

**ICT COMPETENCE NEEDS FOR EMPLOYABILITY POTENTIALS AMONG BUSINESS EDUCATION
GRADUATES IN RIVERS STATE, NIGERIA**

Adizu EUNICENGOZI *Ph.D*

Department of Business Education

Faculty of Education

Ignatius Ajuru University of Education

Port Harcourt, Rivers State – Nigeria;

NseAbasi Peter ESSIEN *Ph.D*

Department of Industrial Technology Education

Faculty of Education

University of Uyo, Uyo, Akwa Ibom State

AND

Angela EMEGHARA

Department of Business Education

Faculty of Education

Ignatius Ajuru University of Education

Port Harcourt, Rivers State – Nigeria

ABSTRACT

The study investigated the relationship between competence needs of Business Education graduates and employability potentials in Rivers State. This study adopted a descriptive survey research design and the correlation research design. The population of this study consisted of 2,552 business education graduates from the period of 2015/2016–2018/2019 academic sessions. The sample size of 331 respondents was derived base on Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table of sample size determination. A self-structured questionnaire titled "Competency Needs and Graduate Employability Potentials Questionnaire (CNGEPQ)" was used as the yardstick to measure the relationship between competency needs of business education graduates and their employability potential. The questionnaire was divided into two sections: A and B. Section "A" covered respondent's demographic information while section "B" covered the instructions guiding the filing of the instrument and the items of the instrument. Section B was further divided into two sub-sections; the Part I covered the items on the dimensions of competency needs, having three clusters – covering technology skill competence of 15-items, while the Part II covered the items on employability potential, with three clusters – covering white-collar employment, blue-collar employment, and entrepreneurial engagement, with a total of 15-items. To obtain the reliability of the instrument, copies of the questionnaire were trial tested by administering it on 20 Business Studies graduates gotten from old students association of Madonna University, Elele, Rivers State. Cronbach Alpha reliability method was used to analyse the data gotten from the administered instruments to the respondents, yielding a reliability coefficient of 0.88, which by implication was enough to adjudge the instrument as being reliable. Pearson's Product Moment Correlation was used in the analysis of the data collected. The results from the investigation revealed results favouring white-collar employment need for the investigated competence needs of Business Education graduates among the respondents that participated in this study. The study indicated that there was strong and significant relationship between technology skill competence and white-collar employment of Business Education graduates. It is recommended that tertiary institutions in Rivers State offering business education need to be provided with up-to-date ICT learning facilities that would aid the effective teaching.

KEYWORDS: ICT Competence, Employability Potentials, Business Education, Graduates, Rivers State and Nigeria

Introduction

Business education is an educational programme that prepares students for entry and advancement in jobs within business and teaches them to handle their business affairs as well as function intelligently as consumers and citizens in a business economy. Osuala (2004) defined business education as that aspect of vocational education that emphasises job competency, career preparation, and blue-collar employment. It involves the acquisition of special skills in business subject areas. Njoku (2006) defined business education as an educational programme that equips individuals with functional and sustainable skills, knowledge, attitudes, and values that would enable the individuals to operate in the environment they find themselves.

Despite universities' efforts in equipping business education students with competencies and knowledge, it appears that complaints are still prevalent that business education graduates possess little or no competencies for effective job performance in modern offices. So, there is a need for this study to identify areas of competencies required of graduates that give them an employability advantage. Competencies are the abilities, knowledge, attitudes, and facts required to complete tasks (Okoro, 2012). The success of business education programmes can be measured by the official duty performance level of graduates of the programme in the world of work. Office competencies for effective performance in modern offices include electronic publishing, electronic collaborative, electronic image processing, electronic communication, and database management.

