

## Article

# Unemployment, curriculum outcomes, psycho-social characteristics, and College of Education graduates' entrepreneurial abilities

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The study adapted an ex-post facto design to predict the effect of curriculum outcomes, personality traits, common business practices, and gender role-stereotypes on entrepreneurial abilities of College of Education graduates. The sample was 86 College of Education graduates. These were purposively drawn in their denomination as those who were self-employed 23 (26.7%), government employed 25 (29.1%) private sector employed 9(10.5%) and unemployed 29 (33.7%). The research instruments were the Self Employment Characteristics Rating Questionnaire (SECRQ); the Common Small Scale Business Practices Inventory (CSBPI); the Personality Job Creation Behaviour Inventory (PJCBI); the Gender Role-stereotype Job Creation Inventory (GSJCI); and the C-O Job Behaviour Inventory (COJBI). Three research questions were asked and answered through analyses of data collected via the research instruments. The data were analyzed using multiple regression analysis at 0.05 alpha levels. Results indicated that, only the common business practices were predicted as entrepreneurial skills of College of Education graduates out of the nine independent variables. Based on the findings, it is recommended that existing College of Education curriculum content and context has been reviewed to incorporate and emphasize common business practices and introvert personality traits.

**Key words:** Entrepreneurial abilities, curriculum outcomes, common business practice, gender role-stereotypes, research instruments, introvert personality traits, curriculum content, self-employed, government employed, private sector employed, unemployed.

## INTRODUCTION

It is a common phenomenon today to; (in Nigeria) see graduates of Colleges of Education roam the streets in search of jobs. That is, despite the fact that the Colleges of Education are meant to, by sections 5(c) and (d) of decree No. 3 of 1989:

(i) Produce trained manpower in applied sciences,

technology and commerce of sub professional levels,  
(ii) Produce technical knowledge and vocational skills necessary for agricultural, industrial and economic development, and;  
(iii) Produce skilled, self-reliant and enterprising craftsmen and technicians (Okorie, 2001:63).

The education offered through College of Education is well known to be most often divorced from students' who needs aspirations, and future life situations and opportunities (Ngwu, 2003:1). Its emphasis remains learners' possession of abilities in grammar, reading, rhetoric's mathematics, and logic through rote and permanent studies (Amadi, 1990). The content and context of its curriculum ignore the interests, natural aptitude values, temperament, learning styles, benefits,

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**Abbreviations:** SECRQ, Self employment characteristics rating questionnaire; CSBPI, common small scale business practices inventory; PJCBI, personality job creation behaviour inventory; GSJCI, gender role-stereotype job creation inventory; COJBI, C-O job behaviour inventory.

life changes of the learner and his immediate environment (Jones and Jones, 1991). Its concern is the Colonial European system of education, religion, politics, economics, science and technology, emphasized, protected and popularized by indigenous elites and employers of labour.

In Nigeria, therefore, with the advent of public sector unemployment in the mid-1980s, College of Education graduates' employments in the private sector worsen as the years-go by. Many graduates of Colleges of Education seem to have a negative attitude towards private sector employment. The reason is that, though section 5(c) and (d) of Decree No. 3 of 1989 establishing the National commission for College of Education (NCCE) emphasizes vocational and technical education, little attention has been paid to private sector or entrepreneurial skills than public or government sector skills. The content and context of the College of Education curriculum are not the type that make recipients interested in what people want; being creative; showing sensitivity to other's feelings, thinking on their own; staying calm in times of crisis, being organized; developing an idea; finding out how things work; working with their hands; working in the outside; repairing things; having time on their hands; managing money; keeping a job; getting a job; being interviewed for a job; being self confident; feeling good about themselves; doing the things they want to do; dealing with authority, etc. (Alexander, 1996). They are the type that rest on the need to produce high level manpower that would run public sector economics (Livingstone and Goodwill, 1972). Therefore, they focus on the discipline of the mind and cultivation of intellectual virtues though the study of selected subjects and permanent studies (Amadi, 1990). Their philosophy is essentialism and perennialism, rather than reconstructionism in progressivism, and existentialism; and the psychology of behaviouralism.

This study, therefore, sought to correlate the contributions of curriculum outcomes, personality traits, gender role-stereotypes, employment status and common business practices on private sector, or entrepreneurial skills of College of education graduates (CEG) in South-South Nigeria.

