

MARKETING ENTREPRENEURIAL COMPETENCES: A NECESSITY FOR BUSINESS TEACHER EDUCATION GRADUATES

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Abstract

This study investigated on the marketing entrepreneurial competencies needed by business teacher education graduates in Anambra State. The population was all the registered small-scale business operators in Anambra state numbering two thousand three hundred and ninety eight (2398) Systematic and Yaro. Yamane determination approaches of sample were used. The sample for the study was three hundred and forty three (343). One research question guided the study. The study employed descriptive and survey research design. Structured questionnaire developed by the researcher was used for data collection. Data collected were analysed using mean, and standard deviation to answer the research question. The result of the study showed that the registered small scale business operators rated marketing entrepreneurial competencies as necessary for Business teacher education graduates. Based on the finding, the researcher recommended, among others that government has to recognize the need to equip business teacher education graduates with entrepreneurial competencies as a strategic imperative for self reliance and nation development.

Entrepreneurship is derived from the French term “Entrepreneur”, which stands for a person who undertakes and develops a new enterprise at some risk. Entrepreneur literally means a go-between. Economists according to Ekwue (2007) use the word, innovator, proprietor and capitalist in the same sense yet the term “entrepreneur” is preferable in business because it carries along with it the full import of “undertaking”. The idea of the undertaking may not be the individuals’ own. However, the entrepreneur is not simply the owner of the business is there may be many business owners who usually have little or nothing to do with the running of the business.

Therefore Entrepreneurship Education is the process of providing individuals with the ability to recognize commercial opportunities and the insight, self-esteem, knowledge and skill to act on them. Adeola and Bolarinwa (2010) defined Entrepreneurial Education as a collection of formalized teaching that informs, trains and educates anyone interested in business creation or small business development. Entrepreneurial education can be viewed broadly in terms of the skills that can be taught and the characteristics that can be engendered in individuals which will enable them to develop new innovative plans. Entrepreneurship is an important part of the school programme that all students are expected to undertake while in school. This programme is directed at helping students in their transition from their educational experience to employment. Research findings by Mueller, Scheela and Hoa, in Adeola and Bolarinwa (2010) indicate that there is a link between entrepreneurship and economic growth of a nation.

Ndinechi (1987) defined business education as an aspect of business education of individuals who have made at least a tentative decision to make a career in business teaching.

Marketing Entrepreneurial Competencies

Marketing is the process of planning and executing the conception, pricing, promoting, and distribution of ideas, goods and services to create exchanges that satisfy individual and organizational goals. Business marketing is the marketing of goods and services to individuals and organizations for purposes other than personal consumption. Business products include those that are used to manufacture other products, become part of another product, and the normal operations of an organization.

Marketing is one of the major areas of business education which is a programme of instruction in distribution and marketing. A successful entrepreneur is one who is first to identify emerging consumer needs and to offer product improvements which satisfy those needs. Marketing is the process of determining consumer demand for particular goods and services which often influence sales and distribution of these goods to final consumers at a profit. Sabo (2006) stated that marketing is present in any occupation, be it industry, direct services or commerce. Put more clearly, it is a programme of vocational instruction in distributing and related management, designed to meet the need of persons who have entered or are preparing to enter a marketing occupation as an entrepreneur. Distributive education has become increasingly important in recent years due to the role of marketing and distribution in the economic growth of the nation. As technological advances are made, as society becomes more complex, as changes occur in product consumer relationship, distributive education must adjust.

Charles, Joseph and Carl (2003) defined marketing as a set of activities by which the demand structure for goods, ideas, and services is managed in order to facilitate the exchange process satisfactorily. Marketing from this point of view is seen as a powerful, even dangerous, technology for behaviour modification, making it possible to sell people things, they rather do not want or that are actually bad for them. Again Charles et al (2003) see marketing as human activities directed at satisfying human needs and want through exchange process. Marketing could also be defined as, the collection of activities undertaken by an entrepreneur to relate profitably to its market. Marketing as management process is responsible for identifying, anticipating and satisfying customer requirement. It is a function of moving goods from the producers to consumers. Iheonunekwu in Ezeani (2008) sees marketing as follows:

- i. Finding out what consumers want
- ii. Planning and developing a product or service that will satisfy those wants.
- iii. Determining the best way to price, promote and distribute that product or service. Ilo (2000) quoting Charles et al (2003) defined marketing as a total system of interacting business activities designed to plan, price, promote and distribute want satisfying products and services to present and potential customers, while William, James and Susan (2002) argued that the major purpose of marketing education is the preparation of people for an enterprise whether big or small.

