

# Competency Needs of Business Educators in Osun State Secondary Schools, Nigeria

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## Abstract

Competency is one of the essential elements in teaching. It also determines the effectiveness of teachers during the teaching and learning process and performance of students. The study therefore investigated the competency needs of business educators in Osun State with a view to know those competencies that are needed but not possessed. Descriptive research design of survey type was adopted for the study. The population was 613 business educators out of which 300 was sampled using simple and stratified random sampling techniques. A self-design 20-item questionnaire titled “Teachers’ Competency Assessment Questionnaire (TCAQ)” was used to collect data for the study. The instrument was constructed on 4-point scale. The instrument was validated by two experts. The reliability of the instrument was established using Cronbach alpha and this yielded reliability co-efficient of 0.78. The research questions raised were answered using the means scores. Any item with a mean score greater than or equal to 2.50 suggests moderate possession, item with mean score ranging from 1.50 to 2.49 suggests fairly possession while item with mean score of 1.49 or below suggests not possession. Findings of the study revealed that out four competencies assessed, two were moderately possessed (planning of instruction and classroom instruction skills) one was fairly possessed (practical demonstration skills) while the remaining one was not possessed (ICT skills). It was recommended among others that government and relevant agencies need to organize series of training for business educators to acquire the needed skills.

**Keywords:** business education, business educators, competency, secondary school, teaching

## 1. Introduction

Business education is an integral part of vocational education, which aimed at equipping the students with relevant skills for purpose of making them functional in the society. Business education focuses on skills acquisition in different areas. It is therefore expected that various components of business education that is; business subjects in secondary schools must be well taught by those who have been properly trained in the field of business education. The trained people who are qualify to teach components of business education in secondary schools are called business educators. Business educators need to teach business studies in the Junior Secondary Schools as well as business subjects such as; Commerce, Office Practice, Shorthand, Trade, Marketing, Typewriting, Financial Accounting among others in the Senior Secondary Schools. Teaching cut across all fields including business education. Teaching involves act of imparting skills or knowledge by person otherwise known as teacher /master to another person or group of persons called students/learners. Teaching according to Smith (2009), is defined as an academic process by which students are motivated to learn in ways that make a sustained, substantial and positive influence on how they think, act and feel. Teacher plays a major role in teaching and learning process because, he is seen as a facilitator whose primary aim is to harness necessary resources to achieve pre-determined objectives. Thus, Olatoye (2006) stated that teaching effectiveness is the extent that students’ performance improves after a period of instruction in a manner that consistent with the goals of instruction. Ajayi and Ekundayo (2011) noted that the extent to which the objectives of teaching are achieved determines teaching effectiveness therefore teachers are expected to be more equipped.

Okoli (2012) stated that business educators are persons who impart knowledge necessary for skill acquisition in the business field. Thus, business educators that are capable of imparting the right skills to their students and achieve pre-determined objectives in teaching must have equipped themselves with certain degree of

competencies. John (2006) observed that the quality of teaching usually determines the level of knowledge and skills acquired by a teacher coupled with availability of relevant materials for instructional purposes. Business educators like other teachers are expected to possess certain competencies which would assist them in discharging their professional duties appropriately. Competency reflects the ability to do something in contrast with more traditional ability to demonstrate knowledge. Competency can be described as sum total of all skills and knowledge needed by a teacher to be successful in teaching. According to Golman, Boyatzis, and Mckee (2002), competency is the underlying characteristics of an individual that relate to effective or superior performance in a job. It is a skill that leads to superior performance. Similarly, Chung, Stepich, and Cox (2006) posited that competencies for business education are those tasks, skills, attitudes and values that are deemed critical to success in life or in earning a living. Again, Olaitan (2003) noted that to be competent implies that an individual has acquired the knowledge, skills, attitudes and judgments which he requires in order to perform successfully at a specified proficiency level in a given work. This implies that competency in an individual holds the key to effectiveness in work. Business education teachers must note that competency is a critical aspect of employability in an occupation and each competency evolves from explicit statements of teacher roles within the profession. Business subject teachers are supposed to possess certain competencies for them to be able to achieve objectives already outlined in the business subject curriculum. Similarly, Cope (1991) stated that a competent teacher should be able to apply the principles of the professional courses taken to the teaching/learning classroom process that will bring about meaningful changes in learners. Ekoh and Okwuanaso (2013) noted that there seems to be a gap between the actual pedagogical competencies possessed by business studies teachers and competencies expected from them. Although, there are several competencies that are needed to be possessed by business subject teachers for effective teaching in the classroom situation but the scope of this study was limited to four.

