

## 21st Century Skills Need and Business Education Students Attainment of Global Relevance in Nigeria

**Atah, Cletus Akpo**

Department of Vocational Education  
(Business education unit)  
University of Calabar  
[cleatah4real@yahoo.com](mailto:cleatah4real@yahoo.com)

**Alabi, Ebifakumor Blessing**

School of Vocational and Technical Education,  
Department of Business Education  
Isaac Jasper Boro College of Education  
Sagbama, Bayelsa State  
[fakumork@gmail.com](mailto:fakumork@gmail.com)

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### **Abstract**

*The study was conducted to determine 21st Century Skills Need and Business Education Student's Attainment of Global Relevance in Nigeria. Descriptive survey design was used in the study. The population of the study comprised one hundred and sixteen (116) Business Education students (52 male and 64 female) in two (2) universities in Cross River State. The entire population was used because it was manageable, thus, there was no sample in the study. Skills Need and Business Education Students Attainment of Global Relevance Questionnaire (SNBESAGRQ) was used as instrument for data collection. The questionnaire consisted of two sections; A and B. Section A contained one item on demographic information of the respondents such male and female while Section B contained 20 items in respect to the two research questions and structured on a four-point rating scale of Highly Needed (HN) Needed (N) Not Needed (NN) and Highly Not Needed (HNN). The instrument was validated by two experts and tested for reliability using split-half analysis which produced a reliability coefficient of 0.94. The statistical tools that were used to analyses the data collected were mean, standard deviation and independent t-test. Mean and standard deviation of scores were used to answer the research questions. The mean and standard deviation were used to analyze the responses to the items in the questionnaire, while an independent t-test was used to test the hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significance. Revealed that 21st century skills are needed by business education students for the attainment of global relevance in Nigeria. It was recommended that Students should learn and develop 21st century skills such digital marketing skills, technical skills, writing skills, financial management skills, social media skills, information management skills, artificial intelligence skills, and conflict resolution skills for the attainment of global relevance in Nigeria*

**Keywords:** Skills, Business Education, Global, Relevance

## Introduction

Skill is commonly defined as the capacity of an individual to execute efficiently in a specific type of employment, profession, occupation, or leisure activity. This suggests that in order to perform efficiently on a certain task, one must have abilities. Business education training programs place a strong emphasis on skill development. Business education graduates must have the necessary skills to contribute to a sustainable global economy. However, based on the researcher's observations, many graduates appear to lack the necessary abilities to compete effectively in the global market. Inspired by this skills gap, it became necessary to identify the talents required for global competitiveness. Business education focuses on skill development. A skill is an acquired ability that allows a person to perform well in a specific sort of employment, profession, occupation, or leisure activity. Atah, et al., (2023) described talent as the taught ability to achieve predetermined results with maximal confidence, frequently with the least amount of time, energy, or both. Skill included both the mental and physical ability to start and finish a job successfully. Chukwurah, et al., (2023) asserted that skills given in business education are in two categories: entrepreneurial/employability and 21st century skills. Management, dialog, excellent client service, financial understanding, business analysis, solving issues, teaching, flexibility, development of capacity, and academic abilities are all examples of employability talents. Similarly, talents for the twenty-first century include collaborative thinking, technological proficiency, creativity and innovation, literacy in the media, digital citizenship, adaptability, critical thinking, and multitasking. Fortunately, the worth of humans' diverse skills is apparent in the financial system in which people thrive.

According to Edet, et al., (2019), the attainment of global relevance is a worldwide effort that aims to offer an adequate standard of living for people while protecting the natural world. Thus, the present generation's use of materials ought not to have an impact on the accessibility and utilization of those assets by subsequent generations. According to the Ajisafe, et al., (2015), global sustainability occurs when nations meet current demands without jeopardizing future generations' ability to meet their own. Dabo et al., (2020) identified three foundations that must be successfully managed to attain global relevance. These three foundations are: economic, social, and environmental. The social foundation is concerned with relationships between people. They must collaborate and exploit assets to the benefit of all individuals without discrimination. The natural world is in need of safeguarding, contrary to warming temperatures, which, if left unchecked, might be disastrous.

It is imperative to note that business education graduates need digital marketing skills, technical skills, writing skills, financial management skills, influence skills, social media skills, information management skills, artificial intelligence skills, and conflict resolution skills for the attainment of global relevance in Nigeria. Edet et al. (2019) asserted that enhancing job creation skills among business education students at universities for global relevance is essential, especially in the 21<sup>st</sup> century global office. This view was supported by Atah et al. (2017), whose finding employed that the acquisition of employability skills among undergraduates in universities is essential for economic growth and development, especially in developing countries like ours. Ukah et al. (2021) carried out a study on the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills development and found out that business education students needed 21st century skills to be self-reliant and to attain global relevance in society. However, Atsu et al. (2021) argue that for business education to acquire 21<sup>st</sup> century skills for the attainment of global relevance, there is an urgent need for the curriculum content of business education to be visited to achieve this objective. Idike et al. (2022) asserted that the graduates' business