According to Ogbuzuru (2011), skill is the manual dexterity that is acquired through the repetitive performance of an operation, displaying expertness, practical ability, dexterity, and discretion. A skill is, therefore, a well-established habit of doing something. Jimah et al. (2011) also describe skill as goal-directed, well-organized behaviour that is acquired through practise and performed with an economy of effort. In the same vein, Speelman (2005) expressed skill as the ability to do something well, usually gained through training or experience. Skills are often acquired after a training session or after a practical activity. Consequently, this study covers an area of business education graduate competency needs in technological skill competence.

Globally, information and communication technology (ICT) has become a household term, bringing about radical changes in the way people live, learn, and work. Obviously, the last decade or two have witnessed tremendous changes in the ways businesses and organisations operate due to the emergence of ICT. It plays a very vital role in the social, political, and economic life of every nation because it makes information collection, processing, dissemination, and storage very fast, easy, and efficient (Ezenwafor, 2012). Consequently, more and more Nigerian schools, especially those in urban areas, are acquiring microcomputers and putting them to use for instruction, record keeping, word processing, and so on. The lack of use of ICT in our schools previously can be attributed to lack of support and/or training, lack of adequate

funding for information and communication technology, lack of adequate knowledge of what is available and, lastly, a lack of adequate knowledge of the benefits of ICT in the teaching and learning process. Thus, the essence of acquiring these skills, as mentioned above, is to have an employability advantage in the labour market as well as to excel in personal entrepreneurial ventures.

According to Knight and Yorke (2006), employability potential is a set of achievements—skills, understandings, and personal attributes that make graduates more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations, which benefits themselves, the workforce, the community, and the economy. Certain key outcomes of employability potential have been identified as white-collar employment, blue-collar employment, and entrepreneurial engagement (Kubler & Forbes, 2006). In the current economic climate, it is also becoming more and more important that graduates can demonstrate their employability skills (Fitzgerald, 2010). There is a proven relationship between learning and employability in that the skills that facilitate learning, such as being able to analyse data, solve complex problems, and communicate effectively, can enhance an individual's employability (Rees et al., 2007).

Despite the importance of competency skills on the employability of fresh graduates in the Nigerian labour market, it is unfortunate that responses by employers of labour on competencies on the use of modern technology by recent graduates reveal that these skills are lacking. Corroborating this fact, Williams (2003) reported that graduates are deficient in transferable skills required of the workforce in the era of modern technology. Tymon (2011) added that employers view that graduates are not yet ready to enter and face the complexities and challenges of the world of work in the era of modern technology. It is against this background that this study investigated the relationship between Competency Needs of Business Education Graduates and Employability Potentials in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

The goal of business education programmes in Nigeria is the acquisition of both physical and intellectual skills, which will enable individuals to be self-reliant and become useful members of society. It is the responsibility of Nigerian higher institutions to prepare the required human capital through appropriate work force training and re-training. An outstanding human capital assumption is that after finishing formal tertiary education, graduates should be able to make a successful transition from these institutions of higher learning to become productive workers, self-reliant entrepreneurs, responsible parents, good citizens, selfless leaders, and live healthy lives. It is assumed, also, that on graduation, young people could have developed additional skills through training and experience that could further enhance their opportunities, capabilities, and success in their life endeavours.

In spite of the available business opportunities and conducive environment for businesses to thrive in Rivers State, the researcher has observed that business education graduates are yet to maximise these opportunities by using their creative abilities in creating jobs for themselves and others. Instead, the business graduates go about the streets in search of jobs, which are either few in supply or not available. This high rate of unemployment has generated frustration and low self-esteem amongst Business Education graduates in Rivers State and has led to increased vulnerability among some youths to drugs, disease, social instability, conflict, militancy, hooliganism, poverty, thuggery, arm robbery, restiveness, ethnic-political clashes, and other social vices. Graduates' lack of skills has also resulted in their marginalisation and exclusion from social activities and government affairs due to an inferiority complex.