Planning of instruction is one the competencies that is needed by every successful business subject teacher in secondary school. This competency is essential to business subject teachers in that it provides them with skills to construct lesson plan, ability to plan teaching to fit into school activities, ability to organize lesson topics to meet instructional objectives, ability to plan lesson to motivate students, ability to select and develop instructional materials suitable for each lesson among others. Observation on the performance of students in business subjects in recent time showed that probably not all business subject teachers possessed relevant skills in this important competency area if the result of students in business subjects is anything to go by.

Classroom instruction is another competency area that is important for the objectives of business education to be achieved in secondary schools. Business subject teachers in secondary schools are supposed to have acquired relevant skills in this area for them to be able to discharge their pedagogical duties as expected. Competencies possessed in this area would provide business teachers with ability to use various methods, ability to communicate with students by giving explicit examples, ability to reinforce learning without encourage rote learning, ability to relate lesson to real life situation among others. Ekoh and Okwuanaso (2013) reported that business subject teachers have poor application of classroom instruction competencies. This however resulted to the poor performance of secondary school students in business studies in Enugu State. Study conducted by Saba, Ma'aji and Tsado (2012) on assessment of pedagogical skills in teaching electrical and electronic students in Northern Nigeria discovered that most teachers needed skills in delivery of instruction. It was observed that failure of business subject teachers to acquire relevant skills in this area would prevent them to provide adequate information needed by students to function effectively in the contemporary society.

Practical demonstration skill is another competency area. Most of the business subjects focus on skills acquisition therefore any teacher that will teach any of the subjects must be able to demonstrate necessary skills in the classroom during teaching and learning process. Business subject teacher who had acquired relevant competencies in this area would no doubt do the following, all things being equal; ability to hold practical session during teaching, ability to use available equipment and materials, ability to help students acquire manipulative skills, ability to outline require steps for acquisition of manipulative skills among others. Enemu (2013) submitted that competencies were highly needed in the area of demonstration of practical skill in accounting for effective entrepreneurship. The import of the above is that business teacher needs to demonstrate practical aspects of all business subjects. Also, Ma'aji (2003) stated that for effective teaching of any skill activity, methods and materials play an important role in facilitating the learners' achievement objectives.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is another essential competency area that is required for effective teaching of business subjects in secondary schools. With the emerging technologies, the teaching profession is evolving from an emphasis on teacher-centered, lecture-based instruction to student-centered and interactive learning environments. The benefits of ICT in education are well documented by many researchers such as Clarke (2006), Duffy (2006), Akudolu and Ololube (2007) among others. ICT has been observed by

scholar that when appropriately used, different ICTs help to expand access to education and raise educational quality. Equally, business subject teachers that would contribute positively to the development of their students must acquire relevant ICT skills that will make teaching to take place anytime, anywhere and anyplace. Ede and Ariyo (2015) in a study on competency improvement needs of metalwork teachers in the use of computer numerically controlled machines tools in technical colleges in Oyo State Nigeria found that ICT skills possessed by metalwork were not adequate to allow them use computer for teaching. It must be noted that lack of relevant ICT skills by teacher of any category could hamper the realization of educational goals in the contemporary society. Acquisition of relevant ICT skills by business subject teachers would provide opportunities for them to open Microsoft word application, ability to network computer to exchange files, ability to write educational programmes, ability to select and evaluate subject specific education software, ability to develop computer assisted software, ability to develop software to teach a subject, ability to develop software to evaluate instruction among others. Furthermore, the research indicates that these competencies can be used to organize the numerous specific skills and knowledge available for building effective teaching and learning process.

