

**PERCEIVED INFLUENCE OF GENERIC GREEN SKILLS ON BUSINESS EDUCATION
STUDENTS SELF-RELIANCE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

ADEBAYO, ADEGBOYEGA
(PhD Student in Business Education),
Phone No: +2348053538099
adebayoadegboyega64@yahoo.com

&

MAYALEEKE, NURAIN OLUFEMI
(PhD Student in Business Education),
Phone No: +2348060689606
obalives@yahoo.com

&

NUBERU, MARYAM OLUBUSOLA
(PhD Student in Business Education),
Phone No: +2348030451187
maryamnuberu2017@gmail.com

&

OKUN, IDOWU EMILY
(PhD Student in Business Education),
Phone No: +2348037115247
okunidowuemili@gmail.com

Tai Solarin University of Education, Ijagun, Ogun State, Nigeria

&

CLEMENT, GODWIN
Department of Business Administration,
DS Adegbenro ICT Polytechnic, Itori Ewekoro,
Ogun State, Nigeria,
Phone No: 08061666620

Abstract

This study examined perceived influence of generic green skills on business education students' self-reliance for sustainable development in Tai Solarin University of Education, Ogun State. Descriptive research design of survey type was used. A total of 147 lecturers and students of Business Education Department, Tai Solarin University of Education, Ogun State participated in the study. Researchers developed questionnaire using Generic Green Skills and Self-Reliance Questionnaire (GGSSRQ) with reliability coefficient 0.91 was used for data collection. Descriptive statistics of mean and standard

deviation were used for analyzing research questions. The findings revealed that design, waste management, communication, financial, leadership, energy and city planning skills were among the needed generic green skills by business education students. Inadequate teaching and learning facilities, lack of entrepreneurship village, inadequate finance and poor nature of infrastructure were among the challenges faced by lecturers in delivering generic green skills to business education students. The study recommends among other things that business education students should be given generic green skill training in addition to their regular academic programme in the crucial sector as being demanded by the industry, as a remedy to the mis-match between educational output and requirements of the labour market in order to enhance the employability of students passing out of school and to be self-reliance.

Keywords: Generic Green Skills, Business Education, Tertiary Students, Self-Reliance, Sustainable Development.

Introduction

Government, stakeholders in education, employers of labour, parents and even students have being concerns on the level of Nigerians university graduates self-reliance. It could be said that the rate of unemployment in Nigeria is majorly caused by graduates' lack of self reliance skills. Self reliance relates to ability or skills possessed by graduates to drive business ideas and become employer of labour. In Nigeria today, university education has failed to guarantee employment for graduates. From experience, it seems that majority of Nigerian university graduates being churned out lacks the requisite skills needed in today's labour market and this inhibits the graduates from being self-reliant. Iroegbu (2017) defined self-reliance as the development of knowledge, power, as well as the feeling of responsibility in the individual. It emphasizes freedom and independence of the self, it encourages creative thinking as well as practical creative transformation activity and it means self emancipation and self-realization. Self-reliance is one of the objectives of business education programme. Business education is an education for sellable skills. Akpan and Naboth-Odums (2018) defined business education as a programme that prepares individual for work life experience, prepares student for specific skills such as teaching skills, office skills, business skills and other valuable skills for occupation and for employment generation. Business education includes other elements such as the development of technical and entrepreneurial competence to a required standard. Business education prepares individual to take up their work role in the various profession and occupation. Based on this, Pavlova (2016) emphasized that changes in employer's needs, the advent of green jobs and the emergence of green technologies in different industry and service sectors have a significant influence on skills requirements at different occupational levels.

Globally, higher education institutions are being asked by societies and educational funding bodies to produce graduates with generic green skills. Green skills refers to technical skills, knowledge, values and attitudes needed in the workforce to develop and support sustainable social, economic and environmental outcomes in business, industry and the community. Green skill is a skill that brings together elements of knowledge, technical and non-technical skills, capabilities and attitudes needed to produce sustainable human resources (Mohd, Hamid & Zuhairi, 2016). Following that, they classify the green skill elements into soft green skills and hard green skills. According to them, soft green skills are non-technical skills, which

include attitudes and capabilities while hard green skill is the technical knowledge and skills required to achieve sustainability goals. Green practices are success factor for industry and human resource enhancement. Incorporation of knowledge, generic green skills and attitudes towards sustainable environment were important in order to survive in and contribute to a development of the country which not only focuses on infrastructure development but also its citizens (Hamid, Yusri, Azlan, Yahya & Zubaidah, 2016). Employees with generic green skills have a greater opportunity to be employed in the future or self-reliance and are a valuable asset for their country. Ramlee and Siti Shuhada (2014) stated that green technology is an emerging concept with the ultimate goal to achieve sustainable development by reducing environmental risks and ecological scarcities, carbon emissions and pollution as well as enhancing energy and resource efficiency and preventing loss of biodiversity. Transforming the economy and society in line with the concept of sustainable development is only possible if people embrace the inherent values and attitudes of this idea, and if people possess the needed green skills and are able to apply them in practice. From this perspective, it is not surprising that education in general and Business Education programme in particular ascribed a significant role in this transformation process.

