

## BUSINESS EDUCATORS' PERCEPTION OF OFFICE AND ENTREPRENEURIAL EDUCATION SKILLS AS PANACEA FOR GRADUATE WHITE-COLLAR UNEMPLOYMENT CHALLENGES IN OYO STATE

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### **Abstract**

*The study examined business educators' perception of office education skills and entrepreneurial education skills as panacea for graduate white-collar unemployment challenges in Oyo State. The population of the study comprised fifty (50) Business Education lecturers in four colleges of education in Oyo State. A 20-item structured questionnaire was used to seek the opinion of Business Education lecturers on the subject matter. The instrument was validated and the reliability index was 0.83 using Cronbach alpha formula. Two research questions were raised for the study and two hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. Research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation, while a t-test was used to test the hypotheses. Consequently, the findings showed that office education skills serve as a panacea for graduates white-collar unemployment challenges in Oyo State, as perceived by Business Educators and that entrepreneurial education skills also serve as a panacea for graduates white-collar unemployment challenges in Oyo State, as perceived by Business Educators. It was therefore, recommended among others that there should be adequate sensitization and mobilization of support for office education and entrepreneurial skills acquisition programme in Nigeria in other to achieve the goals and policy thrusts of the Federal Government of Nigeria on entrepreneurial development to curb unemployment problem in Nigeria.*

**Keywords:** *Business educators; Entrepreneurial education skills; White collar unemployment challenges, Nigeria*

### **Introduction**

In the context of this study the researcher refers to office and entrepreneurial education skills Business as saleable skills acquired from structured learning process. They are practicable skills that may perhaps be considered by the business educators in the course of the study that can be of value for self-engagement, wants satisfaction and pecuniary reward. Amoor as quoted by Paul (2013) describes Business Education as a form of Vocational Education that is directed towards developing the learners to become productive in teaching, paid employment and self-employment. It is seen as education for and about business. Education for business is that aspect of vocational education which provides instructions and preparation for office occupation as secretary, typist, accountant, entrepreneur, marketer, manager, financial and the likes. On the other hand, education about business provides knowledge and understanding of the economy, financial, marketing, accounting and management system.

However, Pollynn (2010) summarizes the actual and operative goals of Business Education as enunciated in the handbook of various Department of Business Education to include: to produce efficient and effective management, secretarial, accounting and marketing managers, to produce lecturers who will handle business and related courses in universities and colleges of education, to propagate the development of the business thought and philosophy in business and management; to prepare people for self-employment in situations where there is no available paid employment; to develop in the students' requisite skills and expertise in managements of both private and public enterprise and arm them with the analytical ability needed to meet the growing challenges of present and future Nigerian and international environment; and to prepare and equip those who pass through the programme to be able to establish and run their own private business ventures as self-employed citizens of the society.

Business Education curriculum offers knowledge in subject areas such as Accounting, Management, Marketing, Secretarial Studies, Human Resources Management and Entrepreneurship Education. All these enable the recipients to seek career in business. Ekoh (2016) perceived Business Education as a tree of five (5) branches which include: general business courses, office, accounting, marketing/distributive and entrepreneurship. The researcher contends that each of these areas have saleable skills that can be of value for self-employability, sustenance and self-dependent without having to depend on someone else for a living.

Office education skills equip students with the ability to operate business centers, ability to engage in reprography. It entails the acquisition of practical skills, attitude, understanding and knowledge relating to occupations in various sectors of economic and social life (Ufot, in (Oyewole, 2016). Accounting education is that aspect of Business Education that provides an individual with skill and knowledge in accounting and computing occupation and data processing for gainful employment in self, public and private sector (Aremu & Adeyemi, 2011). Accounting education option provides individual with the ability to evaluate economic activities of everyday life in monetary terms, ability to estimate the costs of creating goods and services, ability to make decisions about production on the basis of these estimates, ability to compare the actual costs as they occur with the estimate originally made, and ability to adjust output and prices of goods and services accordingly.

