Managerial Skills and Entrepreneurial Competencies Development Among BS Entrepreneurship Students of Cagayan State University

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Abstract:

This research explored the development of managerial skills and entrepreneurial competencies. The study also uncovered the perceived barriers to full-time entrepreneurship that the students of the B.S. Entrepreneurship program at Cagayan State University encountered after they had taken the course on Business Plan Implementation (BPI). The study employed a descriptive research design, and the data were drawn from the BPI portfolios of 221 student implementers who were chosen from the academic years 2017 to 2019. The data were also corroborated by validation interviews. Descriptive statistics were used to assess the students' functional and analytical management skills, personal entrepreneurial competencies, and perceived barriers to a career in full-time entrepreneurship. The results of the study revealed that the majority of the respondents were females and that most of them were 20 years old or below, which reflects the current enrollment trend in the field of entrepreneurship programs. Students have shown a very high level of functional and analytical skills in all management areas throughout the study. They have also shown that they have the strongest competencies in organizational and management skills and marketing skills. Financial management skills were rated as high but were still comparatively lower than other domains, which indicated a need for more reinforcement in financial analysis among the students. Opportunity seeking, moderate risk-taking, and self-confidence were the competencies that were most developed in the students, while efficiency orientation, information seeking, and work contract commitment were the least developed. Lack of capital was the foremost factor that prevented the students from going on with their ventures after the completion of their academic requirement. Next to it was the need for more training and the unfavorable market conditions. In general, the results point to strong basic skills among the students who have implemented the projects, but also to deficiencies in financial literacy, analytical skills, and some personal competencies. The research highlights the necessity of not only practical training but also the provision of resources and institutional measures to facilitate the entrepreneurial readiness and ensure the sustainability of the venture.

Keywords: entrepreneurial competencies; functional skills; venture barriers; business implementation; student entrepreneurship

INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship is basically the one substantial source which has been driving innovations, competitiveness, and economic growth not only in rich countries but also in poorer ones. The role of entrepreneurship as a source of the newly created jobs, a means of attracting the creative power, and a tool for promoting the local development is getting more and more important as economies change their face (Dimitrova, 2020). In college, the entrepreneurship course exists to help the students not only gain business knowledge but also develop the necessary competencies, skills, and the right attitude that are required to spot the opportunities, and build a new sustainable business (Fayolle & Gailly, 2019). Through CMO No. 18, series 2017, The Philippine Commission on Higher Education

(CHED) states that the BS Entrepreneurship curriculum should help students gain the ability to demonstrate the most important skills. Namely, the skills of being able to seek new opportunities, mobilize resources, draw up a business plan and manage a business venture. BPI course, which is a vital part of this training, is the point where pupils take the initiative and develop enterprises. Modern entrepreneurship is built on a scientific foundation, and the Business Plan Implementation course (BPI) through which students undertake hands-on enterprise development to make the business concepts more practical, represents a significant approach in this field.

However, student ventures are not always successful and thus not able to live up to the promise of classroom-based activities, beyond the local academic context. Evidence from different parts of the world as well as from the Philippines indicates that entrepreneurship education is helpful in improving confidence, ideation, and the tendency to venture creation and still many students have gaps in functional skills and business maturity facing so-called readiness challenges (Santos, 2018). The impediments to this phenomenon are such as scanty experiences, the absence of the real market pressure exposure and poor command of the management tools. At the same time, on the personal side of entrepreneurial competencies, e.g. systematic planning, persistence, risk management as well as quality orientation, are among the most instrumental determinants of entrepreneurial behavior, however, these competencies frequently differ hugely within the student population (Bagheri & Pihie, 2013).

Additionally, the research demonstrates that mood and situational factors have a great impact on students' entrepreneurial engagement. First of all, lack of money, the unpredictability of the market, and the shortage of proper training are the most frequently referred to problems that hinder young entrepreneurs from taking up full-time entrepreneurship (Velasco, 2021). These problems may be a barrier to students in the process of turning academic ventures into real enterprises, even if they have had some exposure through university-led programs. The findings, thus, leave room for the examination not only of academic performance within entrepreneurship courses but also the competencies and external barriers that overshadow students' entrepreneurial pathways.

