

## Enhancing Entrepreneurial Competencies for Job Creation among Business Education Students in Universities in South East and South South States, Nigeria

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DOI: [10.36347/sjebm.2021.v08i11.005](https://doi.org/10.36347/sjebm.2021.v08i11.005)

| Received: 22.09.2021 | Accepted: 28.11.2021 | Published: 24.12.2021

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### Abstract

### Original Research Article

This study was carried out in the South East and South South States of Nigeria. The main purpose of the study was to determine the strategies for improving the entrepreneurial competencies of business education students in Universities in the South East and South South States of Nigeria for job creation. The study utilized survey research design and was guided by one research question and one hypothesis. The population for the study comprised 109 Business Educators in Universities offering business education programme in South East and South South. The entire population was utilized, therefore no sample was drawn. The instrument for data collection was a self-structured questionnaire developed by the researcher on enhancing the entrepreneurial competencies of business education students in Universities in South East and South States of Nigeria. The instrument was validated by three experts from the Faculty of Education, Enugu State University of Science and Technology. The reliability co-efficient of the instrument yielded 0.73 using cronbach Alpha measure of internal consistency. The data collected was analyzed using mean and standard deviation while Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. Result obtained showed that extension education aimed at enhancing managerial skills of business education students such as Students Industrial work experience (SIWES) and also organizing seminars and workshops on effective time management and risk management could enhance the entrepreneurial competencies of business education students for job creation. Based on the findings of the study, the researcher recommended among others that extension education aimed at enhancing the managerial skills such as SIWES should be provided for business education students and also seminars and workshops should be organized for business education students on effective time and risk management.

**Keywords:** Enhancing, Entrepreneurial competencies, business education students and job creation.

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## INTRODUCTION

Business education is an academic programme offered in universities and Colleges of Education in Nigeria. Business Education equips the recipients with the relevant skills in Accounting, Marketing, Entrepreneurship and office Technology Management for office career and self-employment. According to Auwal (2020), business education is a programme of study that trains the participants to acquire skills that will lead the graduates of the programme to field of work. In the view of Emeasoba and Nwatarali (2020), Business education provides students with needed skills and competencies, skills, knowledge, understanding and attitude to perform as workers in industries, civil service and proprietors of business. One of the objectives of business education as stated by National University Commission in its core curriculum minimum standard

for Nigerian certificate of education (2014) is to equip graduates with the right skills that will enable them to engage in a life of work in the office as well as for self-employment. Business education students need to be equipped with entrepreneurial competencies so that they can be self-employed on graduation.

Business education students are individuals running a programme in business education in Universities or Colleges of Education with options in Accounting, Marketing and Office Technology. For business education students to be self-employed and contribute their quota in the economic development of Nigeria on graduation, they must be equipped with the relevant entrepreneurial skills on graduation for job creation. Business education is a skill oriented programme for job creation.

Job creation is the provision of new job opportunities for self-employment or paid employment. Job creation helps to grow an economy. At this critical point in time, what Nigeria needs are graduates that can create jobs and not job seekers. Therefore, there is a dire need to enhance the managerial competencies of business education students in Universities for job creation so that they can comfortably manage small scale business on graduation.

Enhancing is to further improve the quality, value or status of something. In the context of this work, enhancing entails improving the quality and standard of business education programme by empowering the graduates of the programme with the entrepreneurial competencies for job creation. Specifically, Effiong (2011) noted that business education students needed the entrepreneurial competencies like managerial, marketing and financial competencies for successful managing of small and medium-scale businesses.

Entrepreneurial competencies are skills necessary for an entrepreneur to venture into an enterprise ably and competently and realize the goal to which the enterprise is established. These entrepreneurial competencies help an entrepreneur to successfully venture into an enterprise and be successful. Acquisition of managerial skill is one of the strategies for enhancing the entrepreneurial competences of business education graduates for job creation.

