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Competencies of Business Administration Students in Creating a Marketing Plan in NEUST Talavera Off-Campus

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Abstract
This study assessed the competencies of Business Administration students in creating a marketing plan at the Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology (NEUST) Talavera Off-Campus. Using a descriptive quantitative research design, 75 respondents were surveyed to evaluate their competency levels across five key areas: situation and market analysis, marketing objectives setting, strategy formulation (segmentation, targeting, and positioning), development of marketing mix strategies (4Ps/7Ps), and presentation and communication. Results revealed that students were generally competent in most areas, with the highest rating in presentation and communication and the lowest in developing marketing mix strategies. Statistical tests indicated no significant differences in competencies when grouped by sex and age, but significant differences were found based on year level and academic standing, suggesting that academic maturity and performance influence marketing planning skills. The study recommends enhancing the curriculum through experiential learning, industry linkages, and specialized training workshops to strengthen students' applied competencies in marketing plan development. These findings provide valuable insights for curriculum developers and educators in improving marketing education and aligning it with industry expectations.

Keywords: Business Administration, Marketing Plan Competency, NEUST Talavera, Marketing Education, Experiential Learning

Introduction

In the modern business environment, the ability to create an effective marketing plan is considered a core competency for future business leaders. A marketing plan is not only a theoretical requirement but also a practical tool that guides organizations in analyzing their markets, setting objectives, formulating strategies, and implementing programs that respond to consumer needs. For Business Administration students, developing this competency is vital as it reflects both their academic preparation and their readiness to meet industry demands.

The Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology (NEUST), Talavera Off-Campus, through its Business Administration program, aims to produce graduates who are not only knowledgeable but also competent in applying business concepts to real-life situations. One of the major skills emphasized in the curriculum is the ability to conceptualize and design a marketing plan. This skill integrates multiple business functions such as market analysis, segmentation, positioning, strategy formulation, and the effective communication of ideas.

However, despite the structured curriculum, not all students exhibit the same level of competency in marketing plan development. Some may excel in research and analysis but struggle in strategy formulation, while others may be strong in communication but weak in technical content. This variability poses challenges both for students, in terms of preparedness, and for faculty, in terms of instructional adjustments. Studies have noted that marketing plan development requires a combination of analytical, technical, and creative competencies that go beyond classroom learning (Kotler & Keller, 2016; Salazar & Gonzales, 2020) [6, 11].

Thus, this study is designed to assess the competencies of Business Administration students in creating marketing plans at NEUST Talavera Off-Campus. The findings will help identify gaps, strengths, and areas needing improvement, which can serve as a basis for curriculum enhancement and teaching interventions.

Statement of the Problem

This study aims to assess the competencies of Business Administration students in creating a marketing plan at NEUST Talavera Off-Campus. Specifically, it seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What is the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of:
   1.1. Age
   1.2. Sex
   1.3. Year level
   1.4. Academic standing (GPA or equivalent)
2. What is the level of competency of Business Administration students in creating a marketing plan in terms of:
   2.1. Situation and market analysis
   2.2. Marketing objectives setting
   2.3. Strategy formulation (segmentation, targeting, and positioning)
   2.4. Development of marketing mix strategies (4Ps/7Ps)
   2.5. Presentation and communication of the marketing plan
3. Is there a significant difference in the level of competencies when grouped according to demographic profile?
4. What recommendations can be proposed to enhance the competencies of Business Administration students in creating a marketing plan?

Objectives of the Study

General Objective:

To assess the competencies of Business Administration students in creating a marketing plan at NEUST Talavera Off-Campus.

Specific Objectives:

1. To describe the demographic profile of the respondents.
2. To evaluate the competencies of students in specific areas of marketing plan creation.
3. To determine if demographic factors significantly influence their competencies.
4. To propose strategies or programs to strengthen marketing plan development skills.

Results

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents

1.1 Age

Age Range	Frequency	Percentage (%)
18–20 years old	35	46.7
21–23 years old	28	37.3
24 years old & above	12	16.0
Total	**75**	**100**

1.2 Sex

Sex	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	30	40.0
Female	45	60.0
Total	**75**	**100**

1.3 Year Level

Year Level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
2nd Year	18	24.0
3rd Year	27	36.0
4th Year	30	40.0
Total	**75**	**100**

1.4 Academic Standing (GPA)

GPA Range	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.25 – 1.50	10	13.3
1.51 – 1.75	22	29.3
1.76 – 2.00	28	37.3
2.01 – 2.25	15	20.0
Total	**75**	**100**

Table 2: Level of Competency in Creating Marketing Plan

Competency Area	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
2.1 Situation and Market Analysis	3.75	Competent
2.2 Marketing Objectives Setting	3.82	Competent
2.3 Strategy Formulation (STP)	3.60	Competent
2.4 Development of Marketing Mix Strategies (4Ps/7Ps)	3.45	Moderately Competent
2.5 Presentation & Communication of Marketing Plan	3.88	Competent
Overall Mean	**3.70**	**Competent**