Statement of the Problem

With the soaring unemployment rate in Nigeria, self-reliance is presently high on the country's national agenda, in hope that they will provide alternate channels of employment. Yearly, thousands of tertiary institutions join the labour market in search of employment. Underlying this situation is the fact that the training which students of business education received in tertiary institutions has not been fully successful in equipping them with desirable skills required for job creation and self-reliance upon graduation. The failure of tertiary institutions to inculcate in students skills required for self-reliance has led to wastages in human and natural resources that abound in Nigeria. This is because the graduates of tertiary institutions might not equip with skills with which to exploit the natural resources that abound in Nigeria. This has rendered the pursuit of self-reliance among our business education graduates difficult to retain. From all indications, there is a high tendency that generic green skills may have some contributory influence on graduates' level of self-reliance. Therefore, this study examined the perceived influence of generic green skills on business education students' self-reliance for sustainable development in Tai Solarin University of Education, Ogun State.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to examine the perceived influence of generic green skills on business education students' self-reliance for sustainable development in Tai Solarin University of Education, Ogun State. Specifically, the study examined the following:

1. The needed generic green skills by business education students' in Tai Solarin University of Education, Ogun State.
2. The challenges faced by lecturers in delivering generic green skills to business education students in Tai Solarin University of Education, Ogun State.

Research Questions

1. What are the needed generic green skills by business education students' in Tai Solarin University of Education, Ogun State?

2. What are the challenges faced by lecturers in delivering generic green skills to business education students in Tai Solarin University of Education, Ogun State?

Significance of the Study

The findings of this study would be of immense relevance to business education students, business education graduate, lecturers, society and future researchers and policy makers. To business education students, it would help to widen their knowledge on problem and nature of generic green skills that could be applied in other life endeavours. To business education graduates, the findings of this study would enable them to realize and assess their problem on generic green skills so as to improve or re-direct their skills more appropriately in this regard. Furthermore, the study findings would also provide meaningful education guideline for the undergraduates who could make them self-reliant and subsequently encourage them to develop entrepreneurship intention, be self-dependent, provide undergraduates with training in generic green skills that would make them meet the manpower needs of the society, provide graduates with the training and support necessary to help them establish a career in small and medium size businesses. To the lecturers, the findings of the study would not only serve as good reference materials but would also assist them to focus their instructions appropriately in assisting the students to develop the requisite generic green skills. To the general public/society, the findings would serve as a good source material in extending the knowledge of the audience in generic skills for self-reliance. The study findings would serve as inspirational guideline for incoming researcher's who would like to direct their searchlight on this issue in future. Also to the policy makers, it will allow them to formulate policy on how to increase business education students' self-reliance towards accumulation and redesign of business education curriculum to accommodate generic green skills.

Review of Related Literature

Generic Green Skills

Mohd, Nordin, Yusri and Mustamal (2019) defined generic skills as complementary to technical skills that enable potential employees to secure a place in the job market. Skills are key to productivity, economic development and a better life (Watch, 2010). This is in tandem with what Chareonwongsak (2008) asserted, that economic and national development is based on skilled manpower. In support of this, Patricia (2019) posited that graduate employability plays a key influence on economic growth. Although jobs require technical skills, nonetheless, generic skills are essential to success in today's work (Mohd, 2006). Generic green skills can be inculcated through education and training. Be it technical skills or non-technical (generic) skills, improving students' ability to practice (skills) and creating a knowledge workforce can be done only through direct experience working in the field or industry (Ratnata, 2015). This refers to education and training as two sides of the same coin. As Watch (2010) summarises, awareness and practice of the importance of environmental preservation and conservation are through education.

