



SKILL ACQUISITION AND GRADUATE EMPLOYMENT IN LAGOS PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES

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Abstract

This study investigated skill acquisition and graduate employment in Lagos public universities. The research design adopted was survey design. A total number of two hundred respondents were selected in the Lagos State University (LASU) and University of Lagos (UNILAG); the instrument used was a structured questionnaire. The statistical tool for data analysis was Chi-Square. The findings revealed through the five hypotheses that were tested at 0.05 level of significance, that there is a significant relationship between proper skill acquired by graduates and employment in Lagos public universities; there is no significant relationship between training of graduates and computer literacy skill for employment; there is a significant relationship between practical experience and team work skill; there is a significant relationship between graduates' communication skill and employers need; and there is a significant relationship between graduates' ability and personnel management skills. It was then concluded that more skills such as computer literacy skill, team work skills, communication skill and practical experience and team work skills are needed to enable the university graduates perform up to expectation at their job for employers' satisfaction. One of the recommendations made was that work experience during the degree programme should be made mandatory for students in all fields at least twice before graduating.

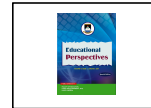
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Introduction

It is no longer a gainsaying that the economic situation nowadays is not smiling on individuals in Nigeria. The government cannot afford to employ a mammoth of graduates from the country's institutions. However, the challenges of lack of skilled labour, heavy competition among organisations, technological problems, low productivity and to mention but a few leads to a high rate of poor performance and poor product implementation while placing a serious limitation on product expansion and increase in productivity (Okoye and Raymond, 2013).

The ability to achieve the mission of producing skilled manpower successfully is what distinguishes one university from the other. All over the world, universities have the mission of producing skilled manpower necessary to function effectively in their societies. Consequently, their training programmes are tailored towards achieving this Objective. Therefore, it is not surprising that universities are ranked on this stand.

In real meaning, meeting this objective involves imparting requisite skills, knowledge and attitude, to enable students to realize their potential and become self reliant, the latter being one of the major goals of tertiary education in National Policy of Education of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

Students will acquire both physical and intellectual skills which will enable individuals to be self-reliant and useful members of the society (FRN, 2013). The goal is yet to be achieved and it is confirmed that, about 4.5 million youths enter the labour market every year without any hope of getting employment for life sustenance (Musari, 2009).

The products of universities in this 21st century appear to be skill deficiency, that is, they lack basic skills such as entrepreneurship skills, communication skills, personnel management skills, team work skills, computer literacy skill, and leadership skills among others.

As a result, they lack what it takes, that is, the skills needed by employers in labour market and to provide employment for themselves and others. This has given rise to producing students who are more of job seekers and are dependent on others for survival. The result of this type of education (training) has been high level of unemployment. This increases every year because of the number of graduates that enters the labour market and unemployment rate has increased from 21 percent in 2010 to 24 percent in 2011 (Muslim, 2013).

In Nigeria, indications from past studies show that the high rate of unemployment experienced by university graduates is not only as a result of the unavailability of jobs, but also because of a dearth of candidates with employable skills that employers are looking for (Emeh, 2012; Pitan, 2010, 2015).

Skill acquisition is the ability to be trained on a particular task or function and become expert in it. It is a pity that there is "huge" parading of unemployment in many parts of the world today especially in Nigeria. This is giving many youths in different parts of the world today a sleepless night. It is one of the causes of rapid growth in crime in many parts of the world (Development Education Centre, 2016).

Skill acquisition is the process and the means of releasing human energy, it means providing an opportunity for people to make the maximum contribution to their own development and to the self development of their communities Skill acquisition will help to reduce the poverty rate if



people are trained in diverse areas and they in turn create wealth for themselves and their immediate environment (Asante, 2009).

A skillful person speaks with confidence while a non skillful person is filled with fear. Skill is very important in the life of every human being. The reason many technicians earn more than some university graduates is because the technicians acquire more practical skills than the theories, unlike the graduates who were fed with theoretical experiences while in the universities (Development Education Centre, 2016).

