Skill Acquisition and Employability of Nigerian Graduates

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Abstract: *Some empirical studies have blamed Nigeria's high rate of unemployment on non – possession of employable skills by our teaming graduates. To this end, this paper on Skill Acquisition and Employability of Nigerian Graduates focused on finding out if the unemployment status of Nigerian graduates is as a result of the absence of employable skills. The researchers made use of primary source of data and the major instrument used was a self administered questionnaire. A sample size of three hundred and twenty four was used and this was determined using the Cochran formular. Copies of the questionnaire were administered on graduates drawn from Abia State using convenience sampling technique. The statistical analysis was done using simple percentages, discriminant analysis and correlation analysis as aided by SPSS Version 25. The paper revealed that Nigerian graduates acquisition of basic employable skills does not significantly determine their employability status (other factors must have contributed to the alarming increase in unemployment); there is a significant relationship between acquisition of employability skills by Nigerian graduates and their exposure to vocational skills in schools. To this end, the paper recommended that employment opportunities should be created by governments at all levels to reduce this alarming rate of unemployment in the country instead of blaming unemployment on lack of employability skills; finally the government should ensure that many vocational skill courses are well taught in our tertiary institutions to make graduates self employed. Where this is done right, the burden of unemployment on government will be reduced.*

Key words: *Skill Acquisition, Employability Skill, Employee/Employer Skill Gap*

A Special Issue Conference Proceeding Paper

1. INTRODUCTION

Nigeria has experienced significant increases in graduate unemployment rate over the past decades, with an average rate of 23% percent between 2016 and 2018. Furthermore, the

National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) places the number of unemployed youths at 6 million or 33.1 percent of total unemployed Nigerians in 2017. This is almost double the number in 2012. Available data from the National Universities Commission (2004) revealed that massive unemployment exists among most graduates of tertiary institutions in the country - a situation that is said to be traceable to the disequilibrium between labour market requirements and essential employment skills of these graduates. John (2018) opined that the labour market in Nigeria is characterized by a significant mismatch between skills demanded by employers and those possessed by these young prospective workers, which has led to an increase in youth unemployment rates. Graduates of tertiary institutions remain unemployed for up to five years after graduation, partly because they lack market-relevant skills, and also because job creation has not kept up with the increase in the young adult population.

Dabalen, Oni and Adekola (2000) and National University Commission (2004) assert that there are other attributes (non-academic skill requirements) which employers of labour emphasize that graduates should have despite their academic qualifications. Given this disequilibrium as well as the state of the economy, it becomes imperative to ultimately carry out this study on skill acquisition and Nigerian graduates employability.

1.2   STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The rate of unemployment in Nigeria is soaring, as graduates are churned yearly. Sodipo (2014), in an empirical study revealed that the height of unemployment in the country is as a result of graduate employees falling short of employers' expectations in terms of employable skills, thereby creating an employability gap. Is lack of employable and vocational skills the root cause of unemployment? Could a graduate possess these skills and still be unemployed, and if it is possible, could there be other factors that play out in this scenerio? Were our graduates actually exposed to vocational studies, and to what extent did they acquire such skills while in school as undergraduates?

1.3   OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The specific objectives of this research paper are to:
1. determine if the acquisition of basic employable skills by Nigerian graduates affect their employment status;
2. find out if there is any relationship between employability skills expected of graduates by employers and the vocational skills they acquire in schools.

1.4   RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1.   To what extent does the acquisition of basic employable skills by Nigerian graduates affect their employment status?
2.   What is the extent of relationship between vocational skills acquired by students in schools and employability skills expected of them by employers?

1.5   RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The following two research hypotheses shall be tested in this research work:
H_{01}:   Nigerian graduates acquisition of basic employable skills does not significantly determine their employability status.

H_{02}:   There is no significant relationship between acquisition of employability skills by Nigerian graduates and their exposure to vocational skills in schools.