The researcher also observed that some of the graduates even venture into small-scale businesses and, at the end of the day, fail in achieving the goals of the business established. The business failure might not be because the business graduates do not have the necessary capital and machines to stay afloat, but most likely because the graduates lack the foundational skills to deal with the process of recognising a business opportunity, operating, and maintaining such businesses, as well as growing from a small position to a bigger one. It is against this background that this study seeks to determine the competency needs of Business Education graduates in ICT for employability potential in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The study determined the relationship between competence needs of Business Education graduates and employability potentials in Rivers State. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Ascertain the relationship between technological skill competence and white-collar employment of Business Education graduates in Rivers State.
2. Determine the relationship between technological skill competence and blue-collar employment of Business Education graduates in Rivers State.
3. Examine the relationship between technological skill competence and entrepreneurial engagement of Business Education graduates in Rivers State.
4. Determine the moderating effect of willingness to learn on the relationship between competence needs and employability potentials of Business Education graduates in Rivers State.

Research Questions

The following research questions were answered in the course of this research work;

1. What is the relationship between technological skill competence and white-collar employment of Business Education graduates in Rivers State?
2. What is the relationship between technological skill competence and blue-collar employment of Business Education graduates in Rivers State?
3. What is the relationship between technological skill competence and entrepreneurial engagement of Business Education graduates in Rivers State?
4. What is the moderating effect of willingness to learn on the relationship between competence needs and employability potentials of Business Education graduates in Rivers State?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study and were tested at the 0.05 level of significance.

- H₀₁:** There is no significant relationship between technological skill competence and white-collar employment of Business Education graduates in Rivers State.
- H₀₂:** There is no significant relationship between technological skill competence and blue-collar employment of Business Education graduates in Rivers State.
- H₀₃:** There is no significant relationship between technological skill competence and entrepreneurial engagement of Business Education graduates in Rivers State.
- H₀₄:** There is no significant moderating effect of willingness to learn on the relationship between competence needs and employability potentials of Business Education graduates in Rivers State.

Research Design

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design and the correlational research design. Descriptive survey design, according to Osuala (2004), enables researchers to obtain vital information and facts about people, their beliefs, opinions, attitudes, and behaviours. Anyakoha (2009) also stated that the design entails the use of questionnaire, interview, and observation in order to determine the opinions, attitudes, preferences and perception of the respondents. On the other hand, correlational research design involves the collection of data to objectively determine the relationship between variables. It helps to indicate the direction and magnitude of the relationship between the variables.

Therefore, descriptive survey research and the correlational research design are considered appropriate for this study because questionnaire was administered to obtain data on the competency needs of business education graduates for employability

potentials from which the relationship between the independent and dependent variable were determined.

Population for the Study

The population of this study consisted of 2,552 business education graduates from the period of 2015/2016 – 2018/2019 academic sessions. The population comprised of graduates drawn from the Department of Business Education from the tertiary institutions used for the study for the period covered by this study. Consequently, the tertiary institutions used comprised of the Ignatius Ajuru University of Education Port Harcourt, Federal College of Education Technical (FCET) Omoku, and Rivers State University, as shown below.

Table 1: Population for the Study

S/N	University	Population
i.	Ignatius Ajuru University of Education Port Harcourt	1,013
ii.	Federal College of Education Technical (FCET) Omoku	356
iii.	Rivers State University	1,183
	Total	2,552

Source: Researchers' Field Work

Sample and Sampling Technique

The sample size of 331 graduates from the selected institutions constituted the sample for the study. The researcher sent copies of the questionnaire to the respondents via social media platforms, like WhatsApp, Telegram, and Emails. The sample size of 331 respondents was derived base on Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table of sample size determination; that recommended for the utilization of 331 as sample size, for the population within the range of 2,401 – 2,599. Furthermore, the Bowley's proportional allocation formula was adapted for an even distribution of the sample across the institutions utilized for the data collection.

