

# Unemployment, Curriculum Outcomes, Psycho-social Characteristics, and Entrepreneurial Skills of Polytechnic Graduates.

ABAM, ARIKPO OMOOGUN, AJAYI C. ORIM, RICHARD E.  
Department Of Curriculum & Teaching, University Of Calabar, Calabar, Nigeria

## Abstract

The purpose of this study was to ascertain the relationship between and among gender role-stereotype, personality traits, common business practices, curriculum outcomes and entrepreneurial skills of polytechnic graduates. 60 Polytechnic graduates, 16 of whom were unemployed, 10 self employed, 14 organised private sector employed, and 20 government employed were used in the study. Those were purposively, drawn from Polytechnic graduates found in South-South Nigeria. The design was ex post facto and five questionnaires were used. Data gathered through them were analysed using Multiple Regression Statistic. Findings revealed that of the nine independent variables, psycho-motor curriculum outcomes, and masculine and feminine gender role-stereotype produced and contributed to the entrepreneurial skills of Polytechnic graduates.

## Introduction

Polytechnics and Colleges of Technology were first introduced into the Nigerian school system in about 1952. This followed the setting up of a commission by the Nigerian government in 1949 to survey the feasibility of establishing Polytechnics and Colleges of Technology that would provide the technical manpower essential for economic, health and technical development of the country (Okorie, 2001; Ikpe, 2000). Thorpe Commission, as it was called recommended the setting up of a Nigerian College of Arts, Science and Technology with branches in Ibadan, Zaria, and Enugu. The bill on funding of the proposal colleges was signed into law in April, 1952. From that time on the Yaba Technical Institute; the Enugu Technical Institute; the Kaduna Technical Institute and the College of Technology, Ibadan came into being (Okedara, 1984).

The number of these Colleges increased with the introduction of the Universal Primary Education (UPE) in 1976. It turned out large number of school leavers for admission into the few existing Polytechnics and Colleges of Technology, which lacked technical equipment and adequate classroom space (Oghuma, Edakpayi and Asulimam, 1988). Thus, there arose a political decision to proliferate the number of existing ones (Aghenta, 1984). This, however, was not the only implication. There also arose the need for technical teachers who would prepare learners for admission into them at primary and secondary school levels of education. This led to the Federal Governments' establishment of Technical teachers' Colleges of Education in Akoka, Gombe, Asaba and Gindiri; and the use of the Polytechnics of Calabar, Kaduna, and Anambra to run Technical Teacher Programmes (Okonkwo and Nwagwa, 1991; Yoloye, 1984).

These numbers were further aggravated by bitter ethnic politics, military coups d' etat, a bloody civil war, continuous division of the country into states, and regional inequalities in the ownership, distribution, and exploitation of human and natural resources (Nweke, 1981; Yoloye, 1984). Hence, as of year 2000 Nigeria had 39 Polytechnics. With the removal of the ownership of tertiary institutions from the exclusive to the concurrent list has the number however increased; many individual Nigerians have gone into the ownership of Polytechnics and Colleges of Technology, some of whom are even degree awarding (JAMB 2003/2004).

Whatever the ownership of Polytechnics or College of Technology, their curriculum is meant to inculcate in their graduates knowledge, attitudes, and practical skills necessary for (a) agricultural, industrial, commercial and economic development of Nigeria; (b) being enterprising and self-reliant; and (c) exposing students to professional studies in technologies (Okorie, 2001).

Despite the technical, vocational, commercial, economic and entrepreneurial implications of the curriculum of these institutions, their graduates could not escape the unemployment suffered by tertiary institution graduates since the 1980's. And ofcourse, most recently there have been source of motivation talks, books, workshops, seminars meant to harness the gift and talent in individuals.

## Statement of the problems

Manpower in the applied science, technology, business, technical and vocational skills, and self reliant economics has in Nigerian Polytechnics, Monotechnics and Colleges of Technology remained limited to training or teaching for the sake of knowing only. It is not oriented in design, purpose or training towards practical resolution of problems, but the expansion of the frontiers of knowledge in engineering, industrial technologies, applied science, commerce. This has made manpower training through the Polytechnics, Monotechnics, or Colleges of Technology a none practicable, phenomenon for and among Polytechnic or College of Technology

graduates. Its emphasis is knowledge acquisition, information control, and recall. The result of this is the basic or constitutive than applied or operational mastery and development of the technical and vocational skills associated with the curriculum contents and contexts of Polytechnic, Monotechnic, and Colleges of Technology curriculum. Hence, their graduates hardly proffer entrepreneurial skills in the face of unemployment threats. This study, therefore, examined the composite and relative effect of curriculum outcomes, gender role-stereotypes, common business practices on the entrepreneurial skills of Polytechnic or Monotechnic, or College of Technology graduates in South-South Nigeria.