2.   REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE
2.1   THEORETICAL REVIEW
Unemployment Rate
Wikipedia sees unemployment, or joblessness, as a situation in which able-bodied people who are looking for a job cannot find a job. It is a situation where people who are strong enough to be gainfully employed are without jobs. Every country strives to keep statistics that reflect the rate at which this situation improves or deteriorates. Therefore, unemployment rate reflects the inability of an economy to generate employment for those persons who want to work but are not doing so, even though they are available for employment and actively seeking work. It is thus seen as an indicator of the efficiency and effectiveness of an economy to absorb its labour force and of the performance of the labour market (ILO, 2013). Unemployment Rate in Nigeria increased to 23.10 percent in the third quarter of 2018 from 22.70 percent in the second quarter of 2018. Unemployment Rate in Nigeria averaged 12.31 percent from 2006 until 2018, reaching an all time high of 23.10 percent in the third quarter of 2018 and a record low of 5.10 percent in the fourth quarter of 2010 (NBS,2019).

Table 2.1 Unemployment Rate in Nigeria (2016 -2018)
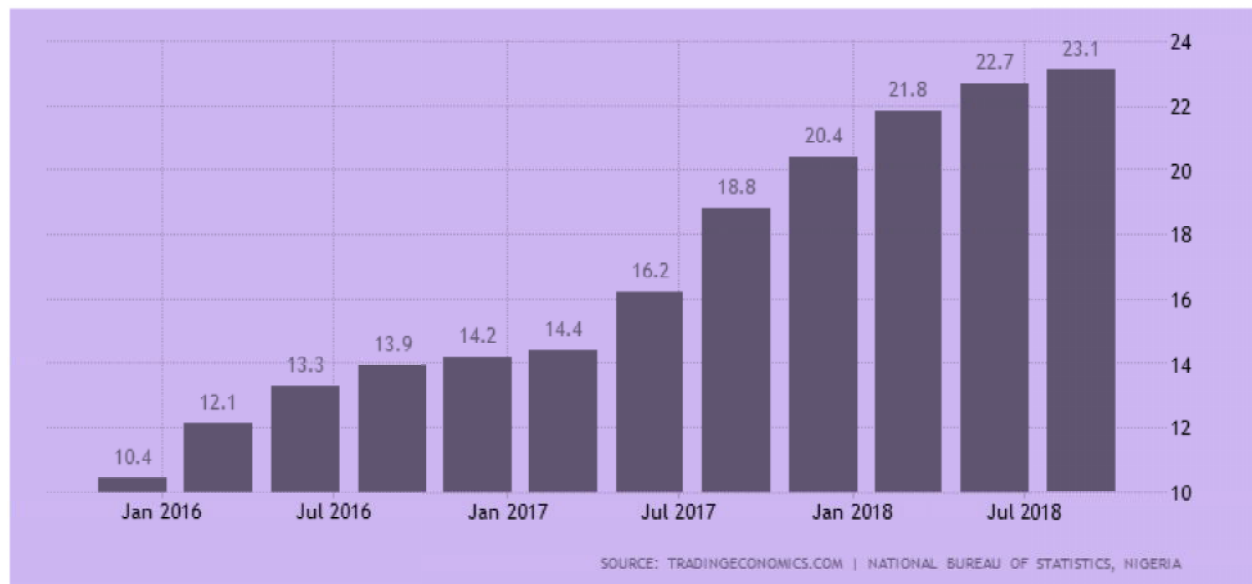
From the chart above, it is glaring that the unemployment rate in Nigeria progresses with time. It was at its lowest ebb of 10.4% in Jan 2016, but as at July 2018, the unemployment rate soared to 23.1%.
Causes of Unemployment in Nigeria
Ayinde (2008), Morphy (2008), Awogbenle and Iwuamadi (2010), Adebayo (1999) and Alanana (2003) in their various studies on unemployment pointed out the following as some of the causes of unemployment in Nigeria:

1.   Rapid Population Growth
The current population of Nigeria as at the 13th day of August, 2019 was 203,085,343 (UN, 2019).With the population growth rate of 3.2% and unemployment rate of 23% per annum, it is obvious that unemployment situation in Nigeria is not getting better unless some decisive measures are taken.

