



Original Research Article

Business Education and Perceived Competency Development among Pre-Service Business Educators in Nigeria

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Article History

Received: 17.08.2026

Accepted: 09.10.2026

Published: 15.10.2026

Abstract: This study examined pre-service business educators' ratings of business education and competency development at FCT College of Education, Zuba-Abuja, Nigeria. Guided by Human Capital Theory, the study adopted a cross-sectional quantitative survey design. A census of 252 registered students was targeted and 232 usable responses were obtained for most questionnaire items, representing 92.1% coverage while one time-management item contained 224 responses. Data were collected with the Business Education and Competency Development Questionnaire (BECDQ), covering curriculum adequacy, entrepreneurship training, instructional delivery, practical learning experiences, communication, leadership and time management. The study used frequencies, percentages, weighted means, standard deviations and one-sample t-tests against the scale midpoint of 3.00. Ratings were favourable across all seven dimensions. Business Education recorded an overall weighted mean of 4.11, while Competency Development recorded 4.47. Among the dimensions, time management received the highest mean rating of 4.52, followed by leadership, 4.47 and communication, 4.43. Every item mean exceeded the criterion value significantly at $p < 0.001$. The findings provide institution-specific evidence that pre-service business educators perceive strong development of transferable competencies, particularly communication, time management and leadership, while instructional delivery remains comparatively less favourably evaluated. The study extends evidence on competency-oriented business education within the underrepresented Nigerian College of Education. The findings underscore the need for sustained experiential learning and stronger instructional delivery.

Keywords: Business Education, Competency Development, Communication Skills, Leadership Skills, Time Management, Pre-Service Business Educators.

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INTRODUCTION

Rapid technological advancement, globalization and evolving labour market demands have transformed the competencies required for success in contemporary organizations. Beyond technical expertise, employers increasingly emphasize transferable competencies such as communication, leadership and time management because these competencies support employability, workplace effectiveness and career progression

(Shek *et al.*, 2025; World Economic Forum, 2023). Consequently, higher education institutions are increasingly expected to produce graduates who possess not only disciplinary knowledge but also the professional competencies required to function effectively in dynamic workplace environments.

Business education has consequently assumed a strategic role in human capital development. Human Capital Theory posits that

Citation: Gidado, S. D., & Auru, O. H. (2026). Business Education and Perceived Competency Development among Pre-Service Business Educators in Nigeria. *Glob Acad J Humanit Soc Sci*, 8(5), 119-129. <https://doi.org/10.36348/gajhss.2026.v08i05.006>

educational investment enhances individuals' productive capacities through the acquisition of knowledge, skills and competencies (Becker, 1964; Schultz, 1961). Accordingly, contemporary business education extends beyond occupational preparation to develop entrepreneurial, managerial and employability competencies through competency-oriented curricula, entrepreneurship training, learner-centred instructional practices and experiential learning (Bell & Bell, 2020; Nwanaka, 2023; Ore & Hassan, 2023; Umo & Okon, 2023). These educational experiences are expected to strengthen communication, leadership and time management competencies, which collectively underpin competency development and professional preparedness (Aeon & Aguinis, 2017; Alvarez Sainz *et al.*, 2019; Chan & Cho, 2022; Ryu & Shim, 2020; Uaikhanova *et al.*, 2022).

The importance of competency development is particularly evident within Nigerian Colleges of Education, where business education programmes have over time prepared future teachers, entrepreneurs and administrative professionals. As pre-service business educators, students are expected to acquire communication, leadership and time management competencies and subsequently model these competencies in their professional practice. Their level of preparedness therefore has implications not only for their own employability but also for the quality of entrepreneurship and business education delivered to future learners. Despite these expectations, evidence from developing economies suggests that many graduates continue to experience employability challenges associated with inadequate transferable competencies despite possessing relevant academic qualifications (Shek *et al.*, 2025; World Economic Forum, 2023). Employers consistently report deficiencies in communication, leadership and time management skills, while educational institutions continue to face criticism regarding the workplace readiness of graduates. Within business education, this concern raises important questions regarding the extent to which existing programmes effectively foster the competencies required for contemporary professional practice.