Marketing option equips individual with the ability to capture and retain attention of customers, ability to promote and sell the organization's product, ability to analyze demand and supply situation, ability to distribute goods to satisfy customers' needs, ability to acquire effective sales habit, ability to acquire good sales techniques and ability to carry out effective marketing and information research. Entrepreneurship education on the other hand equips individual with the ability to own and manage a business both material and human resources, ability to operate business activities including employee and employer's work relationship and ability to produce and distribute goods and services to the populace. Skills and knowledge acquired in entrepreneurship education enable the recipients in establishing a new business, planning, organizing, supervising, directing, controlling and coordinating the business enterprises. All these options guide against unemployment and ready to equip individual with requisite skill needed in the choice of his or her career.

Unemployment, to a lay man simply means lack of employment or without job and able to work. It can also refer to one that has lost his/her job; equally there are some that lack skills or qualities needed to get a job. Oyewole, Maffo and Ojewale (2018) defined unemployment as a situation in which people are willing to work at the prevailing wage rate and unable to find jobs. This implies that not just anyone who is to be counted as part of unemployed labour force is unemployable in order to avoid overestimation of the official rate of unemployment is a universal concern. International Labour Organization (2012) defined unemployment as a member of the economically active population who are without work but

available for and seeking for work, including people who have lost their jobs and those who have voluntarily left work. The application of this definition across countries has been faulted, especially for the purpose of comparison and policy formation, as countries characteristics are not the same in their commitment to resolving unemployment challenges (Chidobi, 2015). Oyewole (2016) said about 20% of Nigeria unemployed are very poor, but are well educated and skilled, even by European and American standard. Graduates unemployment includes graduates of universities, polytechnics and colleges of education who are capable and willing to work but could not find a job or are discriminated for lack of experience. Some have never worked, lost their jobs and seeking re-entry into the work force, under-employed or under-disguised unemployment.

However, the epidemic of graduate unemployment is gradually escalating throughout Nigeria on a daily basis. Even as thousand wander the length and breadth of the country in search of elusive white collar jobs, the universities continue to churn out millions of graduates annually, albeit with little hope of productive career engagement. Little wonder, that news report consistently indicate that the ranks of militants, kidnappers, and internet fraudsters are filled with hordes of intelligent graduates unable to find rewarding legitimate employment. It was on this premises that the National Universities Commission (NUC), on the instruction of the National Council on Education, directed universities in the country to run Business Education programmes for all students to reduce unemployment and boost the nation's economy. Therefore, there is need to find out about the business educators' perception of office and entrepreneurial education skills whether it would be panacea for graduate white-collar unemployment challenges in Oyo state.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Nigeria as a whole is indisputably facing challenges of white-collar unemployment. Thousands of graduates are jobless and this emanating into various vices, crimes, frauds and lot of atrocities being committed by theses teeming jobless masses. Among these jobless sets are graduates of Business Education which should not be despite the training on office and entrepreneurial education they are exposed to. The researchers are of the view that the various skills acquired if put into practice may be of value for self-engagement, wants satisfaction and monetary reward. It is on this premise that the researchers felt the need for capturing the perception of Business educators as to whether or not the office and entrepreneurial education skills termed as Business Education indicators can be panacea for the white-collar unemployment challenges.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of this study was to determine the extent to which business educators' perception of office and entrepreneurial education skills is a panacea for graduate white-collar unemployment challenges in Oyo State. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Determine the extent to which office education skills can be a panacea for graduates' white-collar unemployment challenges in Oyo State, as perceived by the Business Educators.
2. Investigate the extent to which entrepreneurial education skills can be a panacea for graduates' white-collar unemployment challenges in Oyo State, as perceived by the Business Educators.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study.

1. To what extent do office education skills act as a panacea for graduates white-collar unemployment challenges in Oyo State, as may be perceived by the Business Educators?

2. To what extent do entrepreneurial education skills act as a panacea for graduates white-collar unemployment challenges in Oyo State, as perceived by the Business Educators?

### Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

1. There is no significant difference between the mean responses of Business educators in private and public colleges of education on office education skills as panacea for graduates' white-collar unemployment challenges in Oyo State.
2. There is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female Business Educators on entrepreneurial education skills as panacea for graduates' white-collar unemployment challenges in Oyo State.

### Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive research method. The population for the study comprised 50 Business Education lecturers in all the four colleges of education in Oyo State.

Due to the small number of the population, the entire population was used as sample. The instrument for data collection was a 4-point rating scale questionnaire of Very high extent (VHE = 4), High extent (HE = 3), Low extent (LE = 2) and Very Low extent (VLE = 1). The instrument was face and content validated by three experts. The internal reliability of the instrument was measured using Cronbach alpha which yielded a correlation coefficient of 0.74. Mean and standard deviation was used to answer the research questions. Any item which mean score was equal or above 2.50 was considered high extent while items below 2.50 was considered low extent. The t-test statistical tool was used to test the null hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance.

### Results

The results of the study are contained in the following tables in accordance with the research questions and hypotheses.

**Research Question 1:** To what extent do office education skills act as a panacea for graduates white-collar unemployment challenges in Oyo State, as perceived by the Business Educators.

**Table 1:**

#### Mean Rating of Respondents on Office Education Skills

| S/N                | Office Education Skills  | Mean        | SD   | Remark    |
|--------------------|--|-------------|------|-----------|
| 1.                 | Ability to type with speed and accuracy  | 3.73        | 0.53 | HE        |
| 2.                 | Ability to keep official secrets (as keeper of secrets)  | 3.39        | 0.77 | HE        |
| 3.                 | Business communication skills ability  | 3.34        | 0.81 | HE        |
| 4.                 | Ability to eschew gossiping and grumbling  | 3.19        | 0.83 | HE        |
| 5.                 | Record keeping and numeric ability   | 3.30        | 0.81 | HE        |
| 6.                 | Ability to work under pressure   | 3.16        | 0.81 | HE        |
| 7.                 | Competency in shorthand  | 3.08        | 0.92 | HE        |
| 8.                 | Ability to work with computer  | 3.10        | 0.89 | HE        |
| 9.                 | Adequate knowledge of office equipment's/ machines, their functions, how they operate and when to use them | 3.43        | 0.77 | HE        |
| 10.                | Ability for thoroughness and orderliness   | 3.29        | 0.81 | HE        |
| <b>Grand Total</b> |  | <b>3.30</b> |      | <b>HE</b> |

Result in Table 1 shows that the mean scores ranged from 3.08-3.78, while the standard deviation ranged from 0.53-0.92. The grand mean of 3.30 indicates that business educators perceived office education skills as panacea for graduates' white collar unemployment challenges

**Research Question 2:** To what extent do entrepreneurial education skills act as a panacea for graduates white-collar unemployment challenges in Oyo State, as perceived by the Business Educators?

**Table 2:**  
**Mean Rating of Respondents on Entrepreneurial Education Skills**

| S/N                | Entrepreneurial Education Skills                                     | Mean | SD   | Remark |
|--------------------|--|------|------|--------|
| 1.                 | Set the right price for a product                                    | 3.00 | 0.96 | HE     |
| 2.                 | Interpret factors which affects the strength of business enterprises | 3.19 | 0.99 | HE     |
| 3.                 | Identify the right channel of product distribution                   | 3.09 | 0.78 | HE     |
| 4.                 | Identify the target market   | 3.08 | 0.89 | HE     |
| 5.                 | Direct selling strategy in marketing a product                       | 3.21 | 0.86 | HE     |
| 6.                 | Take appropriate decisions when necessary                            | 3.11 | 0.81 | HE     |
| 7.                 | Direct the business activities                                       | 3.01 | 0.88 | HE     |
| 8.                 | Evaluate business activities   | 3.04 | 0.90 | HE     |
| 9.                 | Determine the extent to which products will be sell/produce          | 2.83 | 0.85 | HE     |
| 10.                | Budget and forecast sales/produce                                    | 2.89 | 0.99 | HE     |
| <b>Grand Total</b> |  | 3.05 |      | HE     |

Result in Table 2 shows that the mean scores ranged from 2.83-3.19, while the standard deviation ranged from 0.78-0.99. The grand mean of 3.05 indicates that business educators perceived entrepreneurial skills as panacea for graduates' white collar unemployment challenges

### Testing of Hypotheses

**Ho<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant difference between the mean responses of Business educators in private and public colleges of education on office education skills as panacea for graduates' white-collar unemployment challenges in Oyo State.

