

## ROLE OF SUBJECTIVE NORMS ON ENTREPRENEURIAL INTENTIONS AMONG UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS IN THE UNIVERSITY OF BENIN

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### Abstract

*The study examined subjective norms and entrepreneurial intentions among undergraduate students in the University of Benin. Specifically, the study determined how family background orientation, peer group influence and religious inclinations including school training experiences could influence the students' entrepreneurial intentions. The study adopted the survey research design approach. The population of the study comprised all the undergraduate students of the University of Benin and with a sample size of 285 students. Data collected with the use of structured questionnaire was descriptively analyzed using mean and standard deviation. The t-test was used to test the null hypotheses at 5% level of significance using the SPSS to determine whether a significant difference exists among students entrepreneurial intentions. The study found that male and female students share the same opinion on how family background, peer group and school training experiences would influence their entrepreneurial intentions. The study recommends among others that programmes which could increase students' awareness and reorientation about the need to embrace entrepreneurship development in order to be self-reliant and contribute their quotas to the much needed economic growth is imperative.*

**Keywords:** Students' Entrepreneurial motive, Subjective Norms, University of Benin. .

### Introduction

The role of subjective norms as key driver to entrepreneurial intentions in general and among university students in particular is undisputed. Entrepreneurship development is highly sacrosanct in stimulating nation's economic wellbeing but the mindsets of potential entrepreneurs need to be tailored towards a successful entrepreneurship development using subjective indices. The relevance of entrepreneurship development to the Nigeria economy has been highly acknowledged to be formidable in addressing issues of underemployment and unemployment among tertiary school graduates. In industrialized, emerging, and developing economies, it is seen as the cornerstone for growth and development (Muhammad, Aliyu & Ahmed, 2015). It is also seen as a way to provide the overflowing population work in an effort to lower unemployment and lessen poverty in Nigeria generally. The capacity to build a viable firm is what makes a person an entrepreneur, and in order to do this, they need the assistance of both external and internal influences and persuasions. External influences include business-friendly legislative legislation and an atmosphere that is conducive to entrepreneurship, while internal elements include an individual's motivational psychology (Shook & Bratianu, 2010). In other words, a person's ambition to launch a company is influenced by the strength of the subjective norm that surrounds them.

Subjective norms could be regarded as the perceived social pressure to take or not to take action in certain direction which includes impact of family, friends and other prospective role models. Subjective norms are those who have a direct social effect, such as parents, spouses, friends, religious figures, and instructors (Muhammad, Aliyu, & Ahmed, 2015). Social ties, or the idea that friends, family, and other role models have on people, are examples of subjective norms (Ekpe & Mat, 2012).

The desire to engage in entrepreneurial activities, on the other hand, is known as entrepreneurial intention (Kiiru, Iravo & Kamau, 2015).

In Nigeria like many other emerging nations, education has been regarded as a tool par excellence for influencing national development. The national philosophy of education places one of its objectives on the idea that education should be of high-quality, all-encompassing, practical, and pertinent to societal requirements (FRN, 2013). It is in furtherance of this general national purpose that entrepreneurship education was integrated into the Nigerian university curriculum in 2004 but the implementation began in 2007/2008 session. The primary goal of establishing the course, which is a requirement for graduation, is to provide students with the self-empowerment skills they will need to pursue self-employment when they graduate (Akpan, Effiong & Ele, 2012).

The past several decades have seen the rise of entrepreneurship as one of the world's most powerful economic forces. The major cause of this notion is the expanding need for entrepreneurs who speed up economic growth by coming up with fresh ideas and turning them into successful businesses. Over the last several decades, both academics and policymakers have been more interested in entrepreneurship. Incubators of technical innovation, entrepreneurial activity also provide job opportunities and boost competitiveness. Entrepreneurship is widely seen as a key driver of development, innovation, and particularly the creation of new jobs (Krithika & Venkatachalam, 2014).

The Nigerian economy operates a competitive market and is characterize with high unemployment rate due to the preponderance influx of graduates flowing into the labour market. The fact that majority of educated graduates in Nigeria's labor market are best suited for white-collar employment and lack the necessary vocational skills to participate in entrepreneurship makes the situation even worse (Olorundare & Kayode, 2014). However, the degree of social pressure that students are exposed to may have an impact on their inclination to pursue entrepreneurship development. For instance, in households when both parents are business owners, they serve as positive role models for their kids. The younger generation sees entrepreneurship as an appealing career path to emulate their parents' success in managing the family firm. In other words, the more support they get from their parents, relatives, friends, and others around them, the more determined they are to succeed as entrepreneurs. In order words, early exposure to a family company may be a prior experience, which affects an individual's goals to become an entrepreneur.

One of the factors that precede the choice, which is referred to as a subjective norm, is the perception of societal pressure to pursue or refrain from pursuing entrepreneurship as a vocation. Shapero (1975) in Krithika and Venkatachalam (2014) suggested that external elements including demographic characteristics, skills, culture, social support and financial support influence an individual's inclination to become an entrepreneur. One of these factors would be prior exposure to entrepreneurial activities. This suggests that social norms have an impact on people's choices to launch their own businesses. Contrarily, several research revealed that society and factors like family and friends does not influence students' entrepreneurial goals or their entrepreneurial activity (Ali, Lu, & Wang, 2012; Efrata, Hadiwidjojo, Solimun & Aisjah, 2016; Nasuridin, Ahmad & Lin, 2009).

It is well-known in the literature that entrepreneurship continues to be the key to sustainable wealth creation (Ogundele, 2000), and that if a country wants to escape its alarmingly high unemployment rate and crippling level of poverty, it needs to pay adequate attention to the development of entrepreneurship (Matanmi & Awodun, 2005). In the current economic climate, there is evidence that job opportunities for graduates are limited. For students to be successful in operating a business or creating entrepreneurial opportunities, they should have the necessary entrepreneurship knowledge and skills (Keat et al., 2011).

Unfortunately, over time, the country's education policy makers have failed to recognize that the type of education provided to students in higher education in Nigeria limit their ability to engage in meaningful entrepreneurship that would have contributed to national development and decreased poverty (Soneye, 2014). This important data highlights the Federal Government's order to all higher education regulatory organizations to set up the essential frameworks for the introduction, growth, and maintenance of an entrepreneurial culture among Nigerian youth. Their abilities are supposed to aid in corporate growth and lower levels of poverty. Examining whether the students' subjective standards can predict their entrepreneurial intentions in the University of Benin is thus crucial.

However, the issue that emerges is the extent to which students' entrepreneurial intentions are influenced by subjective standards like those of their family, friends, religious leaders, and lecturers. In the light of this, the researcher intends to examine the subjective norms influencing the desire of undergraduate students' in the University of Benin to pursue entrepreneurship. The specific objectives are to: examine the influence of family background on entrepreneurial intentions among undergraduate students in the University of Benin; ascertain the influence of peer group on entrepreneurial intentions among undergraduate students in the University of Benin; investigate if religious leaders influence the entrepreneurial intentions among undergraduate students in the University of Benin and lastly, examine whether lecturers influence the entrepreneurial intentions among undergraduate students in the University of Benin.