Several studies have provided useful evidence on entrepreneurship education, curriculum effectiveness and employability outcomes (Giami & Emeni, 2025; Oroka & Igberaharha, 2024; Umo & Okon, 2023). However, these studies have generally examined entrepreneurial competence, employability or individual soft skills independently, providing limited understanding of competency development as a multidimensional construct. Furthermore, available Nigerian evidence remains far-flung across particular educational experiences

and individual competency outcomes, leaving limited understanding of how major dimensions of Business Education and transferable competencies are perceived within an integrated framework among pre-service business educators. Consequently, empirical understanding of how business education contributes to competency development among pre-service business educators within Colleges of Education remains split from reported studies.

Against this background, the study examines pre-service business educators' ratings of business education and competency development within the Nigerian College of Education context. It treats curriculum adequacy, entrepreneurship training, instructional delivery and practical learning experiences as dimensions of business education, while communication, leadership and time management represent dimensions of competency development. This framing permits an evidence-based assessment of the observed strength of each educational and competency domain while responding to the contextual gap identified in the literature.

Research Objectives

The main objective is to assess pre-service business educators' ratings of business education and competency development. Specifically, the study seeks to:

- i. Assess curriculum adequacy within the business education programme;
- ii. Measure entrepreneurship training within the business education programme;
- iii. Evaluate instructional delivery within the business education programme;
- iv. Assess practical learning experiences within the business education programme;
- v. Determine the extent of communication skills development among pre-service business educators;
- vi. Ascertain the extent of leadership skills development among pre-service business educators; and
- vii. Determine the extent of time management skills development among pre-service business educators.

Research Questions

The following research questions guide the study:

- i. To what extent is the business education curriculum adequate for contemporary professional preparation?
- ii. To what extent does the programme provide entrepreneurship training?
- iii. To what extent is instructional delivery supportive of competency development?
- iv. To what extent does the programme provide practical learning experiences?

- v. To what extent do pre-service business educators perceive that they have developed communication skills?
- vi. To what extent do pre-service business educators perceive that they have developed leadership skills?
- vii. To what extent do pre-service business educators perceive that they have developed time management skills??

Research Hypothesis

H01: Pre-service business educators' mean ratings of the Business Education and Competency Development indicators do not differ significantly from the theoretical neutral midpoint of the response scale.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Concept of Business Education

Business education refers to a specialized area of vocational and technical education that equips learners with entrepreneurial, managerial and employability competencies required for effective participation in contemporary work environments. Osuala (2004) viewed business education as preparation for business occupations and intelligent economic participation, while Nwanaka (2023) emphasized its role in sustainable development through innovation, research and skills acquisition. Contemporary scholarship conceptualizes business education as a competency-based educational system that integrates theoretical knowledge with practical learning experiences to enhance professional preparedness. In this study, business education is examined through four dimensions: curriculum adequacy, entrepreneurship training, instructional delivery and practical learning experiences. Together, these dimensions represent major programme experiences through which pre-service business educators develop professionally relevant competencies.

Concept of Competency Development

Competency development refers to the systematic process through which individuals acquire, refine and apply the knowledge, skills, behaviours and attitudes required for effective professional performance. Contemporary literature conceptualises competency development as multidimensional, encompassing transferable capabilities that strengthen employability, workplace adaptability and lifelong learning. Human Capital Theory further explains competency development as an outcome of educational investment that enhances individuals' productive capacities. In this study, competency development is examined through communication, leadership and time management skills as interrelated dimensions of professional preparedness among pre-service business educators.

Dimensions of Competency Development Communication Skills

Communication skills refer to the ability to effectively convey, receive and interpret information in interpersonal, organizational and professional contexts. Afolabi *et al.*, (2021) describe these skills as competencies that sustain effective professional relationships, while Chan and Cho (2022) emphasize their role in enhancing collaboration, creativity and organizational performance. In this study, communication skills denote the ability of pre-service business educators to exchange ideas effectively for professional and entrepreneurial competence.

Leadership Skills

Leadership skills refer to the competencies that enable individuals to influence, motivate and guide others toward achieving organizational and professional goals. Ryu and Shim (2020) describe leadership as a developmental behaviour that enhances engagement and organizational effectiveness, while Uaikhanova *et al.*, (2022) view it as a learnable competence strengthened through education and training. In this study, leadership skills denote the ability of pre-service business educators to demonstrate effective coordination, initiative and decision-making.

