

**RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN COURSES OFFERED DURING
UNDERGRADUATES TRAINING AND PRODUCTIVITY LEVEL OF
NIGERIAN UNIVERSITY GRADUATES**

Key words: Courses offered: Productivity: University graduates

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Abstract

This study investigated the relationship between courses offered at the undergraduate training and productivity of Nigerian university graduates. The population for the study consisted of all the university graduates in Nigeria. Stratified random sampling was used to select 12 out of 36 States across the six geo-political zones in Nigeria. Random sampling was used to select five courses out of ten courses in the university. Captive audience sampling was used to select 936 Heads of Departments from the sampled organizations. Two research questions were raised and two research hypotheses were formulated for the purpose of the study. A research instrument titled "Graduates' Courses Offered and Productivity Questionnaire" (GCOPQ) was designed to gather necessary information from the respondents. The data collected were analyzed using percentages, Analysis of variance (ANOVA), Duncan multiple range of means / group Separation and Pearson product-moment correlation statistics. Findings from this study revealed that science based university graduates are more productive than their counterpart in other courses and there was positive significant relationship between courses offered and productivity of Nigerian University graduates. It was recommended among others that government admission policy of 40/60 in respect of Art based and

Sciences based courses respectively should be emphasized so as to produce manpower in needed area such as petroleum, oil and gas, geology and so on.

Introduction

Education is an instrument for change and development of an individual and nation. As a result, human and financial resources are committed to its development.. This fact is well acknowledged by Nigerian Government as reflected in the various measures, commitments and actions, it continues to take in the sustenance of the educational programmes. Education can therefore be described as a system of instrument resources and processes for the delivery of knowledge, skills and attitude for human and societal use at large. There is the need for some steps to be taken in order to identify or determine the goals to be attained, activities or objectives to meet the goals and the personnel to perform the various activities. The aims and objectives of higher education are stated by the Federal Government of Nigeria (2004) in section 6 of paragraph 45 of the National Policy on Education are to:

- *Contribute to national development through higher-level relevant manpower training.*
- *Develop and inculcate values for the survival of the individuals and society.*
- *Develop the intellectual capability of individuals to understand and appreciate their local and external environments.*
- *Acquire both physical and intellectual skills, which will enable individuals to be self-reliant and useful members of the society*
- *Promote and encourage scholarship and community service.*
- *Forge and cement national unity and*
- *Promote national and international understanding and interaction.pp.36*

The development of manpower needs have been generally accepted as a basic precondition to economic development in particular and modernization in general. All these could only be achieved through well- structured curriculum, which is contained in the education policy. After the processing stage of the school (university education), students are turnout into the labour market where their worth will be utilized and appraised. The appraisal is done based on productivity line. Fadipe (2000) defined productivity as the ratio of output of goods and services to the input in production line. The input factors include labour, land, technology, tangible output, finance, energy and management expertise. The concept of productivity involves the interplay of various elements in the work place, while the inputs may be related to miscellaneous resources (labour, materials, capital). The output is the outcome of the whole process.

According to Ibrahim, (2003) curriculum is a document in which learning activities and or experiences are sequentially arranged to bring about permanent changes in behaviour and to make learning easier for the learner.

Okebukola (1992) saw curriculum as being a programme of studies, course content, planned learning experiences had under the auspices of the school structured, series of intended learning Outcomes and a written plan for action.

The Federal Government of Nigeria [2004] stressed the need for education to aid man's instinct for self-preservation through instruction on the basic skills to enable one to earn a living. These basic skills are obtained different subjects of the school curriculum which are embedded in the National Policy on Education.

Students at the higher level of learning prefer to study a particular course of study to the other. This explains why some faculties are faced with over population on enrolment while some will scout for candidates. For example, students rarely wish to choose agriculture as a course of study simply because they want to belong to the more popular occupation such as law and medicine, while Agriculture is generally seen as dirty by the public. It is seen as a job for the old, rural dwellers, and uneducated and less fashionable member of the society (Oyedepo (2011). This was confirmed by Mijinyawa (2005) when he mentioned that lack of entry requirements for other popular courses make students in tertiary institutions to choose agriculture as an alternative course not really that they would have wished to read it as a course. The general realization that education is an indispensable medium of bringing about national development, is no more in doubt. The wealth, strength, social and economic wellbeing of nations are measured in terms of its technological advancement and that was why Aina (2001) commented that for a nation to be competitive in the global market place education programmes must have meaningful link to the social and economic needs of the people. Amasa (1997) claimed that there is need for cordial relationship between the school and industry, because the challenge to success in an ever- increasing competitive world market on the part of industry is dependent upon skilled manpower. This assertion is applicable to all fields of study.

Statement of the Problem

The extent of the productivity accomplished by the learner is a reflection of an increased change in behaviour in an acceptable positive direction. This set of learners produced by the universities go to the Labour market to demonstrate how they can use their changed behaviour to bring about attainment of set goals and objectives in their various field of employment which calls for the measurement of productivity. It. is observed that the type of courses offered in Nigerian universities

today does not actually determine the type of employment an individual will get. Apart from the teaching profession that accommodates virtually all other professions. It is disheartening and out of place to find medical doctors, lawyers, geologists, working in the banking industries. This no doubt, constitutes the clog in the wheel of the economic development. This is definitely a case of a square peg in a round hole. Apart from the money spent to train the individual in the university, the employer will still have to take aforementioned employee through another related training, which will make the employee relevant for the new job. Therefore, this study examined how adequate or otherwise, the contemporary University education has aided the university graduates to perform well on their job by examining the relationship among courses offered, and productivity of Nigerian University graduates.

Research Questions

Research questions were generated to guide the study

- (i) Is there any relationship between courses offered and productivity of Nigerian university graduates?
- (ii) Are graduates' of some courses of study more productive than the other?