2.   Rural Urban Migration
As youths move from rural areas where they are likely to be engaged to urban areas that are already congested, they further worsen the unemployment situation in the country.

3.   Low standard of Education
Uddin and Uddin (2013) averred that the curricular of Nigerian tertiary institutions do not make it possible for undergraduates to be well trained in those areas that are likely to empower them and ultimately make them job creators instead of job seekers tomorrow. This could be why most researchers affirm that Nigerian graduates are unemployable.

4.   Rapid expansion of the education system
Graduates are churned out at an alarming rate in Nigeria. Amidst the unemployment crisis, these graduates are released into the labour market without the government creating the needed jobs to bridge the unemployment gap.
5.   Corruption
Corruption has eaten deep into the fabrics of our economy. Money which would have been used for job creating investment opportunities are stolen and stashed into foreign banks by corrupt politicians. This is in line with the findings of Longe (2017) that revealed that poor governance was one of the contributory factors of graduate unemployment.

Skill Acquisition
Business Dictionary defines skill as an ability and capacity acquired through deliberate, systematic, and sustained effort to smoothly and adaptively carry out complex activities or job functions involving ideas (cognitive skills), things (technical skills), and/or people (interpersonal skills). Skill refers to the ability to *do* rather than underlying competence or mental representation (Vanpatten and Benati, 2010). To expound this, Cornford (1996) outlines nine separate defining attributes of "skill" and "skilled performance. These defining attributes are:
1. skill is learned;
2. skill involves motivation, purpose and goals;
3. schemas are prerequisite for skilled performance;
4. skills require content and context knowledge;
5. skills are performed and transferred in the presence of specific stimuli;
6. skills involve problem solving relevant to the context;
7. skill involves relative judgments with individual differences in skilled performance;
8. standards of excellence are important;
9. skill involves comparable replication and considerable periods of time are required to reach high   levels of skill.

Skill acquisition, therefore, is the process of learning that helps one build his ability or capacity to seamlessly and effortlessly do that which he is exposed to do. Boutcher (1992)

defines skill acquisition as the process of facilitating the development of a novice into an expert. It is the ability to bring about some end results with maximum outlay of energy or time and energy (Guthere, 1982).

Employability of Graduates
Employability is a *set of skills and attributes expected to be possessed by all labour market participants that ensure their effective performance at work place and all round benefit to them, their employers and the society at large (*ILO, 2007). This body sees employability as not just having the ability to get a job, but having the capacity to network and market oneself, navigate through a career and remain employable throughout life. It requires the ability to ask questions, acquire new skills, identify and evaluate options, understand rights at work including the right to a safe and healthy work environment, adapt successfully to changing situations and the courage to innovate. Employability results from several factors – a foundation of core skills, access to education, availability of training opportunities, motivation, ability and support to take advantage of opportunities for continuous learning, and recognition of acquired skills – and is critical for enabling workers to attain decent work and manage change and for enabling enterprises to adopt new technologies and enter new markets. Employability of graduates, therefore, is the ability of graduates to effectively market themselves and be able to, not only secure jobs that offer commensurate satisfaction, but deliver services that match their qualifications. Employability of graduates entails the acquisition of requisite skills that make them fit into those offices that they applied for.

Oguntuwase (2013) asserts that products of the Nigerian University system have at different fora been challenged to test their suitability or otherwise to secure few available white collar jobs. According to the author, the situation is not only sympathetic but embarrassing that the vast human material resources available to the country had not been trained and utilized to the advantage of the country. He cited Tunde Lemo, former Deputy Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), saying that it has become evident that very modern day Nigeria graduates are not employable as Nigerian Education system is bedeviled by myriads of problems ranging from poor funding, undue interference, poor staffing, overcrowding and management incompetence. The author further cited professor Sola Fajana as saying that the dismal performance of many graduates in the labour market was due to faulty curricular in most Nigerian universities, emphasizing that programmes run in the universities are no longer relevant, and classroom teaching mostly focuses on concepts and not marketable skills.