Self-Reliance

The term self reliance can be seen to mean being able to depend on one self, one's resources rather than those of others. It has to do with what one can do himself/ herself. Self reliance also means relying on one's own abilities and efforts to be independent (Nwaigburu & Eneogwe, 2013). According to Ibelegbu (2013), self-reliance is synonymous with self-

sufficiency. It means doing things for ourselves rather than having things done for us. Self-reliance is the personal initiative in the ability and effort to identify, harness and manage effectively and efficiently the personal and collective resources, human or natural in the immediate surroundings in order to uplift one's or a people's life quality, standard and condition of existence. Paul, Uduonyi and Udoh (2016) asserted that self-reliance cautions against dependency-syndrome on the government as the monopoly of development. Self-reliance and its kin-terms accentuates people's primary role as principal agents of development and self-determination both on the individual and collective levels. According to Olawoyin and Adegoke-Samuel (2018), self-reliance refers to the sole dependence of individual capabilities to improve life. It is the ability of an individual to rely on him/herself in order to accomplish a specific task and progress in it. Acquisition of employable skills and benefits that accrues from it, engender self-actualization and job satisfaction which on the long run can lead to sustainable development (Olawoyin & Adegoke-Samuel, 2018).

Business Education

Business education means many things to many people. Agwumezie (1999) sees business education as a programme in education that prepares students for entry into and advancement of jobs within the business. Aliyu (1999) have it as a programme one needs to be proud of if properly designed, adequately prepared and religiously harmonized. Aliyu further affirms that business education is an educational programme which involves acquisition of skills, knowledge and competences which makes the recipient/beneficiary proficient. It is an umbrella under which all business programmes take a shield, such as marketing, business administration, secretarial studies and accounting. To Igboke (2000), business education is a dynamic field of study geared towards preparing youths and adults for and about business. It is a preparation for a career in business when instruction is designed to prepare youths and adults for actual practice in the world of business. On the other hand, education about business involves preparation of youths and adults for intelligent and effective consumption of economic goods and services offered to society in our free enterprise economy. However, business education will produce responsible, productive and self-reliant citizens. This highlights the importance of Business Education in inculcating in the recipients knowledge, values, attitudes and skills needed in the business world. The objectives of business education cannot be over emphasized, hence, business education generally are borne out of the needs of industry, commerce and society. In addition, it is career oriented that aims at preparing people for gainful employment.

Sustainable Development

According to Will (2016), sustainable development is that everyone is a user and provider of skills and information. It stresses the need to change from old sector-centered ways of doing business to new entrepreneurial approaches that involve skill acquisition development and self-reliance for a sustained economy. Sustainable development, or sustainability, has been described in terms of the environment, the economy, society, culture, institutions or governance. United Nations (2014) defined sustainable development as the organizing principle for meeting human development goals while at the same time sustaining the ability of natural systems to provide the natural resources and ecosystem services upon which the economy and society depend. The desirable end result is a state of society where living conditions and resource are used continuously to meet human needs without undermining the integrity and stability of the natural systems. It has been suggested that the term

'sustainability' should be viewed as humanity's target goal of human-ecosystem equilibrium (homeostasis), while 'sustainable development' refers to the holistic approach and temporal processes that lead us to the end point of sustainability.

The concept of sustainable development has identified some elements to include principles and treaties on sustainable development, which involves economic development, social development and environmental protection. Broadly defined, sustainable development is a systems approach to growth and development and to manage natural, produced, and social capital for the welfare of their own and future generations. The term sustainable development as used by the United Nations incorporates both issues associated with land development and broader issues of human development such as education, public health, and standard of living. In the writings of Sanusi (2010) reasonable qualifications of sustainability are seen in leadership, energy and environmental design. This design incorporates some ecological, economic, and social elements. The goals presented by LEED design goals are sustainable sites, water efficiency, energy and atmospheric emission reduction, material and resources efficiency, and indoor environmental quality. Although amount of structures for sustainability development is many, this qualification has become a standard for sustainable building.

Theoretical Framework

Skill Acquisition Theory

The theory was developed by Robert Dekeyser in 2007. The theory postulates that development in knowledge has three stages: declarative, procedural and automatic. Declarative knowledge refers to explicit knowledge about a topic; procedural knowledge is implicit knowledge that refers to behaviour. And automaticity occurs towards the end point of extensive practice; towards the point at which one has become completely expert in performing a task. From the perspective of skill acquisition theory, the sequence of these stages is crucial as is appropriate combination of abstract rules and concrete examples at the declarative stage. The theory relates to this study in the sense that skill acquisition is task oriented and there is need to diagnose a task and break it down into its components in order to provide effective feedback. When it is not possible to conceptualize a task, then feedback becomes considerably less effective. The theory if adopted when business education students learning skill subjects will be helpful to them as it follows the stages of learning a skill. The cognitive phase requires the identification and development of component parts of the skill which involves formation of a mental picture of the skill. Then through practicing the various components of the skill will be linked together. And constant practice will make the skill become automatic.