Managerial competencies involve the application of management skills in running a business. Management involves planning, organizing, coordinating and directing the activities of the business. Effiong (2011) identified the managerial competencies required by business education students for success in small scale enterprises as abilities to plan business activities effectively and efficiently, handle both human and material resources prudently and coordinate business activities. Further, Nwokike (2014) citing Igbo (1995) stated that managerial skills needed for successful business operation include: understanding basic steps in starting a business, plan, direct and effectively control business operations, manage time and meet job schedules, set appropriate business goals, organize human and material resources as well as, delegate authority and monitor performance. Other managerial skills include knowledge of good personnel management/knowledge of good human relation. Enhancing the managerial skills is essential to help business education students to prepare for business and improve their competencies in managerial role. Evidence has shown that skillful management and especially those competent in the management of people in an organization is the key determinant of organizational success. Business education students need managerial competencies to be effective in their chosen field of work and mostly for job creation. It is against this backdrop that the researcher sought to determine the strategies for

enhancing the managerial competencies of business education students for job creation on graduation.

### Statement of the problem

The unemployment rate has risen significantly in developing countries like Nigeria. According to the National Bureau of Statistics (2020), Nigeria unemployment rate surged to 33.5 per cent as at fourth quarter in 2020 amid new COVID -19-strain. Nigerian Government has made several attempts to alleviate the challenge of unemployment such as establishment of National directorate of employment (NDE), Start-up Nigeria (SN), National poverty Eradication Programme(SPEP), Small and medium Industries Equity Investment Scheme (SMIES), Youth Eradication Programme (YESP) and Social Intervention Fund (SIF)etc. Despite all efforts made by the Government to reduce unemployment rate in Nigeria, it continues to rise. This could be as a result of lack of managerial skills. If this unemployment rate is not reduced at the barest minimum, it may likely catapult youths' social vices which will cause adverse effect on the economy and lives of the citizens.

### Purpose of the study

The main purpose of the study was to determine the strategies for enhancing the entrepreneurial competencies of business education students in Universities in South South and South East for job creation. Specifically, the study sought to determine the:

Strategies for enhancing the managerial competencies of business education students in Universities in South East and South South States for job creation.

### Research question

The study was guided by one research question

What are the strategies for enhancing the managerial competencies of business education students in Universities in the South East and South South States for job creation?

### Null hypothesis

The Null hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance.

**H<sub>0</sub>:** There is no significant difference between the mean scores of Business Educators teaching in Federal, State and Private Universities on how the managerial competencies of Business Education Students can be enhanced for job creation.

## METHOD

Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The area of the study was South East and South South States of Nigeria. The population for the study consisted of 109 Business Educators from the South East and South South States of Nigeria made up of 34 Business Educators from Universities in South East

and 75 Business Educators from Universities in South South. Since the population was of a manageable size, the entire population was used. The main instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire developed by the researcher. The instrument consists of two sections; section A and B. Section A elicited information on the background of the Business Educators using such variable as year of experience while section A has only one Part with 14 questionnaire items. The instrument was validated by three experts from the Faculty of Education, Enugu State University of Science and Technology. Each research item had a 4 point scale of strongly agree (4), agree (3), disagree (2) and strongly disagree (1). In order establish the reliability of the instrument, 20 copies of the questionnaire was administered to business educators in North Central and North West geopolitical zones of Nigeria. Data generated from the pilot survey was analyzed using Cronbach Alpha measure of internal consistency. The instrument yielded reliability co-efficient of 0.84. The instrument was administered with the help of trained research assistants. 109 copies of the questionnaires were distributed and retrieved representing 100 per cent return rate. The data collected were analyzed using mean and

standard deviation. The mean was used to answer the research question while Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to test hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. For decision to be reached regarding the mean, the upper and lower class limits of the mean were adopted. For decision to be reached regarding the mean, the upper and lower class limits of the mean were adopted thus: Strongly Agree (SA) =3.50-4.00, Agree (A) = 2.50-3.49, Disagree (D) =1.50-2.49 and Strongly disagree (SD)=1.00-1.49. Mean scores and standard deviation were used to answer the research question while ANOVA was used to test the hypothesis. For the Analysis of variance, the null hypothesis was not rejected when F. calculated was less than the critical F. ratio but rejected when the F. calculated exceeded or equal to the critical F. ratio.

