PERCEIVED ENTREPRENEURSHIP COMPETENCIES REQUIRED BY BUSINESS EDUCATION STUDENTS IN ESTABLISHING SMALL SCALE VENTURES IN KWARA STATE

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Abstract

The study investigated perceived entrepreneurship competencies required by business education students for establishing small-scale ventures in Kwara State. Descriptive survey research design was employed for the survey. A total of 205 comprising 39-business education lecturers and 166 entrepreneurs in Ilorin metropolis made up the population for the study. Three research questions and three null hypotheses guide the conduct of the study. The instrument used for data collection was a questionnaire with Cronbach reliability coefficient of 0.86. The method used for analyzing the data collected for the study was mean and standard deviation for the research questions and t-test was used to test the null hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significance. The result of the data collected and analyzed indicated that managerial skill, Information and communication technology skills and marketing skills are required by business education students in establishing small-scale venture as perceived by business education lecturers and entrepreneurs. The result of the test of the null hypothesis showed significant difference in the mean rating of lecturers and entrepreneurs. It was concluded that entrepreneurial skills are highly required for establishing small-scale ventures. It was recommended among others that undergraduates in Business education should strive towards skill acquisition because success and progress in the world of work and becoming self-employed, self-reliant is dependent on the skills and abilities possessed.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, Competencies, Small Scale, Business Education

Introduction

Entrepreneur's competency is a highly critical factor in attaining excellence in the performance to ensure sustainable growth and success of a venture among a competitive business environment. During the past few decades, the importance of entrepreneurial competency has increased as a result of the strategic role played by the human factors particularly the entrepreneurs of business enterprises. Researchers in the field have reported that entrepreneurship is regarded as a catalyst for economic growth, employment, and wealth creation. Entrepreneurial education is designed to teach the skill and knowledge needed for embarking on new business ventures since it is believed that this would enhance opportunity identification and avoidance of the many pitfalls awaiting those without the relevant skills.

At the international level, young businesses experience a high rate of failure as 20 percent of them would be eliminated by their first year of activity, it reaches to 66 percent by the end of the sixth year (Franco &Haase, 2010). In addition, Driessen and Zwart (2010) stated that 50 percent of businesses would vanish during their first five years of foundation. Without

sufficient performance, a business would not be able to survive, especially in a competitive environment. There are several factors which may influence the business performance, while entrepreneurs pay attention to external factors especially those of financial and nonfinancial for performance improvement. Studies show that there is an indispensable relationship between competencies and business performance (Garcia, 2014). Since entrepreneurial competencies are related to business performance, entrepreneurs must pay a special attention to their competency improvement in order to boost performance (Mitchelmore& Rowley, 2010)

Establishing a new business requires different resources varying from financial to behavioral resources. As it is believed that an entrepreneur could find all the resources in the environment to provide finance, information and social capital, there are some internal factors, which facilitate business startup. Entrepreneurial competency explains the notion or idea for these internal factors. Generally, competency is categorized into knowledge, characteristics and skills (Mojab, 2011). Researchers investigated six types of entrepreneurial competencies in terms of entrepreneurial personality traits, which include opportunity, relationship, conceptualizing, organizing, and strategic and commitment competencies (Man, Lau, & Chan, 2002). Global Entrepreneurship Monitor investigates entrepreneurial competencies through observing and assessing perceived opportunities, capability, entrepreneur's role models all year round and having less fear of failure (Autio, 2005). Studies reveal that according to the nature of competencies, perceived opportunities and capability refer to the skills of an entrepreneur while role models and less fear of failure are targeted to define the entrepreneur's personality (Zali, Bastian, & Qureshi, 2013). Accordingly, in this study entrepreneurial competency are defined as entrepreneur's skills and entrepreneurial personality

Business education is highly rated by many governments since government depends on the development of entrepreneurship. Business education is the major instrument of economic prosperity, growth and development. Education for and about business is a kind of a new concept, which signifies not only a quality education, but also pay attention to the development of an individual's practical ability and competency of students which will make them relevant in the world of work. It is also described as a new method of teaching that promote students innovative spirit, skills and attitudes which consequently make them after graduation to suitable careers and become professional business creator (European Commission, (2003). The role of business education in enhancing entrepreneurial competency is reflected internationally. For instance, the European Commission, (2008), observes that almost half of Europe's students at tertiary institution have full access to business, education to enhance their innovative competencies in establishing small ventures after graduation. The European Commission, (2004) also posits that entrepreneurship as one of the key components to be included in the current educational system in order to prepare people for successful participation in society. In fact, the contribution of business education in promoting entrepreneurship to the global economy is universally recognized.

