By acquiring essential competencies and cultivating an entrepreneurial mindset through education, individuals can enhance their prospects of thriving in today's dynamic business scenery. The undeniable impact of entrepreneurs on both economic prosperity and societal advancement is highlighted by Akeke, Oche, Akuegwé, and Ushie (2022), who emphasize the crucial importance of personal attributes, skills, and expertise in entrepreneurial success.

Entrepreneurial success hinges on diverse skills. According to Amadi and Chuku (2021), skills are a combination of personal attributes, financial resources, and environmental factors that contribute to desired outcomes. Okute (2020) further elaborates on skills as the ability to execute tasks efficiently through training and experience. Mbanefo and Eboka (2017) emphasize the role of continuous learning and practice in skill development. Entrepreneurial skills are essential business competencies that empower individuals to thrive in dynamic market conditions as entrepreneurs or self-employed professionals. According to Mbanefo and Eboka (2017) these skills facilitate effective navigation of the turbulent business environment. Abdulkareem (2016) further emphasizes the role of entrepreneurial skills in identifying and capitalizing on business opportunities for sustainable income generation. Developing these skills involves harnessing personal strengths, financial resources, and environmental factors to achieve desired outcomes effectively.

Marketing expertise is equally essential. It encompasses all profit-oriented activities involved in creating and delivering value to customers. Marketers play a crucial role in devising effective distribution channels, empowering entrepreneurs with the knowledge and confidence to navigate the market landscape (Chiliya et al, 2019). In essence, marketing is a strategic outreach effort, fostering connections with the target audience. Its core objective is to create a win-win situation, enhancing value for both the customers and the business while optimizing costs.

Okoye (2013) characterizes business education as an academic curriculum that educates individuals in business decision-making, service provision, secretarial and stenographic competencies, account clerking, and office information systems and administration. Business education is an academic program that provides students with the competencies required to enter and progress in business roles, manage their commercial activities, and operate judiciously as consumers and citizens within a business economy. Consequently, business education constitutes an integral part of the complete educational curriculum, furnishing students with the requisite knowledge, skills, comprehension, and dispositions to function as producers and/or consumers of the goods and services offered by businesses.

Entrepreneurship Education is a comprehensive program across all university disciplines, aimed at equipping participants with essential skills for business establishment (Boahemaah, Xin, Dobge, and Pomegbe, 2020). The conviction that entrepreneurial skills and competencies can be imparted and cultivated underpins the incorporation of Entrepreneurship Education in Business Education curricula (Amin, Thurasamy, Aldakhil, and Kaswuri, 2016;

Aboobakar and Renjini, 2020; Otache, Edokpolor, and Kadiri, 2022). The aim of entrepreneurship education is to develop in students a range of entrepreneurial competences, abilities, and attitudes that will empower them to create job possibilities for themselves and others (Otache, et al., 2022). Entrepreneurial education, a facet of the broader educational system, involves the acquisition of skills, concepts, and management competencies essential for employment creation. "Entrepreneurship education" denotes the educational experience designed to develop entrepreneurial attributes, supplemented by support services to facilitate effective business operations (Maina, 2013). Moreover, entrepreneurial education equips students to be more cognizant of the needs and ambitions of their personal, familial, and national groups. Uzo-Okonkwo and Oduh (2017) define entrepreneurship education as the process of empowering individuals to see economic possibilities and acquire the knowledge, self-confidence, insight, and skills required to exploit them. Entrepreneurship education is an essential aspect of business education, since it provides individuals with the requisite abilities to proficiently manage a businesses that students attain throughout the class.

Imparting entrepreneurial skills to business education students is paramount for fostering a robust entrepreneurial scheme. Such skills prepare graduates to either launch their own ventures or excel in entrepreneurial roles within established organizations. Business education programs, designed to equip students with theoretical knowledge and practical abilities, can significantly contribute to economic growth and job creation by emphasizing entrepreneurship. By integrating entrepreneurial skills into the curriculum, institutions can cultivate a new generation of innovative business leaders especially in Taraba State and its environs.