### **Objective of the Study**

The main purpose of the study is to determine how subjective norms influence the entrepreneurial intentions among undergraduate students in the University of Benin, Benin City. Specifically, the study intends to:

1. find out the extent to which family background influence entrepreneurial intentions among undergraduate students of the University of Benin;
2. ascertain the extent to which peer group influence entrepreneurial intentions among undergraduate students of the University of Benin;
3. examine the extent to which religious leaders influence entrepreneurial intentions among undergraduate students of the University of Benin;
4. ascertain the extent to which lecturers or all the teachers (including primary and secondary) influence entrepreneurial intentions among undergraduate students of the University of Benin.

### **Research Questions**

The following questions were raised to guide the study.

1. How does family background influence entrepreneurial intentions among undergraduate students of the University of Benin?
2. To what extent do peer group influence entrepreneurial intentions among undergraduate students of the University of Benin?
3. How do religious inclinations influence the entrepreneurial intentions of among undergraduate students of the University of Benin?
4. To what extent do lecturers or all the teachers (including primary and secondary) influence the entrepreneurial intentions of students of University of Benin?

## Hypotheses

**Ho<sub>1</sub>:** Male and female students do not differ significantly in their opinions on how family background influences their entrepreneurial intentions in the University of Benin.

**Ho<sub>2</sub>:** Male and female students do not differ significantly in their opinions on how peer group influence their entrepreneurial intentions in the University of Benin.

**Ho<sub>3</sub>:** Male and female students do not differ significantly in their opinions on how religious leaders influence their entrepreneurial intentions in the University of Benin.

**Ho<sub>4</sub>:** Male and female students do not differ significantly in their opinions on how lecturers or all the teachers (including primary and secondary) influence their entrepreneurial intentions in the University of Benin.

## Literature Review

### Entrepreneurial Intention

Entrepreneurial intention refers to an individual's conscious decision and commitment to start a new business venture or pursue entrepreneurial opportunities (Bird, 2015). It is the willingness and desire to engage in entrepreneurial behaviour, such as launching a startup, innovating, or taking calculated risks to achieve business goals (Krueger, 2000). Entrepreneurial intention is a crucial concept in entrepreneurship research, as it helps predict startup success, innovation, and economic growth. It encompasses three key elements:

- i. **Awareness:** recognizing entrepreneurial opportunities and their potential.
- ii. **Interest:** developing a desire to pursue entrepreneurial ventures.
- iii. **Commitment:** taking concrete steps to launch or grow a business.

Entrepreneurial intention is influenced by various factors, including: personal traits (risk, tolerance and creativity), Environmental factors (family support and market conditions) and cognitive factors (self-efficacy and motivation). Understanding entrepreneurial intentions helps researchers, policymakers, and educators develop effective strategies to promote entrepreneurship, innovation, and economic development.

### The concept of Entrepreneur and Entrepreneurship

Richard Cantillon, an Irishman living in France at the time, coined the term "entrepreneur" to describe someone who sees business prospects and makes the most of the few resources at hand (Edobor & Imade, 2013). The French verb *entreprendre*, which means "to do something," is also where the word "entrepreneur" originates. Therefore, someone who can generate their own business and is willing to take the risks he believes is necessary to ensure their own financial security is said to be an entrepreneur. Egwu (2011) defined an entrepreneur as a person who recognizes opportunities where others do not, as well as a visionary, problem-solver, creative genius, wealth creator, innovator, and inventor who creates jobs for others.

Entrepreneurship is the willingness and ability of the individual (or a group of individuals) to seek out investment opportunities, especially through innovation, establishes and run the enterprise successfully (Anbazhagi & Kishore, 2020). Thus, entrepreneurship incorporates not only the process of enterprise creation but also the process of managing it effectively (Inegbenebor, 2006). Entrepreneurship, in its simplest form, is the capacity and inclination to look for investment possibilities and to operate them as a business for financial gain (Nwambam, Nnennaya & Nwankpu, 2018). Therefore, entrepreneurship is viewed as the driving force behind every nation's economic

growth because it is a reliable way to create employment opportunities, supply the necessary manpower for industrial development, increase market factors and marketing, build citizen capacity, and distribute resources, all of which are prerequisites for sustainable development (Nwambam, Nnennaya & Nwankpu, 2018).

Academics, policy makers, and other stakeholders view entrepreneurship as a crucial instrument since it is linked to national growth and development and is seen as a potential solution to unemployment issue. There are indications that the career opportunities for graduates in the current economic climate are restricted. For students to be successful in operating a firm or establishing entrepreneurial opportunities, they should have the necessary entrepreneurship knowledge and abilities (Keat et al., 2011). According to Shane and Venkataraman (2000), the focus of entrepreneurship training includes identifying the opportunity's source, its processes for identification, evaluation, and exploitation, as well as the group of people who carry out these tasks.

Fatoki and Oni (2014) asserts that undergraduate students who receive entrepreneurship education are more likely to start their own businesses after graduation, which places more responsibility on tertiary institutions to take the lead in Nigeria's ongoing development of entrepreneurship education and practices. Because of this, entrepreneurship education may be seen as a specialized and comprehensive training program created by educational authorities to transform students' worldviews from job seekers to independent wealth creators by nurturing their talents and potential.

### **Theoretical Framework**

This study is anchored on the Theory of Planned Behaviour by Ajzen (1991). The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) was propounded by Ajzen (1991) as advancement to the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA). The two theories explained the behavioural attitude of people towards performing task or actions which subjective norms are associated with. The subjective norm of a person is determined by whether important referents (that is, people who are important to the person) approve or disapprove of the performance of a behaviour (that is, normative beliefs), weighted by the person's motivation to comply with those referents (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Montano & Kasprzyk, 2002). The theory of planned behaviour was developed owing to the assertion that the theory of reasoned action is only applicable in explaining behaviour when volitional control is high (Montano & Kasprzyk, 2002). Ajzen (1991) proposed the theory of planned behaviour by adding perceived behavioural control (PBC) to the theory of reasoned action, in an effort to account for factors outside a person's volitional control that may affect her/his intentions and behaviour. Thus, a person who holds strong control beliefs about factors that facilitate behaviour will have high perceived control, which translates into an increased intention to perform the behaviour (Ajzen, 1991; Montano & Kasprzyk, 2002).

### **Methodology**

This study employed a survey research design and the population comprised 34,756 in 2021/2022 academic session (Uniben ICT Unit, 2023). A sample size of 395 was determined using Taro Yamane's formula. Stratified, quota and convenience sampling techniques were adopted for this study as follows. Stratified sampling technique was used to divide the university into faculties. Furthermore, quota sampling was used to divide the students in each faculty according to sex. Convenience sampling was then used to administer the instrument to each department. The instrument that was used for data collection is a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was divided into section A and section B. Section A was a covering letter, the second part, that is, section B contained the core subject matter that enables the researcher to answer the research objectives and test the formulated hypotheses. The scale has four point modified Likert scale with nominal values of Very High Extent (VHE) - 4; High Extent (HE) - 3; Low Extent (LE) - 2 and Very Low Extent (VLE) - 1.

The reliability of the instrument was determined by establishing the internal consistency coefficient using the Cronbach Alpha method. This was done by administering the questionnaire to 30 undergraduates that are not part of the respondents in University of Benin. The data collected was analyzed with the aid of SPSS 22.0 Version and the reliability coefficient value obtained ranges from 0.70 to 0.87 which indicate that the instrument is highly reliable (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson & Tatham, 2006). Descriptive statistics such as means, frequencies, and percentages were used to analyze the data on relevant variables while t-test was used to test the hypotheses. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS 20.0) was used for all the analyses. All tests were carried out at the 5% level of statistical significance.