Today, there are many unemployed graduates in the country. This is partly as a result of the long system of education that is more of grammar and not much practical learning. It is evident that the highest number of unemployed is found in the African Continent. The truth remains that the major causes of the unemployment among these vibrant youths is lack of skill to back up what they learnt from their institutions of learning. When these graduates were still in school, they did not bother to learn at least one single skill, maybe that which is related to graphic designing, typing, hair dressing, electrical maintenance and others. If they have learnt any skill at all, the rate of unemployment will reduce among them.

A skilled person can survive in any environment. As water is very essential to human life, so is skill training and acquisition needed in the life of every serious minded human being. Skills can do a lot of great work in the life of every living soul. Lack of entrepreneurial skills is one of the major causes of corruption.

The need to acquire and develop specific entrepreneurial skills cannot be neglected because entrepreneurship is vital to creating employment and indeed a special form of employability for graduates. Empowerment helps individuals or groups to fully access personal/collective power through knowledge, skills and motivation for proper functioning in their society and contribution to the economy (Okolocha, 2012).

However, skill acquisition is an instrument of empowerment that seeks to provide the people with skill, vocation and entrepreneurship, bead making, hat making, sewing, shoe making and making workers interested in their job and at the same time improving on their existing skills (Noeetal, 2003).

Skill acquisition is very necessary in providing counseling and extension services on start business, know about business and improve business and skill for informal, micro and small enterprise operators (Syme, 2007).

Statement of the Problem

Universities appear not to have been living up to expectation in solving the problems of life by equipping students with employability skills. The Nigerian educational system does not train youths to acquire skills that will make them the needs of the society (Jakpa, 2013). As a follow up, unemployed youths have constituted societal nuisance by indulging in act capable of undermining the well-being of the society. Giving this unemployment problem, it has become necessary for students to be equipped with skills necessary for their individual survival and employability. In essence the major cause of unemployment among the university graduates seems to be lack of skills to back up what they learnt in the universities. The future of university undergraduates could be very depressing.

Hence, any university that undermines the prominent position which skill acquisition occupies in the development of graduates may jeopardize the chances of the graduates surviving in the



keenly competitive labour market. Therefore, this study intended to investigate skill acquisition and graduate employment in Lagos public universities.

Research Questions

The following research questions were answered through this study.

1. Is the proper skill acquired by graduate for employment in Lagos public universities?
2. To what extent have graduates been trained on computer literacy skill for employment?
3. To what extent graduates gathered practical experience on course for team work skills?
4. Are the graduates' communication skill up to the task the employers needed.
5. Do the graduates possess personnel management skills?

Research Hypotheses

1. There is no significant relationship between proper skill acquired by graduates and employment in Lagos public universities.
2. There is no significant relationship between training of graduates and computer literacy skill for employment.
3. There is no significant relationship between practical experience and team work skills.
4. There is no significant relationship between graduates' communication skill and employers need.
5. There is no significant relationship between graduates' ability and personnel management skills.

Literature Review

There are indications that unemployment being experienced in Nigeria is structural in nature, that is, many graduates are unemployed for lack of skills necessary to fill the existing vacant positions and they are, therefore, unemployable. This situation is a big challenge for the relevance of university education, and thus, needs immediate attention (Oluyomibo, 2016).

Organisations are highly complex, and not amenable to simple analysis, but managers must attempt to predict and control their activities in order to conduct business (Price, 2004). Therefore, an organisation's objectives should be very precise, time-based with measurable actions that support the completion of a goal. Objectives typically must be related directly to the goal, be clear, concise, and understandable, be stated in terms of results, begin with an action verb, specify a date for accomplishment, and be measurable.

Without specific skills acquired by employees, the general goal of an organisation could not be accomplished just as an umbrella cannot be put up or down without the spokes. Importantly, objectives become less useful when appropriate skills are not acquired (Rampersad, 2005).