Taraba State, with its agrarian and commercial economy, offers a fertile ground for entrepreneurial activities. Small scale enterprises (SSE) are vital to the state's economic development, providing employment, stimulating local markets, and contributing to overall stability. Small businesses operate on a smaller scale. Small business types include those involved in services, small-scale manufacturing, trade and commerce. Hair salons, convenience stores, small grocery stores, bakeries, tradespeople (such as carpenters and electricians), extremely small-scale manufacturing, and Internet-related businesses are a few examples of service or retail businesses (Ambler, Kokkinaki, & Puntoni, 2014). It takes very little money and no formalities to launch a small business. Essential entrepreneurial skills are needed to promote small-size businesses (Banabo and Koroy, 2017). However, the region's socioeconomic context underscores the need for enhanced entrepreneurial capabilities among

its populace for the successful operation of small businesses. By equipping business education students with the necessary skills, the study aims to support the growth and sustainability of SSEs, thereby driving economic diversification and alleviating poverty in the State.

Statement of the Problem

In Nigeria as well as throughout the world, small businesses are acknowledged as the foundation of economic growth and development. However, in today's competitive global marketplace, Nigerian small businesses have numerous obstacles, especially in areas like profitability, customer satisfaction, product quality, and business strategy. Despite the emphasis on business education as a skill-oriented programme, many as observed graduate and by lacking the essential entrepreneurial skills needed to launch and run successful small businesses. This discrepancy poses a significant challenge to the state's economic development, as small businesses are the backbone of the local economy. One major issue is that business education programme often prioritize theoretical knowledge over practical application, leaving students unprepared for the realities of entrepreneurship. Skills such as creative problem-solving, financial management, ICT, marketing, and leadership are often underdeveloped.

Additionally, there is limited access as observed to experiential learning opportunities like internships and practical projects, further hindering skill development. Without these essential skills, graduates struggle to create jobs that could contribute to economic growth, and reduce unemployment. This lack of entrepreneurial competence also hinders innovation and competitiveness, limiting the state's potential for development. This research aims to address this critical skills gap by investigating the specific entrepreneurial skills needed by Taraba State's business education students.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to assess the entrepreneurial skills of business education students in establishing small-scale businesses in Taraba State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to determine:

- i. Creativity skills of business education students in establishing small-scale businesses in Taraba state, Nigeria.
- ii. Managerial skills of business education students in establishing small-scale businesses in Taraba state, Nigeria.
- iii. Marketing skills of business education students in establishing small-scale businesses in Taraba state, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

- i. What are the creativity skills of business education students in establishing small-scale businesses in Taraba State, Nigeria?
- ii. What are the managerial skills of business education students in establishing small-scale businesses in Taraba State, Nigeria?
- iii. What are the marketing skills of business education students in establishing small-scale businesses in Taraba State, Nigeria?

Research Hypothesis

Based on the research questions, the following hypothesis are formulated to guide this study and will be tested at 0.05 level of significant

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between creativity skills of business education students and establishing small-scale businesses in Taraba State, Nigeria.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between managerial skills of business education students and establishing small-scale businesses in Taraba State, Nigeria.

H₀₄: There is no significant relationship between marketing skills on business education students in establishing small-scale businesses in Taraba State, Nigeria.

Literature Review: Brief Conceptual Clarifications

Concept of Business Education

The concept of business education has undergone continuous refinement, as reflected in the diverse definitions advanced by scholars seeking to clarify its scope and purpose. Ohiwere (2017) described business education as a programme designed to prepare learners for entry into and progression within business-related occupations, while also equipping them with the competencies required to manage personal business affairs and function effectively as informed consumers and responsible citizens in a business-oriented economy. In a related perspective, Amaewhule (2018) viewed business education as encompassing the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary for all citizens to efficiently manage their enterprises and engage productively within the economic system. Similarly, Atakpa (2019) emphasized that business education integrates vocational knowledge and practical skills essential for employment and career advancement across a wide range of business professions. Broadly, business education represents a component of vocational and technical education concerned with instructional processes that promote the study of business techniques, the

acquisition of practical skills, and the development of relevant attitudes and knowledge applicable to vocational sectors of economic and social life. It is fundamentally an academic programme aimed at preparing learners for teaching business-related subjects, effective participation in the world of work, and the attainment of sustainable livelihoods. Supporting this view, Etonyeaku (2018) asserted that business education serves as a powerful mechanism for equipping graduates with entrepreneurial skills, competencies, and capabilities that foster self-employment and self-reliance.