Sabo (2006) and Adeniyi (2007) disclosed that critical jobs that could be performed by entrepreneurs include specific job tasks and related job task which dealt with display, stock advertising and supervisory responsibilities. He further grouped tasks performance in marketing jobs into nine areas – advertising, communication, display, human relations, mathematics, operations and

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management, products and service technology and selling. However, the following are in the domain of marketing and distribution which are common to West Africa and probably Nigeria – wholesaling, importing, exporting, advertising, hotel and restaurants, store-keeping, purchasing and supply, and salesmanship. Agbonifoh (2006) report of United States Department of Health Education and Welfare outlined the following as areas of instruction in preparatory marketing entrepreneurship programme of which business teacher education graduates should be exposed to.

A. Marketing

1. Selling
2. Sales promotion
3. Buying
4. Operations
5. Market research
6. Management

B. Product or Service Technology

1. Products knowledge and techniques
2. Service knowledge and techniques

C. Social Skills

1. Business and social skills
2. Ethics
3. Human relations
4. Supervisory skills and leadership

D. Basic Skills

1. Application of mathematics
2. Application of communication

E. Distribution in the Economy

1. Channels of distribution
2. Job opportunities in distribution
3. Distribution in a free enterprise system

Brief Explanation on Some Marketing Terms

Retailing: This is the sector through which millions of consumers have a glimpse of the operation of the entire market system. William et al (2002) have observed that retailing has undergone vast changes during the last three decades. Tremendous changes in the broad environment within which retailers of all kinds must operate including social, economic technological and competitive aspects, which have forced adjustments in policies, methods and in managerial strategy that justify the term fantastic.

A business teacher education graduate who wishes to engage in retailing business is expected to have analytical skills, creativity, divisiveness, flexibility, initiative, leadership, organization, risk

taking and high stress tolerance level to be effective in managing a retail outlet. The following skills and competencies are expected of a business teacher education graduate to function as a retailer.

- i. Weighing, measure and packaging
- ii. Stocking a variety of goods
- iii. Providing credit
- iv. Offering personal attention
- v. Opening at convenient hours.

Wholesaling: Marketing is seen as the provision and efficient distribution of goods and services, for chosen consumer segments and this is possible through the wholesaler. The wholesaler according to Okpala, Aghara, Aghara, Anakeoku, Nwaizugbo, and Opara (2010) is a middleman coming between the manufacturer and the retailer. Their major responsibilities include the following:

- i. Warehousing or storage
- ii. Bulk breaking
- iii. Providing credit
- iv. Transport
- v. Providing information
- vi. Processing

Marketing Skills

Perhaps at the heart of every successful business is a real marketing person who actually understands that customers pay the bills and grow the business. Completely and utterly running your business for your customers' needs is where successful businesses come from. Anyone can run a business during boom times but it's those businesses that thrive during a recession that are the ones that clearly understand what their customers want and provide products and services exactly matching those needs. Marketing is a key skill to have and by delivering what people want to buy is an obvious requirement to running a business but not many people truly understand how to market a business correctly. Marketing led organizations always buck the trend and tend to produce more revenues and profits than their competitors. There are many excellent introductions to marketing books that are worth reading or training courses run by the Institute of Marketing.

Sales and Customer Relationships

Selling is almost an art form and everyone has probably sold something in their lives already. Whether you have an interview for a job (where you have to sell yourself) or you have sold a house in the past, you may already have the basic skills required.

The skills required in sales are really to understand the selling process – from initial contact to completing the sale. It's worth having a look around at successful websites to see how the selling process is undertaken and that many sites fail because they simply don't "ask for the order" - Good sales people rarely leave a meeting without an order or at least a commitment and just dropping a few leaflets off at a prospect client will not get you that sale. The sales process has six basic steps as follows:

- i. Prospecting for new leads
- ii. Initial contact with the prospect

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- iii. Presentation of sales materials
- iv. Objection handling
- v. Closing the sale
- vi. Follow up/ after sales service

As mentioned above the objection handling and closing the sale are probably the most important areas but those that people without a sales background have difficulty with.

