



**EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS NEEDED TO PREPARE FINAL YEAR DEGREE STUDENTS  
OF BUSINESS EDUCATION FOR GLOBAL WORK COMPETITION IN IMO STATE,  
NIGERIA**

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**Abstract**

*The study focused on employability skills needed to prepare final year business education degree students for global work competition. The population of the study comprised of 244 male and female final year business education degree students from all the tertiary institutions in Imo State. The instrument for data collection was a 13 items questionnaire. Cronbach Alpha Statistics was used to ascertain the reliability of the instrument. Hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance. Data collected was analyzed using mean and standard deviation. Result revealed that employability skills identified in this study is substantially needed to prepare the graduates of business education for global work competition. The result also indicated that the identified employability skills are needed to a very great extent to get the graduates of business education fortified to face the global work expectations and challenges. Conclusion was drawn and recommendations proffered among others that business educators should improve and update their knowledge and skills in line with the global work expectations. This will enable them impact same to the business education students to be able to tackle work challenges of the labour market.*

**Key words:** *Employability skills, needed to prepare, final year degree students, Business education and Global work competition.*

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**Introduction**

The capacity and capability of every graduate determines his salary placement in the labour market. A graduate with required work skill stands the chance to get a job in the labour market without difficulty all things being equal or in a good economy. Acquisition of appropriate general work skills (employability skills) in addition to the core specialization of the graduate is an edge in the work environment. Employability skill is that work value which enables one to acquire a job. It is also working skills that gives people selfconfidence, efficiency and portray the potentials of the employee in the work place. It also enables one to fit in and or get job anywhere in the world in view of the fact that employers of labour usually outline a set of skills needed in their establishments. Employability skill is acquired through academic or training programme. The programme is specified with a period of time and one is expected to acquire the skill at the end of the programme. Acquisition of employability skills increases work focused and related learning/ training programmes of activities in



preparation for prospective job and achieving employability qualification. The possession of employability skill is the major objective of the Business education programme.

### **Business Education Objectives and Implication for Unemployment**

Business Education is that education that prepares the individual for prospective work. The individuals/students of business education are trained and equipped with appropriate skills, knowledge, abilities and competence both mental and physical to be relevant in the labour market and contribute to the development of the economy. Business education empowers the individual with vocational skills and the competence to engage in productively activities, (National Policy on Education, 2004). Business education is really that programme meant prepare students to acquire employability skills for global work competition and eliminate or reduce drastically unemployment through the following goals

1. Inculcating and preparing students for opportunities to explore and establish self businesses
2. Inculcating and developing an intelligent understanding on the various occupant found in the world of businesses
3. Training and preparing individuals to be business teachers/business educators
4. Training and preparing individuals to develop possible interest and future career on business activities.
5. Training and preparing individual to perform business activities common to many other professional areas
6. Training individual on administrative decision and criteria thinking needed to meet the competitive business challenges
7. Training and develop individuals on management skills both private and public enterprise
8. Training and producing effective and efficient, secretarial, accounting, management and marketing experts and managers in the labour environment (Ogunrinbokun, Ojeme, & Salamu, 2015).

### **Employability Skills Needed in Addition to Core Areas of Specialization**

Every graduate of business education is expected to possess general employability skills in addition to the core professional skills. The following are the employability skills needed to equip the graduates of business education to be able to face the challenges of work expectations: communication ability, resilience (ability to absolve pressure or shock), technological ability, ability to get organized, self-confidence, professional ethics ability, thinking/analytical ability, positive attitude, team work, willingness to learn, human relation ability, ability to determine appropriate forms and style of document used in the office and competitive ability. This should be in addition to his/her core professional area.



**Communication** will enable the graduates to transmit information to persons/group pass instruction to subordinate colleagues and chat in the course of his/her work in line with set objectives. It is the only way a person or group of person transmits some type of information. Communication can be one or two ways process. One way communication is an instruction so to say, that is from the executive/management to subordinates. They may not come back to the boss but actions will be going-on; While two way communication is a situation where information is passed and a response/s is expected, (Davis and Qiue, 2016).