The Concept of Small-Scale Business

A small-scale business is typically owned and managed by an individual, with the owner assuming primary responsibility for decision-making and operational control. Due to their relatively small workforce and modest organizational structure, such enterprises play a vital role in economic development and sustainability (Rahman, 2022). Small-scale businesses generally operate as sole proprietorships, partnerships, or limited liability companies and are distinguished from larger corporations by having fewer employees and lower annual turnover (Rahman, 2022). A small scale business is defined by the U.S. Small Business Administration (USSBA, 2018) as one that employs 500 people or less. Compared to executives of larger companies, small business owners have more freedom and authority over their operations (Asomaning & Abdulai, 2015). Governments all throughout the world acknowledge the important role small firms play in economic expansion and offer assistance through a variety of programs (Nnamseh & Akpan, 2015; McDowell et al., 2016; Price & Stoica, 2015).

Concept of Entrepreneurial skills

In both developed and developing countries, entrepreneurship has grown to be a powerful force that is essential to social advancement and economic prosperity (Värlander et al., 2020). Entrepreneurship, according to Amadi and Chuku (2021), is the process of fusing innovative concepts with managerial know-how to transform chances into profitable ventures. It entails determining needs, obtaining resources, and setting an example to meet those needs. This idea is supported by studies by Yi (2021) and Li et al. (2020), which emphasize entrepreneurship as a major engine behind economic growth. According to Yusuf and Albanawi

(2016), entrepreneurship is the capacity of an individual or group of individuals to generate or uncover an opportunity and utilize it for the good of society, which will ultimately lead to success for the innovators and their company.

A flourishing environment for entrepreneurship requires an entrepreneurial spirit, which is especially important for developing nations like Nigeria (Neneh, 2022). This attitude fosters creativity and results in the establishment of new companies, which are regarded as the foundation of any country's economic stability (Neneh, 2022). Institutions all across the world are providing programs to give graduates the requisite entrepreneurial mentality and abilities in recognition of this significance (Turner & Gianiodis, 2018). According to research by Iqbal et al. (2022), this kind of schooling has a special influence on developing young, gifted entrepreneurs in developing countries. In a similar vein, Jena (2020) emphasizes how entrepreneurship education helps people develop an entrepreneurial intention.

Methodology

The study employed a descriptive survey research design. The population comprised 479 Business Education students drawn from Taraba State University, Jalingo; College of Education, Zing; Peacock College of Education, Jalingo; and Adigrace College of Education, Wukari, during the 2023/2024 academic session. A sample size of 230 respondents was determined using the sample size determination table developed by Krejcie and Morgan (1970). Data were collected using a structured questionnaire titled *Entrepreneurial Skills of Business Education Students Questionnaire (ESBESQ)*. The instrument was validated by three experts from the Faculty of Education, Taraba State University. The reliability of the ESBESQ was established through the Cronbach's alpha method, which produced a reliability coefficient of 0.81. Data analysis involved the use of mean and standard deviation, as well as the inferential statistic of Pearson Product-Moment Correlation. The mean scores were used to answer the research questions, while the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation was applied to test the null hypotheses.

Result

Research Question One: What are the creativity skills of business education students in establishing small-scale businesses in Taraba State, Nigeria?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviations of rating scale on the creativity skills required by Business Education students for establishing a successful small-scale businesses (SSBs) in Taraba State.