### **Theoretical framework**

A number of learning theories underlay this study. These theories were cognitive fields and social learning theories. The cognitive field theories were concerned with how graduates as learners had gained knowledge about their world, and how as graduates could use the knowledge they had gained as learners to guide decisions and perform effective private sector, or entrepreneurial actions. To this end, they postulated a set of interrelated concepts, definitions and propositions which presented a systematic view of the private sector employment or

entrepreneurial capabilities of the College of Education graduates by specifying relationships between and among curriculum outcomes and psycho-social factors. The graduate as a one time learner is seen to be endowed with valuable entrepreneurial potentials to be developed to their greatest height within an environment to be provided by the content and context of the College of Education curriculum. His mind is seen to be endowed with faculties for reasoning, imagining, remembering, perceiving, hearing, thinking and using language associated with abilities and abilities to an enterprise, which develop through exercise and freedom (Vikoo, 2003; Amadi, 1990).

The study is, thus far, concerned with the inner working of the learner's mind and contends that instructional practices in the College of Education must take into account the internal cognitive changes which entrepreneurially occur during learning. The concept of education is that of educating the learner to become what he is. Social learning theory was an opinion that entrepreneurial behaviour could be newly acquired by College of Education graduates, while, still learners through curriculum content and context which advocate direct experience or observation. It also postulated that through the context of the College of Education curriculum, a vast number of stimuli which make their graduates, while, still learners, display activated and guided behaviour could be acquired. It as well viewed acquisition of entrepreneurial skills relative to culture relevant to the learner. Consequently, it equated environmental influence to entrepreneurial skills which can be acquired through imitation, observation, practice, and adaptation (Urevbu, 1985), or values, beliefs, attitudes appreciation, interest, social relations, emotional adjustment, habits, and life style (Ojerinde and Falayajo, 1984).

### **Problem Statement**

The study sought to determine the extent to which curriculum outcomes; personality traits, common business practices, gender role-stereotypes and employment status explain or predict entrepreneurial skills of college of education graduates in South-South Nigeria.

### **Purpose of the study**

The purpose of this study was to essentially determine the nature and extent of relationship existing between and among personality traits, gender role-stereotypes, curriculum outcomes, employment status, common business practices and entrepreneurial skills of College of Education graduates in South-South Nigeria.

## Research questions

The study specifically attempted to answer the following questions:

- (i) What is the composite effect of curriculum outcomes, personality traits, gender role-stereotypes, and common business practices on entrepreneurial skills of College of Education graduates?
- (ii) What is the relative effect of each of the independent variables on entrepreneurial skills of College of Education graduates?
- (iii) Which of the independent variables would predict entrepreneurial skills of College of Education graduates?

## METHODOLOGY

### Research design

The ex-post facto research design was adopted in the study. The independent variables (curriculum outcomes, personality traits, gender role-stereotypes, and common business practices) had already occurred and so, were not manipulated by the researchers.

### Sample

Eighty-six College of Education graduates were used in the study. These included 29 unemployed, 23 self employed, 9 private sector employed, and 25 government employed College of Education graduates. This sample represented two categories of College of Education graduates: Male and female College of Education graduates. So, of the 86 College of Education graduates, 36 were males and 50 females; and of the 36 males, 14(38.9%) were unemployed, 6(16.7%) self-employed, 5(13.9%) private sector employed, and 11 (30.6) government employed; while of the 50 female, 15(30.0%) were unemployed, 17(34.9%) self-employed, 4 (8.0%) private sector employed and 14(28.0%) government employed. This is illustrated by Table 1.

The selection of sample was based on certain criteria, viz; selection of registered names and addresses of business entrepreneurs from the books of Cross River State Ministry of Commerce and Industry; various friendship networks involving school, family, Christian, or neighbourhood associations, and a combination of opportunity and snowballing techniques.

### Instrumentation

Instruments used in the study were the Self Employment Characteristics Rating Questionnaire (SECRQ); the Common Small Scale Business Practices Questionnaire (CSBPQ); the Personality Job Creation Behaviour Inventory (PJCB I); the Gender Role-stereotype Job Creation Inventory (GSJCI); and the C-O Job Behaviour Inventory (COJBI). These instruments were modification of those developed by the National Directorate of Employment (1989); Hitchin (1996); Akinboye (2001); Alexandar (1996). Each of these instruments was 20-itemed, and was validated by research experts in the Department of Teacher Education, University of Ibadan. Cronbach Alpha was used to determine their reliability coefficients. These, respectively, stood at 0.83, 0.81, 0.91, 0.92, 0.93 and 0.91.

## Procedure for data collection

The investigators visited the Cross River State Ministry of Commerce and Industry; the National Directorate Employment, Federal Secretariat Complex, Calabar; homes, Full Gospel Businessmen Fellowship; the Graduate Fellowship; Secondary Schools and business premises. This enabled them obtain permission from leaders of the various organisations to rationally select and use their members for the study. At the grant of the permission, members 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 3 months.