**RESULTS**

**Research question:**

What are the strategies for enhancing the managerial competencies of business education students in Universities in the South East and South South States for job creation?

**Table 1: Mean ratings of Business Educators on how to improve the Managerial skills of Business Education students for job creation**

S/NO.	Managerial skills	X	SD	Dec.
1	Organizing seminars for students on risk management	3.44	0.50	Agree
2	Organizing seminars for students on the need to be truthful trustworthy in business	3.30	0.51	Agree
3	Organizing seminars for students on how to set high standard of job performance	3.33	0.47	Agree
4	Organizing seminars (workshops for students on effective time management)	3.39	0.54	Agree
5	Seminars should be organized for students on how to develop self-confidence	3.34	0.56	Agree
6	Organizing seminars for the students in understanding the basic steps in starting business and seeking appropriate business goals	3.37	0.53	Agree
7	Seminars should be organized on the social norms and values that affect a business.	3.20	0.50	Agree
8	Workshops should be organized for business education students on the roles of managers in achieving the organizational objectives.	3.34	0.52	Agree
9	School should organize a seminar for business education students on the causes of small scale business failures.	3.24	0.48	Agree
10	Workshops should be organized for business education students on how to relate well with their customers	3.20	0.55	Agree
11	Extension education aimed at developing management skills should be provided for business education students e.g SIWES	3.47	0.52	Agree
12	Organizing seminars for students on organization of small scale business	3.21	0.51	Agree
13	Organizing seminars for students on evaluation of organization success and failures.	3.24	0.45	Agree
14	Organizing workshops on how to direct and motivate employees	3.24	0.43	Agree.
	<b>Grand Mean/Standard Deviation</b>	3.31	0.51	

The analysis in Table 1 shows that the respondents' mean scores ranges from 3.20 (Seminars should be organized for business education students on the social norms and values that affect a business and workshops should be organized for business education students on how to relate well with their customers) to 3.47. (Extension education aimed at developing management skills should be provided for business education students.) The grand mean for all the items is

3.31 while the grand standard deviation is 0.51. The result shows that all the managerial skills can be commendable for improving the managerial skills of business education students. The standard deviation (SD) of the items ranges from 0.43 to 0.56, signifying that the respondents are too close in their ratings.

**Hypothesis:**

There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of business educators in Federal, State and Private Universities on how managerial skills of business education students can be enhanced for job creation.

**Table 2: Item by item analysis of variance (ANOVA) of mean ratings of Business Educators in Federal, State and Private Universities on managerial skills that could improve the entrepreneurial competencies of business education students**

S/NO	Managerial	X1	X2	X3	F.ratio cal..	F.ratio critical	Dec.
1	Seminars should be organized for students on risk management.	3.43	3.44	3.50	0.85	2.29	NS
2	Seminars should be organized for students on the need to be truthful/ trustworthy in business.	3.28	3.33	3.38	0.01	2.29	NS
3	Seminars should be organized for students on how to set high standard of job performance.	3.31	3.33	3.38	0.32	2.29	NS
4	Organizing seminars /workshops for students on effective time management.	3.41	3.37	3.38	0.27	2.29	NS
5	Seminars should be organized for students on how to develop self-confidence.	3.35	3.33	3.13	2.10	2.29	NS
6	Organizing seminars for the students in understanding the basic steps in starting business and seeking appropriate business goals.	3.35	3.41	3.38	0.38	2.29	NS
7	Seminars should be organized for the social norms and values that should be organized.	3.19	3.22	3.35	0.12	2.29	NS
8	Workshops should be organized for business education students on the roles of managers in achieving the organizational objectives.	3.35	3.30	3.38	0.27	2.29	NS
9	School should organize a seminar for business education students on the causes of small scale business failures	3.24	3.30	3.25	1.40	2.29	NS
10	Workshops should be organized for business education students on how to relate well with their customers.	3.22	3.19	3.13	0.60	2.29	NS
11	Extension education aimed at developing management skills should be provided for business education students of SIWES.	3.46	3.48	3.50	0.13	2.29	NS
12	Organizing seminars for students on organization of small scale business.	3.20	3.30	3.25	1.12	2.29	NS
13	Organizing seminars for students on organization of small scale business	3.26	3.19	3.25	0.53	2.29	NS
14	Organizing workshops on how to direct and motivate employees.	3.24	3.22	3.25	0.07	2.29	NS