Employability Skills
These are skills that make a graduate employable in the world of work. For ease of comprehension, ILO (2013) defines employability skills as …the skills, knowledge and competencies that enhance a worker's ability to secure and retain a job, progress at work and cope with change, secure another job if he/she so wishes or has been laid off and enter more easily into the labour market at different periods of the life cycle. Individuals are most employable when they have broad-based education and training, basic and portable high-level skills, including teamwork, problem solving, information and communications technology (ICT) and communication and language skills. This combination of skills enables them to adapt to changes in the world of work.

ILO (2013) outlines the following employability skills:

1) **Basic/Foundation Skills:** At their most elemental, foundation skills include the literacy and numeracy skills necessary for getting work that can pay enough to meet daily needs. These skills are also a prerequisite for continuing in education and training, and for acquiring transferable and technical and vocational skills that enhance the prospect of getting good jobs

2) **Vocational or technical:** Specialized skills, knowledge or know how needed to perform specific duties or tasks.

3) **Professional/personal:** Individual attributes that impact on work habits such as honesty, integrity, work ethics.

4) **Core work skills:** The ability to learn and adapt; read, write and compute competently; listen and communicate effectively; think creatively; solve problems independently; manage oneself at work; interact with co-workers; work in teams or groups; handle basic technology, lead effectively as well as follow supervision.

Personal attributes that contribute to overall employability are loyalty, sense of humour, ability to deal with pressure, personal presentation, honesty and integrity, adaptability, balanced attitude to work and home life, positive self esteem, reliability, motivation, commitment, common sense and enthusiasm.

What skills do employers want? Having observed the skill gap in Nigeria labour market, employers most times outsource recruitment task to consultants who rigorously examine potential graduate employees to look out for those who possess these employable skills needed to optimize their resources. Skills You Need (2013) outline the following skills often demanded by employers of labour:

(a) **Interpersonal skills.** Used to interact with people, participate effectively as members of a team, negotiate, satisfy customers, make decisions, manage time and work effectively with colleagues.

(b) **Communication Skills.** These include verbal and writing skills. It includes the ability to write clearly and succinctly, demonstrate good vocabulary and active listening ability.

(c) **Critical thinking Skills.** Ability to solve problems and make decisions is a huge asset to employers. This also includes ability to effectively plan and organize events, having creative thinking ability and being innovative and inventive (devising new ways of doing things that add value to the work environment).

(d) **Personal Development.** Having the right attitude to work and the organization you work for. Employers look for people who are open to learning and embrace change. Such a person will be more successful than the person who is afraid of learning and resistant to changes in the organization.

(e) **Self-management skills.** These skills include self-motivation, self-confidence, self-control-skills that are used to manage personal feelings and how people react to challenges and problems both at work and in their private lives.

(f) **Presentation Skill.** These are skills needed for presenting information clearly and effectively in the work place. This includes business plans, reports, minutes, etc.

(g) **Leadership Skill.** Ability to influence others towards the achievement of a goal.

(h) **Numeracy.** Involves understanding of numerical data, statistics and graphs. It is also a part of making decisions and reasoning.

(i) **IT Skills.** Acquiring basic IT skills and being familiar with the computer opens a wide range of employment opportunities and increases marketability in workplaces.

Employee/ Employer Skill Gap
This is the gap between the skills an employer expects a potential employee to possess and what he actually possesses. Past research works as earlier cited have shown that graduate employees fall short of employers' expectations in terms of employable skills.