Marketing skill is another important and essential skill on which depends the very success or failure of a business. 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. Osuala (2004) defined marketing as the process by which the productive potentials of the company is used to satisfy individual and social needs of all kinds. According to Osuala (2004), marketing can also be defined as the process of finding out the needs of customers or clients and channeling a flow of goods or services to meet those needs. He further explained that marketing includes many activities, which are all parts of the marketing process.

Marketing skill is another important and essential skill which depends on the very success or failure of a business. 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. Osuala (1993) defined marketing as the process by which the productive potentials of the company is used to satisfy individual and social needs of all kinds. Ezeani (1999) sees marketing as consisting of all profitable human activities undertaken by the firm towards the creation of goods and services. Argument among Nigerian traders is that successful entrepreneurship in trading occupation simply depends on talent and luck". They believe that programmed training in marketing skill is irrelevant for success in trading activities. This view is rooted in ignorance because education and training can promote individual initiative and marketing competencies. Sales and marketing skills will enable one to make such vital business decisions as "getting the price right" which is an important factor in retail marketing. Stanton (2002) stated that sales and marketing skills will keep the entrepreneur informed, knowledgeable and confident as to determine the most efficient method of physical distribution of goods and services. Ezeani (1999) identified important sales and marketing skills, which the entrepreneur should possess to include:

1. Knowledge of seasonal fluctuation of goods;
2. Ability to determine the extent to which products will sell;
3. Familiarity with various aspects of sales and salesmanship
4. Ability to budget and forecast;
5. Ability to determine current trends in sales of products
6. Ability to determine what customers need and shortage of such goods;
7. Knowledge of advertising;
8. Ability to determine and interpret factors which indicate extent of and strength of competition; and
9. Ability to determine availability of goods/raw materials for product and shortage of finished goods.

Uche, as quoted by Ademiluyi (2007) opined that the acquisition of marketing skills offers the entrepreneur the unique strategy for succeeding in business. The entrepreneur is able to offer the right product to his targeted customers. He is able to cost and determine his product price and which will be acceptable to the customers, based on their perception of the value and a cost that allows for profit making. Business related graduates require these marketing skills in order to enable them identify their potential customers; persuade them to buy their product or services. Ademiluyi (2007) also identified the following marketing skills and competencies, which are needed for effective entrepreneurship:

1. Salesmanship;
2. Negotiation
3. Sales record keeping;
4. Sales promotion;
5. Stock record keeping
6. Pricing
7. Advertising channels;
8. Advertising media;
9. Consumer behaviour appreciation; and
10. Transportation

Marketing authorities generally agree that business organization exists to serve markets for which they engage in production and distribution of goods and services. Modern marketing emerged as the concept that business exists to create and serve customers and at the same time achieving the firm's profit objective (Ezeani, 1999). Entrepreneurs in business related areas should therefore organize their resources to concentrate on achieving success in the market place as mishandling of negligence can lead to failure.

Marketing Entrepreneur Competencies negligence can lead to failure. The major purpose of this study is to ascertain the marketing entrepreneurial competencies that would be needed by business teacher education graduates. The study, the researcher believe would be of help to especially curriculum planners and students. The problem of this study is what marketing entrepreneurial competencies would be needed by business teacher education gradates.

Methodology

The study was a descriptive survey and was carried out in Anambra State, because they are predominantly farmers and small business operators. The population consists of 2398 small business operators. The sample size of 343 was determined by using Yaro Yamane determination of sample. A structured questionnaire was developed after a thorough review of literature on marketing entrepreneurial competencies based on the only research question. The instrument was validated by three experts, two from business education from Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka and one from measurement and evaluation from Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki. The researcher employed five research assistants who were trained on this. The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics (Mean and standard deviation). Nominal values were assigned to different opinion for the items and the mean of each item was interpreted in relation to the limits of the value assigned to the response categories of the instrument as follows:

Table 1: Lower Limit of Numbers

Responses	Values	Lower limit	Upper limit
Very much needed (VMN)	5	4.1	5.0
Much Needed (MN)	4	3.1	4.0
Needed (N)	3	2.1	3.0
Rarely Needed (RN)	2	1.1	2.0
Not Needed (NN)	1	0.1	1.0

Source: Igwe (2012)

Research Question

What marketing entrepreneurial competencies are needed by business teacher education graduates?