Table 2 denotes that all the 14 managerial skills had their F. calculated ratio less than the F.-table critical value of 2.29 at 0.05 level of significance and 86 degrees of freedom.

**Table 3: Summary of analysis of variance (ANOVA) of business educators in Federal, State and Private Universities on how managerial skills of business education students can be improved for job creation**

Source of variance	df	Sum of squares (SS)	Mean of squares (MS)	f.cal	Critical value of F	Decision
Between groups	2	0.0054	0.1027			Do not reject H0
Within groups	86	72.61	0.8443	0.12	2.29	

Table 3 shows the summary of analysis of variance (ANOVA) of business educators. F computed is 0.12 while the F critical is 2.29 at 0.05 level of significance at 86 degrees of freedom. Since the F computed (0.12) is less than the F. critical (2.29), the null hypothesis H0 is not rejected. Therefore, significant difference does not exist in the mean ratings of Business Educators in Federal, State and Private Universities on

how managerial skills of business education students can be improved for job creation.

### DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings of this study revealed that extension education (most rated high) aimed at developing management skills (SIWES) should be provided for business education students. In agreement with this, Alio (2006) cited by Nwokike(2014) found out

that provision of extension education aimed at developing technical and managerial skills of craftsmen is a commendable strategy for enhancing their competencies. Nse (2012) noted that industrial training is of paramount importance to students because during the period of training, students are expected to acquire adequate and relevant skills that would enable them to perform effectively in their future place of work or assignment. Nse (2012) further stated that the students industrial work experience scheme (SIWES) is aimed at giving the students the opportunity to relate and translate their theoretical knowledge to the world of work. Training is a key factor in improving the efficiency and expertise of the work force. Therefore, one should not be surprised while this item rated high among all the 14 suggested managerial skills for improving the entrepreneurial competencies of business education students. Interestingly, Nse (2012) pointed out SIWES is a skill acquisition programme that blends theory with practice in the industrial and commercial activities of our national economy. SIWES programme afford students the opportunity of familiarizing in handling equipment and machinery that are usually not available in their institutions.

In another development, the study also revealed that organizing seminars and workshops on managerial skills can help to improve the entrepreneurial competencies of business education students. Seminars and workshops are qualitative tools undertaken for capacity enhancement, acquisition of skills and competencies and developing of practical approach to intricacies of business environment. Organizing seminars for students on risk management, time management and development of self-confidence are managerial skills that could improve the entrepreneurial competencies of business education students. Through organizing workshops and seminars on managerial skills, business education students will be equipped with necessary skills that can help them in the field of work.

The null hypothesis tested (Table 2), it was found that significant difference did not exist in the mean ratings of business educators teaching in Federal, State and Private Universities on managerial competencies that could improve the entrepreneurial competencies of business education students. This signifies that all the respondents agreed that the managerial competencies identified in the study could improve the entrepreneurial competencies of business education students whether they are in Federal, State and private universities in the South East and South South States of Nigeria for job creation.

## CONCLUSION

One of the major causes of small business failure in Nigeria has been lack of managerial skills by the owners and operators. Managerial skills are very important in starting and sustaining a small scale business and every entrepreneur needs it. Therefore, the researcher concluded that business students need managerial competencies in order to sustain his/her business and create job for others.

## Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher recommended that extension education aimed at enhancing the managerial skills such as SIWES should be provided for business education students and also seminars and workshops should be organized for business education students on effective time management and risk management.

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