### Estimation of Results

**Table 1:** Extent to which Family Background Influence the Entrepreneurial Intentions of Students

S/N	Items	Responses		
		Mean	Standard Deviation	Decision
1.	Immediate family persuasion	2.88	0.91	Low Extent
2.	Achievement of parents in business	2.86	0.97	Low Extent
3.	Inherited family business/succession	3.00	1.07	Low Extent
4.	Perception of family members on self-employment	3.20	0.75	High Extent
5.	Immediate family members' financial support to start up a business	3.60	0.49	High Extent

*Source:* Author's field work (2023)

Table 1 show that all the items had mean scores above the criterion mean of 2.50 and were accepted concerning the extent to which family background influence the entrepreneurial intentions of students. In summary, with an aggregate mean score of 3.11, the respondents rated that family background influenced the entrepreneurial intentions of undergraduate students of the University of Benin to a high extent.

**Table 2:** Extent to which Peer Group Influence the Entrepreneurial Intentions of Undergraduate Students

S/N	Items	Responses		
		Mean	Standard Deviation	Decision
1.	Monetary support (loans and grants) from friends	2.79	0.89	High Extent
2.	Entrepreneurial advice from friends who have been in business	2.63	0.86	High Extent
3.	Observed success/achievement of friends in personal business	2.66	1.00	High Extent
4.	Perception of close friends on self-employment	3.21	0.60	High Extent
5.	A friend's improvement on business	3.41	0.66	High Extent

*Source:* Author's field work (2023)

Table 2 shows that all the items had mean scores above the criterion mean of 2.50 and were accepted concerning the extent to which peer group influence the entrepreneurial intentions of undergraduate students. In summary, with an aggregate mean score of 2.94, the respondents rated that peer group

influenced the entrepreneurial intentions of undergraduate students of the University of Benin to a high extent.

**Table 3: Extent to which Religious Leaders Influence the Entrepreneurial Intentions of Undergraduate Students**

S/N	Items	Responses		
		Mean	Standard Deviation	Decision
1.	Scholarship/grants from church or mosque members	2.81	0.92	High Extent
2.	Spiritual leaders' motivation and words of encouragement	2.49	1.03	Low Extent
3.	Sponsored training from religious bodies	2.73	0.97	High Extent
4.	Perception of a spiritual leader on self-employment	2.89	1.05	High Extent
5.	Spiritual leaders' sermon on self-reliance	2.90	0.84	High Extent

*Source:* Author's field work (2023)

Table 3 shows that items 1, 3, 4 and 5 had mean scores above the criterion mean of 2.50 and were accepted concerning the extent to which religious leaders influence the entrepreneurial intentions of undergraduate students. Only item 2 had mean score below the criterion mean of 2.50 and were rejected. In summary, with an aggregate mean score of 2.76, the respondents rated that religious leaders influenced the entrepreneurial intentions of undergraduate students of the University of Benin to a high extent.

**Table 4: Extent to which lecturers influence the entrepreneurial intentions of University of Benin Undergraduate Students**

S/N	Items	Responses		
		Mean	Standard Deviation	Decision
1.	Influence of entrepreneurship knowledge/ideas gained from the school	2.81	0.93	High Extent
2.	Likeness of one's teacher's quality as a role model	2.35	0.74	Low Extent
3.	Influence of classroom experience with a business minded teacher	2.25	0.98	Low Extent
4.	Perception of a respected teacher on self-employment	2.30	0.78	Low Extent
5.	Teacher's delivery of student-oriented courses in line with entrepreneurship curriculum	2.40	1.12	Low Extent

*Source:* Author's field work (2023)

Table 4 shows that only item 1 had mean score above the criterion mean of 2.50 and was accepted concerning the extent to which lecturers or all the teachers influence the entrepreneurial intentions of undergraduate students. However, items 2, 3, 4 and 5 had mean scores below the criterion mean of 2.50 and were rejected. In summary, with an aggregate mean score of 2.42, the respondents rated that

lecturers influenced the entrepreneurial intentions of undergraduate students of the University of Benin to a low extent.

### Hypothesis One

Male and female students do not differ significantly in their opinions on how family background influences their entrepreneurial intentions in the University of Benin.

**Table 5: Male and Female Students' Opinions on how Family Background Influence their Entrepreneurial Intentions in University of Benin**

Gender	Mean	Std. Dev	Df	Cal-t	Alpha	Sig. (2 - tailed)	Decision
Male	15.47	3.06	226	-.339	0.050	.735	Not Significant
Female	15.60	2.54					
Total							

*Source:* Author's field work (2023)

Male and female students' opinion on how family background influences their entrepreneurial intentions in the University of Benin is the first objective of this study. The overall mean value of male students' opinion (15.47) is lower than that for female students (15.60). Furthermore, t-test was performed to test for the significance of the differences in male and female opinions. The test showed that the difference is not statistically significant at the five percent level ( $p = 0.735$ ). This means that male and female students share the same opinion on how family background influences their entrepreneurial intentions. The null hypothesis was therefore accepted. This implies that male and female students do not differ significantly in their opinions on how family backgrounds influence their entrepreneurial intentions in the University of Benin.

### Hypothesis Two

Male and female students do not differ significantly in their opinions on how peer group influences their entrepreneurial intentions in the University of Benin.

**Table 6: Male and Female Students' Opinions on how Peer Group Influence their Entrepreneurial Intentions in University of Benin**

Gender	Mean	Std. Dev	Df	Cal-t	Alpha	Sig. (2 - tailed)	Decision
Male	14.82	2.57	226	.780	0.050	.436	Not Significant
Female	14.55	2.59					
Total							

*Source:* Author's field work (2023)

The next objective of the study was to ascertain male and female students' opinion on how peer group influence their entrepreneurial intentions in the University of Benin. The overall mean value of male students' opinion (14.82) is higher than that for female students (14.55). Furthermore, t-test was performed to test for the significance of the difference in male and female opinions on entrepreneurial intention. The test showed that the difference is not statistically significant at the five percent level ( $p = 0.436$ ). This means that male and female students share the same opinion on how peer group influence their entrepreneurial intentions. The null hypothesis was therefore accepted. This implies

that male and female students do not differ significantly in their opinions on how peer group influence their entrepreneurial intentions in the University of Benin.

### Hypothesis Three

Male and female students do not differ significantly in their opinions on how religious leaders influence their entrepreneurial intentions in the University of Benin.

**Table 7: Male and Female Students' Opinions on how Religious Leaders Influence their Entrepreneurial Intentions in the University of Benin**

Gender	Mean	Std. Dev	Df	Cal-t	Alpha	Sig. (2 - tailed)	Decision
Male	13.36	3.52	226	-2.306	0.050	.022	Significant
Female	14.35	2.82					
Total							

*Source:* Author's field work (2023)

The objective here was to find out male and female students' opinion on how religious leaders influence their entrepreneurial intentions in the University of Benin. The overall mean value of male students' opinion on religious leader is (13.36) lower than that for female students (14.35). In addition, t-test was performed to test for the significance of the difference in male and female opinions on entrepreneurial intention. The test showed that the difference is statistically significant at the five percent level ( $p = 0.022$ ). This means that female students believed that religious leaders influence their entrepreneurial intentions as against their male counterpart. The null hypothesis was therefore rejected. This implies that male and female students differ significantly in their opinions on how religious leaders influence their entrepreneurial intentions in the University of Benin.