## Data analysis

Data generated on variables to the study through the five questionnaires were analyzed through multiple regressions.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### RQ1

What is the composite effect of curriculum outcomes, personality traits, gender role-stereotypes, and common business practices on entrepreneurial skills of College of Education graduates? From Table 2, the independent variables put together and correlate 0.622 with the dependent variable (entrepreneurial skills of College of Education graduates); though, they account for only 38.7% of variance in the dependent variable ( $R^2 = 0.387$ ); 61.3% goes to residuals, error, and other factors not investigated. However, the total model is statistically significant at 0.05 alpha level significant,  $F = 11.448$ ; Adj  $R^2 = 0.330$ . Thus, variation in the dependent variable is not attributable to chance. It goes beyond chance expectations. This result answers question 1.

### RQ2

What is the relative effect of each of the independent variables on entrepreneurial skills of College of Education graduates? Table 3 shows that common business practices made the greatest contribution to entrepreneurial skills of College of Education graduates ( $\beta = 0.385$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), followed by introvert personality trait ( $\beta = 0.270$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), then extrovert personality trait ( $\beta = 0.161$ ;  $p > 0.05$ ); cognitive curriculum outcome ( $\beta = 0.138$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ), masculine gender role-stereotype ( $\beta = -0.114$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ), Psycho-motor curriculum outcomes ( $\beta = -0.109$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ), affective curriculum outcomes ( $\beta = -0.024$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ), feminine gender role-stereotype ( $\beta = 0.016$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ) and field experience curriculum outcome ( $\beta = 0.009$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ). However, while beta weight for common business practices and introvert personality traits were positive; those of extrovert personality traits, cognitive curriculum outcome, masculine gender role-stereotypes,

**Table 1.** The number/ percentage of male and female College of Education graduates in each sampled employment status.

Employment status/gender	Self employed		Govt. employed		Private Sector employed		Unemployed		Total
	n	%	N	%	n	%	N	%	
Male	6	16.7	11	30.6	5	13.9	14	38.9	36
Female	17	34.0	14	28.0	4	8.0	15	30.0	50
Total	23	26.7	25	29.1	9	10.5	29	33.7	86

**Table 2.** Composite relationship of the independent variables on entrepreneurial skills of College of Education graduation.

Sources of variation	df	Ss	ms	F-ratio	Sig - F
Regression	9	5019.909	557.768	5.334	0.000
Residual	76	7946.521	104.559		
Total	85	12966.430			

\*Significant at  $P < 0.05$ ,  
 Multiple  $R = 0.622$ ,  
 Multiple  $R^2 = 0.387$ ,  
 Multiple  $R^2$  (Adjusted) = 0.315, and  
 Standard Error of estimate = 10.23.

**Table 3.** Relative effect of the independent variables on entrepreneurial skills of College of Education graduates.

Variables	Un-standardized coefficient B S. E. B		Rank	Standardized coefficient beta	t	Sig t
Masculine gender role stereotype	-0.114	0.124	5 <sup>th</sup>	-0.114	-0.909	0.366
Feminine gender role stereotype	1.251	0.079	8 <sup>th</sup>	0.016	0.919	0.361
Introvert personality trait	0.202	0.102	2 <sup>nd</sup>	0.270	1.978	0.052
Extrovert personality trait	0.122	0.082	3 <sup>rd</sup>	0.161	1.493	0.140
Common business practices	0.332	0.090	1 <sup>st</sup>	0.385	3.703	0.000*
Cognitive curriculum outcome	7.854	0.066	4 <sup>th</sup>	0.138	1.190	0.230
Affective curriculum outcome	-1.323	0.076	7 <sup>th</sup>	-0.024	-0.174	0.863
Psycho-motor curriculum outcome	-6.123	0.075	6 <sup>th</sup>	-0.109	-0.821	0.414
Field experience curriculum Outcome	6.370	0.078	9 <sup>th</sup>	0.009	0.082	0.935
Constant	36.926	8.456			4.370	0.000*

\*Significant at  $p < 0.05$ .

psycho-motor curriculum outcome, affective curriculum outcomes, feminine gender role stereotype, and field experience curriculum outcome were negative. This result answers question 2.

### RQ3

Which of the independent variables would predict entrepreneurial skills of College of Education graduates? Only common business practices ( $B = 0.332$ ,  $t = 3.703$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) and introvert personality trait ( $B = 0.202$ ,  $t = 1.978$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) made significant predictions of the

entrepreneurial skills of College of Education graduates. In this case, only common small scale business practices and introvert personality trait will be entered into the prediction equation, probability is below 0.05. Extrovert personality traits ( $B = 0.122$ ,  $t = 1.493$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ), Cognitive curriculum outcomes ( $B = 7.854$ ,  $t = 1.190$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ), Masculine gender role-stereotype ( $B = -0.114$ ,  $t = -0.909$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ), Psycho-motor curriculum outcomes, ( $B = -6.123$ ,  $t = -0.821$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ), Affective curriculum outcomes, ( $B = -1.323$ ,  $t = -0.174$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ), Feminine gender role stereotype ( $B = 1.251$ ,  $t = 0.919$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ) and Field experience curriculum outcome ( $B = 6.370$ ,  $t = -0.082$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ) will not (probability is above 0.05). This is

because only independent variables with significant t - ratios will always significantly predict dependent variables. The prediction equation for the reaction is as follows:

$$Y^1 = 36.926 + 0.332x + 0.202x$$

Where,  $Y^1$  = entrepreneurial skills of college of education graduates.  $X$  = common business practices and introvert personality traits as independent variables, this result answers question 3.