The Concept of Skill Acquisition

For any nation in search of a high level of industrialisation to succeed, provision of relevant skills must be given serious consideration (Mba, 2008). In this regard, the concept of skill acquisition is aimed at fighting and reducing poverty level particularly in Nigeria. However, various governments have repeatedly asserted its determination to use skills development as the main vehicle for assisting poor youths to break-out of the poverty trap. The underlying

assumption continues to be that the acquisition of skills supported by public funding is the positive answer to the problem of unemployment.

There are things people can do to impact their generation, they can acquire skill. Skill acquisition is not left for the poor and middle class people. Even career women or professional women and men as well as the youth can acquire these skills to make them versatile and self sustaining and independent (Emeka, 2011).

The symbiotic relationship between industrial development and availability of relevantly skilled individuals emphasises the need for possession of relevant skills. Coupled with advancement in technology and the knowledge-based economy which has brought in its stride globalisation, new geopolitical relationships, increased market competition and a flurry of activities, the demand for highly skilled workforce has become acute. Consequently, acquisition of relevant skills by citizens of nations is stressed as one of the critical factors for industrial and by extension, economic development (ITF, 2014). As part of the key indices necessary for adequate national development, ability for improvement and sustenance of socio-economic development must be predicated on development of competent skills. This should be followed by establishment of structures and processes for transferring such skills and competencies from one group of workers to another and from one generation to another.

Skill acquisition is a key to reduction of high rate of poverty, unemployment and insecurity as well as low level of technological development in the society. It is one of the proactive ways of ensuring the survival of individuals and invariably, economic growth and development of the nation particularly for a developing nation like Nigeria.

Skill acquisition has emerged as one of the most effective development strategies that African countries need to embrace in order to train and modernise the technical workforce for rapid industrialisation and national development (Afeti, 2009). Also adequate management of employment challenges in Nigeria will have to be based, to a large extent, on a sustained strategy and policy that empower the citizens to acquire relevant skills to become self-reliant. It is clear that without economic stability at individual and societal levels, there will not be sustainable peace and without peace, national security will be undermined and development hampered (Eket, 2009).

Skill acquisition is the ability to be trained on a particular task or function. A skill is the learned ability to carry out a task with pre-determined results often within a given amount of time, energy or both (Mike, 2014). Skills can be divided into two namely: domain general skills and domain-specific skills. For example, in the domain of work some general skills would include time management teamwork and leadership, self motivation and others while domain-specific skills would be useful only for a certain job (Cowan, 2012).

Successive Nigerian governments have put in place several policies, strategies and programmes and also established many agencies aimed at assisting citizens acquire employable skills to become economically stable. Among the agencies include the National Directorate of Employment (NDE) and National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP). Many Schemes have also been initiated to reduce poverty rates and create wealth amongst which are National Economic Empowerment Development Strategy (NEEDS), State Economic Empowerment Development Strategy (SEEDS), Local Economic Empowerment Development Strategy (LEEDS), New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and a host of others. Moreover, Private individuals and Faith Based Organisations have also been provided the enabling



environment to establish Skills Acquisition Centres to assist individuals acquire relevant vocational and technical skills (ITF, 2014).

But, in spite of all the efforts, skill level has not been adequately enhanced, neither have Skill-Gaps been bridged nor expected jobs created as unemployment is still rife in the country. Lending credence to this observation, members of the Organised Private Sector (OPS), Nigeria Employers Consultative Association (NECA), Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN), Nigerian Association of Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Agriculture (NACCIMA) have at one time or the other expressed doubts about skill level of Nigeria's manpower and its ability to drive the economy. This is evident in the importation of Artisans and Craftsmen such as Welders, Masons, Tillers and Plumbers, to mention a few, from nations in the West African Region (ITF, 2014).

Causes of Unemployable University Graduates in Nigeria

Some factors are inimical to producing employable graduates in Nigeria. Some of these factors are poor curriculum system, poor learning environment, inadequate funding, inadequate collaboration between universities and employers of graduates, disparity between employers' and graduates' views on employability, dearth of guidance counselling and career services units, poor commitment of undergraduates to developing themselves.

