

# Employment Status: Patterns of Tertiary Institution Graduates' Participation in Entrepreneurial Activities

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## Abstract

The study investigated the self employment capabilities of tertiary institution graduates who are government employed, expatriate employed, self employed and unemployed. One thousand two-hundred and twenty (1220) purposively selected tertiary institution graduates were used in the study. Of this number, 196 were self employed, 625 government employed, 177 expatriate employed and 231 unemployed. The Self Employment Characteristic Rating Questionnaire (SECRQ) developed by the National Directorate of Employment in 1985 was used to measure the self employment capabilities of sample. t-test statistics was used to analyse data collected for the study. The result indicated significant differences existed in self employing or private sector employing capabilities of government employed, expatriate employed, and unemployed tertiary institution graduates. The study concluded by recommending private sector than government sector domination of self employing opportunities.

## Index terms—

## 1 Introduction

tertiary education in Nigeria, as in most other countries of the world, has remained saddled with the responsibility of producing higher and middle level manpower. Such manpower was at the inception of the Nigerian colonial and post colonial governments in acute short supply (Fafunwa, 1979; Dubey, Edem and Thakur, 1979; Okedara, 1984; Onwuka, 1996; and Ikpe, 2000). The result of this imbalance was the existence of unfilled posts in many crucial sectors of the economy (Arowolo, 1982). Though government educational policies and programmes attempted to improve the skills, attitudes, knowledge and experiences of potential workers in the country, they did not prepare them for active participation in different sectors of the economy. They prepared them to work largely in the government sector. Vacancy rates though were high in almost all the government sectors of the economy, were thus higher in the corporate or private sector (Arowolo, 1983).

Consequently, while the size of the private sector economy shrank that size of the public sector economy expanded (Ogun and Alokun, 1993). The implications of this was that the private sector lacked or paraded under or undeveloped factors of production infrastructure, labour requirements, raw material, market, land, and capital. Many of these factors were left unenhanced by the activities of government: provision of industrial states, and utilities such as water, electricity, tele-communication and port facilities (Ogun and Alokun, 1993).

But at the record of increasing unemployment among tertiary institution graduates, government reversed the situation from about mid-1980s. This it did through a number of programmes. Ekpo, 1993; Balogun, 1993; Kwanashie, 1993; Oladeji, 1993; Akinyosoye, 1993; Osoba, 1993). Through each of these programmes the private sector enjoyed the following investment opportunities, respectively:

(i) government gradually withdrew from the industrial sector and encouraged the private sector to take it over (Osoba, 1993); it weakened the argument for geographical spread and duplication of industrial investments to the satisfaction of political and religious goals; it shrunk the government or public sector of the economy but expanded its private or corporate sector (Ogun and Alokun, 1993);

## 4 ASSUMPTIONS

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(ii) provision of an enabling environment right for basis life sustaining activities; liberalization of the market for products, capital and labour; investment and consumption opportunities; provision of economic and social infrastructures (Balogun, 1993);

restructuring and diversification of the productive base of the private sector economy;

(iii) empowerment of a wider segment of Nigerians to participate in self employing activities; acquisition of basic skills to the establishment of small businesses (Kwanashie, 1993);

(iv) Promotion of productive activities in food and agriculture, rural industrialization, technological advancement, and rural housing; stimulated enabling environments for increased rural productive activities; increased employment opportunities, enhanced capacity and uplifted material condition of the rural populace (Kwanashie, 1993).

(v) Alleviation of poverty and ignorance about private investment among the rural women populace; the harness of the potentials of rural women to boost rural economic activities; capability building and improvement (Kwanashie, 1993; ?kinynosya, 1993);

(vi) Labour market flexibility; individual worker-employer wage bargain; absence of minimum wage machinery; fall in labour cost; the filter of the quasivoluntarily unemployed graduates queuing for formal sector employment back into available informal job sector (Oladeji, 1993);

(vii) Removal of the rigidities or bottle-necks in the rural capital market; and ease to meet the local demands of banks for loanable fund (Akinyosoye, 1993);

(viii) Liberalization of the procedure with which loans are obtained (Osaba, 1993) from the bank;