Statement	Mean	Std. dev.	Decision
1. Develop a unique value proposition that differentiates small-scale business from competitors in the local market	3.48	0.82	HR
2. Adopt creative networking to scale small-scale businesses in Taraba State	3.14	1.06	HR
3. Integrate creative technological skills into business education to enhance the operation of small-scale businesses in Taraba State	2.99	1.09	HR
4. Apply creative financial management skills to maintain the sustainability of small-scale businesses in Taraba State	3.19	1.03	HR
5. Improve creativity in marketing strategies to attract customers to small-scale businesses in Taraba State	3.10	1.02	HR
6. Develop innovative products and services for small-scale businesses	3.31	0.90	HR
7. Resourcefulness skills is necessary to succeed in small-scale business	3.24	1.00	HR
Cluster Mean/Standard deviation	3.21	0.99	HR

Source: Fieldwork (2025). Criterion Mean: $X \geq 2.50 \Rightarrow$ required; $X \leq 2.50 \Rightarrow$ not required

Results in table 1 showed response on the on the Creativity Skills Required of Business Education Students in Establishing Small Scale Businesses (SSBs) In Taraba State. All the items have the mean rating scales in the region of 2.50 to 3.48, which shows that Creativity Skills is highly required of Business Education Students in Establishing Small Scale Businesses (SSBs) In Taraba State. The cluster has a mean of 3.21; this implies that the Creativity is a Required Skills of Business Education Students in Establishing Small Scale Businesses (SSBs) In Taraba State.

Research Question 2: What are the managerial skills of business education students in establishing small-scale businesses in Taraba State, Nigeria?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviations of Rating Scale on the Business Management Skills Required of Business Education Students in Establishing Small Scale Businesses (SSBs) In Taraba State

Statement	Mean	Std. dev.	Decision
1. Develop effective financial management skills to ensure the profitability of their small-scale businesses	3.19	1.01	HR
2. time management play a role in the success of small-scale businesses, and how can business education students in Taraba State improve this skill	3.36	0.86	HR
3. Apply human resource management skills to recruit, train, and retain employees for small-scale businesses in Taraba State	3.11	1.01	HR
4. Develop efficient inventory management systems for small-scale businesses	3.22	0.97	HR
5. Adopt strategic planning skills to ensure the long-term growth and sustainability of small-scale businesses in Taraba State	3.03	1.03	HR
6. Adopt risk management skills to mitigate risks in small-scale business	3.05	0.95	HR
7. Apply decision-making skills to effectively manage day-to-day operations of their small-scale businesses in Taraba State	3.14	1.01	HR
Cluster Mean/Standard deviation	3.19	0.98	HR

Source: Fieldwork, (2025). Criterion Mean: $X \geq 2.50 \Rightarrow$ required; $X \leq 2.50 \Rightarrow$ not required

Results in table 2 showed responses on the Business Management Skills Required of Business Education Students in Establishing Small Scale Businesses (SSBs) In Taraba State. All the items have the mean rating scales in the region of 2.50 to 3.36, which shows that the Business Management Skills are highly required of Business Education Students in Establishing Small Scale Businesses (SSBs) In Taraba State. The cluster has a mean of 3.19 implies that Business Management Skills is highly Required in establishing Small Scale Businesses (SSBs) In Taraba State.

Research Question 3: What are the marketing skills of business education students in establishing small-scale businesses in Taraba State, Nigeria?

Table 3. Mean and Standard Deviations of Rating Scale on the marketing skills of business education students in establishing small-scale businesses in Taraba State, Nigeria.