From the above, it can be seen how essential those competencies discussed were germane to successful implementation of business subject curriculum in secondary school. It is therefore imperative to find out the extent to which the business subject teachers possessed above competencies with a view to determine the area of their deficiency. Again, observations from the results of two main examination bodies; WAEC and NECO in recent time showed that there was a consistent decline in the academic performance of students in business subjects. WAEC (2015) noted that there was a decline in the performance of students in the last three years. NECO (2015) expressed the similar view about the performance of students in business subjects in the last two years. This suggests that there is possibility on the part of business subjects teachers not to have acquired necessary competencies needed for effective teaching and learning process.

### *1.1 Statement of the Problem*

Teachers whose main duty is teaching are expected to be equipped with relevant competencies for effective discharge of their functions. Teachers, regardless their area of specialization that possessed requisite competencies appears to be effective and impactful in their teaching at any point in time all things being equal. Recently, the results of students in business subjects both at internal and external examinations indicated a downward trend in the performance of students. For instance, WAEC (2015) reported that out of 202,151 students that registered for Financial Accounting in 2014, only 46,778 students representing 23.14% passed at credit level and above. Similarly, in 2015 out of 199,274 that registered for Financial Accounting only 49,440 students representing 24.91% passed at credit level and above. The same story was also recorded in other subjects such as Commerce, Typewriting and Economics. The report of NECO on the academic performance of students in business subjects was not different from account given by WAEC in the same period. This suggests that all is not well with state of performance of students in business subjects in the state. Although, several factors could have accounted for this downward trend in the performance of students in business subjects. However, observation in recent time showed that there is seem to be a gap between competencies possessed and actual competencies needed to be possessed by business subject teachers in secondary schools in Osun State. This disparity between the minimum standard of competencies required and actual competencies possessed by business subject teachers could responsible for downward trend in the performance of students in the business subjects. It was against this background that this study investigated the competency needs of business subject teachers in Osun State.

### *1.2 Purpose of the Study*

The purpose of this study was to investigate the competency needs of business subject teachers in Osun State. Specifically, the study investigated the following:

- 1) The extent to which business subject teachers possessed planning of instruction skills
- 2) The extent to which business subject teachers possessed classroom instruction skills
- 3) The extent to which business subject teachers possessed practical demonstration skills
- 4) The extent to which business subject teachers possessed ICT skills

### *1.3 Research Questions*

The following questions were raised to guide the study.

- 1) To what extent do business subject teachers possessed planning of instruction skills?
- 2) To what extent do business subject teachers possessed classroom instruction skills?
- 3) To what extent do business subject teachers possessed practical demonstration skills?

4) To what extent do business subject teachers possessed ICT skills?

## **2. Method**

This section discussed the procedure that was used to carry out the study. This procedure includes; study design, population, sample and sampling techniques, instrument for data collection and method adopted in analysing the data among others.

### *2.1 Research Design*

The descriptive research design of survey type was adopted for this study. This design was adopted because it allowed the researcher to collect data from sampled group in order to describe the existing situation without manipulation of any variable.

### *2.2 Population*

The area of the study was Osun state in south west Nigeria who has reasonable number of business education teachers that are presently teaching business subjects across the secondary schools in the state. The population of the study consisted of all business subject teachers in 30 local government areas across the state. In all, there were 613 business subject teachers in the state.

### *2.3 Sample and Sampling Techniques*

Simple random sampling and stratified random sampling techniques were used to select 300 business subject teachers that participated in the study. Out of the sample size, 205 were degree holders while remaining 95 were non-degree holders.

### *2.4 Research Instrument*

A self-design 20-item questionnaire titled “Teachers’ Competency Assessment Questionnaire (TCAQ)” was used to collect data for the study. The instrument was constructed on 4-point scale of Highly Possessed (HP=4), Moderately Possessed (MP=3), Fairly Possessed (FP=2) and Not Possessed (NP=1). Respondents were asked to rate each item on the instrument based on their level of possession of each item on the instrument. The instrument contained few bio data of the respondents such as their qualifications and their year of experience.

### *2.5 Validity of the Instrument*

The instrument was validated by two experts. These experts were requested to vet items on the instrument in terms of items construction, relevance and relatedness to the research questions raised for the study. All their suggestions and comments were taking into consideration when the final draft of the instrument was made. Also, the construct validity of the instrument was carried out by tested it with similar instrument constructed by Adeola (2011) titled “Teaching Effectiveness Scale” which yielded coefficient of 0.76.