### **Significance of the study**

The high rate of unemployment among Polytechnic, Monotechnic, and College of Technology graduates in Nigeria has necessitated this study. Hence, the study is significant in the following respects: it will provide an alternative instructional strategy for the career adventurous and conscientious lecturer and student who is in constant search for one. It will improve entrepreneurial skills of students and thereby reduce their unemployment rate. The study will be an eye-opener to curriculum experts who may be in search of appropriate curriculum content and context to recommend for effective entrepreneurial skills development and mastery in Polytechnic, Monotechnic and College of Technology graduates.

### **Research questions**

The following research questions were answered to:

1. What is the composite relationship of curriculum outcomes, personality traits, gender role-stereotype and common business practices on entrepreneurial skills of Polytechnic graduates?
2. What is the relative effect of each of the independent variables on entrepreneurial skills of Polytechnic graduates?
3. Which of the independent variables would predict the entrepreneurial skills of Polytechnic graduates?

### **Research design**

The ex post facto research design was adopted for the study. The variables of the study were:

- (a) **Independent variables:** curriculum outcomes, personality traits, gender role-stereotype, and common business practices; and
- (b) **The dependent variable:** entrepreneurial skills of Polytechnic or College of Technology graduates.

### **Population and selection of sample**

The population of the study consisted of all Polytechnic or College of Technology graduates in South South Nigeria. Sixty (60) Polytechnic or College of Technology graduates were purposively selected from categories of those who were unemployed, self employed, private sector employed, and government employed. The unemployed were 16 (26.7%); the self employed 10(16.7%); the organised private sector employed (14(23.3%); and the government employed 20(33.3%). The choice of graduates only was to control employment status influence on the outcome of the study.

### **Research instrument**

Research instruments comprised the following: the Self Employed Characteristics Rating Questionnaire (SECRQ); the Common Small Scale Business Practice Questionnaire (CSBPQ); the Personality Job Creation Behaviour Inventory (PJCBI); the Gender Role-stereotype Job Creation Inventory (GSJCI); and the C\_O Job Behaviour Inventory (COJBI). These instruments were 20-itemed and were adaptations of those developed by the National Directorate of Employment (NDE) (1989); Hitchin (1996), AkinBoye (2001) and Alexander (1996). Each of the instruments was revalidated using Chronbach Alpha. They yielded reliability coefficient of 0.83, 0.81, 0.91, 0.92, 0.93 and 0.91 respectively.

### **Procedure for data collection**

The investigations visited the Cross River State Ministry of Commerce and Industry; the National Directorate of Employment (NDE); the Federal Secretariat Complex, Calabar; homes, Full Gospel Businessmen Fellowship; Graduate Fellowship; Secondary Schools, and business premises – all in South South Nigeria. This enabled them to obtain permission from leaders of these organizations for the study. At the grant of the permission, members and staff were selected and served the five questionnaires to complete. Twelve research assistants were employed to help administer and retrieve the questionnaires. The exercise lasted for three months.

### **Analysis of data**

Data gathered through the questionnaires were analysed using the Multiple Regression Statistic. This adjusted for initial differences that might exist in the group, either when composite or relative.

### **Results and discussions**

**RQ1:** What is the composite relationship between curriculum outcomes, personality traits, gender role-stereotype, and common business practices on entrepreneurial skills of Polytechnic graduates?

**Table 1 Composite relationship of the independent variables on the dependent variable**

Multiple R = 0.513

Multiple R<sup>2</sup> = 0.204

Multiple R<sup>2</sup> (Adjusted) = 0.131

Standard Error of Estimate = 9.30

Sources of variation	df	SS	MS	F-ratio	Sig.F
Regression	9	1290.811	143.423	1.989	0.000*
Residual	51	3604.789	72.06		
<b>Total</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>4895.000</b>			

\*Significant at P<0.05

From table 1 above the nine variable taken together correlate positively with the independent variable (R=0.513); and account for 20.4% of variance in the dependent variable (R<sup>2</sup>= 0.204; p<0.05). 79.6% of variance in the dependent variable is attributable to residuals, errors and other factors not investigated in the study.

On the whole, the model is significant, F=1.989; Adjusted R<sup>2</sup>=0.131 (see table 1). This answers question one.

**RQ2:** What is the relative relationship of each of the independent variables on entrepreneurial skills of Polytechnic graduates?