	Statement	Mean	Std. dev.	Decision
1	Identify customer needs and preferences for their small-scale businesses	3.17	1.04	HR
2	Digital marketing skills are necessary to reach customers and grow their small-scale businesses in the digital age	3.35	0.95	HR
3	Develop effective branding strategies to differentiate their small-scale businesses in a competitive market.	3.15	1.05	HR
4	Social media marketing play a role in promoting small-scale businesses.	3.25	0.88	HR
5	Develop pricing strategies that attract customers while ensuring the profitability of their small-scale businesses	3.19	0.95	HR
6	Create a successful advertising campaigns to raise awareness of their small-scale businesses	2.87	1.07	HR
7	Networking skills play a role in marketing small-scale businesses.	3.26	0.94	HR
	Cluster Mean/Standard deviation	3.14	0.98	HR

Source: Fieldwork (2025). Criterion Mean: $X \geq 2.50 \Rightarrow$ required; $X \leq 2.50 \Rightarrow$ not required

Results presented in Table 3 revealed respondents’ perceptions of the marketing skills required by Business Education students for the establishment of small-scale businesses in Taraba State, Nigeria. All the items recorded mean ratings ranging from 2.50 to 3.35, indicating that the identified marketing skills are relevant to small-scale business establishment in the study area. The cluster mean score of 3.14 further demonstrates that marketing skills are highly required by Business Education students for the successful establishment and operation of small-scale businesses in Taraba State, Nigeria.

Hypothesis One: - There is no significant relationship between creativity skills of business education students and establishing of small-scale businesses in Taraba State, Nigeria.

Table 4: Pearson Correlation between creativity skills of business education students and establishing small-scale businesses in Taraba State, Nigeria.

		Adjustment	Self-worth
Adjustment	Pearson Correlation	1	.777
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	230	230
Self-worth	Pearson Correlation	.777	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	230	230

Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Source: Field Survey, 2025

A Pearson Product-Moment Correlation was used to determine the relationship between creativity skills of business education students and establishing small-scale businesses in Taraba State, Nigeria. The result in Table 4 shows strong and positive correlation between creativity skills of business education students and establishing small-scale businesses in Taraba State,

Nigeria, which is statistically significant. ($r = .777, df = 441, p < .001$). Therefore, the null hypothesis, which states that there is no significant relationship between creativity skills of business education students and establishing small-scale businesses in Taraba State, Nigeria, is rejected. The result implies that creativity skills of business education students is significantly related to establishing small-scale businesses in Taraba State, Nigeria

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant relationship between managerial skills of business education students and establishing of small-scale businesses in Taraba State, Nigeria.

Table 5: Pearson Correlation between managerial skills of business education students and establishing of small-scale businesses in Taraba State, Nigeria.

		Adjustment	Self-confidence
Adjustment	Pearson Correlation	1	.649
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	230	230
Self-confidence	Pearson Correlation	.649	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	230	230

Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Source: Field Survey, 2025

A Pearson product-moment correlation was used to determine the relationship between managerial skills of business education students and establishing small-scale businesses in Taraba State, Nigeria. The result in Table 5 shows a moderate and positive correlation between self-confidence and academic adjustment among senior secondary school students, which is statistically significant, ($r = .649, df = 441, p < .001$). Therefore, the null hypothesis, which says that there is no significant relationship between managerial skills of business education students and establishing small-scale businesses in Taraba State, Nigeria, is rejected. The result implies that managerial skills is significantly related to establishing small-scale businesses in Taraba State, Nigeria.

Hypothesis Three: There is no significant relationship between marketing skills on business education students in establishing small-scale businesses in Taraba State, Nigeria.

Table 6: Pearson Correlation between marketing skills on business education students in establishing of small-scale businesses in Taraba State, Nigeria.

		Adjustment	Self-efficacy
Adjustment	Pearson Correlation	1	.832
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.006
	N	230	230
Self-efficacy	Pearson Correlation	.832	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.006	
	N	230	230

Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Source: Field Survey, 2025

A Pearson product-moment correlation was used to determine the relationship between marketing skills on business education students in establishing small-scale businesses in Taraba State, Nigeria. The result in Table 6 shows a strong and positive correlation between marketing skills and of business education students in establishing small-scale businesses, which is statistically significant. ($r = .832, df = 441, p = .006$). Therefore, the null hypothesis that says that there is no significant relationship between marketing skills of business education students in establishing small-scale businesses in Taraba State, Nigeria is rejected. The result implies that marketing skills is

significantly related to establishing small-scale businesses in Taraba State, Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

Mean and standard deviation were employed to answer the five research questions relating to the independent variable. For hypothesis testing, the p-values associated with the Pearson Product–Moment Correlation Coefficient (Pearson r) were used to determine the significance of the hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significance.

