

# Perception of Private Sector Employers on Employability of Overschooled Business Education Graduates in Onitsha, Nigeria

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**Abstract:** This descriptive study sought to determine the perceptions of Private Sector employers of labour on the effects of overschooling on employability of business education graduates in Onitsha, Anambra State of Nigeria. The subjects for the study were 145 private business employers purposively drawn from Onitsha metropolis. A structured, validated and reliable instrument questionnaire captioned Employer Rating the Effects of Overschooling on Business Education Graduates (EREOBEG) was used for data collection. Means and Standard deviation were used to analyze data on the two research questions while the t-test was used to test the two hypotheses that guided the study. The findings revealed that the private sector employers perceived that overschooling adversely affect the job performance and job satisfaction of business education graduates employed in the private sector. Recommendations included that business education graduates should embrace education self-employment on graduation in order to avoid taking up jobs inferior to their credentials/academic qualifications. Government and stakeholders on their own part promote entrepreneurship development by providing needed entrepreneurial resources and infrastructure, among other recommendations.

**Keywords:** Overschooling, employability, business education.

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## Introduction

Business education is education for and about business. Gidade and Akaeze (2014) defined business education as an aspect of total educational programme which provides the recipient with knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes needed to perform well in the business world as a producer or consumer of goods and services.

Obi, (2017) posited that the type of business education graduates which Nigeria sincerely requires is one that is adequately armed with worthwhile skills, abilities and competences that can readily ensure their surviving in the uncertain world of business and terribly saturated labour markets. Amoor (2010) noted that business education plays a significant role in the economic development; by providing knowledge and skills to the learners, thereby, enabling them to adequately impact knowledge into others and handle sophisticated office technology and information system. Business education provides its recipient with generic employability skills. Generic employability skills are important because the labour market is intensely competitive and employers are looking for people who are flexible, take the initiative and have the ability to undertake a variety of tasks in different environment. Producing employable graduates forms part of the process of education. It encompasses the full educational spectrum of values from impacting, knowledge and understanding to developing skilling and attributes.

Employability according to Hind and Mess (2011) refers to a person's capability for gaining and maintaining employment. Fungate (2004) defined employability as a form of active adjustment of individuals towards certain occupations until they could identify and recognize existing career opportunities in the work place. Brown and Hesketh (2004) defined employability as the relative chances of getting and maintaining different kinds of employment. Kazilam (2004) posited that employability refers to a group of important skills instilled in each individual in order to produce productive workforce. Employability is a set of skills, knowledge and personal attributes that make an individual more employable. Institutions of higher learning are examining the methods they use to enhance students' employability and are exercising various measures to grow and strengthen this. Again education is often seen as a channel for upward socioeconomic mobility. Persons with more education tend to have better jobs with higher earnings and higher social status. To secure higher position individuals will continue to invest in education with the hope that the additional amount of education will enhance their employability when faced with competitors in the labour market. This situation leads them to overschooling.

Overschooling was defined by Etuk *et al.*, (2012) as a condition whereby somebody occupied a job position which is lower in rank than what is expected of that individual based on his/her educational qualification and training. This suggests that there is an optimum job level for each level of education and those called overschoolers work below their optimum levels. The inputs into each job for each level of education are not the same and the higher the educational ladder, the more the qualification and quantitative imparts all things being equal. So when one who has a certain educational qualification is engaged in a work that is below his /her level, the job level is sub-optimal. In this case, the knowledge and skills as well as the resources spent on that educational venture seem to be wasted. Nkang and Uwah (2013) described overschooling as the extent to which an individual possesses a level of education in excess of that which is required for his particular job. Mcshane (2006) affirmed that the excess qualified workforce has to settle for jobs that do not require their qualifications.

The incidence of overschooling is occasioned by the large expansion in the supply of graduates over a short period of time without commensurate absorption of these graduates by the labour market which leads to disequilibrium in the demand and supply of labour in the short run. Ordinarily, the lower returns should reduce the investment in higher education so that the labour market should return to an equilibrium point. But that is not the case in Nigeria's scenario where the returns on education still remain high encouraging more of overschooling. A number of studies have shown that overschooled workers have lower

returns to their education (Leuven and Oosterbeek, 2011). This becomes disincentive and subsequently affects their level of job performance and job satisfaction.