**Table 2 Relative relationship of each independent variable to the dependent variable**

Variables	Unstandardised Coefficient		Standardised Coefficient	Rank	t-ratio	Sig t
	B	S.E.B	Beta			
Masculine Gender role Stereotype	0.258	0.106	0.464	2 <sup>nd</sup>	2.439	0.018
Feminine Gender role stereotype	-0.250	0.106	-0.431	3 <sup>rd</sup>	-2.361	0.022
Introvert Personality Trait	9.421	0.076	0.187	6 <sup>th</sup>	1.233	0.223
Extrovert Personality Trait	-2.753	0.100	-0.043	8 <sup>th</sup>	-0.274	0.785
Common Business Practices	-1.165	0.128	-0.013	9 <sup>th</sup>	-0.091	0.928
Cognitive Curriculum Outcome	-9.504	0.086	-0.182	7 <sup>th</sup>	-1.103	0.275
Affective Curriculum Outcome	-0.134	0.093	-0.284	4 <sup>th</sup>	-1.432	0.158
Psycho-motor Curriculum outcome	0.243	0.098	0.554	1 <sup>st</sup>	2.469	0.017
Field Experience Curriculum Outcome	-9.792	0.089	-0.219	5 <sup>th</sup>	-1.099	0.277
Constant	77.078	9.250			8.333	0.000

Table 2 shows significant independent variables in the model to retrogressively include Psychomotor curriculum outcomes ( $\beta=0.554$ ;  $p<0.05$ ); masculine gender role-stereotype ( $\beta=0.464$ ;  $p<0.05$ ); feminine gender role-stereotype ( $\beta=0.431$ ;  $p<0.05$ ); affective curriculum outcomes ( $\beta=-0.284$ ;  $p<0.05$ ); field experience curriculum outcomes ( $\beta=-0.219$ ;  $p>0.05$ ); introvert personality trait ( $\beta=0.187$ ;  $p>0.05$ ); cognitive curriculum outcomes ( $\beta=-0.182$ ;  $p>0.05$ ); and extrovert personality trait ( $\beta=-0.043$ ;  $p>0.05$ ); and common business practices ( $\beta=0.013$ ;  $p>0.05$ ). This result answer question 2.

**RQ3:** Which of the independent variables would predict the entrepreneurial skills of Polytechnic graduates?

Only three of the independent variables make significant prediction of the dependent variable (see table 2). These are Psycho-motor curriculum outcomes (B=0.243;  $t=2.469$ ;  $p<0.05$ ); masculine gender role-stereotype (B=0.258;  $t=2.439$ ;  $p<0.05$ ); feminine gender role-stereotype (B=-0.250;  $t=-2.361$ ;  $p<0.05$ ). In this case only psycho-motor curriculum outcomes, masculine gender role-stereotype, and feminine gender role-stereotype will be entered into the prediction equation (Probability is below 0.05). Affective curriculum outcomes (B=-0.134;  $t=-1.432$ ;  $p>0.05$ ); field experience curriculum outcomes (B=-9.792;  $t=-1.099$ ;  $p>0.05$ ); introvert personality trait (B=9.421;  $t=1.233$ ;  $p>0.05$ ); cognitive curriculum outcomes (B=-2.753;  $t=-0.274$ ;  $p>0.05$ ); and common business practices (B=-1.165;  $t=-0.091$ ;  $p>0.05$ ) would not (probability exceeds 0.05). This is because only independent variables with significant t-ratios would always significantly predict the dependent variable. The prediction equation is shown below.

$$Y^1 = 77.078 + 0.243x + 0.258x + -0.250x$$

Where  $Y^1$  = entrepreneurial skills of Polytechnic graduates  $x$  = psycho-motor curriculum outcomes, masculine gender role-stereotype; and feminine gender role-stereotype. This result answers question 3.

## Discussion

The study examined the relationship of masculine gender role-stereotype, feminine gender role-stereotype, introvert personality trait, extrovert personality trait, common business practices, cognitive curriculum outcomes, affective curriculum outcomes, psycho-motor curriculum outcomes, and field experience curriculum outcomes to the entrepreneurial skills of Polytechnic graduates. The findings revealed that the nine independent variables taken together correlate positively with the entrepreneurial skills of Polytechnic graduates. They account for 20.4% variance in the entrepreneurial skills of Polytechnic graduates. However, when the nine independent variable were considered separately against the constant or dependent variable only psycho-motor curriculum outcomes, masculine gender role-stereotype, and feminine gender role-stereotype, respectively made significant contribution to one prediction of the entrepreneurial skills of Polytechnic graduates. This may be due to the postulation that;

- (i) Psycho-motor curriculum outcomes deal with manipulative skills and body movements (Ojerinde and Falayajo, 1984) which make their recipients interested in manual labour, activities demanding manipulation of physical environments and the careers of farmers, modernists, and builders (Makinde and Alao, 1987);
- (ii) gender role-stereotypes whether male or female go with role models gleaned from parents, relations, friends, authority figures, films, television, the music world, famous individuals; and
- (iii) within every woman's psychology dwells what is called the animus representing the male qualities within a female; and within the male is the anima, the female qualities within the male (Alexander, 1969).

Based on these findings, it was recommended that planners, designers, developers and implementers of the Polytechnic curriculum should update its content and context with psycho-motor outcomes, and masculine and feminine gender role-stereotypes. More especially they should employ role models, avoid gender discrimination, and employ curriculum materials that emphasize observation, imitation, practice, and adaptation; or person-oriented outcomes, which are out-going and require keen interest in interpersonal relations.

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