The mean and standard deviation scores rating items on the Creativity Skills Required of Business Education Students

in Establishing of Small-Scale Businesses (SSBs) In Taraba State. All the items have the mean rating scales in the region of 2.5 to 3.48, which shows that the Creativity Skills is highly required of Business Education Students in Establishing of Small-Scale Businesses (SSBs) In Taraba State. The cluster has a mean of 3.21; this implies that the Creativity is a Required Skills of Business Education Students in Establishing of Small-Scale Businesses (SSBs) In Taraba State. Similarly, A Pearson Product-Moment Correlation ($r = .777, df = 441, p < .001$) Signifies that there is significant impact of creativity skills on business education students in establishing of small-scale businesses in Taraba State, Nigeria.

The finding of the present study is consistent with the results reported by Falobi (2018), who conducted an assessment of the entrepreneurial skills required by Business Education students in Colleges of Education in Lagos State. The study revealed that a wide range of competencies—including communication, keyboarding, shorthand, Microsoft application proficiency, marketing, PowerPoint presentation, business plan writing, desktop publishing, accounting, and web design skills—are essential entrepreneurial skills needed by Business Education students to function effectively as self-reliant entrepreneurs.

The present study aligns with the findings of Oboreh and Chukwuemeka (2019), who examined entrepreneurship education and skill acquisition among graduates of public universities in South-East Nigeria. Their study established that technical innovation exerts a significant positive influence on graduates' skill acquisition, and that creativity also has a significant positive effect on skill development in Nigerian public universities. Similarly, the findings of the current study are consistent with those of Falobi, Ishola, and Jacob (2019), who investigated the entrepreneurial competencies required by Business Education students for establishing small-scale ventures in Lagos State, Nigeria. Their results indicated that, at a significance level of 0.05, entrepreneurial competencies are essential for the successful establishment of small-scale ventures in the study area.

Nevertheless, the findings of the present study are consistent with the work of Israel (2020), who investigated the perceived entrepreneurial competencies required by Business Education students for establishing small-scale ventures in Kwara State. The study revealed that, as perceived by Business Education lecturers and practicing entrepreneurs, students intending to establish small-scale ventures require a combination of managerial skills, information and communication technology skills, and marketing skills.

The mean and standard deviation scores for items relating to the business management skills required by Business Education students for establishing small-scale businesses (SSBs) in Taraba State were analyzed. All the items recorded mean ratings ranging from 2.50 to 3.36, indicating that business management skills are highly required by Business Education students for the establishment of small-scale businesses in the study area. The cluster mean score of 3.19 further confirms that business management skills are essential and highly required for the successful establishment of small-scale businesses in Taraba State.

The test of hypothesis yielded a significant result ($r = .649, df = 441, p < .001$), indicating that managerial skills have a significant influence on Business Education students' capacity to establish small-scale businesses in Taraba State, Nigeria. This finding is consistent with the study conducted by Adedeji and Ibronke (2022), who examined skill acquisition in Business Education as a catalyst for sustainable national development and reported that skill acquisition in Business Education has far-reaching implications for national development.

Furthermore, the result of the present study aligns with the findings of Sayeed and Samuel (2022), who investigated the impact of entrepreneurial skills acquisition on enterprise creation in Nigerian universities. Their study revealed that entrepreneurial skills acquisition promotes and encourages university graduates by fostering the growth of a broad private sector within manufacturing and service industries, thereby enhancing the competitiveness of small and medium-scale enterprises and supporting the emergence of new ventures.

However, the findings of the present study are at variance with those of Obidile and Onyeneke (2022), who examined the entrepreneurial competencies required by Business Education graduates for successful entrepreneurial development. Their study reported that both soft skills—such as analytical and critical thinking—and hard skills—including machine operation and software application—are required for effective entrepreneurial development.