Job performance was defined by Abramus (2004) as a workers' effective execution of tasks or job and useful contribution to the social work environment. Business dictionary (2018) defines job performance as the job related activities expected of an individual employed and how well those activities were executed. Job performance assesses whether a person performs a job well. Job satisfaction on the other hand is a measure of workers contentedness with their job. Holand (2018) opined that Job satisfaction measures whether or not a worker like the job or individual aspects or facts of the jobs such as nature of work or supervision which can be measured in cognitive; affective and behavioural components. The author went further to affirm that unemployment, disappointing wages and other economic factors have contributed to job dissatisfaction. Job satisfaction or lack of it influences not only the employee but also the organization they feel dissatisfied with. Miner and Green (2013) affirmed that dissatisfied workers experience lower productivity in the work place, poorer performance, more job stress and higher turnover rates. Holand (2018) opined that low job satisfaction can result in low morale and low loyalty to the company itself.

Nevertheless, business education graduates are expected to teach in schools as well as work in modern business offices. Since the primary actor in the training and development of the child is the teacher, business education graduates who find themselves in the school system should be recognized and treated well if improved performance and high productivity are to be achieved. It is not high degree that facilitates teachers job performance but their level of motivation. Overschooled teachers' who are not sufficiently motivated and whose returns on education are not comparable with those of their counterparts elsewhere suffer from inequity. Adams (1963) opined that overshooled workers who find themselves in schools and other working environment are usually vulnerable to low morale and poor job performance. Tusan (2007) maintained that overschooling causes lower productivity, less satisfaction with job, general poor attitude to people in the society which makes overschoolers more prone to conflicts.

Ng (2000) noted that overschoolers are known to have high job mobility. Owoeye (2007) asserted that variables of job performance such as effective use of the scheme of work, effective supervision of learners work, monitoring of students work and discipline are virtues which teachers should uphold in the school system, but overschoolers are found wanting on these, due to lack of job satisfaction.

According to Abramus (2004) pay, work itself, promoting, and workgroup influence workers' job satisfaction. People expect to receive equitable pay with their job. The work itself influences people's job satisfaction. Works with too little or no challenges create boredom. Most employees leave intellectual challenge on job. They tend to prefer opportunities to use their skills and abilities and being offered a variety of task freedom and feedback on how well they are doing the work well. Onwuchekwa (2008) opined that nature of work and the amount of challenges in a job influences job satisfaction. The rate at which employee desire promotion is generally strong among different employees as it involves change in job content, pay, responsibility independence and status. If this desire is not forthcoming, it affects job satisfaction and job performance (Mann, 1959). Also workgroup influences workers satisfaction especially when members have similar attitudes and sense of values. Nnabuife (2009) pointed that the employee work group has a lot of influence on his/her job satisfaction and general job performance.

### Problem of the Study

The continuous rise in the number of tertiary institutions that offer business education programmes and the rising rate of unemployment in the country are limiting the employability of business education graduates from various tertiary institutions. This situation has made many business education graduates to continue to further their education, acquiring more and more degrees with the hope of getting better employment opportunities. But unfortunately for many of them, the greener pastures are not quick in coming which force them to settle for jobs that are not commensurable with their academic qualifications. It is said that *“half bread is better than none”*.

This popular slogan in Nigeria notwithstanding, it is sad to note that many graduates of business education can hardly demonstrate adequate utilization of the basic skills, competences, attitudes and values in their places of work. These skills are seen as the bedrock of their core activities of knowledge economy that is geared towards bridging the gap between the services provided and meeting the needs of their employers. This unsatisfactory state of affair has necessitated the need to ascertain empirically the effects of overschooling on the employability of business education graduates.

### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to find out the effects of overschooling on employability of business education graduates. Specifically, the study tried to find out the perceptions of private employers on the effects of overschooling on:

- 1) Job performance of business education graduates employed in the private organizations.
- 2) Job satisfaction of business education graduates employed in private organizations.