Empirical Review

In Gambia, Oladotun (2020) examined the relationship between the capacity-building programmes and women empowerment and self-reliance. The author employed a descriptive design of survey type with 250 participants from two educational regions in Gambia. The result showed that adult literacy and skill acquisition programmes correlate significantly with women empowerment and self-reliance in Gambia. In Nigeria, Mohammed and Mohammed (2019) investigated the influence of entrepreneurial education on skill acquisition and attitudes of university graduates towards self-reliance in Nigeria. They used survey design method. They targeted 10,900 undergraduate students serving in business enterprises in

Nigeria. The instrument they used for data collection is 60 item four rating scale structured questionnaire titled Entrepreneurship Education for Skills Acquisition and Self Reliance (EESASR). Data was collected by all the eight researchers assisted by 15 research assistants. Simple logistic Regression (SLR) was employed to test the null at 0.05 (5%) level of significance. The study revealed that entrepreneurship education provides recipients with requisite skills needed for self-reliance.

In Malaysia, Seri, Seri, Seri and Seri (2018) carried out study on the generic green skills. This was done in respect to the perspective of lecturers. A total of 105 lecturers from Politeknik Ungku Omar, Ipoh, Malaysia took part in an online survey conducted from May to Jun 2016. Their findings revealed that lecturers who embed generic green skills (GSs) in their teaching and learning do encounter with some problems in teaching the green skills. In Nigeria, Akpan and Naboth-Odums (2018) used survey design in examining the influence of business education skills for economic diversification and sustainable development. One hundred and fifty (150) business educators from colleges of education in south-south Nigerian constituted the population for the study. Their findings indicated that Business education curriculum should be re-designed by core business educators to reflect current technology, facilities and relevant skills.

Obianuju, Nzewi and Iyeketpolor (2016) examined the influence of entrepreneurial skill acquisition on job creation in Benin City Metropolis, Nigeria. Both primary and secondary sources of data were used to obtain data for the study. Pearson's Product Moment Correlation was employed to test the formulated hypothesis while Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21 was adopted in the analysis of data. Findings revealed that acquisition of entrepreneurial skills is an indispensable means of making jobs available in Benin City, Nigeria. Entrepreneurial skill acquisition should therefore be encouraged to enhance development of initiatives by the youths, and put into productive use the resources in our local environment. The study advocates that both public and private sectors should establish skill acquisition centers which would be adequately equipped and funded to achieve the desired goal. Binuomote and Okoli (2015) investigated the Business education students' perception of skill needs for successful entrepreneurship in Nigeria. The population consisted of 6002 business education students. 600 respondents were selected through stratified sampling technique. The study adopted survey design. Out of the 600 copies distributed, 589 were collected and used for the study. An internal consistency of 0.98 was obtained using Cronbach Alpha correlation coefficient. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while t-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The study revealed that business education students need technical and financial management skills to function well in this time of economic meltdown in Nigeria. It was concluded that there was need to put in place learning facilities that will help the business education students to acquire the skills.

Methodology

The study used descriptive research design of survey type. The population of the study comprised lecturers and students of business education department in Tai Solarin University of Education (TASUED), Ijagun, Ogun State. Using simple random sampling technique, a total of 147 lecturers and students of business education department were selected. This comprised 10 lecturers and 137 students (400 level only). Researchers developed questionnaire; titled: Generic Green Skills and Self-Reliance Questionnaire (GGSSRQ) with reliability coefficient 0.91

was used for data collection. Descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation were used for analyzing research questions.

Result and Discussion

Descriptive Analysis of the Research Questions

Research Question 1: What are the needed generic green skills by business education students' in Tai Solarin University of Education, Ogun State?

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation responses on the generic green skills by business education students' in Tai Solarin University of Education, Ogun State

Items	Mean	SD	Decision
Design skill	2.54	1.148	Agree
Waste management skill	2.52	0.876	Agree
Communication skill	2.50	1.186	Agree
Procurement skill	2.62	0.924	Agree
Financial skill	2.74	1.247	Agree
Leadership skill	3.48	0.975	Agree
Management skill	2.12	1.313	Disagree
Energy skill	2.84	1.375	Agree
City planning skill	2.62	1.059	Agree
Innovation skill	2.41	1.046	Disagree

Source: Field survey, 2020

Based on the cut-off point of 2.50 (strongly agree (SA) 4, agree (A) 3, disagree (D) 2 and strongly disagree (SD) 1). $4 + 3 + 2 + 1/4 = 2.5$. Any mean scores equal to 2.50 or greater than 2.50 was regarded as agreed and less than 2.50 was disagreed. Table 1 indicated that respondents agreed on 8 (80%) items out of 10 raised as the generic green skills. This implies that design, waste management, communication, financial, leadership, energy and city planning skills were among the needed generic green skills by business education students' in Tai Solarin University of Education, Ogun State.