Access to areas of raw materials and technology research and development; adoption of processes for conversion of materials resources into industrial inputs; methods which guarantee local raw materials inputs for the product sector of the economy; encouragement of industrialists to locally secure raw materials; access to a N100,000 rich fund, which provided assistance to indigenous private investors with limited resources to commercialise their inventions direct export of raw material products; attractive export avenues (Osoba, 1993). (Arikpo, 2005). This family of entrepreneurial strategies involved parties collaboration. Approaches to such parties collaboration included parties tutoring corporative learning, and collaborative learning. Parties to an enterprise were required to be actively engaged with business learning and practising materials. This utility of parties support was explained by several learning theories. According to one of this theories, the cognitive elaboration theory, explanation of a business learning, or practice material to a party helps such a party remember new information and relate it to already existing knowledge on the business of concern. Another theory, the constructivist theory identifies acquisition and making of complex reasoning about the business of concern with interaction among individuals of similar business development level. The third theory, the social interaction theory, effective development of the business of concern required that parties worked together under conditions was of positive goal and profit or reward interdependence (Yetter, Gutkin, Saunders, Galloway, Sobonsky; and Song, 2006).

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The fourth theory, conscientization is both an education method and weapon for changing the Nigerian public office holders status quo. The status quo here refers not only to the relationship between (i) the Nigerian public office holder and the public (ii) the deindpendent public office holder and his employer, the government and (iii) the educational system that aids the Nigerian office holders' liberation by contributing to his understanding of his corporate, or private sector potentials in critical terms. Its task then is to move the Nigerian public office holder from the government dependent to the government independent status. Conscientization therefore heralds the emergence of government dependent public office holder in the private sector. Its process of dialogue tries to integrate his tertiary educational attainment with private sector participation. This is the hope of its offer of self employment. Liberation from government employment centred tertiary education is its job status transforming process. It is an instrument for ameliorating public sector employees' total earnings dependence on government; teaching public office holders to read and write in order to decode the myth behind their financial backwardness; a dialogue process which establishes a horizontal relationship between the public office holder and the public or government both of whom are partners in the search for self generated employment opportunities (Aderinoye, 2004).

The study, therefore, incorporates employment status and self employment generating characteristics. It compares the status of being in self employment with (i) government employment, (ii) expatriate employment (iii) and unemployment through self survey opinions or responses to social and personal job creation attributes.

## 3 II.

## 4 Assumptions

The outcomes of tertiary institution curricular are seem to be those that will confine labour of their graduates to the public sector. As a consequence the knowledge, attitudes, skills and experiences arising from them are assumed to be those not required in the private sector. The private sector is considered an informal or hidden part of public office holders' work environment. The post-school skills, attitudes, and knowledge of the public office holder are to be those that will allow his effective and efficient performance in the private sector. They are to be those that will allow them display analytical and quantitative capabilities, and customer focus, planning

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capabilities, oral and written communication, knowledge of organizational culture, teamwork, quantitative skills, market analysis. The postschool skills, attitude and knowledge of the public office holder are to be those that will allow team-work, social relationships, public relations and marketing.

## III.

## 6 Significance of Study

This study has important implication because the Nigerian governments have been structurally adjusting their economies in order to lessen the dominance of unproductive investment in the public sector and improve efficiency and intensify the growth potential of the private sector. The Federal Government has also recorded a plus in its efforts to gradually withdraw from the industrial sector, and privatize and commercialise it. There has also, in accompaniment with SAP, been a deregulation perspective which attaches great importance to the private sector as the actual and potential source of economic dynamism and labour absorption (Oladeji, 1993; Osoba, 1993). The findings of the study would stimulate discussion on the need to reharmonise the public office holder centered and the public office centered education approach, so as to continue to guarantee formal and informal sector jobs for the public office holder.

## IV.

## 7 Research Hypotheses

The study was conducted to test the following hypotheses: Employment Status: Patterns of Tertiary Institution Graduates' Participation in Entrepreneurial Activities H0 1 : There will be no statistically significant difference in entrepreneurial capabilities of self employed and government employed tertiary institution graduates. H0 2 : There will be no statistically significant difference in entrepreneurial capabilities of self employed and expatriate employed tertiary institution graduates. H0 3 : There will be no statistically significant difference in entrepreneurial capabilities of self employed and unemployed tertiary institution graduates.

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## 9 a) Research Design

The ex post facto research design was adopted in the study. This was because the researcher had no control over the variables. They had already occurred.

## 10 V.

## 11 Sample

The population of the study consisted of all University (UN) College of Agriculture (COA), Polytechnic (POL), College of Education (COE) and Theological Seminary (TLS) graduates in South-South Nigeria. Out of these 1229 were purposely selected for the study.