2.2   Empirical Review

Sodipo (2010) conducted a survey on the level of competency of tertiary education graduates employed in Ogun State Civil Service between 2004 and 2006. Findings of the research work revealed that out of 74 Directors of Administration in the Ministries, Departments and Agencies that responded to the questionnaire administered:50% of the respondents agreed that the level of competency is poor; 33.3% of the respondents agreed that they do not possess the necessary skills required on the job; all the respondents disagreed that the graduates' knowledge in their areas of specialization is outdated; 40% of them agreed that the graduates are not resourceful enough; 40% of them agreed that their command of English is poor; 33.3% of them agreed that they are not able to operate the equipment they are to work with, without retraining them; 90% of the respondents agreed that for the graduates to satisfy the requirement of the employers' establishments, they would need to be retrained in areas which include Effective Communication, ICT training, e.g. AutoCAD, data processing and maintenance, Geographic Information System, work ethics, professional ethics, practical aspect of the job, Management and Citizenship training; 20% of them rated them good on ICT skill; 30% rated them good in numeracy or computation skills, organizational skills, and interpersonal skills.

Sodipo (2010) also reported a survey carried out by AGDC on youth Employability in 2010, in which 91 Human Resources Managers and personnel from a selected network of companies participated in. Findings revealed that: 48% of employers rated young graduates 'poor' in conceptual and creative thinking; 44% of employers rated young graduates 'poor' in self-awareness; 39.6% of employers rated young graduates 'poor' in time management; 36% of employers rated young graduates poor in global and commercial awareness; 34.1% of employers rated young graduates poor in sense of career direction; 34.1% of employers rated young graduates poor in emotional intelligence; 31.9% of employers rated young graduates poor in managing school to work transition.

Edinyang, Odey and Dimba (2015) conducted a study on the influence of academic factors on graduate employability in Nigeria. This study was done in Calabar, Cross River State using accidental sampling technique and a sample size of 150 respondents. Pearson product moment correlation coefficient, SpearmanBrown prophesy formular and ANOVA were used for the statistical analysis. Findings revealed that academic discipline significantly influences graduate employability.

Ekong and Ekong (2016) investigated how unemployment problem is tackled through skills acquisition by the National Directorate of Employment in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. The major data collection instrument used was questionnaire, which was administered on a sample size of 141 respondents drawn from 3 technical/vocational skill acquisition centres located in Asuna, Etinan Local Government Area. The result of the trend analysis conducted revealed a positive link between skills acquisition by NDE and unemployment reduction in Akwa Ibom.

Longe (2017) explored the phenomenon of graduate unemployment as well as its

causal factors, consequences and remedies in Nigeria. Using quantitative research method, data were collected from 360 Abuja based professionals through a self-administered questionnaire structured in Likert scale format. The respondents were selected using purposive sampling technique and data were analyzed using descriptive statistics of frequency counts and percentages, mean and standard deviation and Kurtosis. The study identified a combination of causal factors as responsible for the aggravated case of graduate unemployment in Nigeria. Furthermore, findings showed that there was no effective collaboration between universities and labour employers in providing relevant skills required for employability and employment fulfillment of university graduates.

3. METHODOLOGY

Descriptive research design was used much as primary data were the major source of data collection for this study. The primary data were sourced with the aid of structured questionnaire consisting of a five point Likert scale comprising twenty four (24) statements used in assessing the employability of graduates. Copies of the questionnaire were administered on three hundred and thirty-four (334) graduates spread over the three senatorial zones of Abia State using convenience sampling. This sample size was determined using Cochran formular as the percentage of the unemployed, p and percentage of the employed, q, in Abia State are ascertained as published by the National Bureau of Statistics. Hence, the sample size, n is obtained as $n = (Z^2 pq)/e^2 = (1.96^2)(0.316)(0.684)/0.05^2 \approx 334$. The statistical analysis was done using simple percentages, discriminant analysis and correlation analysis as aided by SPSS Version 25.

4.0 DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

4.1 DATA PRESENTATION

The frequency distributions of the bio-data are presented below.