**Resilience** skill is the ability to absolve pressure or shock unchanged or undamaged. It is the ability to bounce back from adversity serious stress, difficulty, bade experience, unexpected disappointment lost of loved one. Resilient individuals are able to successfully cope with and adapt to any situation in the work place, (Job-Interview Site,2018).

**Technology** is the practical use of scientific skills and knowledge in the work place and in every day life activities. It is like 'fuel' or 'motive power' that keeps the engine on. Technology is a driving force that enables the business ideas and actualization of academic objectives (Iwu, 2014). Technology could also be seeing as a scientific methods, systems, devices, skills and knowledge used for practical purposes. It is also the use of modern technical skills, knowledge, devices and machines to communication and process the production of goods and services in the work environment (Atuenyi, 2010).

**Getting organized** is an organization skill demonstrating leadership acts like coordinating roles in the work place or community voluntarily participating in a long range planning initiative and strategic planning sessions.

**Self-confidence** is self assurance in one's personal judgment in performance, ability, power etc. Self confidence is acquired through experiences in regular activities in a particular thing. It is a positive belief in one self that in future one can generally accomplish what one wishes to do or be efficient and effective in the work environment.

**Professional ethics** encompasses the personal and corporate standards of behavior expected be professionals. It also implies quality of workmanship or service. Professional ethics is all about achieving success and influencing reputable excellence and improve work interest and personal ambition (Leando, 2014),

**Thinking/analytical** skills are the problem solving and decision making values. It is the mental processes that we apply when we seek to make sense of our experience. Thinking/analytical skills goes with what, who, where, when , why and how, these variables are associated with thinking skills to fathom the problem and profile solution. Thinking/analytical is critical and it is the peak of performance in every work environment. Thinking skill enable us to integrate each new experience into the schema that we are constructing on how we want something to be (Charity, 2018).



**Positive attitude** is something that goes deeper and has an effect beyond surface cheer. Positive attitude achieves positive result (Hasan, 2018). Attitude controls one's life and expression of people and situations. One's actions is as a result of his attitude which in-turn creates a reaction from others. Your positive attitude will attract positive achievements and positive work atmosphere in the work environment.

**Team work** is the ability to work together and coordinate work activities willingness to learn is desire and new things take corrections when necessary, get updated with current changes in your profession, be more qualified, efficient and effective in the work place.

**Willingness to learn** is the human desire, cheerfully consenting and readiness to acquire new knowledge and improve self. This also means that one wants to improve, be more qualified and be up to date with current changes in one's area of specialization (Wikipedia, 2015).

**Human relations** are ability to study human problems and behaviours arising from organizational and interpersonal relations. It is the process of training employees, addressing their needs, fostering a workplace culture between different employees or between employees and management.

**Determining appropriate forms and documents used in the office**, the style of usage, what there are used for and how it is used to achieve the work/job objectives. Employability skill development is that resources that supports teaching and learning that is aimed at improving learners knowledge and understanding of the workplace (Charity, 2018). Global employability skills are necessary for obtaining, sustaining and progressing in a job. Employability skills are well achieved when people's potentials are well developed.

### **Statement of the Problem**

There is the concern that the recruitment of graduates for work seems to be inadequately responded to employers demand. It appears that most students are not well prepared and equipped in some skills that can give them equal job opportunity in the labour market. This situation may render the graduates jobless and increase unemployment rate. The unemployment situation will certainly affect the individual, the family and the entire economy adversely. Unemployment as a result of lack of employability skills can also result to mental health, quarrels in the house, insecurity amongst employee, crime and violence, suicide cases, drug abuse, stigma of unemployment, low standard of living, frustration and loss of skill usage, armed robbery, internet fraud, oil bunkering, touting, hired assassins and poverty (Job Interview Site, 2018). Hence the need to ascertain empirically the employability skills needed to prepare students for global work competition.



### **Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of this study is to ascertain the employability skills needed to prepare final year degree students of business education for global work competition in Imo State. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Identify the employability skills needed for global work competition in Imo State
2. Ascertain the extent to which final year business education students acquired the global employability skills for global work competition in Imo State.