In selecting the sample for the study, purposive sampling technique was adopted; since the researcher cannot meet the respondents face-to-face to administer the instrument; only respondents who were reached via social media platforms (WhatsApp, Telegram, and Email) constituted the sample size of the study. The study adopted the social media approach for easy distribution and retrieval of the instrument to the respondents many of whom would be difficult to reach one-on-one.

Methods of Data Collection/Instrumentation

A self-structured questionnaire titled "Competency Needs and Graduate Employability Potentials Questionnaire (CNGEPQ)" was used as the yardstick to measure the relationship between competency needs of business education graduates and their

employability potentials. The questionnaire was divided into two sections; A & B. Section “A” covered respondent’s demographic information while section “B” covered the instructions guiding the filing of the instrument and the items of the instrument. Section B was further divided into two sub-section; the Part I covered the items on the dimensions of competency needs, having three clusters – covering technological skill competence with a total of 15-items, while the Part II covered the items on Employability Potentials, with three clusters – covering white-collar employment, blue-collar employment, and entrepreneurial engagement, with a total of 15-items. However, the items of the questionnaire were rated on a modified five (5) point Likert scale, ranging from Very High Extent (VHE) = 5, High Extent (HE) = 4, Moderate Extent (ME) = 3, Low Extent (LE) = 2, and Very Low Extent (VLE) = 1 for items of Part I, while the response of the items of Part II were also rated on a five (5) point Likert scale on a from Strongly Agree (SA) = 5 points; Agree (A) = 3 points, Undecided (UD) = 3 points; Disagree (D) = 2 points; and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1 point, with a mean criterion of 3.0 for the two instruments.

Validity of Instrument

The fact validity of the instrument was ascertained three experts from the departments of Business Education in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education and Rivers State University. The researcher’s supervisor and three other research experts were given copies of the questionnaire to check the adequacy and correctness of the questionnaire items. Suggestions, observations, and criticisms from the experts helped to modify and improve the instrument.

Reliability of Instrument

To obtain the reliability of the instrument, copies of the questionnaire were trial tested by administering it on 20 Business Studies graduates gotten from old students association of Madonna University Elele, Rivers State. The graduates from the institution were used in carrying out the reliability testing of the instrument, because the institution offered business education. In addition, the institution was selected because; it shared similar geographical and socio-economic factors with public institutions in the State. However, for obtaining the internal consistency of the instrument, Cronbach Alpha reliability method was used to analyse the data gotten from the administered instruments to the respondents, yielding a reliability coefficient of 0.88, which by implication was enough to adjudge the instrument as being reliable.

Administration of Instrument

The researcher, aided with information derived from the various Heads of Departments of the selected institutions used for the study, distributed, and retrieved the instrument used for the data collection. In order to effectively access the respondents, an introductory letter prepared by the researcher was presented to the Heads of Department of the selected tertiary institutions, for permission to access the brochure and contact

details of the graduates from the Department of Business Education for the period of 2015/2016 – 2018/2019 academic sessions.

Since, the researcher cannot reach the respondents face-to-face to administer the questionnaire, the researcher sent copies of the questionnaire to the respondents via social media platforms, like WhatsApp, Telegram, and Emails. Calls were put across to some of the respondents to aid distribution and retrieval of the instrument, and to clarify respondents who needed clarification on what the essence of the study was all about. At completion of the filling of the instrument, the respondents send back the instrument via the platform it was received.

Consequently, after distribution and retrieval of the distributed questionnaire; out of the distributed copies (331) 322 copies were returned and properly filled. Therefore, 322 was used for further analysis in the study.

Method of Data Analysis

Mean, Standard deviation, Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) were used to answer the research questions while the null hypotheses were tested using Regression Analysis, and Analysis of Covariance at the 0.05 significance level. However, the data analyses were carried out using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22.

Distribution of Questionnaire

Questionnaires were distributed representing 100%, 322 copies of questionnaire retrieved were properly filled, which represents 97.3%, as such 9 copies of the questionnaire representing 2.7% of the questionnaire were discarded because they were not properly filled. However, the table further indicated that more returns was gotten from Ignatius Ajuru University of Education Port Harcourt with 98%, followed by the Rivers State University with 97%, and lastly the Federal College of Education Technical (FCET) Omoku with 96%.