Characteristic	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	1. Male	221	62.2
	2. Female	113	33.8
Age Group	1. 20 - 29	251	75.1
	2. 30 – 39	60	18.0
	3. 40 - 49	23	6.9
Marital Status	1. Single	277	82.9
	2. Married	57	17.1
Highest Educational Qualification	1. HND	256	76.6
	2. B.Ed	17	5.1
	3. B,Sc	43	12.9
	4. M.Sc	18	5.4
Employment Status	1. Unemployed		
	2. Employed		

Source: Field Survey (2019)

Table 4.1 above shows that 221 respondents representing 66.2% of the respondents are males, while 113 representing 33.8% of the respondents are females. 75.1% of the respondents are between 20 and 29 years, 18.0% of the respondents are between 30 and 39 years, while 6.9% of the respondents are between 40 and 49 years. This indicates that a higher percentage of the respondents are young graduates. The table also reveals that 82.9% of the respondents are single while 17.1% are married. In view of the highest qualifications of respondents, 76.6% of the respondents are HND graduates, 5.1% are B.Ed holders and 12.9% are B.Sc. holders and the remaining 5.4% have Masters Degrees. That is, 94.6% of the respondents are first degree holders. The table also reveals that 74.0% of the respondents are unemployed and 26.0% are employed.

Table 4.2: Descriptive Statistics of Responses of the Likert-Scale questions

SN	Statements	SD	%	D	%	U	%	A	%	SA	%	Mean	SD
1	Many vocational skill courses are offered by undergraduates.	170	50.9	115	34.4	30	9.0	12	3.6	7	2.1	1.72	0.923
2	Vocational skill courses offered by undergraduates are well taught.	58	17.4	54	16.2	124	37.1	51	15.3	47	14.1	2.93	1.253
3	Students pass vocational skill courses they offer with good grades	37	11.1	37	11.1	95	28.4	97	29.0	68	20.4	3.37	1.237
4	Graduates communicate in English language fluently.	7	2.1	3	0.9	20	6.0	123	36.8	181	54.2	4.40	0.817
5	At the point of graduation, students read independently and negotiate responsively.	3	0.9	13	3.9	0	0.0	114	34.1	204	61.1	4.55	0.616
6	Graduates can network and share information.	7	2.1	12	3.6	95	28.4	119	35.6	101	30.2	3.88	0.953
7	Working across different ages, gender, races, religions or political divides is not a problem to graduates.	6	1.8	18	5.4	36	10.8	167	50.0	107	32.0	4.05	0.897
8	Graduates can work independently and as a member of a team.	4	1.2	50	15.0	0	0.0	120	35.9	160	47.9	4.29	0.808
9	Coaching, mentoring team skills and giving feedback are acquired by undergraduates.	12	3.6	19	5.7	85	25.4	135	40.4	83	24.9	3.77	1.003
10	Graduates have creative and innovative skills to solve problems.	9	2.7	15	4.5	50	15.0	160	47.9	100	29.9	3.98	0.935
11	Graduates can independently initiate, identify and solve problems.	3	0.9	7	2.1	87	26.0	130	38.9	107	32.0	3.99	0.865
12	Graduates could use the knowledge acquired in mathematical courses to solve problems.	12	3.6	25	7.5	93	27.8	115	34.4	89	26.6	3.73	1.048
13	Graduates have personal vision and goals.	11	3.3	6	1.8	27	8.1	131	39.2	159	47.6	4.26	0.927
14	Graduates can evaluate and monitor their own performances.	9	2.7	34	10.2	0	0.0	146	43.7	145	43.4	4.28	0.754