Time Management Skills

Time management skills refer to the ability to effectively plan, prioritize and organize time to accomplish tasks and achieve goals. Macan *et al.*, (1990) conceptualized time management as behavioural patterns associated with planning and control over time, while Aeon and Aguinis (2017) described it as a multidimensional competence that enhances productivity, performance and well-being. In this study, time management skills denote the ability of pre-service business educators to manage time effectively for academic and professional effectiveness.

Review of Previous Studies Business Education

Empirical evidence consistently indicates that business education enhances entrepreneurial competence, employability and workforce preparedness through competency-oriented curricula, entrepreneurship training, effective instructional practices and practical learning experiences. Collectively, these educational dimensions facilitate the acquisition of transferable competencies required for professional and entrepreneurial effectiveness.

Studies on curriculum adequacy demonstrate that competency-oriented curricula significantly strengthen entrepreneurial competence and employability. Umo and Okon (2023) and Ore

and Hassan (2023) found that relevant business education curricula improve entrepreneurial skills through the integration of theoretical and practical learning experiences. However, both studies emphasized entrepreneurial competence rather than communication, leadership and time management as dimensions of competency development. Evidence on entrepreneurship training similarly suggests that entrepreneurship-oriented instruction promotes communication, interpersonal and employability competencies (Oroka & Igberaharha, 2024; Umoh, 2023). While these findings support the contribution of entrepreneurship training to behavioural competence development, they examined entrepreneurship education largely in isolation from other dimensions of business education.

Research on instructional delivery further shows that learner-centred, experiential and service-learning approaches enhance competence development by improving communication, collaboration and employability-related skills (Bell & Bell, 2020; Gbadamosi & Oladele, 2025). Likewise, studies on practical learning experiences report that internships, structured learning activities and experiential engagement strengthen leadership, decision-making and time management competencies among business education students (Alvarez Sainz *et al.*, 2019; Okeke & Okolocha, 2022). Nevertheless, these studies treat practical learning as an independent educational experience rather than as a component of an integrated business education framework.

Overall, the literature provides substantial evidence suggesting that curriculum adequacy, entrepreneurship training, instructional delivery and practical learning experiences contribute to competence development. Existing studies nevertheless remain split because they often examine these dimensions separately and often emphasize entrepreneurial or employability outcomes. The present study therefore evaluates the four educational dimensions alongside communication, leadership and time management within one College of Education context.

Competency Development

Communication Competence as a Dimension of Competency Development

Empirical evidence consistently identifies communication skills as critical determinants of employability, entrepreneurial effectiveness and workplace performance. Studies by Afolabi *et al.*, (2021) and Udie and Nwosu (2023) demonstrate that competencies such as effective listening, oral expression and message clarity enhance professional relationships and workplace effectiveness. While these studies establish the importance of

communication competence, they primarily regard it as a prerequisite for professional success rather than as an educational outcome developed through business education.

Subsequent studies have examined communication competence from an educational perspective. Otamiri and Amadi (2022) found that active listening contributes to entrepreneurial development among business education students, although their focus was limited to a single communication dimension. Similarly, Oroka and Igberaharha (2024) reported that entrepreneurship education predicts communication skills acquisition among business education students, strengthening evidence that educational experiences may contribute to communication development. However, existing studies vary considerably in population, educational context and the aspects of communication examined. Some focus on entrepreneurs, others on general pre-service teachers or university students, while relatively limited evidence addresses communication competence among pre-service business educators in Colleges of Education. The present study extends this evidence by examining communication alongside leadership and time management within a common competency-development framework.

Overall, the literature confirms that educational experiences can strengthen communication competence. However, existing evidence spans different populations and contexts, while relatively few studies focus directly on pre-service business educators. The present study addresses this contextual gap by assessing communication alongside leadership and time management within the same business education population.

Leadership Competence as a Dimension of Competency Development

Empirical evidence consistently identifies leadership skills as critical determinants of entrepreneurial success, professional effectiveness and organizational performance. Studies by Ryu and Shim (2020) and Awotunde and Aregbeshola (2025) demonstrate that developmental, transformational and participative leadership enhance employee engagement, innovation and organizational outcomes. While these studies establish leadership as a performance-enhancing competence, they narrowed their enquiry to workplace and entrepreneurial settings rather than on leadership development through formal education.