## 12 Procedure for Data Collection

The investigator visited the Cross River State Ministry of Commerce and Industry: The National Directorate of Employment (NDE), the Federal Secretariat Complex, Calabar; homes; Full Gospel Businessmen Fellowship; Graduate Fellowship, Secondary Schools, and business premises -all in South-South Nigeria. This enabled the investigator to obtain permission from leaders of these organizations for the conduct of the study. At the grant of the permission, members and staff of these organizations were selected and served the questionnaires to complete. Twelve research assistants were employed to help administer and retrieve the administered questionnaires. This exercise lasted for three (3) months.

## 13 VII.

## 14 Analysis of Data

Data gathered through SECRQ were analysed using the t-test statistic. Table 3 shows government employed tertiary institution graduates obtained a higher mean ( $\bar{x}=62.8$ ) than the self employed tertiary institution graduate ( $\bar{x}=74.3$ ) on entrepreneurial capabilities. The means difference is 11.5 and it is significant ( $t_{\text{cal}} = -17.37$ ;  $t_{\text{crit}} = 1.960$ ;  $df = 819$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ). The standard deviations (S.D) are 8.62 and 7.92 respectively. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H0 1 ) was rejected. The calculated values show there is significant difference in the entrepreneurial capabilities of government and self employed tertiary institution graduates.

## VIII.

## Results

### a) Research

### b) Research Hypothesis 2

There will be no statistically significant difference in entrepreneurial capabilities of expatriate and self employed tertiary institution graduates. Table 4 shows expatriate employed tertiary institution graduates obtained a higher mean ( $\bar{x}=68.4$ ) than the self employed tertiary institution graduates ( $\bar{x}=62.8$ ) on entrepreneurial capabilities. The standard deviations are 8.27 and 7.92 respectively. Their difference is 0.35. The mean difference is 5.6 and it is significant ( $t\text{-cal}=-6.66$ ;  $t\text{-crit} = 1.960$ ;  $df = 371$ ;  $p<0.05$ ). So, the null hypothesis  $H_0 2$  was rejected. That the calculated  $t$  is greater than the critical- $t$  ( $-6.66 > 1.960$ ) at 0.05 alpha level, shows there is significant difference in the entrepreneurial capabilities of self and expatriate employed tertiary institution graduates.

### c) Research Hypothesis 4

There will be no statistically significant difference in entrepreneurial capabilities of unemployed and self employed tertiary institution graduates. \* Significant:  $P<0.05$

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Table 5 shows the means score of self employed tertiary institution graduates to be 62.8 and that of the unemployed tertiary institution graduate 52.6. Their standard deviations are 7.92 and 7.25, respectively. The mean difference is 10.2 and the standard deviation difference 0.67. The mean difference is significant ( $t\text{-cal} = 13.80$ ;  $t\text{-crit} = 1.960$ ;  $df = 425$ ;  $p<0.05$ ). Therefore, the null hypothesis ( $H_0 3$ ) is rejected, moreso, that the calculated  $t$  is greater than critical or observed  $t$  ( $13.80 > 1.960$ ) at 0.05 alpha level.

## IX.

## Discussion

The findings of this study clearly demonstrate significant differences in entrepreneurial capabilities of self and government employed; self and expatriate employed; and self and unemployment tertiary institution graduates. They also show (i) the government and expatriate employed tertiary institution graduates to respectively record higher means scores than the self employed in entrepreneurial capabilities; and (ii) the government employed tertiary institution graduates to record the highest means score, followed by the expatriate employed and then the self employed on the constant, or entrepreneurial capabilities. The reasons for these are, of course, obvious. First, there is in Nigeria a prevailing pattern of development inequalities. This which though owes its origin to British colonial political economy, deliberately promotes the concentration of political and economic power in the hands of bureaucrats or public office holders, and foreign merchants.