University Graduates Employability Skills and its Enhancement

The extent to which university education is capable of producing potential employable graduates in the competitive 21st century world, is attracting the attention scholars and policymakers globally. This interest stems from two major concerns. First, there are signs that patterns of work are rapidly changing with new sectors emerging, and with technology, globalization and demographic changes significantly reforming the workforce (Oliver, 2015; Pitan, 2015). The implication of this change is that it is no longer enough for graduates to have a good degree but they should also possess the skills and attributes required to compete and collaborate in a dynamic knowledge economy and world of work (Newton, 2015).

Many graduates who find work are not gainfully employed, and for those who found fulfilling employment in spite of everything, their employers raised serious concerns about their skills and fit for the job (Akanmu, 2011). There is an overall skills mismatch of 60.6 percent among employed university graduates, with critical deficiencies in communication, information technology, decision-making, critical thinking, interpersonal relationship, entrepreneurial, technical and numeracy skills (Pitan and Adedeji, 2012). Many of the university graduates in Nigeria were unemployable (Phillips, 2014).

Some researchers recognize the possession of generic skills as employability skills. Such a perception has been criticized for being too narrow (Harvey, 2010; Bridgstock, 2009). Generic skills include verbal and written communication skills, interpersonal skills, and analytical and critical thinking skills, which are all applicable in a range of contexts (Luk, Ho, Yeung and Chan, 2014; Pitan, 2015). It should be clear that generic skills are clearly subsets of employability skills, and the development of generic skills could lead to enhanced employability. Also, for many people, employability is the same thing as being employed (Harvey, 2003; Pool and Sewell, 2007).

It should be noted that employability and employment do not have the same meaning and need to be distinguished.



To be employed means having a job, while employability means the possession of necessary qualities to get employment, maintain it and progress in it. Thus, employability means more than just getting a job (Weligamage, 2009; Oliver, 2015).

Employability is “a set of achievements (skills, understandings and personal attributes) that make individuals more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations, which benefits themselves, the workforce, the community and the economy” (Yorke and Knight, 2006).

The Basic Components of Employability

Academic Skills

These are subject or discipline-specific skills and knowledge, which students must possess. Academic skills in relation to employability are “those skills that provide the basic foundation to get, keep, and progress in a job to achieve the best results” (McLaughlin, 1995).

The major reason for university education is to get a degree, which invariably should give its recipients an edge in the labour market. This assertion still holds today that the labour market favours those who have better academic qualification (Pool and Sewell, 2007).

Generic Skills

Generic skills are also referred to in the literature as “core skills”, “key skills”, “essential skills”, “soft skills” and “transferable skills”. Due to technological change and increasing globalization with strong competitiveness between firms, employers now want graduates who are competent technically and are also well equipped with relevant generic skills. The generic skills commonly demanded by all sectors as identified by employers in Nigeria are communication and analytical skills (Pitan, 2015).

Career Education Activities

The university’s contribution to student employability in addition to its performance in general has much to do with the quality of its careers service (Knight and Yorke, 2003). It has been observed that many students do not realize the need for career services until it is too late; it is therefore, the responsibility of the school to orientate the students on the need for career education at their early stage in the university (Pitan and Adededeji, 2014; Kinash, Crane, Judd, Knight and Dowling, 2015).

Work Experience

Exposure to work experience during the degree programme is a major mechanism, which enables students to establish a concrete relationship between theory and practice. On the relationship between work experience and employability it has been shown that employers’ value graduates who have participated in a work experience programme (Jackson, 2015). The responses from graduates and students who have participated in work placement programme also indicate that work experience gives students the opportunity to build on the foundation of knowledge acquired in the formal classroom situation (Lowden, 2011).

Participation in Extracurricular Activities

Leadership skills are mostly developed from active participation in sports clubs, creativity skills from music clubs, while self-promotion skills and communication can be developed from all



extracurricular activities (Lau et al., 2014: 26). Students, therefore, need to ensure that participation in extracurricular activities is not at the expense of their academic achievement.

Reflection and Assessment

In this situation, reflection and assessment have to do with having the opportunities for reflecting on and assessing the acquired learning experiences to improve performance. Reflection is thinking about what one has done and how it has helped one develop as a person, not just doing it (Lees, 2002). Without these opportunities, students may not really give attention to the employability skills they have developed and what they have to do so as to develop them further (Pool and Sewell, 2007).

Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence is the capacity for recognizing our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves, and for managing emotions well in ourselves and in our relationships. People who understand others' emotions and are able to regulate their own have been found to be more successful in interviews and in developing productive working relationships (Goleman, 1998: 317).

Self-awareness

Selfawareness involves an examination of one's actual and potential strengths in terms of personal abilities, qualities, practical skills, and physical strengths. It involves an exploration of one's limitations, personal needs, interests and aspirations (Law and Watts, 2003).

Self-belief

Well-established and most contextual construct of self-belief is self-efficacy (Turner, 2014). Mastery experiences are the most effective way of developing a strong sense of self-efficacy (Kirk, 2013; Chery, 2015).

Enabling Environment

For students to learn well and develop employability skills there is need for provision of an enabling environment such as well-equipped libraries and laboratories, good and conducive hostel accommodation, constant electricity supply, access to career services, and a good attitude of employers towards attachment students (UNESCO, 2014). The role of the government in the provision of enabling environment for students is majorly in the area of adequate provision of funds for the universities.

Skills needed by employers in labour market

The skills needed by employers from graduates are such as entrepreneurship skills, communication skills, personl management skills, team work skills, computer literacy skill, and leadership skills.

Entrepreneurship Skill

Entrepreneurial skills are believed by employers as what could be learnt, practiced and improved, in turn enhancing the prospects of business survival and growth (2013, p. 9).

Communication skill

The communication skills include public relation which has the ability to hold civilized values, pass information with pleasantries, project a good image, link up organisation with beneficial publics, resolve conflicts; interpersonal which has the ability to disseminate information (Nwankwo, 2001).

Personnel management skill

No matter how hardworking or how many brilliant ideas one has, if not connected with the people who work around, one's personal life will suffer (Adeniran, 2006).

Team work skill

A good and efficient teamwork contributes to the success of the organisation. When one works in an environment that is "team-oriented", it automatically produces better results. Team building in a workplace needs competence. Good teamwork emerges when the team feels that all its members have the skill, knowledge and capability to handle issues or have the necessary access to all the help needed to accomplish the mission the team was created for (Adepoju and Fadokun, 2009).

Computer literacy skill

Computer literacy has been defined as the ability to use computers and related technology (Manowaluilou, 2008). Specific computer skills are perceptions of ability to perform specific computer-related tasks in the domain of general computing (Grant, Malloy and Murphy, 2009).

Leadership skill

Student leadership enhancement involves giving students opportunities to practise a range of leadership skills in supportive learning and social environment where progress and errors are reviewed (Bisland, 2004). Students can be helped to develop leadership skills by inclusion of leadership opportunities in and outside the classroom (Layfield, Radhakrishna and Andreasen, 2000).

Methodology

Research Design: The descriptive survey research design was employed to undertake the study. **Population** of this study included all the graduate employees of Lagos State University (LASU) and University of Lagos (UNILAG), Lagos State.

Population: the working population is defined as all the employed graduates across faculties in the universities.

Sample and Sampling Technique

The sample of the population will be drawn from employees from two faculties in Lagos State University (LASU) and University of Lagos (UNILAG) respectively. A total of two hundred graduate employees were selected by simple random technique within the institutions. One hundred respondents were sampled from two faculties of the institutions. The method of selecting respondents (graduates) from each of the faculty is through accidental sampling technique. Accidental technique is used in order for the researcher to randomly or systematically select the sample hence it is convenient to use respondents which the researcher accidentally comes across to fill questionnaires. However, the percentage returns of the questionnaires were 30 percent.



Research Instrument

The research instrument was mainly based on twenty (20) itemed questionnaires – “Skill Acquisition and Graduate Employment” (SAGE) constructed by the researcher to obtain data for this study.