education needed 21<sup>st</sup> century skills and e-competencies for maximum productivity in the 21st century office because the world is digitalized and the curriculum of business education must equally be digitalized. This opinion was supported by Chukwurah et al. (2023), who agree that the world as a whole, as seen in the emergence of ICT and artificial intelligence (AI), has resulted in enormous changes, and that 21st century digital skills are now required by business education graduates for global relevance. In agreement with Atah et al.'s (2022), Wonah et al.'s (2023), **Alabi (2022)** and Atah et al.'s (2023), business education graduates needed 21<sup>st</sup> century skills like soft skills competences for global relevance. This implies that business education needs digital marketing skills, technical skills, writing skills, financial management skills, influence skills, social media skills, information management skills, artificial intelligence skills, and conflict resolution skills for the attainment of global relevance in Nigeria.

In today's job market, having the necessary abilities to function on a global scale is critical. Though every skill is crucial, each skill is designed for a distinct goal, and no single skill can do it all. The purpose of this study is to determine employability and 21st century skills that are thought to be necessary for a healthy global relevance among business education graduates.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of the study was to determine 21st century skills needs and business Education Student's Attainment of global relevance in Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to determine:

1. 21st century skills needed and business education students' attainment of global relevance in Nigeria

### **Research Questions**

The following research question was developed for the study:

1. What are the 21st century skills needed for business education students to attain global relevance in Nigeria?

### **Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses guided the study and were tested at the 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant difference in the mean scores of male and female business education students on the 21st century skills needed by business education students for the attainment of global relevance in Nigeria.

### **Methodology**

Descriptive survey design was used in the study. The population of the study comprised one hundred and sixteen (116) Business Education students (52 male and 64 female) in two (2)

universities in Cross River State. The entire population was used because it was manageable, thus, there was no sample in the study. Skills Need and Business Education Students Attainment of Global Relevance Questionnaire (SNBESAGRQ) was used as instrument for data collection. The questionnaire consisted of two sections; A and B. Section A contained one item on demographic information of the respondents such male and female while Section B contained 20 items in respect to the two research questions and structured on a four-point rating scale of Highly Needed (HN) Needed (N) Not Needed (NN) and Highly Not Needed (HNN). The instrument was validated by two experts and tested for reliability using split-half analysis which produced a reliability coefficient of 0.94. The statistical tools that were used to analyses the data collected were mean, standard deviation and independent t-test. Mean and standard deviation of scores were used to answer the research questions. The mean and standard deviation were used to analyse the responses to the items in the questionnaire, while an independent t-test was used to test the hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significance. The decision level was based on a 2.50 cut-off point. Any item with a cluster means of 2.50 and above indicates agreement with the need of 21st century skills among Business Education students for the attainment of global relevance and any item below 2.50 indicates disagreement. A null hypothesis was rejected where the p-value is less than 0.05 level of significance; otherwise, the null hypothesis was accepted.

## Results

### Research Questions

What are the 21st century skills needed and business education students' attainment of global relevance in Nigeria?

**Table 1: Respondents' mean ratings and standard deviation on the 21st century skills needed by Business Education students' attainment of global relevance in Nigeria**

S/No.	Items of 21st century skills need	N	Mean	SD	Decision
1	Digital marketing skills	114	2.83	1.01	Needed
2	Technical skills	114	2.66	0.95	Needed
3	writing competence skills	114	2.93	1.23	Needed
4	Financial management skills	114	3.08	1.16	Needed
5	Relationship skills	114	2.77	1.02	Needed
6	Influence skills	114	2.85	1.08	Needed
7	Social Media management skills	114	2.99	1.32	Needed
8	Information management skills	114	2.71	1.12	Needed
9	Artificial intelligence skills	114	2.82	1.03	Needed
10	conflict resolution skills	114	3.05	1.22	Needed
	<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>2.86</b>	<b>1.11</b>	<b>Needed</b>

Source: research work 2024

Data in Table 1 shows that all the 10 items on 21st century skills have a mean above 2.50 with the grand mean of 2.85. This implies that 21<sup>st</sup> century skills are needed among business education students for the attainment of global relevance in Nigeria. The standard deviations for all the items are within the same range showing that the respondents are not wide apart in their ratings.