Within business education, available evidence suggests that educational experiences contribute to leadership competence. Okeke and

Okolocha (2022) reported that internship participation strengthens decision-making, coordination and responsibility among business education students, while Gidado (2020) identified institutional factors influencing entrepreneurial and leadership-related skill acquisition in Colleges of Education. Similarly, Oluwalola (2021) found that lecturers and students regarded leadership as an important employability competence for business education graduates. However, these studies either examined leadership as part of a broader soft-skills construct or focused on specific educational experiences rather than the overall influence of business education programmes.

Methodologically, Uaikhanova *et al.*, (2022) provided stronger evidence by demonstrating that structured leadership development programmes significantly improve leadership knowledge and behaviour among university students. Nevertheless, their investigation centred on an intervention programme rather than regular business education. Overall, existing evidence indicates that educational experiences can strengthen leadership competence. However, the literature remains divided across employees, entrepreneurs, university students and participants in specific educational interventions. Within Nigerian business education, relatively limited evidence examines leadership competence specifically among pre-service business educators in Colleges of Education. Moreover, leadership is often investigated independently of other transferable competencies, providing limited understanding of how pre-service business educators perceive leadership alongside communication and time management within their broader competency development. The present study addresses this contextual and integrative gap by assessing leadership as one dimension of competency development among pre-service business educators within the same institutional setting.

Time Management Competence as a Dimension of Competency Development

Empirical evidence consistently demonstrates that effective time management enhances academic performance, productivity and well-being through improved planning, prioritization and task execution. Foundational research by Macan *et al.*, (1990) established that students with stronger time management behaviours achieve better academic outcomes and experience lower stress, while the systematic review by Aeon and Aguinis (2017) confirmed that time management improves performance across educational and workplace settings. Although these studies establish the value of time management, they do not explain how business education specifically develops this competency.

Subsequent studies have examined time management from an educational perspective. Alvarez Sainz *et al.*, (2019) demonstrated that structured learning activities strengthen planning, prioritization and self-management, supporting the view that time management is a teachable competence rather than merely a personal habit. Similarly, Zuo *et al.*, (2025) found that future-oriented time management behaviours positively predict academic performance among first-year college students, while Fu *et al.*, (2025) reported that effective time management enhances study engagement through improved self-control and reduced mobile phone dependence. Patzak *et al.*, (2025) further associated time management with productivity and workforce development. Collectively, these studies provide robust evidence that educational experiences and behavioural practices contribute to time management competence.

Despite this growing body of evidence, the literature remains rather diverse. Existing studies predominantly examine time management as a general study behaviour, psychological resource or predictor of academic performance rather than as a competency developed through business education. Most investigations focus on general student populations and rely on predictive or intervention-based designs, providing limited evidence regarding the contribution of routine business education programmes to time management competence among pre-service business educators. More broadly, the reviewed literature suggests that communication, leadership and time management represent interconnected dimensions of competency development. However, relatively few studies examine these competencies together among pre-service business educators within Nigerian Colleges of Education. This contextual and integrative gap provides the foundation for the present study.

The reviewed literature indicates that business education supports competency development through curriculum adequacy, entrepreneurship training, learner-centred instructional delivery and experiential learning. Communication, leadership and time management are likewise associated with employability, workplace effectiveness and professional preparedness. Yet Nigerian evidence remains disproportionate across individual educational experiences and isolated competency outcomes. The present study addresses this contextual and empirical gap by examining the seven dimensions within one integrated survey of pre-service business educators in a College of Education setting.

Theoretical Review

Human Capital Theory (Schultz, 1961; Becker, 1964) posits that education is an investment that enhances productive capacities through knowledge, skills and competencies. Contemporary applications suggest that educational investment strengthens employability and professional effectiveness by developing transferable competencies (Psacharopoulos & Patrinos, 2018). In this study, business education represents a structured human capital formation process expressed through curriculum, entrepreneurship training, instructional delivery and practical learning. Communication, leadership and time management represent competency outcomes relevant to professional preparedness. Human Capital Theory therefore provides the conceptual basis for interpreting favourable ratings of these educational and competency dimensions as evidence of perceived human capital development.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a cross-sectional quantitative survey design to assess business education and competency development among pre-service business educators. The population comprised all 252 registered students in the Department of Business Education, FCT College of Education, Zuba-Abuja, during the 2025/2026 academic session. A census approach was used because the population was manageable. The available dataset contained 232 responses for 34 of the 35 substantive items, equivalent to 92.1% of the target population. TMS3 contained 224 responses and was analysed using its valid responses.