### **Research Questions**

1. What are the employability skills needed for global work competition?
2. To what extent do the identified employability skills suitable for global work competitions?

### **Hypotheses**

Two null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

- Ho<sub>1</sub> There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of female and male business education final year degree students on the needed employability skills to prepare them for global work competition.
- Ho<sub>2</sub> There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of female and male final year business education degree students on suitability of the identified employability skills for work competition.

### **Method**

The research adopted a descriptive survey design. This is because Nworgu (2006) sees survey research as that study which seeks opinion of population using questionnaire or interview. Survey research encompasses any measurement procedures that involve asking questions and getting answer/response from respondents.

The population of the study was 244 female and male (Female 133 and Male 111) final year business education students. Questionnaire was used as instrument for data collection. The instrument was divided into two parts. Part 1 solicited information from the male business education final year degree students on research questions 1 & 2, while part two solicited information from the female and male final year business education students on research questions 1 & 2. The instrument was developed based on modified 4 point likert scale designed to attract the following ratings for research question 1. Substantially needed, (SN-4), Needed (N-3), Undecided (UN-2) Not Needed (NN-1). The research question two was designed based on the following-Very great extent (VGE-4), Great extent (GE-3), Small extent (SE-2) and to no extent (TNE-1). The questions was validated by two business educators from Institute of Management and Technology (IMT) Enugu. The reliability index of 0.88 was obtained with Cronbach Alpha reliability co-efficient which indicated that the instruments was reliable and suitable for the study. Copies of the instrument were personally



administered to the Respondents. Contacts were established with the Heads of Department (HODs) of the different institutions used for the study as in when to revisit for retrieval of the completed instrument. We agreed on two weeks thereafter went back and collected the instrument from different institutions. 244 Copies of instrument was distributed and only 218 completed instruments was retrieved representing 95% return. Mean and standard deviation was used to analyze the data generated, while t-test was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance.

**Decision Rule**

It was agreed in this study that any mean score from 2.5 4.00 (SN and N) in research question 1, will be accepted. In research question 2, it was agreed as well that any mean score from 2.5 4.00 (VGE and GE ) will be accepted. Any items below the above scores will be rejected as not suitable for preparing the students for global work competition. Furthermore, if t-calculated exceeds t-critical, you accept hypothesis, otherwise reject the null hypothesis.

**Results**

**Research Question 1**

What are the employability skills needed to prepare business education students for global work competition?

**Table 1:** Mean ratings of the of needed employability skills to prepare business education students for global work competition:

S/N	Employability skills needed to prepare Business education students for global work competition	Male		Female	
		X	Decision	X	Decision
1.	Communication ability	3.61	SN	3.57	SN
2.	Resilience ability (ability to absolve pressure or shock undamaged)	3.27	N	2.98	N
3.	Technological Ability	3.81	SN	3.89	SN
4.	Get organized ability	3.15	N	3.25	N
5.	Self confidence	3.08	SN	2.96	SN
6.	Professional Ethics ability	3.81	SN	3.76	SN
7.	Thinking and Analytical ability	3.05	N	3.11	N
8.	Positive attitude ability	2.81	N	3.01	N
9.	Team work ability	3.15	N	2.98	N
10.	Willingness to learn ability	2.87	N	3.03	N
11.	Good Human Relation ability	2.91	N	2.89	N
12.	Ability to determine appropriate form and style of documents for use in the office	3.11	N	3.21	N
13.	Competitive ability	3.69	SN	3.58	SN



The data in Table 1 shows that items 1, 3, 6, and 13 represented substantially needed with mean 3.00 and above, while the other items represented needed, meaning that all the respondents agreed that the identified employability skill is seriously needed for preparing graduates of business education for global work competition.

**Question 2**

To what extent do the identified employability skills suitable for global work competition?