Decision Rule

The following interpretations were used for the analysis

±0.8	-	±1.0	Very strong
±0.6	-	±0.79	Strong
±0.4	-	±0.59	Moderate
±0.2	-	±0.39	Weak
±0.0	-	±0.19	Very Weak

Source: Etuk & Uchendu (2008).

Results and Discussion

Data Analysis and Result

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between technological skill competence and white-collar employment of Business Education graduates in Rivers State?

Table 1: Pearson's Product Moment Correlation analysis on the relationship between technological skill competence (TKSC) and white-collar employment (WTCE) of Business Education graduates in Rivers State

Variables	Mean	Std. Dev	N	r	Remark
TKSC	15.640	2.730	322	0.832	Very Strong
WTCE	14.550	2.419			

Source: SPSS Computation

Table 1 show the extent of the relationship between technological skill competence and white-collar employment of Business Education graduates in Rivers State. However, the result indicated that the relationship that exist between technological skill competence and white-collar employment of Business Education graduates in Rivers State is very strong ($r = 0.832$). The implication of this result is that the extent of relationship between technological skill competence and white-collar employment of Business Education graduates in Rivers State is very strong.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between technological skill competence and blue-collar employment of Business Education graduates in Rivers State?

Table 2: Pearson's Product Moment Correlation analysis on the relationship between technological skill competence (TKSC) and blue-collar employment (BLCE) of Business Education graduates in Rivers State

Variables	Mean	Std. Dev	N	r	Remark
TKSC	15.640	2.730	322	0.573	Moderate
BLCE	15.150	2.496			

Source: SPSS Computation

Table 2 show the extent of the relationship between technological skill competence and blue-collar employment of Business Education graduates in Rivers State. However, the result indicated that the relationship that exist between technological skill competence and blue-collar employment of Business Education graduates in Rivers State is moderate ($r = 0.573$). The implication of this result is that the extent of relationship between technological skill competence and blue-collar employment of Business Education graduates in Rivers State is moderate.

Research Question 3: What is the relationship between technological skill competence and entrepreneurial engagement of Business Education graduates in Rivers State?

Table 3: Pearson's Product Moment Correlation analysis on the relationship between technological skill competence (TKSC) and entrepreneurial engagement (ENLE) of Business Education graduates in Rivers State

Variables	Mean	Std. Dev	N	r	Remark
TKSC	15.640	2.730	322	0.739	Strong
ENLE	14.690	2.711			

Source: SPSS Computation

Table 3 show the extent of the relationship between technological skill competence and entrepreneurial engagement of Business Education graduates in Rivers State. However, the result indicated that the relationship that exist between technological skill competence and entrepreneurial engagement of Business Education graduates in Rivers State is strong ($r = 0.739$). The implication of this result is that the extent of relationship between technological skill competence and entrepreneurial engagement of Business Education graduates in Rivers State is strong.

Research Question 4: What is the moderating effect of willingness to learn on the relationship between competence needs and employability potentials of Business Education graduates in Rivers State?

Table 4: Regression analysis on the on the extent to which willingness to learn moderate the relationship between competence needs and employability potentials of Business Education graduates in Rivers State

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.585 ^a	0.342	0.340	20.251

a. Predictors: (Constant), CMPN

Table 4 show the moderating effect of willingness to learn on the relationship between competence needs and employability potentials of Business Education graduates in Rivers State. However, the result indicated that willingness to learn moderately intervenes in the relationship between competence needs and employability potentials of Business Education graduates in Rivers State ($R = 0.585$).

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between technological skill competence and white-collar employment of Business Education graduates in Rivers State.