Data were collected using the Business Education and Competency Development Questionnaire (BECDQ) developed by the researchers and content validated by two experts. The instrument comprised 35 substantive items measured on a five-point scale from Very Low Extent (1) to Very High Extent (5). Business Education was represented by curriculum adequacy, entrepreneurship training, instructional delivery and practical learning experiences. Competency Development was represented by communication, leadership and time management skills. The analysis retained these seven dimensions as theoretically defined analytical domains.

Descriptive statistics comprising frequencies, percentages, weighted means and standard deviations were used to summarize respondents' ratings across the seven analytical dimensions. One-sample tests against the scale midpoint of 3.00 were conducted to determine whether item-level mean ratings differed significantly from the neutral reference point. Dimension-level means were computed descriptively from the aggregated item frequencies and were not treated as respondent-level composite scores. This analytical approach reflects the structure of the available data while preserving the inferential limitations associated with aggregated responses. For each item, the weighted mean was computed as $\sum fx/N$, where x represents the response weights 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1. Means above 3.00 indicate ratings above the scale midpoint, while standard deviations describe the dispersion of responses. The one-sample t statistic was used to compare each item mean with the scale midpoint of 3.00, with statistical significance evaluated at $\alpha = 0.05$.

Table 1: Operationalization of Study Dimensions

Analytical Domain		
Conceptual Domain	Analytical Dimension	Indicators
Business Education	Curriculum Adequacy	Curriculum relevance, industry alignment, entrepreneurship content
	Entrepreneurship Training	Venture creation exposure, opportunity recognition, innovation exercises
	Instructional Delivery	Learner-centered methods, simulations, project-based learning
	Practical Learning Experiences	Internship, practicum, field projects
Competency Development	Communication Skills	Oral communication, written communication, interpersonal communication
	Leadership Skills	Decision-making, initiative, coordination
	Time Management Skills	Planning, prioritization, task scheduling

RESULTS

Descriptive Results by Study Dimension

Table 2: Descriptive Summary of the Seven Study Dimensions

Dimension	Weighted mean	VHE + HE (%)
Curriculum Adequacy (CA)	4.15	80.9
Entrepreneurship Training (ET)	4.18	80.6
Instructional Delivery (ID)	4.00	75.6
Practical Learning Experiences (PLE)	4.10	79.3
Communication Skills (CS)	4.43	89.6
Leadership Skills (LS)	4.47	92.2
Time Management Skills (TMS)	4.52	95.1

All seven dimensions were rated above the scale midpoint. Within Business Education, entrepreneurship training received the highest mean of 4.18, followed by curriculum adequacy, 4.15, practical learning experiences, 4.10 and instructional delivery, 4.00. The pooled descriptive mean across the 20 Business Education items was 4.11, with 79.1% of item-responses falling in the high or very

high categories. Competency Development received stronger ratings: time management recorded a mean of 4.52, leadership, 4.47 and communication, 4.43. Across the 15 competency items, the pooled mean was 4.47 and 92.3% of item-responses were high or very high.