**Table 2:** Mean ratings of the identified employability skills suitable for global work competition.

S/N	Employability skills suitable for global male competition	Male Students			Female Students		
		X	SD	Decision	X	SD	Decision
1.	Community ability	3.70		VGE	3.81		VGE
2.	Residence ability (ability to absolute pressure or shock)	3.17		GE	3.15		GE
3.	Technological ability	3.70		VGE	3.73		VGE
4.	Get organized ability	3.44		GE	3.15		GE
5.	Self confidence	3.54		VGE	3.08		GE
6.	Professional ethic ability	3.65		VGE	3.63		VGE
7.	Thinking and analytical ability	3.38		GE	3.11		GE
8.	Positive attitude ability	3.10		GE	3.18		GE
9.	Teamwork ability	3.08		GE	3.03		GE
10.	Willingness to learn ability	3.51		VGE	3.23		GE
11.	Good human relation ability	3.10		GE	3.15		GE
12.	Ability to determine appropriate forms and style of document used in the office	3.18		GE	2.89		GE
13.	Competitive ability	3.61		VGE	3.57		VGE

The data in Table 2 above shows that items 1, 2, 5, 10, and 13 have mean 3.00 and above, which is very great extent and above the cutoff point. The other items represented Great extent, meaning that all the respondents agreed that the identified employability skills are suitable for global work competition.

**Hypothesis I**

There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of female and male business education final year degree students on the needed employability skills to prepare them for global work competition.

**Table 3:** Summary of t-test analysis of female and male final year business education degree students on the needed employability skills to prepare them for global work competition in Imo State.

Source of Variation	N	X	SDDf	t-cal	t-crt	Level of Sig	Remark
Female	117	3.53	0.71				
			54	0.43	1.96	0.05	SN
Male	101	3.68	0.91				

The data in 'Table 3' shows that there is a positive correlation between the female final year business education degree students on the needed employability skills to prepare them for global work competition.

### Hypothesis 2

There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of female and male final year business education degree students on the extent to which the identified employability skills suitable for global work competition.

**Table 4:** Summary of t-test of differences on the mean responses of female and male business education final year students on the extent to which the identified employability skills suitable for global work competition in Imo State.

Source of Variation	N	X	SD	Df	t-cal	t-crt	Level of Sig	Remark
Male	101	3.59	0.57					
				54	0.35	1.96	0.05	VGE
Female	117	3.56	0.55					

Table 4 shows that there is a correlation between the responses of both male and female final year business education students on the extent to which the identified employability skills suitable for global work competition

### Discussion of Findings

The results of this study obtained revealed and identified the skills substantially needed to prepare the degree students of business education for global work competition. This is in consonance with Bandaranike (2010) who stated that graduates need employability skill to be conversant with the expectations of the labour market. More so, Business education as a skilled programme is expected to produce graduates fortified and prepared for global work competition (Azubuike, 2004).

The identified employability skills in this study were needed to a very great extent to acquire the capability and the skills for global work competition. In line with what, Social Research Conference (2017) report stated that the employers of labour need a certificatory employability skill for efficiency and productivity. Employability skill is the peak of



performance in every work environment. Employability skills portray the people's work potentials in and give them self confidence and job security. Business education programme should in addition to the core course include the employability skilled courses that can fortify and equip students to face the challenges of global work expectations.

### **Conclusion**

Employability skills are the acquisition and expression of work capacity and capability. The employers of labour expect certain general skills from every prospective graduate's employee for both salary placement and efficiency. These employability skills can also be used for white collar job and self reliance (entrepreneurship). As such, the curriculum of business education should accommodate/include the employability cognitive skills generated by this study for global work competition and for further studies to enhance self for the world of work.

### **Recommendation**

Based on the findings of this study and conclusion drawn, the following recommendations are made:

1. Curriculum of business education should be reviewed from time to time and embrace the required global employability skills as identified by this study;
2. In view of high work expectations and technological emergence, business educators are expected to improve and update their knowledge and skills in line with the global work expectations. This will enable them impact same to the business education students.
3. Lecturers should pattern an evaluation method to arrest the students none seriousness in their academic work. This will enable form the students academically to perform in any working environment.

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