Subsequently, numerous studies locally and internationally which have been conducted have brought up the issues of entrepreneurial intention, entrepreneurial competencies, or performance of student-led ventures. However, a considerable gap in knowledge still exists regarding the interaction among functional and analytical management skills, personal entrepreneurial competencies, and venture barriers in the case of BS Entrepreneurship students performing actual business implementation has not been bridged. Most of the existing scholars' works have been concentrated on the entrepreneurial intention instead of the competency development; meanwhile, some researchers examine entrepreneurial ventures without understanding which skill domains have been enhanced or diminished during implementation. Therefore, a comprehensive integrated assessment is called for in order to fully encompass the entrepreneurial readiness of students.

Addressing these lacunae, the research focused on entrepreneurial skill development and venture challenges among BSE students from Cagayan State University who have passed the course on Business Plan Implementation. It delineates the student implementers' profile; their level of functional and analytical skills in using management tools; the personal entrepreneurial competencies that were developed the most as well as those which were least developed; and the top barriers that prevent them from choosing full-time entrepreneurship. By pinpointing the strengths, shortcomings, and limitations, the current research offers practical, data-driven insights that can support curriculum development, student assistance programs, and institutional interventions to foster entrepreneurial readiness.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Design

This research utilized a descriptive design to measure in an organized way the growth of entrepreneurial skills and the presence of barriers to ventures among student implementers of the Business Plan Implementation course. The participants were 221 final-year BS Entrepreneurship students who had taken the course from the academic years 2017 to 2019. These students were the implementers of 15 business ventures that were chosen for the evaluation.

Data Sources and Instruments

The data for this research came from the Business Plan Implementation portfolios of 221 fourth-year BS Entrepreneurship students. These portfolios were the primary sources that reflected their performance during actual enterprise implementation. These portfolios included the students' personal profiles, business plan documents, operational and financial records, functional and analytical skills rating sheets, personal entrepreneurial competencies self- assessment tools, and written reflections describing the challenges they faced during the execution of the venture. In order to ensure the completeness and accuracy of the portfolio content, supplemental validation interviews were held with the student implementers who were thus, selected. Collectively, these sources offered a wide range of evidence to the investigators about the respondents' competencies, skill development, and perceived barriers to entrepreneurship.

Data Analysis

The study used descriptive statistics to evaluate the quantitative and qualitative data that were obtained from the students' portfolios and validation interviews. Frequency and percentage distributions were utilized to reveal the demographic profiles of the respondents, whereas weighted mean scores were employed to indicate the level of functional and analytical skills in the key managerial domains of the business such as business planning, organization and management, communication, marketing, production, and financial management. Ranking methods were used to determine the most and least personal entrepreneurial competencies that have been developed as well as the top barriers that prevent students from engaging in full- time business ventures. Every piece of information was done in a very orderly manner and interpreted by the use of a standardized descriptive scale so as to provide clarity, consistency, and the reliability of the results.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Respondents' Profile

Table 1. Demographic profile of respondents *(N = 221)*

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Sex	Male	68	27%
	Female	153	73%
Age	20 and below	172	78%
	21–25	36	16%
	Above 25	13	6%

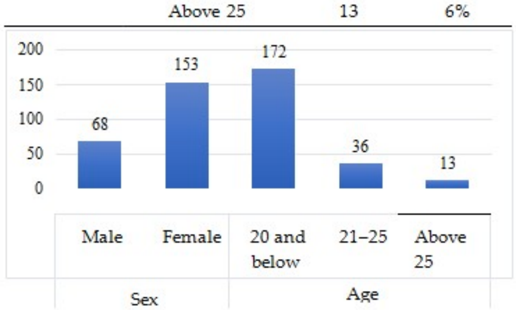

Figure 1. Demographic profile of the respondents

The findings reveal that the majority of the respondents were females (73%) and mainly 20 years of age and below (78%). The demographic trend here is in line with the pattern of female participation in business and entrepreneurship programs, where women are becoming more and more involved in entrepreneurship education. The age distribution of the respondents is very young, which is the usual age of undergraduate students majoring in entrepreneurship, thus the respondents are most likely the developmental stage of entrepreneurial skills and mindsets.