Table 5: Summary of simple linear regression of the relationship between technological skill competence and white-collar employment of Business Education graduates in Rivers State

Variables	Coefficients	Std. Error	t	Sig.
(Constant)	9.946	0.741	13.416	0.000
TKSC	0.294	0.047	6.302	0.000*
R	0.832 ^a			
R-squared	0.610			
Adjusted R-squared	0.608			
F-statistic	231.285			
P-value	0.000 ^b			
df	320			

a. Dependent Variable: WTCE;

b. Independent Variable: TKSC

c. *Items show significant relationship with the dependent variable at the 0.05 level of significance

Source: SPSS Computation, 2021.

The result of Table 5 show that r-value of 0.832 indicates a very strong relationship between technological skill competence and white-collar employment of Business Education graduates in Rivers State. The r²-value of 0.610 indicated roughly the variation of 61% to the relationship between technological skill competence and white-collar employment of Business Education graduates in Rivers State. Furthermore, since, F-statistic = 231.291, t = 6.302, at df = 320, and p = 0.000 < 0.050, hence, null hypothesis seven is rejected at the 0.050 level of significance. Therefore, there is significant relationship between technological skill competence and white-collar employment of Business Education graduates in Rivers State.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between technological skill competence and blue-collar employment of Business Education graduates in Rivers State.

Table 6: Summary of simple linear regression of the relationship between technological skill competence and blue-collar employment of Business Education graduates in Rivers State

Variables	Coefficients	Std. Error	t	Sig.
(Constant)	6.956	0.665	10.461	0.000
TKSC	0.524	0.042	12.501	0.000*
R	0.573 ^a			
R-squared	0.328			
Adjusted R-squared	0.326			
F-statistic	156.283			
P-value	0.000 ^b			
df	320			

a. Dependent Variable: BLCE;

b. Independent Variable: TKSC

c. *Items show significant relationship with the dependent variable at the 0.05 level of significance

Source: SPSS Computation, 2021.

The result of Table 6 indicated that r-value of 0.573 reveals a moderate relationship between technological skill competence and blue-collar employment of Business Education graduates in Rivers State. The r²-value of 0.328 indicated roughly the variation of 33% to the relationship between technological skill competence and blue-collar employment of Business Education graduates in Rivers State. Furthermore, since, F-statistic = 156.283, t = 12.501, at df = 320, and p = 0.000 < 0.050, hence, null hypothesis eight is rejected at the 0.050 level of significance. Therefore, there is significant relationship between technological skill competence and blue-collar employment of Business Education graduates in Rivers State.

Hypothesis 7: There is no significant relationship between technological skill competence and entrepreneurial engagement of Business Education graduates in Rivers State.

Table 7: Summary of simple linear regression of the relationship between technological skill competence and entrepreneurial engagement of Business Education graduates in Rivers State

Variables	Coefficients	Std. Error	t	Sig.
(Constant)	3.216	0.593	5.420	0.000
TKSC	0.734	0.037	19.636	0.000*
R	0.739 ^a			
R-squared	0.546			
Adjusted R-squared	0.545			
F-statistic	385.575			
P-value	0.000 ^b			
df	320			

a. Dependent Variable: BLCE;

b. Independent Variable: TKSC

c. *Items show significant relationship with the dependent variable at the 0.05 level of significance

Source: SPSS Computation, 2021.

The result of Table 7 indicated that r-value of 0.739 reveals a strong relationship between technological skill competence and entrepreneurial engagement of Business Education graduates in Rivers State. The r²-value of 0.546 indicated roughly the variation of 55% to the relationship between technological skill competence and entrepreneurial engagement of Business Education graduates in Rivers State. Furthermore, since, F-statistic = 385.575, t = 19.636, at df = 320, and p = 0.000 < 0.050, hence, null hypothesis nine is rejected at the 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, there is significant relationship between technological skill competence and entrepreneurial engagement of Business Education graduates in Rivers State.