### *2.6 Reliability of the Instrument*

The reliability of the instrument was established through Cronbach’s alpha after the instrument had been administered on 35 students outside the sample for the study, which yielded reliability co-efficient of 0.78. According to Hejase and Hejase (2013), they generally agreed upon lower limit for Cronbach’s alpha is 0.70. The coefficient obtained for the instrument was considered high enough for the instrument that was used for the study.

### *2.7 Data Analysis*

Out of the 300 copies of the questionnaire distributed, only 286 were retrieved, indicated a return rate of 95.3 percent. The research questions were answered using the means scores. Any item with a mean score greater than or equal to 2.50 suggests moderate possession, item with mean score ranging from 1.50 to 2.49 suggests fairly possession while item with mean score of 1.49 or below suggests not possession (Mohan & Parameswaran, 2011).

## **3. Results**

Research Question 1: To what extent do business subject teachers possess planning of instruction skills?

Table 1. Business subject teachers' possession of planning of instruction skills

Competencies statements	Mean	Remark
1 ability to construct workable lesson plan within specified time	3.51	HP
2 ability to plan teaching to fit into school activities	3.43	MP
3 ability to organize lesson topics to meet instructional objectives	3.56	HP
4 ability to plan lesson to motivate students	2.84	MP
5 ability to select suitable instructional materials for each lesson	2.57	MP
Weighted Mean	3.18	MP

Result in Table 1 shows that out five competencies assessed in this category, business subject teachers moderately possessed all of them. In fact, two of them that is; ability to construct workable lesson plan within specified time and ability to organize lesson topics to meet instructional objectives were highly possessed with mean scores of 3.51 and 3.56 respectively. With a weighted mean of 3.18, it indicated that business subject teachers moderately possessed planning of instruction skills.

Research Question 2: To what extent do business subject teachers possess classroom instruction skills?

Table 2. Business subject teachers' possession of classroom instruction skills

Competencies statements	Mean	Remark
6. Ability to use different teaching methods	2.92	MP
7. Ability to communicate with students by giving explicit examples	3.35	MP
8. Ability to reinforce learning without encourage rote learning	2.54	MP
9. Ability to relate lesson to real life situation	2.47	FP
10. Ability to summarise and evaluate lessons	2.41	FP
Weighted Mean	2.74	MP

Result in Table 2 shows that out five competencies assessed in this category, only three of them were moderately possessed that is; items 6, 7 and 8 with their mean scores above 2.50. The remaining two competencies that is; items 9 and 10 were fairly possessed with mean scores of 2.47 and 2.41 respectively. However, with weighted mean of 2.74, it indicated that business subject teachers moderately possessed classroom instruction skills.

Research Question 3: To what extent do business subject teachers possess practical demonstration skills?

Table 3. Business subject teachers' possession of practical demonstration skills

Competencies statements	Mean	Remark
11. Ability to hold practical session during teaching	2.63	MP
12. Ability to use available equipment and materials for practical	1.52	FP
13. Ability to outline require steps for acquisition of manipulative skills	1.69	FP
14. Ability to help students acquire manipulative skills	1.87	FP
Weighted Mean	1.93	FP

Result in Table 3 shows that out four competencies assessed in this category only one that is; ability to hold practical session during teaching was moderately possessed by business subject teachers with a mean score of 2.63. The remaining three competencies that is; items 12, 13 and 14 were fairly possessed by business subject teachers with their mean scores ranges from 1.52 to 1.87. The weighted mean of 1.93, indicated that business subject teachers fairly possessed practical demonstration skills.

Research Question 4: To what extent do business subject teachers possess ICT skills?

Table 4. Business subject teachers' possession of ICT skills

Competencies statements	Mean	Remark
15. Ability to open Microsoft word application	2.53	MP
16. Ability to write educational programmes	1.05	NP
17. Ability to use technological devices for teaching	1.46	NP
18. Ability to develop software to teach a subject	1.07	NP
19. Ability to network computer to exchange files	1.35	NP
20. Ability to use software to evaluate instruction	1.19	NP
Weighted Mean	1.44	NP

Result in Table 4 shows that out six competencies assessed in this category, only one was moderately possessed that is ability to open Microsoft word with a mean score of 2.53. The remaining five competencies that is; items 16 to 20 were not possessed by business subject teachers. Also, with weighted mean of 1.44, it implied that business subject teachers did not possessed ICT skills.