As to the first point, the literature on the matter has it that entrepreneurship is a male- dominated field, however, the current research findings disprove that by showing that women have lower participation in entrepreneurial training as claimed by Pimpa (2021). Rather, the female participation rate is a clear indication of the changes in gender dynamics in the education sector of entrepreneurship. Furthermore, while earlier studies argue that engagement in entrepreneurship is a function of age and thus increases with age, this research is a complete turnaround to the view of Rotnitski et al., (2023), as the younger respondents were strongly engaged in business implementation projects.

Table 2. Level of functional and analytical skills in management tool use

Domain of Skills	Overall Weighted Mean (WM)	Verbal Interpretation
Business Planning Skills	3.77	High
Organizational & Management Skills	3.97	High
Business Communication Skills	3.75	High
Basic Marketing Skills	3.96	High
Production Skills	3.78	High
Financial Management Skills	3.72	High

The combined results reveal that students demonstrated a consistently high level of functional and analytical skills, with weighted means ranging from 3.72 to 3.97 across all domains. Organizational and management skills emerged as the strongest competency area (WM = 3.97), suggesting that students possess well-developed capabilities in decision-making, problem-solving, and people management. Basic marketing skills (WM = 3.96) and production skills (WM = 3.78) likewise indicate strong readiness to engage in real-world entrepreneurial tasks. Meanwhile, financial management skills, although still high (WM = 3.72), posted the lowest weighted mean among the domains, which implies that students may require additional reinforcement in areas such as break-even computation and financial analysis. Overall, the results suggest that the Business Plan Implementation course effectively supports the development of technical and operational competencies essential for entrepreneurial practice.

Although the table reflects high self-reported proficiency across all skill domains, existing literature provides contrasting evidence that challenges such uniformly strong ratings. For instance, prior studies argue that undergraduate entrepreneurship students often struggle with financial literacy and analytical computation, particularly break-even analysis and cost modeling, which contradicts the relatively high rating observed in financial management skills. Similarly, research by Biju (2016) asserts that students frequently exhibit insufficient planning and organizational capabilities due to limited exposure to real market conditions—an assertion that runs counter to the strong organizational and business planning scores reported here. Moreover, Hartley et al. (2018) noted that selling and market analysis skills typically require repeated experiential exposure, implying that high marketing competency scores may reflect perceived rather than actual mastery. These contrasting findings suggest that while students believe they possess strong competencies, further objective performance assessments may be necessary to validate these self-reported measures.

Table 3: Most and least developed entrepreneurial competencies

Competency	Frequency	Rank
Opportunity Seeking	168	1
Moderate Risk-Taking	155	2
Self-Confidence	122	3
Persistence	110	4
Persuasion & Networking	102	5
Goal Setting	98	6
Systematic Planning	94	7
Information Seeking	89	8
Demand for Quality	82	9
Work Contract Commitment	78	10