Table 2: Mean Results Based on the Marketing Entrepreneurial Competencies (N = 343)

S/N	Items	VMN	MN	N	RN	NN	\bar{X}	SD	Interpretation
1.	Ability to determine common needs for customers	139	108	81	9	6	4.06	0.95	VMN
2.	Ability to capture and retain the attention of customers	191	93	51	8	0	4.36	0.81	VMN
3.	Ability to promote and sell the finished products	154	141	40	6	2	4.28	0.78	VMN
4.	Ability to determine level of stocks	131	128	66	17	1	4.08	0.89	VMN
5.	Ability to determine availability of goods, raw materials, shipping	136	124	54	26	3	4.06	0.96	VMN
6.	Ability to determine and interpret factor which indicate extent and strength of competition	141	103	68	15	16	3.98	1.09	MN
7.	Ability to determine price of products	128	98	95	19	3	3.95	0.97	MN
8.	Knowledge of effective channels of distribution	142	117	62	18	4	4.09	0.95	VMN
9.	Knowledge of markets where products are in high demand	136	144	46	13	4	4.15	0.87	VMN

10.	Knowledge of seasons of fluctuations of goods and services	153	100	66	19	5	4.09	0.99	MN
11.	Ability to prepare sales budget	160	89	70	17	7	4.10	1.02	VMN

Table 2: Mean Results based on the marketing entrepreneurial competencies (N = 343)

S/N	Items	VMN	MN	N	RN	NN	\bar{X}	SD	Interpretation
	Ability to acquire sales technique	146	101	72	17	7	4.05	1.00	MN
	Ability to analyze demand sales situations	127	127	53	28	8	3.98	1.03	MN
	Ability to create utility	150	94	73	21	5	4.05	1.01	MN
	Grand Mean						4.09	0.95	MN

Table 2 shows that the mean rating of respondents on marketing entrepreneurial competencies needed by business teacher education graduates ranged from 3.95 to 4.36 with a grand mean of 4.09. All the marketing competencies were rated very much needed by the respondents, except items 34, 35 and 41, which were rated much needed by the respondents. This implies that the respondents rated almost all the items as much needed which include competencies to: determine the common needs for customers, capture and retain the attention of customers, knowledge of effective channels of distribution, prepare sales budget, acquire sales technique and create utility are needed by business teacher education graduates to function as entrepreneurs.

Marketing Entrepreneurial Competencies Needed by Business Teacher Education Graduates:

Results in table 2 showed that all the marketing entrepreneurial competencies studied were much needed by business teacher education graduates as responded by small-scale business operators in Anambra State. This agrees with the findings of Ikeanyionwu (2006), that sales and marketing competencies are the two most important competencies the entrepreneur should have when he plans to start his own business. Iheonunekwu (2003) also agreed with this finding when he stated that if an entrepreneur produces the best bread around and there is no demand for the bread, his business cannot be said to be successful. Again Asuquo (2010) found out that marketing competencies are important in the management of small-scale enterprises. It was surprising that these authors and small business operators rated these competencies as much needed by business teacher education graduates because for them to operate efficiently, the business teacher education graduate must be well groomed in these competencies especially in the area of problem solving.

Business teacher education graduates need all the marketing entrepreneurial competencies.

Conclusion

The study investigated the marketing entrepreneurial competencies needed by business teacher education graduates to effectively operate as entrepreneurs. The finding showed that all the listed marketing entrepreneurial competences are needed by the business teacher education graduates.

Recommendation

1. National Commission for Colleges of Education has to recognize the need to equip graduates with entrepreneurial competencies as a strategic imperative for self-reliance and nation development and take cognizance of the fact that it helps to develop private businesses and it provides considerable national resources both financial and otherwise.
2. Schools should establish entrepreneurship centres in schools, that will help the students to have practical oriented studies on entrepreneurship or a kind of simulation
3. Teachers of vocational technical education that handle entrepreneurship studies in schools should be better groomed through organization of workshops and seminars by relevant government agencies to equip them with the required entrepreneurship competencies instructional techniques and this will enhance entrepreneurship teaching and students will stand to benefit and be able to put it into practice upon graduation.

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