### Hypotheses

There is no significant difference in the mean scores of male and female business education students on the 21st Century skills needed by business education students for the attainment of global relevance in Nigeria

**Table 2: Summary of t-test Analysis of significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female on the 21st Century skills needed by business education students for the attainment of global relevance in Nigeria**

S/No.	Category of the Respondents	N	Mean	SD	Df	t-cal	Alpha	P-val	Decision
1	Male Students	52	3.0577	1.27439	114	0.485	0.05	0.345	NS
	Female Students	64	2.9375	1.36713					
2	Male Students	52	2.7115	1.1261	114	-0.034	0.05	0.834	NS
	Female Students	64	2.7188	1.1334					
3	Male Students	52	2.8846	1.04138	114	0.535	0.05	0.961	NS
	Female Students	64	2.7813	1.03078					
4	Male Students	52	3.0769	1.21826	114	0.198	0.05	0.577	NS
	Female Students	64	3.0313	1.24682					
5	Male Students	52	2.8654	1.2212	114	0.224	0.05	0.387	NS

	Female Students	64	2.8125	1.2956					
6	Male Students	52	2.6835	1.08065	114	-2.423	0.05	0.762	NS
	Female Students	64	3.1622	0.76425					
7	Male Students	52	2.5443	0.95806	114	-2.004	0.05	0.653	NS
	Female Students	64	2.9189	0.89376					
8	Male Students	52	2.7722	1.29049	114	-1.706	0.05	0.872	NS
	Female Students	64	3.1892	1.07595					
9	Male Students	52	2.9241	1.20652	114	-2.22	0.05	0.672	NS
	Female Students	64	3.4324	1.0149					
10	Male Students	52	2.6203	1.05373	114	-2.447	0.05	0.524	NS
	Female Students	64	3.1081	0.87508					
	<b>Male Students</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>23.453</b>	<b>6.3421</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>-0.939</b>	<b>0.05</b>	<b>0.658</b>	<b>NS</b>
	<b>Female Students</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>21.087</b>	<b>5.8732</b>					

*Source: research work 2024*

The result in Table 2 shows that the t-value of -0.939 with 114 degree of freedom has p-value of 0.658 which is greater than the alpha level of 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted. There is no significant difference in the mean scores of male and female business education students on the 21st Century skills needed by business education students for the attainment of global relevance in Nigeria.

### **Discussion of findings**

Data analyzed in Table 1 revealed that 21st century skills are needed by business education students for the attainment of global relevance in Nigeria. This result is evidenced by the grand mean of 2.85, which is above the 2.50 benchmark. This implies that business education needs digital marketing skills, technical skills, writing skills, financial management skills, influence skills, social media skills, information management skills, artificial intelligence skills, and conflict resolution skills for the attainment of global relevance in Nigeria. This finding corresponds with Edet et al. (2019), who opined that enhancing job creation skills among business education students at universities for global relevance is essential, especially in the 21<sup>st</sup> century global office. The finding is supported by Atah et al. (2017), whose finding employed that the acquisition of employability skills among undergraduates in universities is essential for economic growth and development, especially in developing countries like ours. Ukah et al. (2021) also opined that the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills development helps business education students to be self-reliant and to attain global relevance in society. This could be that business education graduates who are able to get jobs or have self-reliance would be able to care for themselves and contribute to the economic growth of the country.

However, Atsu et al. (2021) argue that for business education to acquire 21<sup>st</sup> century skills for the attainment of global relevance, there is an urgent need for the curriculum content of business education to be visited to achieve this objective. Idike et al. (2022) asserted that the graduates of business education needed 21<sup>st</sup> century skills like e-competencies for maximum productivity in the 21st century office because the world is digitalized. The finding is supported by Chukwurah et al. (2023), who agree that digital skills are now required by business education graduates for global relevance. This is because of the world as a whole, as seen in the emergence of ICT and artificial intelligence (AI), which has resulted in enormous changes in the 21st century. The finding aligns with Atah et al.'s (2022) revelation that business education graduates needed 21<sup>st</sup> century skills like soft skills competences for global relevance's. This implies that business education needs digital marketing skills, technical skills, writing skills, financial management skills, influence skills, social media skills, information management skills, artificial intelligence skills, and conflict resolution skills for the attainment of global relevance in Nigeria.

There is no significant difference in the mean scores of male and female business education students on the 21st century skills needed by business education students for the attainment of global relevance in Nigeria. This implies that both male and female business education students needed 21<sup>st</sup>-century skills for the attainment of global relevance in Nigeria. Wonah et al. (2023) and Atah et al. (2023), whose findings agree that the gender of business education students does not influence how they need 21<sup>st</sup> century skills for global attainment and relevance in economic growth.

## **Conclusion**

According to the findings, business school students in Nigeria require 21st-century abilities in order to achieve global relevance. This implies that for Nigerian business education to be globally relevant, it must have digital marketing skills, technical skills, writing skills, financial management skills, influence skills, social media skills, information management skills, artificial intelligence skills, and conflict resolution abilities. There is no significant

difference in mean scores between male and female business education students in Nigeria on the 21st century abilities required for global relevance. This suggests that both male and female business education students in Nigeria require 21st-century abilities to achieve global relevance.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that:

1. Students should learn and develop 21st century skills such digital marketing skills, technical skills, writing skills, financial management skills, social media skills, information management skills, artificial intelligence skills, and conflict resolution skills for the attainment of global relevance in Nigeria.

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