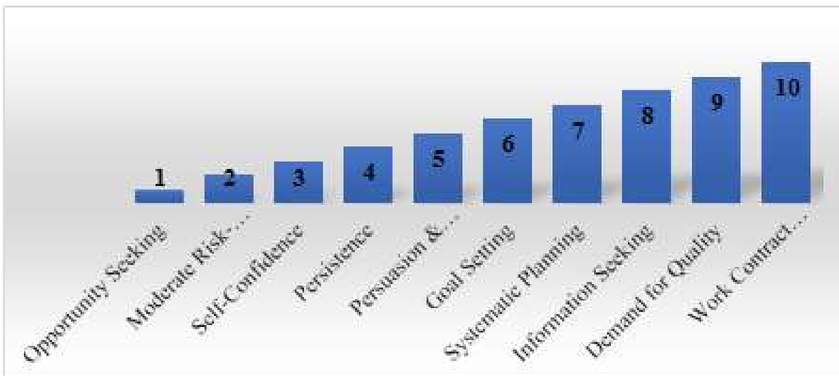

Figure 2. Rank of entrepreneurial skills of respondents

Opportunity seeking, risk-taking, and self-confidence were the most developed features of the personality, showing that the person had a strong entrepreneurial initiative and was willing to go into the unknown. The least developed features—quality/efficiency, information seeking, and work contract commitment—point to the areas that need more instructional focus.

The strong ranking of opportunity seeking is in line with Bergner et al., (2023) who consider it as the main factor that leads to entrepreneurial behavior. On the contrary, the lower scores in quality and efficiency were used to argue that an efficiency orientation develops naturally along with opportunity seeking; in this research, opportunity-seeking grew more quickly, thus the level of competency was not evenly formed (Laguador, 2013).

Table 4. Barriers to pursuing full-time entrepreneurship

Barrier	Frequency	Rank
Insufficient Capital	95	1
Need for Additional Training	37	2
Unfavorable Market Conditions	36	3

Figure 3. Barriers to pursuing full-time entrepreneurship

Not having enough money was the most common reason cited thus remains to be the biggest major issue that student-entrepreneurs must hurdle for their implemented ventures to turn to full-time enterprises. The need for additional training and bad market conditions rises as well to be two different types of internal and external challenges.

The results of the study are consistent with the findings of Burdette (2023), who stresses the lack of capital as one of the most common barriers faced by entrepreneurs.

Moreover, they contradict Amjad et al. (2020), who argued that the gap in training would shortly close due to the improvement of entrepreneurship courses at universities; the current research indicates that survey participants still feel that they need more advanced and more specialized training before they decide to commit entrepreneurship full-time.

CONCLUSIONS

The research results show that the BS Entrepreneurship students at Cagayan State University are endowed with strong fundamental entrepreneurial skills especially in organizational management, marketing, and production which means that the Business Plan Implementation course is effective in enhancing their operational readiness. On the other hand, the performance in financial management, and competencies such as systematic planning, information seeking, and quality orientation is significantly lower, thus, revealing that the students' capabilities in these areas are limited and they need to be further developed. The students, as a group, are good at opportunity seeking, have high levels of self-confidence, and moderate risk-taking—which are the three most important characteristics for entrepreneurial engagement—however, they still face some critical external constraints, such as lack of capital, low level of advanced training, and uncertainties in the market that hamper their activities. These are the factors, which, combined together, prevent the academic ventures that students started from being turned into real entrepreneurial undertakings. In general, the students have entrepreneurial potential, but there are competency gaps and environmental barriers, which have to be removed if the students are to be more likely to start sustainable ventures beyond the university setting.

RECOMMENDATIONS

By interactions, the Entrepreneurship program is suggested to lavish its syllabus more by integrating experiential and simulated exercises in financial management, including budgeting, cost modeling, and break-even analysis supported by industry-based case-work and a simulation. Besides, systematic planning, information gathering, and quality assurance workshops can also be provided to improve the entrepreneurial competences that are the least developed. In order to eliminate venture barriers, the university through a seed-fund mechanism, micro-grant competitions, and by creating strong relationships with financial institutions and local industry partners can provide students with resource access and market exposure. Also, well-organized mentoring programs, therefore, involving seasoned entrepreneurs can provide insights, guidance on practical aspects, and confidence-building opportunities. Together, these measures can contribute to skill development, the removal of structural barriers, and thus, the long-term entrepreneurial readiness of CSU students will be improved.

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