DETERMINATION OF COMPETENCIES NEEDED BY BUSINESS EDUCATION GRADUATES FOR ENTREPRENEURIAL SUCCESS IN ANAMBRA STATE

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Abstract
The need to ensure adequate preparation of business education graduates for self employment necessitated this study. The study was to determine the entrepreneurial competencies needed by business education graduates for entrepreneurial success in Anambra state. The study considered 237 business education graduates working in Anambra State. Two research questions guided the study and two hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. Survey research design was adopted for the study. Data were collected using a 47 item questionnaire validated by three experts from the Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The test re-test reliability method and the Pearson Product Moment Coefficient were used to obtain the overall reliability coefficient of 0.85. The data collected using the questionnaire were analysed using mean values to answer the research questions while the null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance using z-test and ANOVA. The findings revealed that business education graduates need conceptual, organizing, strategic and human relation competencies for entrepreneurial success. It also revealed that respondents' gender, qualifications and working experience did not affect their mean ratings on conceptual, strategic and human relation competencies but type of institution significantly affected their mean ratings on organizing competencies. It was recommended among others that tertiary institutions should encourage business education lecturers and students to organize workshops and conferences with a view to keeping them abreast of contemporary issues and needs of the business world and world of work.

Key words: Competencies, entrepreneurial success, business education graduates, tertiary institutions.

Introduction

With the soaring unemployment rate in Nigeria, self employment and small enterprise initiatives are presently high on the country's national agenda, in the hope that they will provide alternative channels of employment. Yearly, thousands of tertiary institutions (universities, polytechnics and colleges of education) graduates join the labour market in search of gainful employment. The challenge is not only that of tackling the already sizeable unemployed graduates, but also of absorbing the new entrants into the labour market. Underlying this situation is the fact that the training which students receive in tertiary institutions has not been fully successful in equipping them with desirable skills and competencies required for job creation and self employment (Madumere & Obike, 2000,

Amaewhule, 2007 & Nwangwu 2007).

The realization of this critical fact informs the directive of the Federal government to all tertiary education regulatory agencies to establish necessary mechanisms for the introduction, development and sustenance of entrepreneurial culture among Nigerian youths (Amaewhule, 2007). To make up for the curricula inadequacies in meeting employment problems, the National Universities Commission (NUC) in July 2008, organized a workshop on entrepreneurship for Nigerian universities as a way forward. The NUC workshop produced a draft curriculum on entrepreneurial studies for Nigerian universities. Consequently, many tertiary institutions have initiated entrepreneurship education programme in an attempt to reverse graduate unemployment trend by giving the needed training in entrepreneurial skills to students who should subsequently set up businesses and consider self employ-ment as a viable alternative.

Entrepreneurship education according to Isaac, Visser, Fredrick and Brjlal (2007) is a purposeful intervention by an educator in the life of the learner to survive in the world of business. It has as its focus, an action orientation primarily embodied in teaching students how to develop business plans (Ronstad, 2009). Entrepreneurship education develops and stimulates entrepreneurial process, providing all tools necessary for starting up new ventures (Postigo & Tomborini 2005). It is commonly believed that entrepreneurship education is an imperative that should make a positive contribution to improving the entrepreneurship orientation of people. This could lead to the acquisition of skills, creativity, confidence, drive and courage in order to create employment for self and others. Entrepreneurship education has come to denote all forms of knowledge delivery that seek to empower the individual to create real wealth in the economic sector, thereby advancing the course of development of the nation as a whole. According to Okpan (2006), the goal of entrepreneurship education is to empower the graduates irrespective of their areas of specialization, with competencies that will enable them to engage in income yielding ventures, if they are unable to secure jobs in the public sector. It is a re-orientation from job seekers to job creators.

The rationale for the introduction of entrepreneurship curricula in universities, according to Cotton, 0' Gorman and Stampfi (2009), is that it will help the graduates to acquire increased understanding of entrepreneurship, equip them with entrepreneurial approach to the world of work and prepare them to act as entrepreneurs and managers of new businesses. From the foregoing, it can be deduced that exposure of tertiary institution students to entrepreneurship education will ginger entrepreneurship spirit in the students and if properly packaged, can provide a significant solution to the chronic unemployment situation among graduates.