### Hypothesis Four

Male and female students do not differ significantly in their opinions on how lecturers influence their entrepreneurial intentions in the University of Benin.

**Table 8: Male and Female Students' Opinions on how Lecturers Influence their Entrepreneurial Intentions in the University of Benin**

Gender	Mean	Std. Dev	Df	Cal-t	Alpha	Sig. (2 - tailed)	Decision
Male	11.65	2.89	226	-2.489	0.050	.014	Significant
Female	12.63	3.01					
Total							

*Source:* Author's field work (2023)

The last objective was to examine male and female students' opinion on how lecturers influence their entrepreneurial intentions in the University of Benin. The overall mean value of male students' opinion on lecturers is (13.36) lower than that for female students (12.63). In addition, t-test was performed to test for the significance of the difference in male and female opinions on how lecturers influence their entrepreneurial intention. The test showed that the difference is statistically significant at the five percent level ( $p = 0.014$ ). This means that female students believed that lecturers influence

their entrepreneurial intention as against their male counterpart. The null hypothesis was therefore rejected. This implies that male and female students differ significantly in their opinions on how lecturers influence their entrepreneurial intentions in the University of Benin.

### **Discussion of Findings**

Subjective norms and entrepreneurial intentions among undergraduate students in the University of Benin were considered in this research investigation. Based on the review of literature and theoretical frameworks relating to subjective norms and entrepreneurial intentions, some hypotheses were formulated and tested using research instruments adapted from previous studies.

The results showed that male and female students of the University of Benin share the same opinion on how family background influences their entrepreneurial intentions. This finding is supported by Santos, Galvo, Mascarenhas and Justino (2018) who established in their studies that family background had no significant influence on entrepreneurial intentions.

Similarly, the result of the t-test revealed that male and female students share the same opinion on how peer group influence their entrepreneurial intentions. In other words, both male and female students believed that peer group had no influence on entrepreneurial inclinations of the University of Benin students. Our finding contrasts with the results by Lingappa, Shah and Mathew (2020) which reported that peer group had a large favourable impact on student's entrepreneurial transition owing to social influence rather than institutional influence.

In terms of male and female students' opinions on how religious leaders influence their entrepreneurial intentions in the University of Benin, the result showed that the difference is statistically significant at the five percent level ( $p = 0.022$ ). This means that female students believed that religious leaders influence their entrepreneurial intention as against their male counterpart. This result supports the findings by Lindquist *et al.* (2015), who discovered that religious leaders had influence on entrepreneurial intentions among University of Benin undergraduate students.

Lastly, the result of the t-test revealed that female students believed that lecturers influence their entrepreneurial intentions as against their male counterpart. This implies that male and female students differ significantly in their opinions on how lecturers influence their entrepreneurial intentions in the University of Benin. This study supports Diegoli and Gutierrez's (2018) conclusion that lecturers had a significant influence on students' entrepreneurial ambitions.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

The aforementioned data led to the conclusion that subjective norms (family background, peer group, religious leaders, and lecturers/teachers) would be crucial in influencing and figuring out the respondents' entrepreneurial intentions after graduation. The family background factor had the greatest impact among the four predictors. Additionally, although male and female students at the University of Benin do not significantly differ in their views on how family background and peer group influence their entrepreneurial intentions, they do significantly differ in their views on how religious leaders and lecturers/teachers influence those intentions. Therefore, researchers, university administration, and the government can use the study's findings to create policies and procedures that can encourage, promote, and strengthen the development of entrepreneurial intentions and sustainability of enterprise development among students when they graduate.

Based on the findings and conclusion of the study, we recommend as follows:

- i. Awareness-raising and reorientation programs for students about the need to further embrace entrepreneurial abilities in order to contribute to the alleviation of poverty in society should urgently be launched by the school administration.

- ii. The entrepreneurship curriculum at colleges has to be updated to go beyond what is often taught in classrooms. Lecturers should use teaching methods that may inspire students while also boosting their self-confidence throughout entrepreneurial courses. This suggests that in order to inspire pupils to make entrepreneurial choices beyond school, it is necessary to include them in experimental training.
- iii. It is important for parents and family members to encourage their children's entrepreneurial spirit. This will encourage students to pursue entrepreneurial endeavors after graduation, creating jobs for the community by way of the establishment of businesses.
- iv. Additionally, mentoring programs for prospective students and recent graduates should be supported by educators, parents, relatives, and successful businesspeople in order to develop their abilities for real-world entrepreneurship after graduation.

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## DIGITAL ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS: A TOOL TO EQUIP AND PROMOTE SELF-RELIANCE AMONG STUDENTS' IN COLLEGES OF EDUCATION, OYO STATE, NIGERIA

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### Abstract

*The clarion call for students to be highly equipped with digital entrepreneurship skills prior to graduation to promote their self-reliance in the twenty-first century has become imperative. The study therefore, examined the digital entrepreneurial skills that would prepare the students for self-reliance in a technology-driven world. The descriptive survey research design was adopted. 238 students and lecturers comprised the study population and no sampling was done because it was a manageable size. Structured questionnaire was used for data collection which was validated by three experts and tested to be highly reliable with a co-efficient value of 0.87 using Cronbach Alpha. The arithmetic mean and standard deviation were used to analyze the data gathered. The null hypotheses were tested using t-test inferential statistics. The findings revealed among others the need for ICT proficiency in order to stimulate innovativeness and creativity for self-sufficiency. The findings revealed a non significant difference in the mean rating of respondents' abilities in relation to information and communication technology. However, there is a significant difference in the mean rating of respondents' abilities relating to their innovative/creative skills and marketing skills needed to support themselves and contribute their quotas to national economic development. It was therefore recommended among others that business educators should ensure that students acquire sufficient ICT, creative and innovative skills as well as marketing skills prior to graduation.*

**Keywords:** Digital Entrepreneurial Skills, Innovative, Marketing and marketing skills

### Introduction

The National Policy on Education emphasized the purpose of Business Education curriculum as a tool to equip students with relevant skills that would make them have more competitive advantage in the labour market. Business education, according to Koyosaki (2013), is one of the most significant types of education for the twenty-first century economic development. Among the various topics it covers are accounting, investments, marketing, office processes, law, insurance, information and communication technology aimed to equip students in becoming proficient in the world of work. Business education is a specialized curriculum that aims to provide students with the skills, values, and information necessary to successfully traverse society (Ubulom & Ogwunte, 2017; Ore, 2022). Chinwokwu (2013) claims that the primary cause of Nigerian vocational school graduates' inability to successfully launch and manage their own small businesses for self-sufficiency, particularly those with a background in business, is a lack of sufficient knowledge and experience in digital entrepreneurship. According to Chinwokwu (2013), graduates of business schools are not equipped with the core skills of digital entrepreneurship, which include ICT, marketing, leadership, financial

management, and self-management. These skills are necessary to run the chosen enterprises. He concluded that this may be the reason behind the high percentage of business failure, joblessness, and poor employment opportunities.