15	Graduates have knowledge and confidence in their own ideas and visions and can take responsibility of their actions.	6	1.8	22	6.6	0	0.0	138	41.3	168	50.3	4.40	0.694
16	Graduates can manage time, properties and resources – setting time line, coordinating tasks for themselves and with others.	3	0.9	15	4.5	49	14.7	148	44.3	119	35.6	4.09	0.870
17	Weighing up risk, evaluating alternatives and applying evaluation criteria are no more problems to graduates.	7	2.1	16	4.8	102	30.5	136	40.7	73	21.9	3.75	0.920
18	Graduates can collect, analyze and organize information of business systems and their relationships.	19	5.7	13	3.9	73	21.9	121	36.2	108	32.3	3.86	1.092
19	Graduates have a range of IT Skills and can use computers to organize and analyze data.	7	2.1	19	5.7	85	25.4	89	26.6	134	40.1	3.97	1.036
20	Graduates are willing and eager to learn new Computer/IT skills.	11	3.3	9	2.7	34	10.2	125	37.4	155	46.4	4.21	0.964
21	Graduates have the physical capacity (manual dexterity) to apply technology.	9	2.7	9	2.7	57	17.1	144	43.1	115	34.4	4.04	0.931
22	Graduates can contribute to the learning community.	9	2.7	56	16.8	0	0.0	137	41.0	132	39.5	4.17	0.802
23	Graduates can apply learning to 'people, goods and services issues'.	12	3.6	52	15.6	0	0.0	129	38.6	141	42.2	4.19	0.828
24	Graduates are open to new ideas and techniques as to accommodate change.	6	1.8	13	3.9	16	4.8	130	39.9	169	50.3	4.33	0.876

Source: Field Survey, 2019.

Table 4.2 shows the percentage analysis and descriptive Statistics of Responses of the Likert-Scale questions. The mean values of 1.72 for "many vocational skill courses are offered by undergraduates" which is quite less than the mean score of 3.0 indicates that many vocational skill courses are not taught to undergraduates in Nigerian tertiary institutions. In addition to that, the mean value of 2.93 does not show that vocational skill courses offered by undergraduates are well taught since it is not up to the average mean of 3.0. But a mean score of 3.37 which is above the average score of 3.0 indicates that students pass vocational skill courses they offer with good grades despite the finding that they are not well taught. This also implies that grades could be influenced by factors not disclosed by this study. The other questions which bother on the employability skills required by employers of labour, each has a mean score significantly above the mean score of 3.0, indicating that graduates are quite aware of these skills that employers of labour are looking for and seem to acquire these skills in preparation for employment. This also implies that other factors may have contributed to the soaring graduate unemployment rate in Nigeria.

4.2 ANALYSIS AND TEST OF HYPOTHESES
Discriminant Analysis for Hypothesis 1
Hypothesis 1 stated in the null as H_{01}: Nigerian graduates acquisition of basic employable skills does not significantly determine their employment status is tested using discriminant analysis. The variables for the discriminant analysis are as outlined below:

Y_1 = Employment status (Unemployed, Employed) = Q5
X_1 =Communication Skills = Q9 + Q10 + Q11
X_2 =Inter-Personal Relationship Skills = Q12 + Q13 + Q14
X_3 =Problem Solving Skills = Q15 + Q16 + Q17
X_4 =Self - Management Skills = Q18 + Q19 + Q20
X_5 =Planning and Organizing Skills = Q21 + Q22 + Q23
X_6 =Technological Skills = Q24 + Q25 + Q26
X_7 =Life-long learning Skills = Q27 + Q28 + Q29

and the results of the discriminant analysis are shown in Tables 4.7, 4.8 and 4.9 below

Table 4.3: Eigenvalues, % of Variance and Canonical Correlation

Function	Eigenvalue	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Canonical Correlation
1	0.028	100.0	100.0	0.166

Source: Field Survey, 2019.

Results of Table 4.3 shows that the eigenvalue associated with the discriminant function is 0.028 and it accounts for 100% of the explained variance with a canonical correlation of 0.166. The square of it (0.166^2) is equal to 0.028, That is, only 2.8 percent of the employability of graduates in Nigeria can be accounted for by these employable skills internationally recognized.

Table 4.4 Wilks' LambdaTest of Function

Test of Function(s)	Wilks' Lambda	Chi-square	df	P-value
1	0.973	9.073	6	0.170

Source: Field Survey, 2019.