In the domain of entrepreneurial, previous researchers have studied models in order to completely examine entrepreneurial competencies regarding the importance of initiating and succeeding in a new business (Bird, 2011). Onstenk (2007) maintained that proper entrepreneurial competencies are required to successfully start, operate and ensure the survival of new businesses in the market place. Thus, it is pertinent to determine the competencies needed by Business Education graduates for entrepreneurial success in Anambra State.

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Statement of the Problem

Business education graduates are trained and equipped to be self reliant if they fail to secure paid employment. However, Nwangwu (2007) reported that the type of training offered in business education programmes in most tertiary institutions in Anambra State produce business education graduates with insufficient entrepreneurial competencies. This incapacitates them in the field of work. Consequently, some of the graduates become unemployed and frustrated and this has increased the rate of unemployment in Nigeria, particularly in Anambra State. To remedy this ugly situation, the Federal Government introduced entrepreneurship education but did not specify the entrepreneurial competences that must be inculcated in the students of tertiary institutions before graduation. The curriculum is thus flaccid and did not provide for the introduction of the indigenous curriculum (Eze & Okoroafor, 2012). This makes it imperative to determine the entrepreneurial competencies needed by business education graduates to give both the lecturers and students focus regarding the content of the entrepreneurship education programme.

Purpose of the Study.

The purpose of this study is to determine the competencies needed by business education graduates for entrepreneurial success. Specifically the study sought to:

1. determine the conceptual competencies needed by business education graduates for entrepreneurial success.
2) determine the organizing competencies needed by business education for entrepreneurial success.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study

1. What are the conceptual competencies needed by business education graduates for entrepreneurial success in Anambra State?
2. What are the organizing competencies needed by business education graduates for entrepreneurial success in Anambra State?

Null Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female business education graduates on the conceptual competencies needed for entrepreneurial success in Anambra State.
2. There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of business education graduates from universities and colleges of education on the organizing competencies needed for entrepreneurial success in Anambra State.

Method

The population of the study comprised 237 business education graduates working in Anambra State. The entire population was used because the number was manageable. A structured questionnaire consisting of two sections (A and B) was produced for the purposed of data collection. The instrument was validated by one expert in measurement and evaluation and two business educators from Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The questionnaire was subjected to a reliability test using test-re-test method. The reliability co-efficient was computed using Pearson Product Moment Co-efficient which yielded a score of 0.85.

Two hundred and thirty-seven questionnaires were distributed but two hundred and twenty-seven were duly completed and returned. Data in respect of the research questions were analysed using mean. Standard deviation was used to show the spread of the responses about the mean while the null hypotheses were tested using z-test and ANOVA. **Keys:** VMN- Very much needed, MN-Much needed, N-Needed, SN-Somewhat needed, NN-Not needed.

Results

Data collected were analysed and presented as follows:

Table 1:

Respondents' Mean rating and Standard Deviation on the Conceptual competencies needed by Business Education Graduates from Tertiary Institution in Anambra State for Entrepreneurial success.

N =227

S/N	Conceptual Competencies needed for Entrepreneurship	X	S.D	Decision
1	Possession of divergent thinking ability	4.35	0.91	MN
2	Ability to bring about radical change or significant improvements.	4.44	1.11	MN
3	Taking time to listen to new ideas without pre-judgment.	4.81	0.41	VMN
4	Ability to take decisions in solving problems.	4.24	0.74	MN
5	Being effective in carrying out a task in the present or in future.	4.22	0.72	MN
6	Ability in making cognitive and analytical thinking.	4.57	0.63	VMN
7	Ability to sustain temporal tension	4.61	0.58	VMN
8	Ability to become innovators	4.48	0.69	MN
9	Possession of skills to cope with uncertainty	4.62	0.69	VMN
10	Assorting and understanding complex information	4.26	0.90	MN
11	Ability to take risk	4.46	0.66	MN
12	Ability to perceives risks and evaluates alternatives	4.45	0.76	MN
13	Takes action to reduce risks or control outcomes	3.93	0.94	MN
14	Places self in situations involving a challenge or moderate risk	3.81	1.78	MN
	Mean of means	**4.38**	**3.54**	**VMN**

The data in table 1 shows that all the competencies were indicated by the respondents as

needed for entrepreneurial success.