This through (i) a policy of deliberate marginalization; (ii) an inherited colonial capitalists mode of production and exchange; and (iii) total exclusion of the vast majority of Nigerians from the political process, legal and human rights, and economic basis of power exploit the natural, human, and social endowments of Nigeria to the mutual benefit of their private, social, business, and family interests. In consequence there exist (i) a peasantry and the expropriation of its cheap labour through a market system dominated by the organised private sector, usually expatriate companies and their middlemen; (ii) a marketing system tightly controlled, planned, and commanded by federal, state and local government administrations; (iii) the preclusion of enterprising Nigerian, except those from the privilege class of public office holders and indigenous class of intermediaries from foreign exploitation of mineral and human resources and the commercial and industrial sector; (iv) the manipulation of the wage industrial bargaining machinery by employers of labour; (v) a rudimentary industrial sector, and a class of wage and salary earners who depend on governments' ability to sustain high level revenue collection from oil and agriculture for their income; (vi) wage and salary earners share of the same susceptibility and vulnerability of fluctuations in commodity prices and government and wage policies with peasant farmers and traders; (vii) the projection of government employment as the most important source of power, enrichment and private investment; hence, the main essence in the search for political positions remain not the desire to offer selfless service to the people, but to gain access to government coffers as economic basis for self investment; (viii) objective differences in the income and life style of workers and political elites; (ix) discrimination against ethnic minorities by the Hausa-Fulani, Igbo and Yoruba on real and felt differences in culture and economic development, on political and economic grounds; (x) inter-regional and inter-ethnic competition among and between the ethnic minorities and majorities and (xi) the growth of class relations and an associated class consciousness arising from the cumulative impact of a bureaucratic and expatriate political economy culminating in a pattern of societal inequalities, political conflict and instability; (xii) specific government policies which exacerbate social inequalities to the point the material forces of production and bureaucracy come into direct conflict with relations among various classes and groups in the political and economic systems; thus, there have been incidence of lawlessness, highway robbery, bitter ethnic politics, traumatic census conducts, electoral controversies, military coup d'etat, a bloody

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civil war ??1967) ??1968) ??1969) ??1970); the Agbekoya rebellion ??1968) ??1969), widespread industrial strikes, the madness to get rich by the fastest possible means, various forms of financial improprieties and recklessness, offenses relating to obtaining by false pretenses and impersonation, drug and human trafficking and related vices; criminal linkages with money lenders and their collaborating officers in banks, or other financial houses; the menace of cultism; and the Niger-Delta militancy; the Ife-modakeke; Iju-Itaogbolu; Arogbo-Ijaw; Ilaje and Yoruba-Hausa/Fulani; the Jukun/Chamba and Kuteb; the Bassa and Ebiras; the Tiv and Jukun; the minority Fulani and Jema'a; the Shagamu-Hausa; and the Aguleri-Umuleri crises (nweke, 1986; Iwe, 1997;Arikpo, 1999;Arikpo, 2005;Dokun-Oyeshola, 2005).

Though the Nigerian government tried to reverse, the absurd situations above, by introducing Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP), the National Directorate of Employment (NDE), the Directorate of Foods, Roads productive activities and materials conditioning, there was neither a globalised environment, nor developed socio-economic and political infrastructure for their attainment. Government as well did not only put the labour market, whose performance, functioning, and implication for capacity building and human resource developed are critical components of the needed adjustment under control and inappropriate interference; but also strictly restricted its wage increases that would have served enhanced returns to capital essential to investment. The Nigerian education policy which emphasised the need to build up scientific and technological capabilities; float special programmes for the handicapped, gifted and nomadic; float mass literacy programmes for adults and part time learners; promote primary education among children; stimulate research and undertaking and completion of capital projects among tertiary institution; uplift the material condition of the mass majority of the populace; accord increased importance to informal sector human resource development; provide ample opportunities for continuing education and knowledge, skills and attitudes updating for productive career in the formal sector suffered deficit funding. Its experience has been decline. This has resulted in very low morale of workers in the sector; brain drain; bare management of institution to pay workers salaries, allowances and other fringe benefits; poor maintenance of existing structures and equipment; non-conduct of meaningful research; dilapidated teaching, learning and research environments, stagnation in teachers' basic salary at all levels, and teachers' and learners' aiding and abating of examination malpractices (Kwanashie, 1993;Denga, 1997).

