

MARKETING COMPETENCIES AND JOB CREATION POTENTIALS OF BUSINESS EDUCATION STUDENTS IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN RIVERS STATE.

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ABSTRACT

This study is all about marketing competencies and job creation potentials of business education students in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. Correlational survey design was adopted in this study and the population consisted of six hundred and ten (610) final year business education students in four (4) tertiary institutions running business education programme in Rivers State. The sample size of this study consisted of 241 respondents drawn from the population using Taro Yamen formula, hence simple random sampling technique was adopted in this study. Two (2) set of instruments titled "Entrepreneurial Competencies of Business Education Students Questionnaire (ECBESQ)" and "Job Creation Potentials of Business Education Students Questionnaire (JCPBESQ)" were used to obtain necessary data for this study. The instruments were validated by experts in the Department of Business Education and Measurement and Evaluation, and a reliability index coefficient of 0.81 and 0.74 were obtained respectively using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC). The aforementioned statistical tool was also used to answer and analyze the research questions and to test the stated null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Finding of this study showed that there is a very strong, positive and significant relationship between marketing competency and job creation potentials of business education students respectively in the aforementioned institutions in Rivers State. It was therefore recommended among others that business education students should endeavor to acquire business management competency while in school so that they can create jobs for themselves upon graduation.

Keywords: Marketing Competency, Job Creation, Business Education, Entrepreneurial Education

INTRODUCTION

Today, the demand for white-collar jobs has outpaced the supply of available positions, resulting in unexpected unemployment. The recruitment exercise of most Federal Government ministries, departments, and agencies, such as the Nigeria Immigration Service, attests to Nigeria's high rate of unemployment. As a result, determining what strategies to employ to combat the country's high unemployment rate has become a serious issue. Adding to this, Murray and Adepoju (2021) argue that job creation is a critical driving force of economic growth, creating hundreds of thousands of new jobs as well as enhancing Federal and local tax revenues, boosting exports, and generally increasing national productivity.

Indeed, given the current state of increasing uncertainty and instability caused by globalization and internationalization, competition, and rapid technological change, entrepreneurship has grown into a fascinating and interesting field of study around the world (Clever & Uduak, 2019). There are various definitions of entrepreneurship in terms of concepts. Esomomu (2018) defines entrepreneurship as the effective manipulation of human intelligence, as evidenced by creative and innovative performance. In other words, only humans can be entrepreneurial, and such beings are unique because they are creative and innovative, causing them to think in higher realms of existence. Entrepreneurship according to Tijani-Alawiye (2014), is the process of increasing the supply of entrepreneurship or adding to the stock of existing small, medium, and large enterprises available to a country by creating, innovating and promoting many capable

entrepreneurs who can successfully run innovative enterprises, nurture them to grow, and sustain them to achieve broad socio-economic development goals.

Entrepreneurship competencies of business education students may contribute to economic welfare by increasing the economy's innovative capacity. This is learned through entrepreneurial training. Entrepreneurship education reduces the high rate of rural-urban migration by providing people with functional education that allows them to be self-employed and self-sufficient. It also provides adequate training to the youth, allowing them to be more creative and innovative in identifying noble business opportunities (Akeke & Eyo, 2018). Entrepreneurship competency are a set of knowledge, skills, beliefs, and motivational aspects that assist individuals in dealing more effectively with the world's increasing globalization, uncertainty and complexity.

A critical evaluation of the core objectives of business education reveals that business education is ultimately goal-oriented and enhances the skills, attitude, and knowledge of the business education student for success in their status as an employee in a competitive and ever-changing business environment or as a business owner. It was for these reasons that business education was consider as a component of technical and vocational education. Buttressing the foregoing, Ajuah and Wokocha (2020) posited that business education is a component of technical and vocational education and is widely recognized around the world as a means of empowering students for sustainable livelihood and social-economic development. Therefore in this study the researcher examine entrepreneurial competencies and job creation potentials among business education students using business management competency, financial management competency, marketing competency, human resources competency and personal competency as variables in which job creation potentials of business education students could be fully realized.

Null Hypothesis

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between marketing competency and job creation potentials of business education students in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

Entrepreneurial Competency

Entrepreneurial competency are the abilities required for business success. Entrepreneurial skills are the fundamental abilities important to empowering someone to start, create, back and prevail in a chosen venture. Entrepreneurial competency can be defined as the ability to create something new with high regard by devoting the necessary time and effort, accepting financial and social risks, and reaping the benefits of financial and individual fulfillment and autonomy (Hisrich & Peters, 2017). Entrepreneurial skills are the capacity of a person to exploit a thought and make an enterprise for individual benefits as well as for social and formative gain (Olatunji, 2016).