Research Question 2: What are the challenges faced by lecturers in delivering generic green skills to business education students in Tai Solarin University of Education, Ogun State?

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation responses on the challenges faced by lecturers in delivering generic green skills to business education students in Tai Solarin University of Education, Ogun State

Items	Mean	SD	Decision
Inadequate teaching and learning facilities	2.90	1.198	Agree
Lack of entrepreneurship village	2.69	1.308	Agree
Inadequate finance	2.61	1.030	Agree
Poor nature of infrastructure	2.72	0.818	Agree

Source: Field survey, 2020

Based on the cut-off point of 2.50 (strongly agree (SA) 4, agree (A) 3, disagree (D) 2 and strongly disagree (SD) 1). $4 + 3 + 2 + 1/4 = 2.5$. Any mean scores equal to 2.50 or greater than

2.50 was regarded as agreed and less than 2.50 was disagreed. Table 2 indicated that respondents agreed on all the 4 items raised as the challenges faced by lecturers in delivering generic green skills to business education students. This implies that inadequate teaching and learning facilities, lack of entrepreneurship village, inadequate finance and poor nature of infrastructure were among the challenges faced by lecturers in delivering generic green skills to business education students in Tai Solarin University of Education, Ogun State.

Discussion of Findings

The findings revealed that design, waste management, communication, financial, leadership, energy and city planning skills were among the needed generic green skills by business education students' in Tai Solarin University of Education, Ogun State. These findings corroborate with Binuomote and Okoli (2015) investigated the Business education students' perception of skill needs for successful entrepreneurship in Nigeria and they revealed that business education students need technical and financial management skills to function well in this time of economic meltdown in Nigeria.

It was also indicated that inadequate teaching and learning facilities, lack of entrepreneurship village, inadequate finance and poor nature of infrastructure were among the challenges faced by lecturers in delivering generic green skills to business education students in Tai Solarin University of Education, Ogun State. These findings correlate with Seri, Seri, Seri and Seri (2018) carried out study on the generic green skills. This was done in respect to the perspective of lecturers and they revealed that lecturers who embed generic green skills (GSs) in their teaching and learning do encounter with some problems in teaching the green skills. Obianuju, Nzewi and Iyeketpolor (2016) examined the influence of entrepreneurial skill acquisition on job creation in Benin City Metropolis, Nigeria and they revealed that acquisition of entrepreneurial skills is an indispensable means of making jobs available in Benin City, Nigeria. Akpan and Naboth-Odums (2018) used survey design in examining the influence of business education skills for economic diversification and sustainable development and they indicated that Business education curriculum should be re-designed by core business educators to reflect current technology, facilities and relevant skills. Mohammed and Mohammed (2019) investigated the influence of entrepreneurial education on skill acquisition and attitudes of university graduates towards self-reliance in Nigeria and they revealed that entrepreneurship education provides recipients with requisite skills needed for self-reliance.

Conclusion

Significant number of the graduates of Nigerian universities find it difficult to be self-reliant after their graduation and this could have been part of the factors contributing to increase in the level of unemployment in Nigeria. Having said that, this study had examined the perceived influence of generic green skills on business education students' self-reliance for sustainable development in Tai Solarin University of Education, Ogun State. The study concluded that if all things being equal in terms of provision of needed teaching and learning infrastructure, the teaching and learning of generic green skills could have aid level of self-reliance of business business students. It was also concluded that design, waste management, communication, financial, leadership, energy and city planning skills were among the needed generic green skills by business education students and inadequate teaching and learning facilities, lack of entrepreneurship village, inadequate finance and poor nature of

infrastructure were among the challenges faced by lecturers in delivering generic green skills to business education students in Tai Solarin University of Education, Ogun State.

Recommendations

1. Business education students should be given generic green skill training in addition to their regular academic programme in the crucial sector as being demanded by the industry, as a remedy to the mis-match between educational output and requirements of the labour market in order to enhance the employability of students passing out of school and to be self-reliance.
2. Government should provide teaching and learning facilities, develop entrepreneurship village and the needed infrastructure in business education department.
3. Educational planners should pay careful attention to the logistic and support factors in the business education programme which are crucial to the attainment of the quality of its graduates for self-reliance.
4. Government as a matter of urgency should set up a Training Department in all tertiary institutions in Nigeria that will be specifically trained business education student before graduation on generic green skills.
5. Finally, it is imperative for the business education stakeholders to revise and revamp their curriculum in order to produce graduates with generic green skills to cater for the demand of manpower market.

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