Table 2
Respondents' Mean rating and Standard Deviation on the Organizing Competencies needed by Business Education Graduates from Tertiary Institutions in Anambra State for Entrepreneurial Success .
N =227

S/N	Organizing Competencies needed for Entrepreneurship	X	S.D	Decision
15	Ability to lead your workers	4.53	0.36	VMN
16	Ability to develop the external and internal resources towards the firm's capabilities	4.34	0.65	MN
17	Being able to control and monitor the affairs of the firm	4.62	0.56	VMN
18	Being efficiency oriented	3.3	0.47	MN
19	Being concerned for high quality work	4.23	0.58	MN
20	Ability to find ways to do things better, faster and cheaper	4.72	0.42	VMN
21	Acts to things that meet or exceed standards of excellence	4.36	0.84	MN
22	Ability to develop and use procedures to ensure completion of work on time	4.52	0.94	VMN
23	Ability to meet the standard of quality work or job	4.92	0.29	VMN
24	Ability to organize different internal and external human, physical resources.	4.24	0.72	MN
	Mean of means	**4.41**	**21.55**	**MN**

The data in table 1 shows that all the competencies were indicated by the respondents as needed for entrepreneurial success.

Hypothesis 1
There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female business education graduates from tertiary institutions in Anambra state on the need of conceptual for entrepreneurial success.

Table 3:
Summary of z-test analysis of the Opinions of Male and Female Respondents on the Need of Conceptual Competencies by Business Education Graduates for Entrepreneurial Success.(N=227)

Gender	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	Df	z-cal	z-crit	∝	Remark
Male	120	4.56	6.09					
				226	0.33	1.96	0.05	Retained
Female	107	4.38	0.99					

Keys: N=Total population, X=mean, SD=Standard deviation, Df=Degree of freedom, Z-cal=

z-calculated, z-crit =z-critical, ∝ =level of significance.

Table 6 shows that the calculated z value of 0.33 is less than the z-critical value of 1. 96. Thus, the hypothesis is upheld/retained.

Hypothesis 2
There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of business education graduates from universities and colleges of education on the need of organizing competencies for entrepreneurial success in Anambra state.

Table 4:
Summary of z-test of Difference between the mean Rating of Respondents on the Need of Organizing Competencies by Business Education Graduates for Entrepreneurial Success Based on the Institution Type (University and Colleges of Education). (N=227)

Institutions	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	Df	z-cal	z-crit	∝	Remark
University	127	4.20	1.20					
				226	0.23	1.96	0.05	Retained
Colleges of Education	100	4.23	0.71					

Table 7 shows that the calculated z value of 0.23 is less than the z-critical value of 1.96. Thus, the hypothesis is upheld/retained.

Discussion of Findings

In respect of research question 1, the respondents used for this study were the graduates of business education who were supposed to be adequately trained to be self employed and independent citizens if they failed to get white collar job. It was found that they rated all the conceptual competencies very much needed by business education graduates for entrepreneurial success. This finding is in line with recommendations of Bird (2011) that an entrepreneur needs the ability of cognitive, analytical thinking, learning, decision making and problem solving approaches. The findings also support the position of Edgar (2005) that entrepreneurs needed competencies in resolving instant events or events requiring intuitive responses which may enhance their effectiveness in carrying out present or future tasks. The result of the study recognized organizing competencies as very much needed by business education graduates for entrepreneurial success. It was found that the respondents rated all the 10 items on the second research question as needed by business education graduates for entrepreneurial success. This is in line with what Mccelland (2006); Chandler and Jansen (1992) and Boyatzis (2008) observed that the organizing competencies like managerial competencies are required to keep the firms operating efficiently. The research also

indicated that organizing competencies calls for the ability to lead, control, monitor, organize and develop the external and internal resources towards the firm's capabilities.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that the business education graduates from tertiary institutions in Anambra State considered all aspects of entrepreneurial competencies(conceptual, organizing, strategic and human relation competencies) very important for entrepreneurship at a great extent.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Tertiary institution business educators should endeavour to impart the needed competencies for entrepreneurial success to their students.
2. Tertiary institution management should provide the enabling environment and teaching facilities for lecturers to impart the entrepreneurial competencies to their students and make them better qualified graduates of business education.
3. Tertiary institution should encourage business education lecturers and students to organize workshops and conferences with a view to keeping them abreast of contemporary issues and needs of the business world and work.
4. Business education curriculum planners should include the needed competencies in the curriculum for successful entrepreneurship in the future.

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