A more interconnected and interdependent world has resulted from the disruption of traditional practices and the transformation of numerous industries by the process of globalization. Beyond schooling, the advent of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has also had an impact on the economic sector. Employers state that candidates need to be proficient in digital skills and have a strong aptitude for information and communication technology (ICT). As a result, it is expected of prospective employees to possess the core digital entrepreneurial skills necessary for success in the 21st-century business sectors. Undoubtedly, digital skills are very adaptable and are transforming how people live in the twenty-first century. Along with opportunity, they also have issues. Consequently, the advancement of digital entrepreneurial skills hinges on the implementation of a carefully designed Business Education curriculum that integrates digital literacy with the technological know-how of Business Educators/teachers. Like other nations, Nigeria strives to attain the economic prosperity stated in the now-evolved Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) from the original Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). This endeavor tackles societal problems including low living standards and poverty. All Nigerian universities have reformed and refocused their academic curricula to prioritize teaching entrepreneurship skills in order to have the greatest possible impact on national growth. Similar to this, preparing students and equipping them with the necessary skills to become economically independent is the primary goal of TVET, the vast academic curriculum for business education. According to Okute *et al.* (2019), self-sustenance is the ability of a person to rely on their own abilities and efforts in order to become independent. The optimum conditions for self-sustenance are those in which people have the required abilities. The ability of a person to contribute significantly to society and to oneself is referred to as skill in this context. In order to do this, post-secondary education, the highest degree of education, should make sure that graduates have these abilities so they can live meaningful lives in society (Ben, 2020). The main focus of this study is to evaluate entrepreneurial competencies, including leadership, marketing, ICT (information and communication technology), creativity and innovation, and interpersonal skills. The primary objective of business education is to encourage self-sufficiency, which is what these competencies are designed to achieve. Thus, these abilities are crucial for students, particularly those who are enrolled in colleges as undergraduates. Based on Bassey's (2015) definition, entrepreneurship can be defined as an ongoing process initiated and managed by individuals with the aim of creating new value in the market through creative means of meeting particular requirements. Okute and Olom (2012) assert that there is a close relationship between innovation and entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurship is a process of having the capability to acquire the resources needed to explore new business opportunities. It denotes the action of starting a worthwhile project with the goal of making enough money to support oneself. This implies that uniqueness on a national and international level is not always required for creative endeavors. According to Olajumoke (2021), taking risks, being innovative, creating value, identifying opportunities, stabilizing the market, managing a business effectively, allocating resources, maximizing profits, and having the capacity to correct unbalanced situations are all crucial elements of entrepreneurship. The main goal of entrepreneurship is to find and seize business opportunities in order to increase earnings. The study looks at the three key domains of entrepreneurial abilities that are needed: marketing, innovation and creativity, and ICT. The capacity to complete tasks effectively is known as skill, and it can be developed through training and experience. According to Okute (2013), skill is the capacity to carry out a task in a methodical and efficient manner after undergoing a demanding training program. Skill is the result of the integration of affective (feelings, emotions, and attitude expression), psychomotor (actions, and the beginning of conscious mental movement) and

capacity to absorb new information with sound cognitive knowledge. The ability to be an entrepreneur is essential to a nation's economic progress. As such, it is imperative that people take advantage of opportunities to become self-sufficient. For this reason, entrepreneurship skills should be required of graduates in higher education, according to the National University Commission (NUC). An entrepreneurship curriculum in higher education will provide graduates with improved understanding and knowledge of entrepreneurship, enabling them to create their own jobs rather than just looking for them. Ememe (2012) highlighted the adoption of business plan contests in tertiary universities, the creation of small and medium-sized resource centers, the launching of networking activities, and the establishment of entrepreneurial development centers within colleges. Students that performed very well in their practical assignments while under site observation should be formally acknowledged and given prizes for their creative efforts. Business education as a component of vocational education aims to equip students with digital entrepreneurial skills which they need for self support and contribute to society development and students can start business after graduation. Business education places high premium on the acquisition of skills in management information system, office technology and management, marketing, entrepreneurship, digital marketing, cooperative studies, accounting, insurance among others. As a result, it is expected that the various components of Business Education courses, which foster specific skills, be effectively taught to students so that they can become digital entrepreneurs (Ernest, 2011; Ezeani, Ifeonyemetalu, & Ezemoyih, 2012; Iloeje & Okolocha, 2018); Oyerinde, Onajite, & Aina, 2020; Futurelearn, 2020). Digital entrepreneurship skills enable business owners to use information and communication technology and the internet to efficiently find, evaluate, distribute, and create material for marketing their goods and services at any time or place. One aspect of digital entrepreneurial skills is the ability to use automation to manage branding, marketing, communication, and reaching the target market for the supply of goods and services (Afro-digital, 2021). Being adept at digital entrepreneurship is a crucial skill for any business owner, whether they manage a small home-based business or a large global corporation. The key digital entrepreneurial competencies needed to succeed in today's business environment and land good jobs are social media marketing; cloud computing, cyber security, data analysis, and user experience and (UX) design abilities (Martinez, 2021). Nevertheless, the curriculum here primarily emphasizes data analysis and the growth of digital entrepreneurship in the social media marketing industry.

In marketing, the term "digital entrepreneurial skills" refers to the use of social media platforms as promotional tools for online goods and services. Companies can interact with their target audience using these social media platforms, which helps them to develop their brand, boost sales, enhance website traffic, and create a community of followers who can interact with and share their material. These responsibilities, which include choosing pertinent social media channels, putting together a diverse content mix, and developing a social plan with objectives, are addressed by the five fundamental ideas of social media marketing. The next phase is planning and distributing the content, actively engaging with and listening to customers, utilizing analytical methods to provide reports that support managerial choices, and finally carrying out marketing campaigns (LaFleur, 2022). If they are properly prepared with the required skills, undergraduates with these digital entrepreneurial qualities have a higher chance of landing great jobs after graduation. The recipients of business education might become more self-sufficient with the help of these digital entrepreneurship abilities.

Developing digital entrepreneurial abilities has been motivated by the concept of self-sustenance, sometimes known as self-sustainability. The ability of a single household or a community to meet basic necessities (safety, security, food, water, shelter, health, business, and education) in a dignified and sustainable way is known as self-sustainability (Anukan, 2013). According to Ogbonna (2017), self-sustainability is the capacity to rely on one's own resources, judgment, and abilities to carry out the appropriate actions. It is a condition in which an individual or business owner need little to no

assistance from or engagement with other people.

Business education undergraduates are expected to acquire digital entrepreneurial skills that will help them become self-sufficient, which would significantly contribute to the growth of the economy and reduce the graduation unemployment rate, which has been a distinguishing characteristic of the Nigerian economy (Ediagbonya et al., 2024). Despite owning cellphones and laptops, the majority of these undergraduates do not seem to be very business-minded. The two most important gadgets for digital entrepreneurship are laptops and smartphones, and the majority of these students seem to be more interested in other amusing apps than in ones that can help their firms grow. The majority of these undergraduate students do not seem to have the necessary digital entrepreneurship abilities to transit from the classroom to running their own firm with ease (Chinwokwu, 2013). This is primarily the result of insufficient knowledge and expertise in digital entrepreneurship. This supports the earlier claim made by Ekpenyong and Ojo (2018) that graduates of business education lack critical digital entrepreneurship competencies and skills related to information and communication technology (ICT), marketing, leadership, social media digital marketing, and data analysis, all of which are critical for operating their chosen businesses. In order to advance understanding and self-sustenance, academics have kept up their studies in this area.