The study would be significant in the sense that it would enable business education students and their guardians to be aware of the skills and competencies needed for establishing a small-scale venture even after graduation. The study was delimited to business education lecturers in universities offering business education in Kwara State and registered entrepreneurs in Ilorin metropolis (Ilorin west, east and south), Kwara State.

Statement of the Problem

Entrepreneurial competencies are needed by graduates of business education to establish and run business enterprises successfully. If business education students are therefore trained in entrepreneurship, they can become successful entrepreneurs. Most students are graduating from colleges without the necessary skills and competencies. Furthermore, many of these students do not possess entrepreneurial skills that will enable them establish and manage a small business enterprise so as to become self-employed and self-reliant on graduation. Similarly, Aina (2008) observed that the goals of business education are yet to be achieved due to lack of the necessary practical skills and entrepreneurial competencies that will enable them to be self-employed. The high rate of unemployment among the business students has been attributed to lack of competencies required in the world of work. Ifedi, (2009) agrees that one of the main causes of unemployment among college students is lack of employable skills. Thus, business education graduates are faced with the burdens of surplus unemployable work force because of the wide gap created by the absence of entrepreneurial competencies. This calls for the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills, which is a prerequisite for any meaningful self-employment. Therefore, this study sought to identify the perceived entrepreneurial competencies required by business education students for establishing small and medium scale enterprises in Kwara States.

Purpose of the study

1. To determine the managerial skills required by business education students in establishing small scale ventures in Kwara State
2. To investigate the ICT skills required by business education students in establishing small scale ventures in Kwara State
3. To examine the marketing skills required by business education students in establishing small scale ventures in Kwara State.

Research Questions

1. What are the managerial skills required by business education students in establishing small-scale ventures in Kwara State?
2. What are the Information Communication Technology (ICT) skills required by business education students in establishing small-scale ventures in Kwara State?
3. What are the marketing skills required by business education students in establishing small-scale ventures in Kwara State?

Hypotheses

H_{01}. There is no significant difference between the mean responses of lecturers and small-scale entrepreneurs on the managerial skills required by business education students in establishing small-scale ventures in Kwara State

H_{02}. There is no significant difference between the mean responses of lecturers and small-scale entrepreneurs on the Information Communication Technology (ICT) skills required by business education students in establishing small-scale ventures in Kwara State

H_{03}. There is no significant difference between the mean responses of lecturers and small-scale entrepreneurs on the marketing skills required by business education students in establishing small-scale ventures in Kwara State.

Methodology

A descriptive survey research design was used. The survey was carried out in Universities offering business education in KwaraState, which include University of Ilorin, Kwara State University and Al-hikma University, Ilorin and entrepreneurs in Ilorin metropolis. The population of the study was 205 made up of 39 business education lecturers and 166small-

scale entrepreneurs in Ilorin metropolis. The entire population was involved in the study because the researchers consider the size manageable. A structured questionnaire containing 28 items developed by the researchers from the literature reviewed was used for data collection from the respondents. The instrument was divided into sections, A, B and C. A was designed to obtain information from the business education lecturers and small scale entrepreneurs on managerial competencies, B was designed to obtain information on ICT competencies and C was designed to obtain information on marketing competencies required of business education students in establishing a small scale venture. A four point scale of Highly Required (HR), Required (R), Not-Required (NR), Highly Not-Required (HNR), were written against each item with a corresponding assigned value of 4, 3, 2, and 1 respectively.

The instrument was face and content validated by three experts from the Department of Business and Entrepreneurship Education, Kwara State University, Malete. The internal consistency of the questionnaire was ascertained using Cronbach Alpha reliability, which yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.86. The researchers administered the questionnaires and the respondents were allowed a period of three days, after which the researchers went round to collect the questionnaire items for analysis.

The data collected to answer the research questions were analyzed using mean and standard deviation. The null hypotheses were tested using t-test at an alpha level of 0.05. The decision rule was that any item with a mean score of 2.50 and above was taken as Required while items with a mean score of below 2.50 were regarded as Not Required for research questions. The decision rule for testing the hypothesis was that, if the observed probability value is less or equal to the fixed p-value, then the hypothesis was rejected and if otherwise, the null hypothesis was not rejected at the 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question one: What are the managerial skills required by business education students in establishing small-scale ventures in Kwara State?