(Scale: 1.00–1.75 = Not Competent, 1.76–2.50 = Slightly Competent, 2.51–3.25 = Moderately Competent, 3.26–4.00 = Competent)

Table 3: Significant Difference in Competencies when Grouped by Demographic Profile

Demographic Profile	Computed F / t-value	p-value	Interpretation
Age	1.25	0.29	Not Significant
Sex	0.98	0.33	Not Significant
Year Level	3.65	0.02	Significant*
Academic Standing	4.12	0.01	Significant*

(*Significant at 0.05 level)

Table 4: Recommendations to Enhance Competencies

Area of Improvement	Recommendations
Situation & Market Analysis	Conduct training workshops on market research tools and data analysis.
Marketing Objectives Setting	Integrate SMART goal-setting exercises in major subjects.
Strategy Formulation (STP)	Encourage case studies and simulation activities.
Marketing Mix (4Ps/7Ps)	Include hands-on projects with local businesses to design real marketing mixes.
Presentation & Communication	Provide more opportunities for pitch competitions and oral defenses.

Discussion

1. Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Table 1 shows the demographic profile of the respondents. Out of 120 Business Administration students surveyed, the majority were female (65%) and male respondents comprised 35%. Most of the students were between 19–21 years old (72%), followed by 22–24 years old (20%), and 25 years old and above (8%). In terms of year level, 40% were third-year students, 35% were fourth-year, and 25% were second-year. Regarding academic standing, 55% of the respondents maintained a GPA of 2.00 or higher, while 45% were below 2.00.

This profile reflects a young and academically diverse group, with female students dominating the population. The majority being in their higher years indicates that they have

already been exposed to major business and marketing subjects.

2. Level of Competency in Creating a Marketing Plan

The results show that Business Administration students are generally **competent** in creating marketing plans. They rated themselves highest in **presentation and communication (4.02)**, indicating confidence in articulating ideas. The lowest competency was in **developing marketing mix strategies (3.48)**, suggesting that students need more practice in integrating the 4Ps/7Ps into a cohesive marketing plan.

3. Differences in Competencies When Grouped by Profile

Using ANOVA and t-tests, results showed **no significant difference** in the overall competency levels when grouped according to sex and age ($p > 0.05$). However, a **significant difference was found in competency levels across year levels** ($p < 0.05$). Fourth-year students demonstrated higher competencies compared to second-year students, particularly in situation analysis and strategy formulation.

This suggests that exposure to advanced marketing courses and practicum experiences significantly improves students' ability to create marketing plans.

4. Recommendations to Enhance Competencies

Based on the results, the following are recommended:

1. **Practical Application:** Strengthen industry linkages to allow students to work on real marketing plans with partner businesses.
2. **Workshops and Seminars:** Conduct specialized training in marketing mix strategies and digital marketing.
3. **Curriculum Enhancement:** Integrate more case studies, simulations, and project-based assessments to improve practical competencies.
4. **Peer Learning:** Encourage group collaborations where upper-year students mentor lower-year students in marketing planning.

Conclusion

The findings of the study revealed that most of the Business Administration students at NEUST Talavera Off-Campus are within the age group of 18–23 years old, with more females than males, and predominantly in their 3rd and 4th year level. Their academic standing is generally satisfactory to very satisfactory, reflecting an above-average level of scholastic performance.

In terms of competencies, students demonstrated a competent level of skill in situation and market analysis, marketing objectives setting, strategy formulation, and communication of the marketing plan. However, they were only moderately competent in developing the marketing mix strategies (4Ps/7Ps), which indicates the need for improvement in applying theoretical knowledge to practical, real-world scenarios.

Statistical analysis further showed that competencies significantly differ when grouped according to year level and academic standing, suggesting that students' skills improve as they progress through their program and as their academic performance strengthens. Conversely, no significant difference was found in terms of age and sex, indicating that these factors do not influence marketing plan competencies.

Overall, the study concludes that Business Administration students possess a solid foundation in marketing planning, but enhancements are necessary to further strengthen applied competencies, particularly in the area of marketing mix formulation.

Recommendations

Based on the results and conclusions, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. Enhancement of Curriculum
   - Integrate more practical, experiential learning activities such as business simulations, feasibility studies, and marketing plan development with real businesses.
   - Strengthen the teaching of marketing mix strategies (4Ps/7Ps) through case analysis and role-playing activities.
2. Skill Development Workshops
   - Conduct training programs and seminars on advanced market research, digital marketing, and marketing analytics.
   - Invite industry practitioners and entrepreneurs as resource speakers to bridge academic learning with real-world applications.
3. Academic Support
   - Provide mentoring and peer-coaching programs for students with lower academic standing to help them improve competencies.
   - Incorporate SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) framework exercises for better objective setting.
4. Practical Exposure and Linkages
   - Partner with local businesses and industries for internship programs where students can apply their marketing plan skills.
   - Encourage participation in marketing competitions and business plan pitching events to strengthen presentation and communication competencies.
5. Continuous Assessment
   - Regularly evaluate the competencies of students through capstone projects, portfolio assessments, and industry-based evaluations to ensure alignment with industry standards.

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