Item-Level Inferential Results

Table 3: Item-Level Means and Tests against the Scale Midpoint

Item	N	Mean	SD	t	p
CA1	232	4.49	0.83	27.39	< 0.001
CA2	232	4.09	0.89	18.63	< 0.001
CA3	232	4.25	1.00	18.89	< 0.001
CA4	232	3.85	1.23	10.54	< 0.001
CA5	232	4.06	1.19	13.61	< 0.001
ET1	232	4.39	1.05	20.12	< 0.001
ET2	232	4.23	0.92	20.27	< 0.001
ET3	232	4.09	1.08	15.30	< 0.001
ET4	232	4.24	0.90	21.04	< 0.001
ET5	232	3.97	1.13	13.04	< 0.001
ID1	232	4.12	1.07	15.91	< 0.001
ID2	232	4.14	1.06	16.45	< 0.001
ID3	232	4.06	0.97	16.66	< 0.001
ID4	232	3.81	1.01	12.30	< 0.001
ID5	232	3.87	1.20	11.06	< 0.001
PLE1	232	4.32	1.02	19.83	< 0.001
PLE2	232	4.00	0.99	15.33	< 0.001
PLE3	232	4.07	1.02	16.05	< 0.001
PLE4	232	3.99	1.17	12.95	< 0.001
PLE5	232	4.10	1.27	13.14	< 0.001
CS1	232	4.52	0.66	34.79	< 0.001
CS2	232	4.22	0.87	21.26	< 0.001
CS3	232	4.59	0.66	36.94	< 0.001
CS4	232	4.41	0.78	27.31	< 0.001
CS5	232	4.41	0.73	29.36	< 0.001
LS1	232	4.48	0.76	29.80	< 0.001
LS2	232	4.35	0.72	28.66	< 0.001
LS3	232	4.44	0.79	27.86	< 0.001
LS4	232	4.50	0.64	35.71	< 0.001
LS5	232	4.59	0.62	39.08	< 0.001
TMS1	232	4.72	0.49	53.44	< 0.001
TMS2	232	4.46	0.70	32.01	< 0.001
TMS3	224	4.57	0.62	37.68	< 0.001

Item	N	Mean	SD	t	p
TMS4	232	4.47	0.78	28.78	< 0.001
TMS5	232	4.39	0.61	34.49	< 0.001

Every item mean exceeded 3.00 significantly as shown by all $p < 0.001$. The smallest item mean occurred for ID4 ($M = 3.81$, $SD = 1.01$), while the largest occurred for TMS1 ($M = 4.72$, $SD = 0.49$). Every item mean significantly exceeded the scale midpoint of 3.00, with probability values below 0.001. The lowest mean occurred for ID4 at 3.81, SD 1.01, while TMS1 recorded the highest mean of 4.72, with SD of 0.49. All item-level tests produced probability values below 0.001, indicating that the mean ratings were significantly above the scale midpoint of 3.00. Accordingly, the null hypothesis was rejected at the item level, demonstrating consistently favourable ratings across the measured aspects of Business Education and Competency Development.

DISCUSSION

The findings show that respondents evaluated all four Business Education dimensions positively. Entrepreneurship training produced the highest mean within the educational domain, closely followed by curriculum adequacy and practical learning experiences. This pattern supports the view that business education extends beyond disciplinary knowledge to include opportunity recognition, applied learning and professional preparation. It is consistent with Bell and Bell (2020), who argued that experiential entrepreneurship education can develop skills and entrepreneurial mindsets when pedagogy actively engages learners. The comparatively lower rating for Instructional Delivery, particularly ID4 and ID5, suggests that respondents evaluated the curriculum and broader learning opportunities more favourably than certain aspects of instructional practice, especially the use of simulations and the provision of lecturer feedback during classroom learning. This distinction is important because curriculum quality alone cannot guarantee competency formation without effective pedagogical delivery.

Competency Development received particularly strong ratings, with communication skills recording a mean of 4.43. This finding indicates that respondents perceived strong development of their ability to express ideas, listen effectively and engage in professional interaction. The result is consistent with Udie and Nwosu (2023), who identified communication competence as important for the workplace performance of Business Education graduates, and Otamiri and Amadi (2022), who linked active listening with entrepreneurial development among Business Education students. It also aligns more directly with Oroka and Igberaharha

(2024), who reported that entrepreneurship education contributes to communication-skills acquisition among Business Education students. The present finding extends this evidence to pre-service business educators in a College of Education context, where communication competence is relevant not only to employability and entrepreneurship but also to their future instructional and professional responsibilities. From the perspective of Human Capital Theory, the strong communication rating suggests that students perceive transferable communication capabilities as an important component of their professional development alongside technical Business Education knowledge.

Leadership skills recorded a mean of 4.47, with more than nine in ten pooled item-responses falling within the high or very high categories, indicating strong perceived development of leadership competence among the respondents. This finding is consistent with Okeke and Okolocha (2022), who found that Business Education students perceived internship experiences as contributing to leadership skill development. It also aligns with the broader evidence of Ryu and Shim (2020) linking developmental leadership and skill development with work engagement. The present finding suggests that pre-service business educators perceive themselves as developing initiative, coordination, responsibility and decision making capacities relevant to their future educational and workplace roles. From a human capital perspective, these capabilities constitute transferable competencies that can strengthen professional preparedness beyond technical Business Education knowledge.