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation of responses on managerial skills required by business education students in establishing small-scale ventures

S/N	Item Statements	$\overline{X}$	SD	Remark
1.	Ability to have a cordial communications with customers and staff	2.52	0.45	Required
2.	Ability to make effective use of feedback from customers	2.58	0.69	Required
3.	Ability to set achievable goals and target for the enterprise	2.91	0.99	Required
4.	Ability to plan effectively on how to attain the goals of the enterprise	2.68	0.87	Required
5.	Ability to understand the concept of time management and Job demands	2.86	1.01	Required
6.	Ability to have self-evaluation skills and knowledge	2.76	0.86	Required
7.	Ability to maintain cost effectiveness policy	3.09	0.88	Required
8.	Ability to have a long and short term vision for managing an enterprise	2.86	0.92	Required
9.	Ability to have human resource management skills	2.91	0.99	Required
10.	Ability to have a good human relations	2.68	0.87	Required

Source: Field Survey, 2019

Table 1 revealed that the respondents indicated that all the constructs were required with mean ranging from 2.52 to 3.09. The result, therefore showed that the respondents indicated that all the constructs are the managerial skills required by business education students in establishing small-scale business ventures in Kwara State.

Research Question two: What are the Information Communication Technology (ICT) skills required by business education students in establishing small-scale ventures in Kwara State?

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation of responses on Information Communication Technology (ICT) skills required by business education students in establishing small-scale ventures

S/N	Item Statements	$\overline{X}$	SD	Remark
1.	Ability to Operate the computer	2.64	0.94	Required
2.	Ability to use scanning machines	2.53	0.85	Required
3.	Ability to Browse and download information from the internet	2.98	1.09	Required
4.	Ability to use database, Microsoft access for storage and administration of staff data	3.04	0.90	Required
5.	Ability to use spreadsheets like-Microsoft excel to manage the business budget	3.15	0.79	Required
6.	Conference calls/video conferencing for skills	2.81	0.94	Required
7.	Ability to create, format, save and print documents	2.66	0.94	Required
8.	Ability to access the internet through the use of mobile phones	2.51	0.75	Required
9.	Ability to create a website	2.48	0.72	Not Required

Source: Field Survey, 2019

The result presented in table 2 revealed that the respondents indicated that items 1 to 8 are ICT skills required by business education students in establishing small scale ventures. Only item 9 was rated as not required with mean ratings between 2.51to 3.15. The table further depicts that the respondents indicated that item 9 (ability to create a website) is a skill, not required by business education students in establishing a small-scale business.

Research Question three: What are the marketing skills required by business education students in establishing small-scale ventures in Kwara State?

Table 3: Mean and standard deviation of response marketing skills required by business education students in establishing small-scale ventures

S/N	Item Statements	$\overline{X}$	SD	Remark
1.	Ability to recognize opportunities for business	2.64	0.87	Required
2.	Ability to identify various marketing techniques	2.34	0.86	Not Required
3.	Ability to recognize the concept of customer kingship (customer is always right)	2.57	0.97	Required
4.	Ability to Identify existing and future competitors	3.27	0.57	Required
5.	Ability to Provide alternative products which can compete favorably with branded products	3.32	0.64	Required
6.	Ability to determine what customers need	2.76	0.78	Required
7.	Ability to Satisfy customers' needs	2.74	0.87	Required
8.	The ability to acknowledge the several fluctuations of	2.49	0.86	Not

	goods and familiarity with various aspects of salesmanship			Required
9.	Ability to understand the importance of advertising in business	2.97	0.97	Required

Source: Field Survey, 2019

The result presented in table 3 reveals that the respondents indicated required for seven items as skills required by business education students in establishing a small-scale business ventures with mean ratings between 2.57 to 3.32. The table further depicts that the respondents indicated that item 2 and 8 are skills not required by business education students in establishing small-scale ventures.

Hypotheses:

$H_{01.}$ There is no significant difference between the mean responses of lecturers and small-scale entrepreneurs on the managerial skills required by business education students in establishing small-scale ventures in Kwara State.

Table 4: Independent Samples t-test result of mean difference between the perceptions of lecturers and small-scale entrepreneurs on the managerial skills required by business education students in establishing small-scale ventures

Group	N	Mean	SD	T-Cal	Df	t-crit.	Sig (2tailed)	Decision
Lecturers	39	3.52	0.44					
				13.38	203	1.96	0.000	Rejected
Entrepreneurs	166	2.62	0.50					

Source: Field survey, 2019

The analysis of data in Table 4 reveals that there are 39 lecturers and 166 small-scale entrepreneurs. The lecturers and entrepreneurs' responses showed a positive perception on managerial skills required by business education students in establishing small-scale ventures ($\bar{x}$ = 3.52; SD = 0.44) and ($\bar{x}$ = 2.62; SD = 0.50) with very low variability. The table reveals that there was significant difference in the perception of lecturers and small-scale entrepreneurs on the managerial skills required by business education students in establishing small-scale ventures in Kwara State (t_{203} = 0.000, P<0.05).