## **23 X.**

## **24 Recommendations**

In the light of the findings of this study, proposals for elimination of the dominance of government than expatriate and self employed in the private sector would need to emphasise the following: (i) a none employment status discriminatory cooperate sector; (ii) an agrarian and socio-economic all employment status private sector liberalisation or modernization; (iii) an all employment status private sector revolutionary strategy; (iv) a comprehensive inservice, or on-the-job academic training and personal experience master plan for eliminating discriminatory employment status corporate sector inequalities and participation, than even development, engagement and stability thereto: (v) recognition of the present government sector dominated political economy of the national private sector development and its lope-sided non-government employment status implications; (vi) recognition of the reciprocity between polities and the private sector economy and between the domestic structure, foreign policy and the private sector economy; (vii) a radical break from the prevalent government sector dominated private sector to the establishment of a strong private sector dominated without fear or favour by all employment status of the labour market; that is, a political and economic private sector which places on all employment status the responsibility for development of the national economy; (viii) a strong private sector economic rationalism, or an active all employment status intervention in the corporate spheres of public works, education, public health, agriculture and industry; that is, complete non-discriminatory all employment status control of the commanding heights of the private sector politics and economics; (ix) the pursuit of a nonmercantilist trade policy designed to be maximised for the purpose of national private sector development and the benefit of international political and economic transactions by all labour market employment status without interference in their freedom to develop and participate in the private sector their own peculiar way; (x) national labour market employment status self reliance, which does not mean private sector economic autarky; but the ability and necessity of each labour market employment status to depend on itself and national resources to develop and participate in the corporate, or private sector to the socio-economic wellbeing of its employees; and (xi) a leadership imbued with patriotism, knowledge, attitudes, skills, and experiences committed to privatized, commercialised, and liberalised than marginalised national goals and symbols.

## **25 XI.**

## **26 Conclusion**

The study established that in addition to the government employed, the expatriate employed dominated entrepreneurial opportunities. This indicates that entrepreneurial opportunities in Nigeria lie between the government employed and expatriate employed. Only the tertiary institution graduates in government employed feel prepared for utilization of full entrepreneurial opportunities in the corporate sector as a result of the privileges open to them as public office holders; those either expatriate employed, unemployed of self employed

consider themselves adequate for either partial none utilization of such opportunities, because of the inadequate government component of their labour market employment status. The study also showed that the business, social and personal knowledge, attitudes and skills acquired through National Directorate of Employment (NDE), the Directorate of Foods, Road and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI), Better Life Programme (BLP) and tertiary institutions could neither overshadow government nor expatriate employment privileges in the private sector.

They unlike the latter did not thrive on Lugard's (Lugard, 1922) theory of dual mandate which legitimised

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Figure 1:

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Manpower category	Estimated stock (2)	Reported vacancy rate (3)	Estimated staff vacancies (man-power requirement) (2) x r 1-r
Administrative officer (public sector)	20,000	34.5	10,500
Accountants and Auditors	5,000	30.5	2,200
Executive Officers (General duties)	24,500	23.9	7,700
Executive Officers (Accountant)	15,000	28.8	6,000
Librarians	750	45.3	900
Statisticians and Statistical Officers	-	-	-
Confidential Secretaries and Stenographers	13,500	33.1	6,700
Architects	850	49.4	800
Civil/Structural Engineers and Builders	6,500	54.3	7,700
Electrical/Electronic Engineers	3,000	37.2	1,800
Land Surveyors	1,200	36.7	700
Quantitative Surveyors	700	35.8	400
Architectural Assistants/Technicians	800	53.1	900
Civil Engineering Assistant/Technicians	10,500	37.8	6,400
Electrical Engineering Assistants/Technicians	15,000	43.2	11,400
Refrigeration and Air-conditioning Technicians	5,500	14.2	800
Agricultural (including Veterinary, Forestry, Live-stock and Fisheries) Officers	5,000	36.5	2,900
Agricultural (including Veterinary, Forestry, Live-stock and Fisheries) Assistants	11,500	24.5	3,700
Medical Doctors (all specialist and non-specialists)	9,700	29.0	3,900
Pharmacists	2,400	36.1	1,300
Dentists	210	42.0	150
Nurses	22,500	29.9	9,600
Mid-wives	23,600	30.0	10,100

Figure 2: Table 1 :

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[Note: Hypothesis 1]

Figure 3: Table 2 :

**3**

E Employment status	n	X	SD	df	t-cal	t-crit	P
Self employed	196	62.8	7.92	619	-17.37	1.960	0.00*
Government employed	625	74.3	8.62				
Significant P<0.05							

Figure 4: Table 3 :

**4**

Employment status	n	X	SD	df	t-cal	t-crit	P
Self employed	196	62.8	7.92	371	-6.66	1.960	0.00*
expatriate employed	177	68.4	8.27				
Significant: P<0.05							

Figure 5: Table 4 :

**5**

Employment status	n	X	SD	df	t-cal	t-crit	P	D D D D ) Global Journal of Hu- man Social Science (
Self employed	196	62.8	7.92	425	13.80	1.960	0.00*	
Unemployed	231	52.6	7.25					

Figure 6: Table 5 :



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