Research Hypotheses

HO₁: There is no significant relationship between courses offered and productivity of Nigerian university graduates

HO₂: There is no significant difference in the productivity of university graduates based on courses of study of Nigerian university graduates.

Methodology

The study was a descriptive survey of correlational type. Twelve out of 36 states were selected for the study using stratified sampling technique, random sampling technique was used to select five courses out of ten and, captive audience sampling was used to select 936 respondents from selected organizations. An instrument titled Graduates' Courses Offered and Productivity Questionnaire (GCOPQ) was designed to gather relevant information from the respondents. The instrument consisted of two sections.

Section 'A' elicited information on the sampled organizations, section 'B' gathered data on the level of productivity of the graduates as rated by the Heads of department based on the productivity indices. The instrument was validated by three experts in Educational Management and it was found reliable at 0.86 using test-retest method. The data collected were analysed using percentage, Analysis of variance, Duncan

multiple range of mean/ group separation and Pearson product- moment correlation statistics.

Result

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between courses offered at the first degree level and the productivity of Nigerian university graduates.

Table 1

Relationship between Courses Offered and Productivity of Nigerian University Graduates

Variables	N	X	SD	DF	Cal.	r-value	Critical r-value	Decision
Course offered	836	24.08	4.21					
productivity	836	11.11	3.63		834	.92	.09	Ho not accepted

Table 1 indicates that the mean of courses offered is 24.08 while the mean for productivity of Nigerian university graduate is 11.11, at 834 degree of freedom; the calculated r-value is .92 while the critical r-value is .09. The calculated r-value of .92 is greater than the critical r-value of .09, therefore, the null hypothesis is not accepted. This implies that there is a significant relationship between the courses offered at bachelor's degree level and productivity of Nigerian university graduates.

Ho₂ There is no significant difference in the productivity of Nigerian university graduates based on course of study at the undergraduate level.

Table2

Productivity of Nigerian University Graduates based on course of study

	Sum of square	Df	Mean square	Cal. F- value	Critical F-value	Decision
Between groups	241.28	2	120.64	301.9	3.01	Ho not accepted
Within groups	332.77	833	34			
Total	574.05	835				

Table 2 is the Analysis of variance of significant difference in the productivity among the graduates in some courses offered in the University.

The result shows that F-value calculated is 301.99 greater than the critical F- value 3.01 at .05 level of significance .Since the calculated value is greater than the critical

value the null hypothesis is not accepted, therefore there is significant difference in the productivity of Nigerian University graduates.

Research Question: - Are graduates of some courses of study more productive than others?

Table 3

Separation of Productivity of Selected Courses Offered in the University

Courses offered	N	Subset for alpha is .05				
		1	2	3	4	5
Arts/social science	122	15.69				
Agriculture	102		20.97			
Education	102			23.55		
Engineering	102				26.69	
Sciences	407					27.33

Table 3 shows Duncan multiple range of mean/group separation of productivity of some of the courses offered in the university. The result shows the separation of the five major areas of studies into their distinct groups. The result shows that graduates in the five major areas of studies are different in productivity from one to another with Art/ social sciences having the least productivity of 15.69 followed by Agriculture with 20.97, Education with 23.55, and engineering with 26.69 while Sciences have 27.33 as the highest productivity level...

Discussions

The result in table 1 is not surprising because according to Vroom (1964), productivity is a function of performance as shown by the equation:-

$$\text{Performance} = \text{Ability} \times \text{Effort} \times \text{Motivation} \times \text{Opportunity.}$$

Ability is the skill gained through the training received in the University. If ability which is courses offered is zero, performance will also be zero, and productivity will automatically be zero. Since university education is supposed to be a specialized education, whereby after obtaining the first degree certificate, the graduates are tested and certified to go to the labour market to enhance high productivity, because it is assumed that university education should have a meaningful link with industries.

The proceeding result in table 3 showing sciences university graduates with the highest level of productivity, this may be due to the nature of science related courses that required both the theory and practical aspects of the training. This enables the science graduates to utilize at least two out of three domains of knowledge which is

cognitive, psychomotor and affective. Science subjects effectively require the domains of cognitive and psychomotor for both the theory and practical examinations application of what is learnt is a must before certification.

This is in line with Ugwuonah and Omeje's (2002) report that engineering polytechnics graduates performed better on the job than other university graduates because they were able to make use of the knowledge gained during the course of study in their work place. Therefore, inability of the university graduates to perform excellently on the job might be as a result of the gap that exists between what is taught in the class and the demand of the labour market. But some employers see University education as a general education, and once it is acquired the individual graduate will be teachable to perform any job. This category of employers according to Oni (2001) claimed that since there is wide gap between theory that is learnt in the university and its application in industries outside the university, they have resulted into recruiting the half-baked university graduates and re-train them at an extra cost to make them productive on the job.

Recommendations

On the basis of the findings of this study the following recommendations are considered appropriate;

- ❖ The Federal Government's admission policy of 60/40 (Science /Arts and Humanities) should be strictly complied with, so as to produce manpower in areas that are most needed such as petroleum, oil and gas, geology and so on. This will allow for putting the right peg in the right hole which will enhance high productivity
- ❖ The employers of labour should employ university graduates based on the courses offered so as to reduce pre-training before job placement. This will reduce cost and prevent professional mismatch hence, enhancing productivity.
- ❖ The expansion being witnessed in university education system is such that called for serious training of educational and curriculum planners to ensure that university education is made relevant by continuous review of the curriculum so as to meet the need of industries.
- ❖ Much emphasis should be placed on the practical aspect of science courses to equip the students with the much needed technological know- how for national development which will enhance high productivity.

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