The study conducted by Wogboroma and Amesi (2021) revealed that business education postgraduate students acquired moderate level of entrepreneurial accounting skills for sustainability. Ile and Wogboroma (2021) and Amuah and Amaewhule (2019) findings also revealed that postgraduate business education students acquired moderate innovation skills. Wogboroma and Adiele (2022) in their study on entrepreneurial marketing skills acquisition for self-sustainability by postgraduate business education in River State found that the participants (business education postgraduate students) acquired moderate level of entrepreneurial marketing skills. Similarly, Amaewhule and Wolugbom (2018) found that entrepreneurial marketing skills are required by business education students. The study by Amaewhule and Abung (2020) found that graduating students of business education acquired ICT usage skills. Despite the numerous empirical studies that have been done in the area of entrepreneurial skills, there is still a gap. Most of the studies reviewed focused on entrepreneurial skills and not digital entrepreneurial skills which is crucial in the 21<sup>st</sup> century digital world. This obvious gap needs to be filled and this study attempt to address it.

### **Research Questions**

1. What ICT skills are required by students in business education prior to graduation to promote their self-reliance?
2. What innovative/Creative skills are required by students in business education prior to graduation to promote their self-reliance?
3. What marketing skills are required by students in business education prior to graduation to promote their self-reliance?

### **Objectives of the study**

The study intends to:

1. determine the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) acquired by business education students prior to graduation to promote their self-reliance;
2. ascertain the innovative and creative skills required by students in business education prior to graduation to promote their self-reliance; and
3. assess the marketing skills required by business education students to promote their their self-reliance.

## Hypotheses

- H0<sub>1</sub>:** Lecturers and students in business education do not differ significantly on the ICT skills required to promote their self-reliance in the study area.
- H0<sub>2</sub>:** Lecturers and students in business education do not differ significantly on the innovative and creative skills they require to promote their self-reliance in the study area.
- H0<sub>3</sub>:** Lecturers and students in business education do not differ significantly on the marketing skills required to promote their self-reliance in the study area.

## Literature Review

It is crucial to acquire Information and Communication Technology (ICT) skills through training. The term "information and communication technology" refers to a broad range of technologies that are used in communication, including wireless networks, computers, cell phones, and the internet. According to Ukwungwu and Oyedepo (2012), using computers can help students develop their cognition, coordination, creativity, commercial, communication, and math skills. Communication and information sharing are essential to the growth of entrepreneurship. Human progress has benefited greatly from technology (Oluka & Onyebuenyi, 2017; Edigbonya & Aghatise, 2023). According to Okute (2013), communication is the process of producing, disseminating, deciphering, and applying information. Guile & Unwin (2022) claim that integrated, interconnected work environments bolstered by intangible assets have consistently produced and recognized occupational competence.

Information and communication technology (ICT) is essential for promoting sustainable development in developing countries, according to research done by Saidu *et al.* (2014). In a similar vein, Ibelegbu (2017) investigated the ICT competencies required of business studies lecturers and discovered that these educators were supposed to be experts in all areas linked to computers. Furthermore, the results showed that faculty members teaching business lack access to contemporary ICT and have not gotten enough training, the latter of which is not relevant to the current curriculum. The ICT skills that students pursuing vocational and technical education gain in order to become self-sufficient were examined by Ofili and Idris (2022). Furthermore, the results showed that faculty members teaching business lack access to contemporary ICT and have not gotten enough training, the latter of which is not relevant to the current curriculum.

Denicolo and Zanchetlin (2016) contend that growth and innovation are intertwined. An idea, practice or object that is perceived as new by an individual or other unit of adoption is understood by innovation and creativity (Daugherty *et al.*, 2021). Therefore, innovation is the process of transforming chances into new concepts with wide applicability especially as it relates to creative inspiration. Innovation is the successful introduction of a new procedure or product. Ezeanwu (2020) examined six distinct categories of inventive behavior, including; creating a new product, expanding into untapped markets, creating new ways to deliver services and developing new ways of organizing business activities. Okpara (2019) investigated the impact of innovativeness on the survival of businesses in a hostile business climate using 161 businesses from various developing economies. The outcomes demonstrated that the essential component of entrepreneurial skills, such as innovativeness, significantly contributes to an organization's ability to survive in a dynamic business climate. In a similar study, Fadahusi (2022) found positive strategies through 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. The Nigerian university system's current policy, which emphasizes gaining entrepreneurial skills as a prerequisite for graduation, is further strengthened by this conclusion.

Novel concepts have been categorized by some scholars as either administrative or technological. Modifications to business rules, how resources are distributed, and other factors are all part of administrative innovation. On the other hand, technological innovation refers to the adoption of new ideas that directly impact the provision of essential utilities (Deaton, 2019). Innovation encompasses the processes through which businesses create and implement new designs and processes (Desai, 2021). Innovation is important because it can make a country self-sufficient. Entrepreneurs can significantly contribute to their country's economic success by embracing innovation (Ediagbonya, 2023a, 2023b). The study's conclusions demonstrated that students in business schools believe that inventive and entrepreneurial skills are necessary for success after graduation. According to Mbanefo (2015), the variables mentioned in the study by Mbanefo and Ebukab (2014) contribute to the increased likelihood of success for entrepreneurial enterprises. Nevertheless, there is still a requirement for a thorough elucidation of success in this context (Di Zhang & Bruning, 2021). Nwafo (2013) asserts that prominent Nigerians do not provide a platform for engaging with emerging entrepreneurs and providing guidance, nor do they fulfil the role of mentors.

Critical competencies that have a direct bearing on an organization's success or failure are marketing skills. Among the skills covered by this list are salesmanship, organization, self-motivation, creativity, leadership, communication, and personal skills. Marketing as a systematic process develops, offers and exchange products and services that benefit clients and the society at large which cuts across a wide range of organizations and projects. According to Ajaero (2019), marketing skills are essential since if you don't have them, you could be tricked or exploited. To become self-sufficient, business education students need to get familiar with these marketing skills. Additionally, marketing is the process of creating and offering consumers goods and services that are appealing, as stated by Scarborough (2021). Eze *et al.* (2016) conducted a study at Delta State University to look at the particular entrepreneurial skills graduates of business education need to be successful as independent contractors. The findings indicated that a reasonable level of marketing proficiency is required for business education graduates to operate for themselves. In order to investigate what skills Nigerian students studying business education need to be self-sufficient, Akpotohwo *et al.* (2016) conducted a study in Bayelsa State University. The researchers used data from a sample of 180 students in the business education unit. According to the survey, having marketing expertise is crucial for running a profitable organization. Furthermore, after finishing their courses, students will find it more difficult to launch a business if they lack marketing skills. Marketing proficiencies are essential for businesses, according to the research.

## **Methodology**

The study employed a descriptive survey design. The study's design was deemed appropriate by the researchers, who were keen to find out what respondents believed students studying business education should know about digital entrepreneurship. 238 respondents comprised the population (38 business educators and 200 undergraduate) which were selected from the Oyo State College of Education, Lanlate and Federal College of Education (Special), Oyo. The data is shown below in Table 1.