#### 4. Discussion

Finding of the study revealed that business subject teachers moderately possessed planning of instruction skills. This is because all items in this category have a mean of 2.5 and above. Again, the weighted mean of 3.18 showed that business educators moderately possessed this competency. The import of this finding is that business subject teachers are likely to construct workable lesson plan within the stipulated time, plan teaching to fit into school activities, structure the lesson topics to meet instructional objectives among others. Again, adequate possession of planning of instruction skills by business subject teachers would ensure that lesson plan at point in time would motivate students to learn. This reason for this finding could be premised on the fact that every teacher regardless of his area of specialization, ought to have been exposed to the rudimentary of teaching which include ability to plan instruction for students. The outcome of this study supports Ajayi and Ekundayo (2011) who reported that teachers at any field needed to possess relevant skills to plan instruction in order to equip students with adequate information.

Finding of the study revealed that business educators moderately possessed classroom instruction skills. This is because a weighted mean of 2.74 for all items in this category established this. However, two skills that are: ability to relate lesson to real life situation and ability to summarize and evaluate lesson with a mean less than 2.5 were not sufficiently possessed by business educators and this could hinder effective delivery of instruction in the classroom. The reason for this outcome could be attributed to the pre-service training of business educators. Finding of this study supports Ugbe and Agim (2009) which discovered that teachers of different categories possessed skills to deliver instruction in the classroom. However, this finding contradicts Ekoh and Okwuanaso (2013) who reported that business subject teachers have poor application of classroom instruction competencies.

Finding of the study showed that business educators fairly possessed practical demonstration skills. The weighted mean for all items in this category was 1.93. It was an item that is; ability to hold practical session during teaching was moderately possessed with a mean of 2.63. Competencies in other three items were fairly possessed by business educators. The reason for this finding could be attributed to inadequate provision of needed materials during the pre-service training of business educators. Business educators who failed to acquire needed competencies in the area of practical demonstration would find it difficult to impart skills that could make students functional in the environment in which they live since most of the business subjects focus on skills acquisition. This finding supports Enemu (2013) who submitted that competencies were highly needed in the area of demonstration of practical skill in business subjects for effective entrepreneurship.

Finding of the study revealed that business educators did not possess ICT skills. The weighted mean of all six items in this category was 1.44 which was less than 2.5 cut-off mean. The only skill possessed by business educators in this category was ability to open Microsoft word. This skill is not enough for business educators to use potentials inherent in ICT for teaching and learning process. Reason for this finding could be attributed to inability of business educators to update their ICT knowledge in view of technology that has taken over virtually all aspects of human endeavours. The outcome of this study corroborates Ede and Ariyo (2015) who discovered that ICT skills possessed by metalwork teachers in technical colleges were not adequate to allow them use computer for teaching.

#### 5. Conclusion

From the findings of this study it can be concluded that business educators had acquired relevant skills that could enable them to plan instruction for effective teaching and learning of business subjects in secondary schools. Also,

business educators possessed good skills in the area of classroom instruction. This would enable them to deliver lesson plan as scheduled to their students. With this skills business educators would be able to teach using different methods, reinforce their teaching and communicate well with their students during teaching and learning process. Again, it can be concluded from the findings of the study that business educators did not possess required skills to demonstrate practical aspects of teaching and learning business subjects in secondary schools. It was also concluded that business educators were deficient in the area of acquisition of relevant ICT skills for teaching of business subjects in secondary schools.

## 6. Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study the following recommendations were made.

- 1) Government should provide business educators with relevant ICT devices needed to acquire relevant ICT skills for effective teaching and learning process.
- 2) Training programmes should be organized for business educators by relevant agencies to acquire necessary demonstration and ICT skills needed to make them more functional in the classroom situation.
- 3) Business educators should endeavour to attend conferences and workshops in order to keep themselves abreast of current trend both in pedagogical and technical aspects of their teaching profession with a view to make meaningful impact in their teaching at all times.
- 4) School administrators should encourage business educators to develop themselves through active participation in professional activities that are critical to their profession.

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