Time management received the highest competency rating, with a mean of 4.52, indicating that respondents perceived particularly strong development of their ability to plan, prioritise and manage tasks effectively. This finding is consistent with Alvarez Sainz *et al.*, (2019), who demonstrated that structured learning experiences can strengthen planning and self-organisation, and with Aeon and Aguinis (2017), whose review associates effective time-management practices with improved performance and well-being. The prominence of time management in the present study is particularly relevant to the preparation of business educators, whose future professional responsibilities require the coordination of instructional activities, deadlines and competing work demands. From a human capital perspective, the finding suggests that students regard effective management of time and responsibilities as

an important transferable capability within their professional preparation.

The item-level hypothesis tests further reinforce the consistency of these findings. All the measured aspects of Business Education and Competency Development recorded mean ratings significantly above the scale midpoint of 3.00, with probability values below 0.001, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. This pattern indicates that the favourable assessments were evident across the individual indicators rather than being driven by a limited number of highly rated items. The consistency across curriculum adequacy, entrepreneurship training, instructional delivery, practical learning, communication, leadership and time management provides broader evidence that respondents viewed both their educational experiences and competency development positively.

The overall findings reinforce the central premise of Human Capital Theory view that structured educational experiences contribute to the development of knowledge and competencies required to enhance individuals' productive capacities. The consistently favourable ratings across communication, leadership and time management suggest that pre-service business educators recognise these competencies as important outcomes of their educational experiences. The pattern further indicates that competency development extends beyond disciplinary knowledge to encompass transferable capabilities that support professional preparedness, workplace adaptability and employability. Within the Business Education framework, the findings underscore the importance of aligning relevant curriculum content with entrepreneurship training, effective instructional practices and practical learning experiences to strengthen the human capital formation of future business educators.

CONCLUSION

This study provides evidence that pre-service business educators hold favourable perceptions of both their Business Education experiences and the development of competencies required for professional practice. Curriculum adequacy, entrepreneurship training, instructional delivery and practical learning experiences received favourable ratings, while communication, leadership and time management recorded particularly strong assessments. The comparatively lower rating of instructional delivery, however, highlights an area requiring greater attention, particularly in translating curriculum objectives into engaging and practice-oriented learning experiences. Viewed through Human Capital Theory, the findings underscore the importance of educational

experiences that develop disciplinary knowledge alongside productive and transferable competencies. The findings also have important implications for the future of Business Education pedagogy in Nigeria. As contemporary workplaces increasingly require graduates who can communicate effectively, exercise initiative, manage responsibilities and adapt their knowledge to professional situations, Business Education pedagogy should increasingly emphasise competency-oriented learning. Greater integration of simulations, collaborative projects, workplace experiences, entrepreneurial activities and developmental feedback can provide richer opportunities for students to apply knowledge and strengthen professional competencies. The continuing relevance of Business Education therefore rests on its capacity to integrate disciplinary knowledge with communication, leadership and time management competencies required for effective professional practice and the preparation of future business educators.

Recommendations

The Department should strengthen learner-centred instructional delivery through simulations, project-based learning, structured feedback and other active pedagogies.

The programme should sustain and deepen entrepreneurship training, particularly opportunity recognition, innovation exercises and applied venture-development activities.

Practical learning should remain integral to the programme through internships, practicum and field-based projects that connect classroom knowledge with professional settings.

Communication, leadership and time management should be explicitly embedded in course activities and assessment tasks to improve the preservice teachers' proficiency.

Limitations and Further Research

The study's descriptive design limits examination of complex relationships among the constructs. Future studies should extend the analysis using respondent-level and multi-institutional data, applying confirmatory factor analysis, multiple regression or structural equation modelling (SEM) to test relationships and strengthen understanding of how Business Education contributes to competency development.

Acknowledgement

The authors gratefully acknowledge the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) for providing financial support for this study through its Institution-Based Research (IBR) grant.

Declaration of Interest

The authors declare that they have no known financial or non-financial competing interests that could have influenced or jeopardize the conduct or reporting of this study.

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