## DISCUSSION

The results of data analyses that have gone by reveal that when the nine independent variables were taken together, only common business practices and introvert personality traits were found to effectively predict entrepreneurial skills of College of Education graduates (the dependent variables) in South-South Nigeria. Masculine gender role-stereotype, feminine gender role-stereotype extrovert personality trait, cognitive curriculum outcomes, affective curriculum outcomes, psychomotor curriculum outcomes, field experience curriculum outcome did not effectively predict the entrepreneurial skills of College of Education graduates. The observed F-ratio was significant at 0.05 alpha levels. The magnitude of relationship between the entrepreneurial skills of College of Education graduates and a combination of the independent variables is reflected in the coefficients of multiple regressions and multiple R as shown in Table 2. It may thus be said that, a reasonable percentage of total variance in entrepreneurial skills of College of Education graduates is accounted for by higher combination of the nine variables.

The extent in which each of the nine independent variables constitutes to prediction of College of Education graduates entrepreneurial skills is revealed by t-ratios associated with each of them. By the t-ratios, only common business production and introvert personality traits contribute significantly to entrepreneurial skills of college of education graduates. The value of standardized regression weights associating with each of the nine independent variables indicate common business practices, to be the most potent contributor to entrepreneurial skills of College of Education graduates, followed by introvert personality and then, extrovert personality trait, cognitive curriculum outcomes, masculine role-stereotype, psychomotor curriculum outcomes, affective curriculum outcomes, feminine gender role-stereotype and field experience curriculum outcomes. This may be because with delays in the payment of teachers' salaries and poor salary package, it is common practice for most teachers to get involved in part time business ventures. These findings are in agreement with those of Adedeji and Osuagwu (2001); Musa (1991); Olofinroye (1998), in Arikpo (2005). These works associate development of

entrepreneurial skills with common business practices, knowledge, skills, value of job, motivation, attitude, environmental situation, reward, age and gender role-stereotyping.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

In this light of the findings of the study, it is recommended that planners, developers and implementers of the College of Education curriculum make analytical and quantitative capabilities, quantitative skills, labour market analysis, team-work, knowledge of organizational culture, oral and written communication; planning, organizing, coordinating, command and control capabilities and employer, employee, and customer focus, receive particular emphasis. They should ensure the content and context of the College of Education curriculum that give emphasis to fieldwork, job fares, training programmes in pertinent areas of entrepreneurial development, seminars, joint college-employer research and projects for collaborative and mutual learner training, inputs from the private or corporate sector in matters relating to curriculum design, conduct of coursework, training programmes design, and other entrepreneurial efforts, and reach-out activities that would create in College of Education students mutual awareness and confidence towards the private or corporate sector. In addition, the curriculum should expose students to (i) career tracks that would help them choose the track they might be interested in, (ii) internship programmes that would create bridges between academic programmes and the companies and other work settings they are serving (iii) technical capabilities, that would strengthen their practical use of IT, machinery, methods and the management of business resources, (iv) entrepreneurial literacy initiatives so that, no student leaves the college without business capabilities, (v) consultation centres which any student needing instruction, programmes, and information on entrepreneurial skills can approach, and (vi) indoctrination towards conscious mindset changes that would make them perceive that, they are not to work only in a particular job setting, but in many others.

## Conclusion

This study set out to investigate the nature of relationship between unemployment, curriculum outcomes, psycho-social characteristics and College of Education graduates' entrepreneurial skills. A multiple regression analysis of responses to SECR, CSBP, PJCB and COJB inventories identified two main job orientations: The curriculum outcome and psycho-social characteristics orientations. Correlations were found between theoretical constructs and perception; but the use of common business practices with entrepreneurial skills became the

most prevalent. It needs to be borne in mind that, in common with other questionnaire or inventory approaches, reliance on self reporting was a major limitation of the findings study. Future research could usefully supplement data collection with fieldwork and prototype development of participants. The main conclusion that can be drawn from the research is emphasis on common business practices as the strategic approach to students' development of entrepreneurial skills. This could take the form of organised studying (keeping up-to-date with what is happening in the labour market, file sharing with employers of labour) and alertness to contemporary labour market demands (individual assignments that link students to job sites, on-the-need job information resources, jobs news archive, job demand video clips, and lecture notes).

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