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Predictors of Self-Employment Efforts among Unemployed Nigerian Graduates

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Abstract

The problem of graduate underemployment in Nigeria is traceable to a number of factors among which is inappropriate curricula being used in the tertiary institutions without so much of empirical support for curricula innovation. This study therefore was carried out to find out how personality traits, graduates employment search behaviour, gender role stereotypes and curriculum outcomes compared with levels of difficulty in employment efforts of Nigerian tertiary institution graduates. The samples were 361 tertiary institution graduates who responded to five questionnaires under the five variables used in the study. The result of the study showed that differences exist in levels of difficulty experienced by different groups of tertiary institution graduates in their self employment efforts, as influenced by personality traits, graduates employment search behaviour, gender role stereotypes and curriculum outcomes. Effective interaction between the variables and self employment efforts of Nigerian underemployment threatened tertiary institution graduates was also revealed. The study provides some support to the notion that self-reliant aspects of the investigated independent variable can make for easy self employment efforts of tertiary institution graduates. The curricula of tertiary institutions are therefore recommended for innovations in order to accommodate these variables which influence their employment search behaviour.

Introduction

The role of educational outcomes in the promotion of economic growth has long been recognized by economists and other people. Early researchers like Smith are cited by Okoye (1989) to have noted the acquisition and use of the abilities of all inhabitants or members of a society through education as part of its economic fortune. Likewise, Adeyemo (1997) cites Marshall to have considered the most valuable of ail capital investment to be that directed towards human development through education. Nyerere (1968) supported the foregoing by seeing education to be an instrument for effecting economic and technological change, change in ideas and personality. This was why he laid so much emphasis on education as a means of transformation in his country - Tanzania -through his 'Ujama' revolution. Datta (1984) aligned behaviour change, production of more or improved goods and services and earning of higher personal incomes with educational attainment.

While the domain of education in Nigeria has been growing largely because of the need to have adequate manpower to meet the challenges of making the country great and to meet the demands of the 21 century, unfortunately, there is no sustained efforts to use education to prepare Nigerian graduates to meet the on-the-job requirements of entrepreneurs in blue chip companies in the country. This has thus led to the situation where Nigerian graduates have become 'unemployable' because they have been claimed not to possess adequate competencies required by their end users. This has thrown a big challenge to tertiary education in Nigeria.

Today, there are very many institutions made up of eighty-nine universities owned by government and private organizations, several colleges of education and agriculture and mono/polythechnic that produce graduates for the few job situations that are available in the country. Graduates of tertiary institutions, therefore, faced the difficulty of readily gaining jobs immediately after school. Okedara (1984) showed that of the

initial years of tertiary education, majority of **graduates (86.6%) found** work within two months of searching; **but** as **their institution grew older,** the length of time they needed to **find employment increased. Hence,** Tracer (1986) cited by Oladeji (1994) showed (5.7%) **of all graduates to** have jobs immediately they finished the National **Youth Service Corps** (NYSC). But a follow-up study in **1994 showed that (75.6%) spent 13.24** months before they could get a job; and **(14%) spent well over 25-30** months before they could secure a **job.**

The situation why graduates find it difficult to secure adequate **job after** their graduation has been traced to the inadequate **curricula their** institutions have adopted. This has been so because **most graduates** do not possess appropriate job competencies required **by employers while** some do not bring their personality traits to **their job search behaviour** through the adoption of creative and innovative **strategies that could** promote job security or creation. Unfortunately, several **end** users **of** graduates skills have had to spend several **amount of money** to retrain these graduates after the completion of their programmes of study. Consequently, there have been clamour for tertiary institutions in Nigeria to embark on curricula innovations as a necessary step in making sure that their products are exposed to the necessary skills, competencies **and** strategies they require to secure or create employment easily for themselves and the several others who are waiting on the uending employment queues outside the tertiary institutions.

In addition to the above, tertiary institutions are also being expected to up-date their infrastructural facilities, retrain their lecturers and improve their funding in order to meet the challenges of the new curricula that would be developed to accommodate the new concepts to be introduced into tertiary education by the innovation being carried out. This is because merely effecting curricula innovation without adequate manpower and infrastructural bases to carry it out will not, in any significant way, change -0.23 T-0.5u5 innovatior7

which are not readily available, this study is, therefore, concerned with explaining graduates level of easy in efforts towards job security in order to provide empirical data on what aspects of tertiary institutions curricula require innovation.

Statement of the Problem

This study was carried out to determine the contribution of curriculum outcomes, personality traits, gender role stereotypes and graduate employment search behaviour to levels of difficulty in the self employment efforts of the unemployed Nigerian tertiary institution graduates. Four basic hypotheses were tested in the study and they are:

1. There is no significant difference between curriculum outcomes and levels of difficulty in self-employment efforts of unemployed Nigerian tertiary institution graduates;

2. There is no significant difference between personality traits and levels of difficulty in self employment efforts of the unemployed Nigeria tertiary institution graduates;

3. There is no significant difference between gender role stereotypes and levels of difficulty of self employment efforts of unemployed Nigeria tertiary institution graduates;

4. There is no significant difference between employment search behaviour and levels of difficulty in self employment efforts of unemployed Nigerian tertiary institution graduates.

Procedure

(a) Instrument

Five instruments namely personal employment characteristic attitude questionnaire (PECAQ), with the Cronbach coefficient alpha value of 0.82, the graduates employment search behaviour inventory (GESBI) with the Cronbach coefficient alpha value of 0.81, the personality trait job creation inventory PYTJCI with the Cronbach coefficient alpha value of 0.91, gender job creation behaviour inventory GJCBI with the Cronbach coefficient alpha value of 0.92 and curriculum outcomes job creation behaviour inventory Cronbach alpha value of 0.91 were used to collect data for the study. They were adapted from the instruments previously developed by the Nationalte96c 0.577 Tw (wit)Tj198j0 Tc61-0.303Akinboy 2.07 Tw (e b)Tj0

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