H_{02}. There is no significant difference between the mean responses of lecturers and small-scale entrepreneurs on the Information Communication Technology (ICT) skills required by business education students in establishing small-scale ventures in Kwara State

Table 5: Independent Samples t-test result of mean difference between the perceptions of lecturers and small-scale entrepreneurs on the ICT skills required by business education students in establishing small-scale ventures

Group	N	Mean	SD	t-cal	df	t-crit.	Sig (2tailed)	Decision
Lecturers	39	3.89	0.75					
				22.13	203	1.96	0.000	Rejected
Entrepreneurs	166	2.70	0.69					

Source: Field survey, 2019

The analysis of data in Table 5 reveals that there are 39 lecturers and 166 small-scale entrepreneurs. The lecturers and entrepreneurs' responses showed a positive perception on the

ICT skills required by business education students in establishing small-scale ventures ($\bar{x}$ = 3.89; SD = 0.75) and ($\bar{x}$ = 2.70; SD = 0.69) with very low variability. The table reveals that there was significant difference in the perception of lecturers and small-scale entrepreneurs on the ICT skills required by business education students in establishing small-scale ventures in Kwara State (t_{203} = 0.000, P<0.05).

H_{03}. There is no significant difference between the mean responses of lecturers and small-scale entrepreneurs on the marketing skills required by business education students in establishing small-scale ventures in Kwara State.

Table 6: Independent Samples t-test result of mean difference between the perceptions of lecturers and small-scale entrepreneurs on the marketing skills required by business education students in establishing small-scale ventures

Group	N	Mean	SD	t-cal	Df	t-crit.	Sig (2tailed)	Decision
Lecturers	39	3.81	0.70					
				20.11	203	1.96	0.000	Rejected
Entrepreneurs	166	2.68	0.52					

Source: Field survey, 2019

The analysis of data in Table 6 reveals that there are 39 lecturers and 166 small-scale entrepreneurs. The lecturers and entrepreneurs' responses showed a positive perception on marketing skills required by business education students in establishing small-scale ventures ($\bar{x}$ = 3.81; SD = 0.70) and ($\bar{x}$ = 2.68; SD = 0.55) with very low variability. The table reveals that there was significant difference in the perception of lecturers and small-scale entrepreneurs on the marketing skills required by business education students in establishing small-scale ventures in Kwara State (t_{203} = 0.000, P<0.05).

Discussion

The finding of this study revealed that business education students need entrepreneurial managerial competencies as revealed by the findings of the study to establish small-scale ventures. This is in line with the result of Olaitan, Eze and Ogbonnaya (2009) that carried out a study on the entrepreneurial competencies required by secondary school graduates for entering into oil palm processing enterprise in the southeastern states of Nigeria. The study revealed that managerial competencies are required by graduates of colleges to establish an enterprise in oil palm processing and in other vocational fields.

Business education students before graduation require entrepreneurial marketing competencies to establish a small-scale venture as revealed by the findings of the study. This in line with the findings of Leghara andMbah (2009) who found out that graduates of business studies lacked competencies in marketing and communication skills. Data presented in Table 3 also revealed that marketing skills are highly required for any effective enterprise. The finding revealed that marketing skills are required to identify alternative products that can compete favorably with branded products and determine what customers need. This is in line with Kotler and Keller (2010) who stated that marketing is meeting consumers' needs profitably and satisfying them by communicating marketing ideas to the consumers.

The study revealed in Table 2that business education students in establishing a small-scale venture require ICT skills. These findings corroborate the findings in the work of Ojukwu (2002) that ICT skills should include: word processing skills such as formatting, editing

keyboarding, ability to use scanning machines, to select reproduction activities. According to Osuala (2004), business operators use word processing for memos, reports, and correspondence, among others. ICT skills are necessary tools for business operators because many people, who do not possess personal computers, go to the business center to type their documents.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it could be concluded that entrepreneurial skills are highly required for establishing small-scale ventures as well as effective business operation. The absence of these skills affects business students in embarking on any business venture. Managerial skills, information and communication technology skills and marketing skills would enable business education students to handle all types of documents for their customers and thereby meet their customers' satisfaction successfully. The skills could serve both as operational guidelines for those who are already in business as well as a training package for new entrants. The study has provided information on entrepreneurship skills that are required by business education students in establishing small scale-venture. Therefore, the business education students need to combine all the skills identified or listed therein for effective business establishment and management.

Recommendation

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

1. There is the need for undergraduates as well as graduates in business education program to strive toward skill acquisition because success and progress in the world of work and becoming self-employed, self-reliant is dependent on the amount of skills and abilities possessed.
2. The lecturers of business education should be exposed to adequate training and retraining on the entrepreneurial skills and competencies.
3. Government through her educational curriculum planners and developers should review curriculum of business education in colleges to include relevant entrepreneurial skills for effectively establishing and managing business enterprise so that students can learn in the course of their studies while in the colleges.
4. Lecturers and students who are not ICT acquiescent should acquire the skills to be relevant in the society.

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