Entrepreneurial competency acquisition is the training that provides experience and skills that are suitable for entrepreneurial endeavours. Entrepreneurial skills acquisition, therefore, trains graduates with entrepreneurial knowledge, competence, and skills needed for self-reliance. Entrepreneurial skills training encompasses the total learning experience provided in educational institutions that can influence knowledge, ideas, and abilities to make mature decisions and create goods and services in the areas of Home Economics Education, Business Education, Industrial Technical Education, Agricultural Education, and other courses.

Entrepreneurial competency are defined formally as the ability to have self-conviction, strength, determination, energy, sympathy, the status to take master's guidance, the desire for immediate result, visionary, and the ability to perceive opportunity. Don (2018) expressed that the variety of conceivable entrepreneurial skills includes the view of monetary freedom, specialized and authoritative development, acquiring orders over scanty assets, taking obligations regarding internal management and for outside advancement of the firm in all aspects of teaching enterprise.

Entrepreneurship competency is the knowledge, skills and behaviours that will enable an employee to meet established performance criteria. In light of the above statement, an employee possesses competency if he has the combination of observable and measurable knowledge, skill, abilities and personal attributes that contribute to enhanced employee performance and ultimately result in organizational success.

In the view of Adamu (2021), the inability of some small and medium-scale, entrepreneurs to keep financial records negatively affects the growth of their businesses, the ability to secure loans from financial institutions and the determination of cost and profit. The knowledge of business education would therefore help toward proper keeping of financial records. It would also guide the entrepreneurs in cost analysis, inventory control and profit determination. For an individual to have the skills to seek funds and apply the funds for investment opportunities and succeed is very important to developing his/her financial management skills and other relevant skills.

Marketing Competency and Job Creation Potentials of Business Education Students

In the opinion of Hamington (2022) marketing is the sum total of all business activities that direct the flow of sales of products and services from producers to consumers. Hisrich and Peters (2017) stated that marketing competencies are critical to a venture's continued success. As the company grows, it will need to develop new products and services to maintain its distinctiveness in a competitive market. According to Hisrich and Peters (2017) many often blame lack of finances or poor management for the failure of a business, but a closer look will often reveal that the real problems relate to marketing issues such as: identifying the customer; defining the right product and service to meet customer needs; pricing; distribution; promotion; identifying the target market; characteristics of the customer; and buying situation.

A market is a place where buyers express their demands for a good or service and sellers provide their supplies of such goods or services. For Hornby (2020), marketing is the theory and practice of buying and selling goods and services. A marketing skill is the art of developing and distributing goods and services to consumers as well as businesses. However, marketing is not just limited to goods and services. It is extended to other areas like internet marketing, or online marketing, which refers to the buying of goods and services through the use of the web and e-mail to drive direct sales via electronic commerce. Internet marketing, or online marketing, is typically used in conjunction with traditional types of advertising like radio, television, newspapers, and magazines.

Marketing is a profit-making activity that involves the co-ordination of various functions aimed at facilitating the flow of the required goods and services from the place of production to the consuming public or clients for whom they are intended (Nwaukwa, 2015). The American Marketing Association (AMA, 2008) defined marketing as a process of planning and executing the conception, pricing, promotion, and distribution of ideas, goods, and services to create exchanges that satisfy individual and organizational objectives. Marketing is a common phenomenon, but it is a very complex and elusive subject matter. The activities of marketing are so diverse that it is difficult to say exactly what marketing is. Another important and essential skill that determines the success or failure of any business is marketing. Ezeani (2021) defined marketing skills as the art of developing and distributing goods and services to consumers as well as businesses.

However, Ezeani (2021) identified marketing skills which the entrepreneur should possess and include: knowledge of seasonal fluctuation of goods; ability to determine the extent to which products will sell; familiarity with various aspects of sales and salesmanship; ability to budget and forecast; ability to determine current trends in sales of products; ability to determine what customers need and shortage of such goods; knowledge of advertising; ability to determine and

interpret factors which' indicate the extent of and strength of competition; and ability to determine availability of goods/raw materials for products and shortage of finished goods. Kotler (2008) stated that the most efficient marketing strategy is that which supplies the goods and services required in sufficient quantity, at the right time and place, at a minimum cost, and sells them at a reasonable price that yields a satisfactory level of profit.

The Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)

The theory of The Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) was promulgated by Vygotsky (1978). The Zone of Proximal Development is Vygotsky's term for the range of tasks that are too difficult for students to master alone but that can be learned with guidance and assistance from adults or more-skilled students. The lower limit of the ZPD is the level of problem solving by the students working independently alone. The upper limit is the level of additional responsibility the students can accept with the assistance of an able instructor. Thus, the ZPD involves the students' cognitive skills that are in the process of maturing and their performance level with the assistance of a more skilled person. Vygotsky called these the buds or flower of development to distinguish them from the fruits of development, which the students already can accomplish indecently.

However, this theory is based on the underlying assumption that learners are active agents, purposefully seeking and constructing knowledge within a meaningful context. The view of this learning process is based on the research that has emerged from theoretical framework related to human learning. Many reflected a constructivism view of the learning process. In this view, learners are active agents who engage in their own knowledge constructions by integrating new information into their mental structure. The learning process is seen as a process of meaning making in socially, culturally. Historically and politically situates context. The learners construct their own knowledge by testing ideas and approaches based on their previous these to new tasks, context and situation, and integrating the new knowledge gained with pre-existing intellectual constructs. Vygotsky's theory is constructivist, emphasizing that students actively construct knowledge and understanding rather than ebbing passive receptacles.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design in non-experimental research. The population of this study consisted of six hundred and ten (610) final year students of 2020/2021 academic session from the four(4) tertiary institutions running business education programme in Rivers State. The sample size of this study consisted of 241 final year which was derived from the use of Taro Yamen's sampling formula. However, simple random sampling technique was considered fit for this study because it gives all the students the equal opportunity of being selected for this study. In addition the Bowley Proportional Allocation Formula was used to determine the sample size of students in each of the institutions. The researcher used Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC) to analyze and answer the research questions that were stated regarding the relationship between entrepreneurial competencies and job creation potentials of business education students and to test the hypotheses that were formulated at 0.05 level of significance.

Presentation of Null Hypothesis

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between marketing competency and job creation potentials of business education students in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

Table 1: Test of Correlation of Relationship between Marketing Competency and Job Creation Potentials of Business Education Students at 0.05 Level of Significance

Variables	N	Df	r-cal	r-critical	Decision
Marketing Competency	204				
Job Creation Potentials	204	202	0.86	0.196	Significant/Rejected

Source: Researcher’s Fieldwork (2024)

Table 1 shows that the calculated r-value of 0.86 is greater than r-critical value of 0.196. Therefore, since the computed r-value is greater than r-critical value, the hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between marketing competency and job creation potentials of business education students in tertiary institutions in Rivers State is hereby rejected. However, this implies that there is a significant relationship between marketing competency and job creation potentials of students in the aforementioned institutions in Rivers State.

Marketing Competency and Job Creation Potentials of Business Education Students

The result analysis in Table 1 shows that there is a very strong and positive relationship between marketing competency and job creation potentials of business education students in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. In addition, the result of the associated hypothesis shown in Table 4.8 reveals that there is a significant relationship between marketing competency and job creation potentials of business education students. However, this finding is in sync with the assertion of Hisrich and Peters (2017) who stated that marketing competencies are critical to a venture’s continued success. As the company grows, it will need to develop new products and services to maintain its distinctiveness in a competitive market. According to Hisrich and Peters (2017), many often blame lack of finances or poor management for the failure of a business, but a closer look will often reveal that the real problems relate to marketing issues such as: identifying the customer; defining the right product and service to meet customer needs; pricing; distribution; promotion; identifying the target market; characteristics of the customer; and buying situation.

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CONCLUSION

This study investigated entrepreneurial competencies and job creation potentials of business education students in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that for a business education students to be successful in creating jobs for themselves, it then becomes imperative that their competencies in terms of marketing competency need to be acquired and developed on a regular basis in order to be able to explore in this entrepreneurial world.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were proffered:

1. Business education students should endeavor to acquire business management competency while in school so that they can create jobs for themselves after graduation.
2. Lecturers should inculcate human resources competencies in their students in order to be able to relate effectively with others for job creation.
3. Business education students should compulsorily improve their knowledge and skills in order to acquire the personal competencies that may be required of them for the purpose of job creation.

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