**Table 3: Testing for Significant difference between the Mean Response of Business Educators of private and public colleges of education on office education skills as panacea for graduates white-collar unemployment challenges**

| Groups  | N  | Mean | SD   | Df | P-value | Alpha | Remark      |
|---------|----|------|------|----|---------|-------|-------------|
| Private | 12 | 2.54 | 0.53 | 48 | 0.01    | 0.05  | Significant |
| Public  | 38 | 2.89 | 0.59 |    |         |       |             |

The result in table 3 shows that p-value was less than alpha level and the null hypothesis was significant. Therefore Business Educator in private institutions perceived business skills more than business educators in public colleges of education as a panacea for graduates' white-collar unemployment challenges. Therefore the null hypothesis was rejected.

**Ho<sub>2</sub>:** There is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female Business Educators on entrepreneurial education skills as panacea for graduates' white-collar unemployment challenges in Oyo State.

**Table 4: Testing For Significant Difference in the Mean Responses of Male and Female Business Educators on entrepreneurial education skills as panacea for graduates white-collar unemployment challenges.**

| Groups | N  | Mean | SD   | Df | P-value | Alpha | Decision        |
|--------|----|------|------|----|---------|-------|-----------------|
| Male   | 21 | 2.59 | 0.41 | 48 | 0.08    | 0.05  | Not significant |
| Female | 29 | 2.54 | 0.53 |    |         |       |                 |

The result in table 4 revealed that the calculated p-value was greater than the alpha level, and the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the mean responses between male and female Business Educators on entrepreneurial education skills as panacea for graduates white-collar unemployment challenges based on gender was accepted. This implies that there was no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female Business Educators on entrepreneurial education skills as panacea for graduates' white-collar unemployment challenges.

### Discussion of Findings

Result in Table 1 indicated that office education skills serve as a panacea for graduates white-collar unemployment challenges in Oyo state, as perceived by Business Educators. This is in agreement with Oyewole (2012) who stated that that office education skills equip students with the ability to operate business centers, ability to engage in reprography. It entails the acquisition of practical skills, attitude, understanding and knowledge relating to occupations in various sectors of economic and social life.

Result in table 2 showed that entrepreneurial education skills serve as a panacea for graduates white-collar unemployment challenges in Oyo State, as may be perceived by Business Educators. This was corroborated by Akinbile (2015) who asserted that entrepreneurial education is a specialized training given to students of vocational and technical education to acquire the skills, ideas and managerial abilities and capabilities for self-employment rather than being employed for pay.

A test of significance was used to test the first hypothesis on to what extent to which Business Educators of private and public colleges of education perceived office education skills as panacea for graduates' white-collar unemployment challenges in Oyo State, as a result of ownership. Table 3 revealed that there was a significant difference among the responses of Business Educators in private and public college of education. The result in table 4 revealed that there was no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female Business Educators on entrepreneurial education skills as panacea for graduates' white-collar unemployment challenges.

### Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that office education skills and entrepreneurial skills serve as a panacea for graduates white-collar unemployment challenges in Oyo State, as may be perceived by Business Educators.

## Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were put forward:

1. Office and entrepreneurship syllabus in higher institutions should be designed to be more practicable than theoretical, that is, it should allocate more time for skill acquisition.
2. There should be adequate sensitization and mobilization of support for office and entrepreneurial skill acquisition programme in Nigeria in other to achieve the goals and policy thrusts of the Federal Government of Nigeria on entrepreneurial development.

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