The findings of the present study are consistent with those of Egabri and Ogunleye (2024), who investigated the entrepreneurial skills possessed by Business Education students for sustainable enterprise development in Ekiti State and reported that managerial, marketing, and information and communication technology skills were possessed to a low extent, while accounting skills were possessed to a high extent. In a similar vein, the results of this study align with the findings of Songwut (2023), who examined creativity and its influencing factors on students' innovation and creative skills in the design of industrial products in Bangkok, Thailand, and emphasized that the capacity for innovative thinking is fundamental to creativity

and serves as a critical driver for self-employment and enterprise creation.

The mean and standard deviation scores of the items assessing marketing skills required by Business Education students for establishing small-scale businesses in Taraba State, Nigeria were examined. All the items recorded mean ratings ranging from 2.50 to 3.35, indicating that marketing skills are relevant and required for the establishment of small-scale businesses in the study area. The cluster mean score of 3.14 further confirms that marketing skills are highly required by Business Education students in establishing small-scale businesses in Taraba State. In addition, the test of hypothesis yielded a significant result ($r = .832$, $df = 441$, $p = .006$), signifying that marketing skills have a significant impact on Business Education students' ability to establish small-scale businesses in Taraba State, Nigeria.

The present study is consistent with the findings of Abanyam and Udida (2019), who investigated the creative skills possessed by Business Education students in universities for self-employment in Cross River State. Their study revealed that conference training and staff development had insignificant combined effects but exerted significant relative effects on workers' optimal job productivity, thereby underscoring the importance of creativity-related skill development in enhancing work effectiveness and self-employment potential.

The finding from this study is not contrary to the findings of the study conducted by Amesil and Akpomi (2014) conducted a study on entrepreneurs' success and creativity in Business Education. The results showed that creativity is required for entrepreneurial business success and that it influences entrepreneurs' success to a moderate degree. Nevertheless, these findings confirmed Ingwe, Okute & Okon (2023) conducted a research on entrepreneurial skills required by business education graduating students in universities for self-reliance result shows that current twenty-first century, students require certain abilities for independence. The mean and standard deviation scores of the rating items on the extent of exchange programme influence academic staff job performance in tertiary institutions in Taraba State.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it is concluded that gaining new abilities boosts markets and generates job opportunities, which greatly advances a society's socioeconomic standing. This complex process entails developing critical thinking, creativity, flexibility, and sound decision-making skills, with these abilities, business education students and business owners can spot market gaps, seize them, and overcome the inescapable obstacles.

For entrepreneur to be successful needs some knowledge of these skills (Creativity, managerial, Leadership, Marketing and Information and communication technology (ICT) skills) these skills encompass a range of abilities necessary for efficient and effective task completion and resource utilization which help entrepreneur in time management, organization, problem-solving, and adaptability also these skills give one ability to analyze, interpret, and synthesize information to make informed decisions and solve problems effectively

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made;

1. The Nigerian Universities Commission (NUC), in collaboration with other regulatory agencies overseeing tertiary institutions in Nigeria, should ensure that practical vocational components are systematically integrated alongside theoretical content in entrepreneurship education curricula at institutions of higher learning. Such integration would expose students to the practical dimensions of entrepreneurship, facilitate the early development of entrepreneurial traits and dispositions, and enhance graduates' readiness for business start-ups, thereby making entrepreneurial ventures more viable and sustainable after graduation.
2. It is recommended that well-funded model entrepreneurship centers be established in all tertiary institutions in Taraba State, Nigeria, with strong emphasis placed on practical exposure and the acquisition of functional, market-relevant skills to enhance students' entrepreneurial competence and readiness for self-employment.
3. It is recommended that Centres for Entrepreneurship Development, in collaboration with entrepreneurship educators, should provide Business Education students with adequate opportunities to develop a comprehensive understanding of the various funding sources available for new venture creation.
4. Adequate facilities/materials and trainers should be provided for each skill. These skills should be integrated into secondary education curriculum so that undergraduate students could be exposed to them as early as possible.

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