**Table1: Population/Sample Distribution of Colleges of Education in Oyo State**

S/N	Institution	No. of lecturers	No. of students
1	Oyo state college of education, Lanlate	18	80
2	Federal College of Education (SP), Oyo	20	120
	Total	38	200

**Source:**Field study, 2024

The instrument was a set of questionnaire developed by the researcher titled “*Digital Entrepreneurial Skills Questionnaire (DESQ)*”. The instrument was made up of two parts, Part 1 and Part 2. The Part 1 was created with the purpose of gathering data on demographic factors including gender and institution name. To find out how the entrepreneurial skill required for self-sustenance of undergraduate business education students in Oyo State's education colleges affected their ability to support themselves, Part 2 of the questionnaire featured 24 items that centered on the independent variables of ICT skills, marketing skills, and innovation and creativity skills. The Likert scale was utilized to arrange the items onto a 4-point answer scale. A total of 24 items were used with 8-items in each of the clusters. The rating for the items was designed to reflect Highly Required (4), Required (3), Slightly Required (2) and Not Required (NR). The instrument was validated by three lecturers from the Faculty of Education at Kwara State University, Malete. One of them was from the Measurement and Evaluation section, and two from Business education. Similarly, the appropriate methodology was used to evaluate the instrument's reliability. The Cronbach alpha was used in conducting the reliability of the instrument after administering the instrument to 12 lecturers and eight students. The following reliability coefficients were arrived at from each of the Cluster: ICT cluster (.78); Innovation/creativity skill cluster (.81); and marketing skill cluster (.82). The overall reliability analysis yielded a coefficient of .80. The researchers personally gave copies of the questionnaire to each respondent in their particular school, helped by four research assistants. The research assistants received adequate explanations on how to distribute and collect the instrument from the respondents. Respondents have one week to finish the questionnaire if they were unable to do so at that time. Of the questionnaires administered, 238 were accurately filled out, gathered, and examined. The single null hypothesis was tested using the inferential statistics of the t-test, while the data from the research question were answered using the mean and standard deviation to determine the homogeneity and heterogeneity of respondents' opinions. The null hypothesis was rejected in cases where the computed significant (Sig.) value, also known as the p-value, was greater than or equal to the alpha value of 0.05. If not, the null hypothesis was not rejected. The data was analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) version 25 software.

### Estimation of Results

**Table2: Mean Response on ICT Skills Required Students in Business Education for Self-reliance in Colleges of Education, Oyo State**

S/N	Information and Communication Technology Skills:-Ability To:	Mean	S.D	Remarks
1	Make use of the internet as a vital source of knowledge and communication.	3.69	0.69	Required
2	Use technology to your advantage to run your online business and connect with clients in a clear and concise manner.	3.34	0.84	Required
3	Use social media to effectively communicate business-related information.	3.32	0.86	Required

4	Send ideas via voice over the internet and information via email to raise brand awareness for a company.	3.03	1.02	Required
5	Transmit ideas using voice on the internet	3.01	0.96	Required
6	Send ideas via voice over the internet and information via email to raise brand awareness for a company.	3.10	0.92	Required
7	Speak in a language that will attract online shoppers.	3.19	0.89	Required
8	Interpret business concepts that are sent via email.	2.97	0.86	Required

**Source:** Field study, 2024

*Note: S.D means Standard Deviation*

In Table 2, the result indicated that, when considered separately, the cutoff mean of 2.5 is exceeded by the mean values of 3.68, 3.34, 3.32, 3.02, 3.00, 3.04, 3.18, and 2.97 for items 1 through 8. Furthermore, the resulting mean of 3.20, upon aggregate, remains higher than 2.5. This shows that knowledge and communication skills are necessary for Oyo State's education colleges' undergraduate business education majors to be self-sufficient.

**Table3: Mean Response on Innovative and Creative Skills required by students in Business Education for Self-reliance in Colleges of Education, Oyo State**

S/N	Innovative and Creativity Skills:- Ability To:	Mean	S.D	Remarks
1	Identify business opportunities where others see risk	3.28	0.92	Required
2	Learn how to constructively use failure as a teaching tool.	3.08	0.90	Required
3	Extending the concepts of others to produce fresh work.	3.07	0.92	Required
4	Translate ideas into wealth-creating ventures	3.17	0.92	Required
5	Manage people effectively.	3.17	1.00	Required
6	Create creative, fresh methods for tackling the novel idea.	3.20	0.93	Required
7	Come up with original, valuable concepts.	3.52	0.79	Required
8	Provide useful ideas that will bring innovation.	3.52	0.72	Required

**Source:** Field study, 2024

*Note: S.D means Standard Deviation*

According to the result in Table 3, the mean values of 3.28, 3.08, 3.07, 3.17, 3.20, 3.52, and 3.52 for items 1 through 8 are higher than the cutoff mean of 2.5 when considered separately. Furthermore, after aggregation, the 3.25 mean that was achieved is still higher than 2.5. This suggests that in order for undergraduate students in education colleges to be self-sufficient, they must possess inventive and creative talents.

**Table4: Mean Response on Marketing Skills required by students in Business Education for Self-reliance in Colleges of Education, Oyo State**

S/N	Marketing Skills:- Ability To:	Mean	S.D	Remarks
1	Encourage consumers to purchase the organizational goods	3.18	0.95	Required
2	Develop stronger ties with clients	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	To the satisfaction of both parties, identify the areas of disagreement.	3.12	0.99	Required
7	Control your feelings while negotiating.	3.22	0.91	Required
8	Determine which of your clients' wants can be met.	3.26	0.89	Required

**Source:** Field study, 2024

*Note: S.D means Standard Deviation*

The result in table 4 indicates that, when considered separately, the cut-off mean of 2.5 is exceeded by the mean values of 3.18, 3.23, 3.06, 3.20, 3.09, 3.12, 3.22, and 3.26 for items 1 through 8 of the instrument. Furthermore, even after aggregating, the mean of 3.17 that was obtained is higher than 2.5. This implies that graduates of Oyo State institutes of education's business education programs need to be adept at marketing in order to be self-sufficient.

**H0<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean rating of business education lecturers and students on Information and Communication Technology (ICT) skills acquired by business education undergraduate students for self-sustenance.

**Table5: Independent t-test Analysis on the differences between business education lecturers and students on the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) skills required for self-sustenance**

Entrepreneurial skills	Status	N	Mean	Std.Deviation	Df	t-cal	p-val
ICT Skills	Lecturer	38	25.29	3.76	236	-0.120	0.905
	Students	200	25.39	4.21			

Source: Field study, 2024

The mean ratings of business school lecturers and students are the independent variables, and the dependent variables are the ICT skills required for self-sustenance. The study employed the independent t-test to investigate the hypotheses. The findings shown in Table 5 indicate that there is significant difference between the mean ICT abilities of lecturers ( $X=25.29$ ) and students ( $X=25.39$ ) with respect to these abilities. When mean differences were evaluated, the t-test revealed that ( $t=0.120$ ,  $p>0.05$ ). There is no significant difference in the information and communication technology (ICT) abilities that undergraduate students in business education need for self-sustenance; this is demonstrated by the P-value being greater than the 0.05 level of significance. Consequently, the null hypothesis is true.

**H0<sub>2</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean rating of business education lecturers and students on the innovation/creative abilities acquired by business education undergraduate students for self-sustenance.

**Table6: Independent t-test Analysis on the differences between business education lecturers and students on the innovative and creative skills required for self-sustenance**

Entrepreneurial skills	Status	N	Mean	Std.Deviation	df	t-cal	p-val
Innovation/Creativity Skills	Lecturer	38	27.51	3.32	236	2.18	0.012
	Students	200	25.12	4.64			

Source: Field study, 2024

The lecturers' mean ratings in business education are the independent variables. The hypothesis was tested using the t-test, and the results, which are shown in Table 6, indicate that, in terms of innovation/creative abilities developed for self-sustenance, the mean value ( $X=27.51$ ) for lecturers' responses differs from the mean value ( $X=25.21$ ) of students' responses. This suggests that when it comes to the innovative and creative talents that graduates of business education learn for self-sufficiency, the replies of lecturers and students diverge. The t-test showed that when mean differences were compared, ( $t=2.18$ ,  $p.05$ ). There is a substantial difference in the mean assessments

of business education lecturers and students on the innovative/creative abilities required by business education undergraduate students for self-sustenance (.05), as indicated by the P-value being larger than 0.05 level of significance. Consequently, the hypothesis is rejected.

