

Entrepreneurial Competencies of University Graduates and Their Usefulness to Business Management

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Abstract

Entrepreneurial competencies can help your success as a business owner. These are fundamental personality traits that can result in exceptional knowledge, abilities, and attitudes, as well as considerable job performance that is conducive to entrepreneurship. The purpose of this study was to examine the level of entrepreneurial competencies of University graduates and their use in business management. Ninety respondents comprised of business owners answered the questionnaire. Furthermore, it was determined that business owners who graduated from the University held these entrepreneurial competencies considerably and found it moderately useful. Furthermore, no significant differences in the level of entrepreneurial competencies are found when respondents are divided by age, gender, business type, and length of operation. However, there is significant difference in the level of entrepreneurial competencies when respondents are group according to department. This study indicates that entrepreneurial competencies are necessary for professional success in today's employment market. Due to the current level of complexity and unpredictability, this type of expertise is essential to drive global and digital change, generate valuable commodities, and develop creative services as part of a team. In this way, the abilities that support the behaviors enable us to focus and be receptive to novelty, develop value, and communicate effectively.

Keywords: *Entrepreneurial Competencies, Business Management, University of Saint Louis*

Article History:

Received: February 27, 2023

Accepted: March 22, 2023

Revised: March 19, 2023

Published online: April 2, 2023

Suggested Citation:

Catacutan, K., Domingo, N.T., Ojerio, C., Ubias, N. & Bartolome, M. (2023). Entrepreneurial Competencies of University Graduates and Their Usefulness to Business Management. *The Research Probe*, Volume 3 (1), 52-62.

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**This paper is presented at the 4th Northern Philippines Business Research Conference hosted by Northwestern University*



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Introduction

Entrepreneurship has been a desirable career choice, assuming prior intention exists (Hattab, 2014). Equipping students with the skills required for being self-employed has been considered an effective method to address the changing marketplace requirements. Entrepreneurship as a production component has increasingly been recognized as an influential aspect of modern economies. It is a source of economic growth that produces new job opportunities and gets into new markets (Sabella et al., 2014). Entrepreneurship remains the suitable option to create jobs, eliminate unemployment and poverty and empower the youths to establish businesses, pursue their goals and contribute to total productive capacity and national economic growth and development (Lemo, 2013). They are promoting the development of entrepreneurial skills which can assist individuals in transforming issues into business possibilities. Gone are the days when jobs were accessible everywhere, both in the private and public sectors of the economy, and businesses went about seeking potential employees to employ, for the importance of entrepreneurial skills' development of every graduate cannot be over-emphasized. By fostering a culture that nurtures entrepreneurial skills, universities may play a significant role in societal development (Audretsch et al., 2014), which enables individuals to complete the variety of responsibilities required to find and act on new businesses (Karlsson & Moberg, 2013). During an entrepreneurship course, students' self-assessed skills declined since they were exposed to problems that made them understand the insufficiency of their skills to tackle the hurdles faced during the entrepreneurial process. Thus, this research is proposed to determine the level of entrepreneurial competencies of University graduates of a private Higher Education Institution (HEI) in the Philippines and its usefulness in business management.

Methodology

The study utilized a descriptive quantitative research design. The respondents of the study were graduates of a private university in the Philippines. Purposive and snowball sampling method was used to select 90 respondents. The criteria of the respondents are the following: (1) should be a University graduate and (2) should own a business. The study used a questionnaire to gather the data needed. The questionnaire was divided into two (2) parts. Part 1 is about the profile of the respondents and the profile of the business while part 2 is about the level of entrepreneurial competencies and their usefulness to business management. The questions were

adapted from the questionnaire used by Akhmetshin and Lukiyanchina (2019). After the data was collected, it was analyzed and interpreted. The data gathered was analyzed through descriptive and inferential statistics. Using frequency and percentage, the profile of the respondents and the profile of the business were analyzed. The entrepreneurial competencies and their usefulness to business management were analyzed using mean. Lastly, an independent sample t-test and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) were used to test if there is a significant difference in the level of entrepreneurial competencies when grouped according to profile.

Findings

Results revealed that initiative received the highest score across all entrepreneurial competencies tested. This demonstrated that business owners were eager to accomplish things without being told. They have a strong ability to act, plan, decide, and seize chances on their own. The “initiative” competency scores demonstrated this. However, assessing new business opportunities got the lowest score. The analysis revealed that business owners have difficulty evaluating new ideas, establishing a business idea, or entering a new business sector; they have no idea how business opportunities are evaluated and alternatives are explored. This is similar to the findings of Akhmetshin et al. (2019), who discovered that students develop more in establishing personal qualities such as initiative, whereas problem-solving and identifying new business opportunities are the least developed skills. It has been argued that the active nature of the entrepreneur is a central element of entrepreneurship. It uses initiative to understand the implications of an active approach to entrepreneurship from the study of Tornau et al. (2013). Employee and entrepreneur studies have also revealed that initiative is an essential aspect of performance. Lans et al. (2011) stated that businesses could change resources, rearrange institutional arrangements, and develop new competencies, innovations, and procedures to obtain market opportunities. However, their research findings showed that business owners still lack the necessary skills to assess business opportunities. Furthermore, the results demonstrated that entrepreneurs possess the vision necessary to develop their businesses, even when that vision has not been well developed. The growth of personal characteristics, including initiative, persistence, creativity, and self-confidence, was the most pronounced among business owners. Among the least developed competencies were problem-solving, making decisions with consequences, using ICTs, and evaluating new business prospects. These results underline how crucial it is for individuals to learn their critical thinking, creativity, and decision-making skills while studying.

Furthermore, when grouped according to age, gender, nature, and length of operation, it was revealed that there is no significant difference in the level of entrepreneurial competencies of respondents. Yet, when grouped according to the department, there is a significant difference in the level of entrepreneurial competencies. It significantly impacts entrepreneurial competencies' development since the graduates own a business are mostly from the business department. This was similar to the study of Kozlinska et al. (2020) that there is a significant difference in entrepreneurial competencies when respondents are classified by educational attainment.

Conclusion

This study concludes that business owners who graduated from the University moderately possess entrepreneurial competencies, which were also moderately useful. Furthermore, it was revealed that there is no significant difference in respondents' entrepreneurial competencies when classified by age, gender, nature, and length of operation. However, when grouped by department, there is a significant difference in the level of entrepreneurial competencies. Since the data show that initiative has the highest category mean among the other dimensions, it can be concluded that business owners can use this technique to improve their performance. Further study would be interesting to evaluate the importance of the context in which competencies develop, allowing separation between competencies developed individually, academically, or professionally. Comparing groups could aid in determining the most effective educational tactics and providing information on the quality and usability of entrepreneurial training programs and how competence develops for these more successful cases. Future researchers can also develop instruments for measuring the competencies provided to reliably quantify the level of these competencies in different business owners. It will also be feasible to investigate its relationship with other variables such as financial success, life satisfaction, physical and mental health, and family achievement.

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