Hypothesis 4: There is no significant moderating effect of willingness to learn on the relationship between competence needs and employability potentials of Business Education graduates in Rivers State.

Table 8: Summary of Analysis of Covariance of the extent to which business willingness to learn moderate the relationship between competence needs and employability potentials of Business Education graduates in Rivers State

Dependent Variable: ENPP

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	7667.558a	13	589.812	26.045	0.000
Intercept	1924.108	1	1924.108	84.965	0.000
CMPN	548.324	1	548.324	24.213	0.000
WNL	2019.417	12	168.285	7.431	0.000
Error	6974.917	308	22.646		
Total	649083.000	322			
Corrected Total	14642.475	321			

a. R Squared = .524 (Adjusted R Squared = .504)

Source: SPSS Computation

Table 8 show that willingness to learn significantly moderate the relationship between competence needs and employability potentials of Business Education graduates in Rivers State ($F_{12} = 7.431$, $df = 308$, $p = 0.000 < 0.050$). Hence, null hypothesis ten was rejected at the 0.050 level of significant. The finding implied that there was significant moderating effect of willingness to learn on the relationship between competence needs and employability potentials of Business Education graduates in Rivers State.

Discussion of Findings

The study investigated the relationship between competence needs of Business Education graduates and employability potentials in Rivers State. However, the result showed the relationship that exists between technological skill competence and white-collar employment of Business Education graduates in Rivers State is very strong. The result also indicated that there is significant relationship between technological skill competence and white-collar employment of Business Education graduates in Rivers State. These findings are consistent with the study of Imeokparia and Kennedy (2012), which revealed Business Education graduate's employability skills, is high.

Further results showed the relationship that exists between technological skill competence and blue-collar employment of Business Education graduates in Rivers State is moderate as well as indicated that there is significant relationship between technological skill competence and blue-collar employment of Business Education graduates in Rivers State. This finding is consistent with the study carried out by Mong, and Oklocha (2019) which revealed that business education graduates possessed management and cost accounting competencies to a moderate extent.

Furthermore, the results showed the relationship that exists between technological skill competence and entrepreneurial engagement of Business Education graduates in Rivers State is strong and at the same time indicated that there is significant relationship between technological skill competence and entrepreneurial engagement of Business

Education graduates in Rivers State. These findings are consistent with the study of Binuomote and Okoli (2015) which revealed that business education students need technical and financial management skills to function well in this time of economic meltdown in Nigeria.

The result revealed that willingness to learn moderately intervenes on the relationship between competence needs and employability potentials of Business Education graduates in Rivers State. Furthermore, there is there was significant moderating effect of willingness to learn on the relationship between competence needs and employability potentials of Business Education graduates in Rivers State. This finding is corroborated by the study of Imeokparia and Kennedy (2012), which revealed Business Education graduates' employability skills is high.

Conclusion

The study investigated the relationship between competence needs of Business Education graduates and employability potentials in Rivers State. The results from the investigation revealed results favouring white-collar employment need for the investigated competence needs of Business Education graduates among the respondents that participated in this study. The study indicated that there was strong and significant relationship between technological skill competence and white-collar employment of Business Education graduates was very strong and significant. These results are indicative of the fact that in business education emphasis were placed more on the competence of graduates on white-collar employment than it is for blue-collar employment, and entrepreneurial engagement.

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that it is high time tertiary institutions in Rivers State liaise with government to finance in-service training and retraining of lecturers in the area of the technical-know-how of teaching what is required if graduates to be meaningful competent in blue-collar employment and entrepreneurial engagement, as a lecturer cannot give what he/she does not have. In addition, if tertiary institutions put in the necessary facilities in terms of information technology and other facilities needed for effective inculcation of business education knowledge, then graduates' communication skill competence, quantitative skill competence, and technological skill competence would improve significantly.

Recommendations

Considering the findings and conclusion of this study the following recommendations were proffered:

1. Tertiary institutions in Rivers State offering business education need to be provided with up-to-date learning facilities that would aid the effective teaching of communication skills.