The questionnaire consists of two sections; A and B. Section A consists of bio-data item such as gender, age, qualification, years of experience, type of skill acquired etc. Section B consists of 20 itemed SAGE in line with a four point likert-scale options of Little Degree (LT), Some Degree (SD), Great Degree (GD) and Indifferent (I).

Validity of Instrument

This was ensured by the face and content validity of the instrument used in carrying out the research. In this regard, experts scrutinized the questionnaire through face validity and their suggestions were used in perfecting the structural component of the questionnaire before administration on the field of study.

Reliability of the Instrument

The reliability of instrument was established using Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation Co-efficient (PPMC) analysis and a value of 0.75 obtained which was considered reliable for adoption in this study.

Method of Analysis

The data collected were analysed through coding and tabulation of responses derived from the questionnaire according to the variable involved. The analysis was done through the conversion of the raw scores into percentages for easy interpretation of data. Finally, Chi-Square statistical method was run on SPSS to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance

Findings and Discussions

The results of the findings are outlined and discussed as follows

Test of Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1

Ho: There is no significant relationship between proper skill acquired by graduates and employment in Lagos public universities.

Significance level = 0.05

Critical region: Reject H_1 if P-value is greater than the significance value



Table 1: The relationship between proper skill acquired by graduates and employment in Lagos public universities

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	10.719 _a	3	.013
Likelihood Ratio	11.288	3	.010
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.953	1	.162
N of Valid Cases	200		

$X^2= 10.719$, $df=3$, $P<0.05$

Table 1 shows the relationship between proper skill acquired by graduates and employment in Lagos public universities. The chi square analysis shows a p-value of .013. Since the p-value (.013) is less than the significant value (0.05), the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted, concluding that there is a significant relationship between proper skill acquired by graduates and employment in Lagos public universities.

Hypothesis 2

H₀: There is no significant relationship between training of graduates and computer literacy skill for employment.

Table 2: The relationship between training of graduates and computer literacy skill for employment

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	7.565 _a	3	.056
Likelihood Ratio	7.692	3	.053
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.058	1	.151
N of Valid Cases	200		

$X^2= 7.565$, $df=3$, $P>0.05$

Table 2 shows the relationship between training of graduates and computer literacy skill for employment. The chi square analysis shows a p-value of .056. It is therefore concluded that since the p-value (.056) is greater than the significant value (0.05), the null hypothesis is accepted and reject the alternative hypothesis, concluding that there is no significant relationship between training of graduates and computer literacy skill for employment.



Hypothesis 3

Ho: There is no significant relationship between practical experience and team work skills.

Significance level = 0.05

Critical region: Reject H_1 if P-value is greater than the significance value

Table 3: The relationship between practical experience and team work skills

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	3.480 ^a	3	.323
Likelihood Ratio	3.481	3	.323
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.154	1	.142
N of Valid Cases	200		

$X^2 = 3.480$, $df=3$, $P>0.05$

Table 3 shows the relationship between practical experience and team work skills. The chi square analysis shows a p-value of 0.323. Since the p-value (0.323) is higher than the significant value (0.05), the null hypothesis is not rejected and the alternative hypothesis rejected, concluding that there is no significant relationship between practical experience and team work skills.

Hypothesis 4

Ho: There is no significant relationship between graduates' communication skill and employers need.

Table 4: The relationship between graduates' communication skill and employers need

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	10.109 ^a	3	.018
Likelihood Ratio	10.562	3	.014
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.929	1	.087
N of Valid Cases	200		

$X^2 = 10.109$, $df=3$, $P<0.05$

Table 4 shows the relationship between graduates' communication skill and employers need. The chi square analysis shows a p-value of 0.018. Since the p-value (0.018) is less than the significant value (0.05), the null hypothesis is rejected and accept the alternative hypothesis accepted concluding that there is a significant relationship between graduates' communication skill and employers need.



Hypothesis 5

H₀: There is no significant relationship between graduates' ability and personnel management skills.