Table 4.4 shows the test of the discriminant function. As the associated p-value = 0.170 is less than 0.05, we do not reject the null hypothesis one. Hence, we accept the null hypothesis one, which states that Nigerian graduates acquisition of basic employable skills does not significantly determine their employability status.

Table 4.5 Classification Results of Cross-validation

Predicted Group Membership			
Employment status	Unemployed	Employed	Total
Unemployed	121(49.0%)	126 (51.0%)	247
Employed	49 (56.3%)	38 (43.7%)	87

Source: Field Survey, 2019.

The summary of the classification result of the cross-validation is shown in Table 4.5 which shows that the discriminant function correctly classified 47.6% of respondents. Since we expect ratio of 0.50 = 50%, the validity of the discriminant function is judged unsatisfactory as it will not discriminate (classify) the unemployed and the employed graduate satisfactorily.

Correlation analysis for hypothesis 2

Hypothesis 2 stated in the null as H_{02}: There is no significant relationship between acquisition of employability skills by Nigerian graduates and their exposure to vocational skills in schools is tested using the correlation analysis. The variables for the correlation analysis are outlined below:

Y_2 = Exposure to Vocational skills in schools = Q6 + Q7 +Q9
X_1 = Communication Skills = Q9 + Q10 + Q11
X_2 = Inter-Personal Relationship Skills = Q12 + Q13 + Q14
X_3 = Problem Solving Skills = Q15 + Q16 + Q17
X_4 = Self - Management Skills = Q18 + Q19 + Q20
X_5 = Planning and Organizing Skills = Q21 + Q22 + Q23
X_6 = Technological Skills = Q24 + Q25 + Q26
X_7 = Life-long learning Skills = Q27 + Q28 + Q29

Table 4.6. Correlation Analysis

Variables	n	R	R^2	P-value	Decision
Graduates acquisition of employability skills	334	0.390	0.152	0.000	Reject
Exposure to Vocational skills in schools	334				

The result of table 4.6 shows that there is a significant relationship between acquisition of employability skills by Nigerian graduates and their exposure to vocational skills in schools as the p-value is significantly less than 0.05. This result is also confirmed by the correlation analysis which shows a multiple correlation coefficient, R, of 0.390 and coefficient of determination R^2 of 0.152 = 15.2% as its p-value is 0.000 and this leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis 2. The result of this hypothesis reinforces the assertion that both vocational and employability skills are relevant in our contemporary society. Little wonder Abiodu (2010) affirms that employers of labour force are not only interested in those having higher education, but also practical skills appropriate for job fulfillment.

4.3   SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The following findings are made in this study:
1. Many vocational skill courses are not taught to undergraduates in tertiary institutions and the few taught are not well taught.
2. Graduates passed the few vocational courses taught with good grades, despite the fact that they were not well taught.
3. Nigerian graduates acquisition of basic employable skills does not significantly determine their employability status. Other factors must have played out as captured by (Longe, 2017, Uddin and Uddin, 2013, Ayinde, 2008).

4. There is a significant relationship between acquisition of employability skills by Nigerian graduates and their exposure to vocational skills in schools.

5   CONCLUSION

There is an alarming increase in the rate of unemployment among Nigerian graduates. This is not necessarily as a result of non-possession of employable skills as averred by some researchers. Many factors may have culminated into that, of which the speed at which these graduates are churned, use of old curricular which do not create ample opportunities for undergraduates to be fully trained in the areas of skill acquisition to make them self reliant as they graduate, poor governance, among others may have contributed to it, hence, the need to conduct further studies to further verify these causative factors.

6   RECOMMENDATIONS

From the findings of this work, the following recommendations are made:
1   Many vocational skills should be taught and well taught to students in tertiary institutions to empower them to be self sufficient and ultimately reduce unemployment rate in the country.
2   Employment opportunities should be created by governments at all levels to reduce this alarming rate of unemployment in the country.
3   Employment process should be free, fair and credible, giving opportunities to those who can prove their mettle to occupy advertised positions. Nepotism encourages mediocrity and should be abhorred at all times.

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