**H<sub>03</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean rating of business education lecturers and students on the marketing skills acquired for self-sustenance by business education undergraduate students.

**Table 7: Independent t-test Analysis on the differences between business education lecturers and students on the marketing skills required for self-sustenance**

Entrepreneurial skills	Status	N	Mean	Std.Deviation	Df	t-cal	p-val
Marketing skills	Lecturer	38	26.22	4.98	236	2.19	0.03
	Students	200	23.87	6.05			

Source: Field study, 2024

The marketing skills necessary for self-sufficiency are dependent factors, and the mean assessments of business school teachers and students are independent variables. The t-test was used to investigate the hypothesis regarding the marketing skills required for self-sustenance, and the results are shown in Table 7. There is a difference in the mean value ( $X=26.54$ ) between the responses from instructors and students ( $X=23.86$ ). That is, there exist disparities in the ways that instructors and learners react to the marketing skills that graduates of business school acquire in order to become self-sufficient. The mean differences were compared using an independent t-test, and the findings indicated that ( $t=2.19$ ,  $p=0.05$ ). Because the P-value is more than the 0.05 level of significance, there is a significant difference (0.05) between the mean ratings of business education lecturers and students about the marketing skills developed by business education undergraduate students for self-sustenance. Thus, the null hypothesis is refuted.

### Discussion of Findings

The first hypothesis holds that there was no discernible difference between the lecturers and the students in the mean ratings of the ICT abilities needed for self-sustenance by undergraduate students studying business education. This could be the case because, as a result of globalization, everyone, regardless of profession, understands the significance of ICT in the Nigerian economy today. For students majoring in business education to be marketable in the workforce, regardless of their topic of study, these skills are therefore crucial. As a result, the majority of educators and business owners recognize the value of these abilities in helping their pupils secure employment or establish a venture that will increase their level of independence. The findings of the study are consistent with those of Ibelegbu (2017), who examined the ICT abilities required of business studies teachers in Adamawa's junior secondary schools. The study's conclusions led to the requirement that business studies teachers possess full computer proficiency. Based on their educational background, business teachers' mean answers to questions about information and communication technology (ICT) skills for self-sustenance did not differ statistically significantly. The study's findings are consistent with those of Ofili and Idris (2022), who examined Edo State vocational and technical education students' ICT proficiency for self-sufficiency. The findings demonstrated that, among other things, students required to understand the foundations of building websites, carrying out economic transactions, and safeguarding websites from hackers. According to the researcher, acquiring ICT skills will improve the quality of life, allow students pursuing business education attain economic growth and self-sufficiency, and support the economy. Amaewhule and Wolugbom's (2018) findings that students studying business education improved their ICT usage

skills are further supported by the data.

The second hypothesis shows no significant difference in the mean assessments of lecturers and students about the innovation and creativity needed by the respondents to be self-sustaining. According to this, when it comes to the creative abilities that students pursuing undergraduate business education need to be independent, academics score better on the mean than company owners. This may be because professors have a better understanding of the working world's dynamics and expectations for these students' post-school employment. They are also aware that this ability is necessary for the students to be both employers and employees, putting them in a position to make significant contributions to society. The study's conclusions aligned with those of Okpara (2019), who investigated the effect of inventiveness on an enterprise's ability to survive in a difficult business environment. The results of the investigation showed that a company's need for entrepreneurial skills affects its ability to survive in a changing market. Additionally, he said that companies that prioritize innovation fare better than those that take a more cautious approach. The results align with those of Fadahusi (2022), who identified advantageous tactics for business survival through innovation. The results of Ile and Wogboroma's (2021) study support this conclusion, according to which students pursuing postgraduate business education developed moderately creative skills. The results also support the findings of Egberi and Ebifakumor (2023) and Orhena, Egbule, and Utebor (2017), who highlighted the need for creative talents for self-sustenance. As a result, in order to succeed in the market, owners of creative businesses now have access to a wider array of skills and expertise that can enable them to take advantage of opportunities and overcome obstacles that could jeopardize the performance of their business. The researcher posited that in order for businesses to thrive, they must be able to adapt to an external environment that is changing quickly.

The analysis of the third hypothesis equally showed significant difference in the mean rating of the respondents on the marketing skills necessary for their self-reliance. This shows that when it comes to the marketing skills necessary for undergraduate business education students to be self-sufficient, instructors have a higher mean ranking than business operators. Given that the talent is technical and can only be demonstrated by those who have received instruction, this may be the case. It provides a variety of activities that may help the young business instructor succeed professionally, in addition to advertising. Many business education graduates may feel trapped after graduation for a variety of reasons, including having ideas but not knowing how to sell them. As such, it becomes difficult for people to go out on their own and look for work. The study's outcomes were consistent with those of Eze *et al.* (2016), who investigated the entrepreneurial abilities required of Delta State business education graduates in order to work for themselves. Regarding the survey, Delta State business school graduates must demonstrate a commendable degree of marketing proficiency in order to seek self-employment. In a similar vein, the study's conclusions align with those of Ezeanwu (2020) who examined the entrepreneurial abilities graduates in business fields need to successfully run a business. The study area was the commercial center and surrounding areas of Enugu. The survey findings indicated that companies operating in the business sector require nine (9) marketing competencies. It was discovered that the managers' money had no appreciable effect on the marketing skills required for a business to turn a profit.

## **Conclusion**

The study's findings demonstrated that there was no appreciable variation in the average assessments of the ICT abilities required for self-sufficiency by undergraduate business education students between students and instructors. On the other hand, there was a discernible discrepancy in the average evaluations provided by educators and business owners concerning the level of marketing

and innovative/creative talents that students pursuing undergraduate business education needed to become self-sufficient. This demonstrates how important it is for business school students to have ICT, marketing, creativity, and innovation skills in order to be self-sufficient. Because it addresses the digital entrepreneurial abilities undergraduate business education students need, this study has significantly advanced understanding.

### Recommendations

1. Based on the study's results and conclusion, business educators should give students' practical classes priority. Students will be able to gain communication and information skills as a result, which will improve their independence and help the economy by creating jobs.
2. Academic staff members should make sure that business education undergraduates actively participate in class and exhibit originality and innovation. By doing this, they will be able to develop their creative and innovative talents, which will improve their capacity for self-sufficiency and generate employment chances for the community.
3. In order to help undergraduate students in business education become more independent and help create jobs for society, academic faculty should expose them to marketing companies on a practical basis.
4. The management of tertiary institutions, as well as state and federal governments, should prioritize the establishment of effective policies and oversee their proper execution. Additionally, they should provide a favourable teaching and learning environment and allocate sufficient funds for the development of digital marketing and social media skills among learners. In addition, it is essential to provide sufficient hardware, software facilities, laboratories, standard offices, and welfare packages to support the teaching and learning of ICTs as a soft skill. This will enable learners to gain the necessary abilities for self-sustenance.

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