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2- sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	5.004 ^a	3	.172
Likelihood Ratio	5.072	3	.167
Linear-by-Linear Association	4.631	1	.031
N of Valid Cases	200		

$X^2= 5.004$, $df=3$, $P<0.05$

Table 5 shows the relationship between graduates' ability and personnel management skills. The chi square analysis shows a p-value of 0.172. Since the p-value (0.172) is greater than the significant value (0.05), the null hypothesis is accepted and the alternative hypothesis is rejected concluding that there is no significant relationship between graduates' ability and personnel management skills.

Discussion of Findings

The result of the analysis in Table 1 revealed that there is a significant relationship between proper skill acquired by graduates and employment in Lagos public universities. This is in line with the observation of Chell (2013) regarding the nature of entrepreneurship, the knowledge, skills and abilities of entrepreneurs and innovators are many and various, but as with personality traits, they interact with situations. Entrepreneurial skills are believed by employers as what could be learnt, practised and improved, in turn enhancing the prospects of business survival and growth.

The result in Table 2 shows that there is no significant relationship between training of graduates and computer literacy skill for employment. But on the contrary, Grant, Malloy and Murphy (2009) see specific computer skills as perceptions of ability to perform specific computer-related tasks in the domain of general computing.

Table 3 shows that there is no significant relationship between practical experience and team work skills. This is in contrary to the view of Adepoju and Fadokun (2009) that good teamwork emerges when the team feels that all its members have the skill, knowledge and capability to handle issues or have the necessary access to all the help needed to accomplish the mission the team was created for.

Table 4 shows result that there is a significant relationship between graduates' communication skill and employers need. In accordance, Nwankwo (2001) noted that the competencies of communication are very essential to the efficiency of performance in an organisation. The communication skills include public relation which has the ability to hold civilized values, pass information with pleasantries, project a good image, link up organisation with beneficial publics, resolve conflicts; interpersonal which has the ability to disseminate information, while interprets

and discriminate sources of information, manage crisis, prepare for emergency, display good grooming and maturity on the job, etc.

Table 5 also shows there is a significant relationship between graduates' ability and personnel management skills. This was established by Adeniran (2006) on how staff is perceived by the employer and co-workers and even visitors to the office plays a large role as minor as day to day happiness at the organisation and as major as the future of one's career. Adeniran buttressed that no matter how hardworking or how many brilliant ideas one has, if not connected with the people who work around, one's personal life will suffer.

Conclusion

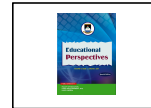
This study revealed the skill acquisition and graduate employment in Lagos public universities. From the study, it was discovered that skill acquisition is helpful to graduate employees to carry out effective and efficient work performance in public universities.

On the basis of the findings, it was concluded that the level of graduate employees' skill acquisition for employability in the institutions is favourable. In essence, more skills such as computer literacy skill, team work skills, communication skill and practical experience and team work skills are still needed to enable the university graduates perform up to expectation at their job for employers' satisfaction. It was also concluded that university graduates differ from in their skill acquisition for employability.

Recommendations

In light of the findings of this research, it was recommended that:

1. University management across the nation most especially Lagos public universities should equip students with more employability skills right from their first year to the final year with practicals that are worth the criteria employers needed.
2. Main concern should be accorded to courses like entrepreneurship education, leadership/management, computer/technical literacy programmes among others. There is need to provide adequate facilities for each centre for practicals.
3. There is a need for lecturers to design ways of integrating the components of employability into students' teaching methods. This could be achieved by consciously laying more emphasis on practical work and real life situations than on theory.
4. Basic skills could be taught by paying particular attention to simulations, group projects, individual projects, seminar sessions, field trips and visits to firms. The lecturers could also assist in developing self-confidence, self-esteem and emotional stability in their students through their methods of assessment and comments on students.
5. Work experience during the degree program should be made mandatory for students in all fields at least twice before graduating.
6. The government should also sensitize and mandate employers in the private sector not to reject students and graduates sent to them for industrial training and the National Youth Service Scheme (NYSC) even if the government or the Industrial Training Fund (ITF) is not going to be responsible for work experience in all fields of study as it occurs now.



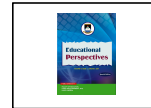
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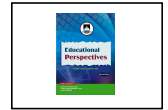
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