2. There is need for policymakers to enact policies that would ensure that Government adequately fund education as to introduce vocational courses into business education curriculum in order that graduates can be technically inclined, so that they can easily fit into the any workplace and be fit to apply their technological skill in solving real life problems.
3. National University Commission (NUC) business educators with relevant ICT devices needed to acquire relevant technological skills for effective teaching and learning process.

REFERENCES

- Anyakoh, E. E. (2010). Towards enhancing the entrepreneurship skills of operators of home economics related business: Implication for entrepreneurship Education. In: T.I and N.P.M.E. *Empirical studies of social and economic implementation*. Vocational Research and Publication unit, Federal Colleges of Education (Technical), Umunzepp 64 – 74.
- Binuomote, M. O., & Okoli, B. E. (2015). Business education students' perception of skill needs for successful entrepreneurship in Nigeria. *International Journal of Education, Learning and Development*, 3(7), 27-34.
- Etuk, E. H. & Uchendu, B. A. (2008). *Basic Statistics with application*, 1. (1st ed.). Duke Press.
- Ezenwafor, J. I. (2012). Assessments of managerial challenges of entrepreneurs: Implication for entrepreneurship education. *UNIZIK Orient Journal of Education*, 5(2), 183-191.
- Fitzgerald, P. (2010). Enhancing employability in a final-year undergraduate module using group work and peer assessment. *Assessment, Learning and Teaching Journal*, 10, 3-5.
- Imeokparia, P.O., & Kennedy, G. (2012). Employability of business education graduates. *Educational Research*, 8, 645-651
- Jimah, M. S., Jimah, K. O. & Ebele, O. (2011). Skill and competency acquisition through symbols-based projects of CEDAP, Auchi Polytechnic. *Skill and Competency Acquisition MSJ Libraries*, 3(1), 23-37.
- Krejcie, R.V., & Morgan, D.W. (1970). Determining sample size for research activities. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 4, 3-6.
- Kubler, B. & Forbes, P. (2006). *Student employability profiles: A guide for employers*. The Council for Industry and Higher Education Publication.
- Mong, I. K., & Oklocha, C. C. (2019). Assessment of accounting competencies possessed by business education graduates for handling entrepreneurship challenges in Abia State, Nigeria. *International Journal of Accounting Research (IJAR)*, 4(2), 1-11.
- Njoku, C. U. (2006). *Business education and value orientation for national economic empowerment and development*. Paper presented at the Owo 2006 Annual Conference of the Association of Business Education of Nigeria (ABEN).

- Ogbuzuru, R. E. (2011). *Strategies for improving skill acquisition of building technology students in technical colleges in Ebonyi State*. Unpublished M. Ed. Thesis. Department of Vocational Teacher Education. University of Nigeria Press.
- Okoro, J. (2012). Assessment of accounting competencies possessed by postgraduate university business education students to handle entrepreneurship business challenges in Nigeria. *World Journal of Education*, 4(1), 1-10.
- Osuala, E. C, (2004). *Introduction to research methodology*. Africana-FEB Publishers.
- Rees, C., Forbes, P., & Kubler, B. (2007). *Student employability profiles: A guide for higher education practitioners*. <http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/ourwork/>
- Speelman, C. (2005). Skill acquisition: History, questions, and theories. In: Speelman C, Kinser K (eds.). *Beyond the learning curve: The construction of mind*. Oxford, Oxford University Press.
- Tymon, A. (2011). The student perspective on employability. *Studies in Higher Education*, 16, 44-58.
- Williams, I. P. (2003). *Land administration and cadastral trends*. Technical papers of N/FIG Conference on Land Tenure and Cadastral Infrastructures for Sustainable Development, 317-338.
- Yorke, M. (2006). Work-engaged learning: Towards a paradigm shift in assessment. *Quality in Higher Education*, 17(1), 117-130.