### Research Questions

The following two research questions guided the study.

- 1) What are the perceptions of private employers on the effects of overschooling on job performance of business education graduates employed in private organization?
- 2) What are the perceptions of private employers on the effects of overschooling on job satisfaction of business education graduates employed in private organization?

### Hypotheses

The null hypotheses formulated for this study are.

- 1) There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female private employers perceptions on the effects of overschooling on the job performance of business education graduates.
- 2) There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female private employers' perceptions on the effects of overschooling on the job satisfaction of business education graduates.

### Method

The descriptive survey design was used for the study. This design was adopted to elicit status quo information from employers in private organization on the effects of overschooling on job performance and job satisfaction of business education graduates employed in private organizations.

The population for the study consisted of 145 employers in private organizations in Onitsha metropolis in Anambra State. Onitsha is the biggest commercial city in Anambra State and has the largest market in West Africa. The instrument for data collection was a structured

questionnaire which was face validated by three experts from Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The instrument contained 20 items and was structured on 4 points rating scale of strongly agree (4 points) agree (3 points) disagree (2 points) and a strongly disagree (1 point). The reliability of the instrument was established by administering 20 copies of the instrument to 20 employers in private organizations in Nnewi who were not part of the population.

The data obtained were subjected to cronbach alpha statistical analysis and at the end a correlation co-efficient of 0.86 was obtained which proved that the instrument was reliable. The researchers personally distributed 145 copies of the instrument out of which 144 copies were retrieved and used for analysis.

For the analysis of data on the research questions, Mean scores of 2.50 and above are taken to imply a positive (agreement) whereas 2.49 and below would imply a negative (disagreement). For the hypotheses the T-test statistic was used for the analysis at 0.05 level of significance.

## Results

**Researcher Question 1:** What are the perceptions of private employers on the effects of overschooling on job performance of business education graduates employed in private organizations?

**Table 1. Mean Rating and Standard Deviation Results on the Private Employers' perceptions on the effects on overschooling on job performance of business education graduates employed in private organizations**

**N: 144:**

S/N	Items on job performance	Mean	SD	Remark
	<b>Overschooled business education graduates:</b>			
1	Have more turnover rate	3.51	0.78	Strongly Agree
2	Have lower productivity	3.52	0.85	Strongly Agree
3	Show more job stress	3.58	0.72	Strongly Agree
4	Have low loyalty to organization.	3.43	0.90	Agree
5	Show lower interest in organizations business	3.26	0.64	Agree
6	Show higher insubordination to authority	3.39	0.70	Agree
7	Show more occupational mobility	3.53	0.92	Agree
8	Show lower sense of adaptability	3.62	1.16	Strongly Agree
9	Show lower sense of responsibility	3.71	0.88	Strongly Agree
10	Show lower team spirit	3.51	0.92	Strongly Agree
	<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>3.69</b>	<b>3.74</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>

All the mean scores for both male and female employers of private business organization are above the criterion mean of 2.49. This implies that overschooling affects the job performance business education graduates employed in private organizations in Onitsha metropolis.

**Research Question 2:** What are the perceptions of private employers on the effects of overschooling on job satisfaction of business education graduates employed in private organizations.

**Table 2. Mean Ratings and standard Deviation Results on the perceptions of private employers on the effects of overschooling on job satisfaction of business education graduates employed in private organizations**

**N: 144:**

S/N	Items on Job Satisfaction Overschooled business education graduates:	Mean	SD	Remark
1	Are happy with the wage system.	3.48	0.46	Strongly Agree
2	Are happy with the work itself	3.91	0.76	Strongly Agree
3	Are happy with their workgroup	3.41	0.62	Strongly Agree
4	Are happy with their working condition	3.74	0.63	Strongly Agree
5	Are happy with their social status	3.64	0.82	Strongly Agree
6	Are happy with the supervision pattern	3.42	0.96	Agree
7	Are always expecting promotion	3.69	0.74	Strongly Agree
8	Often feel they are being cheated	3.41	0.69	Agree
9	Always feel they are wasting their time in the organization	3.36	0.86	Agree
10	Have low sense of contentment on the job	3.41	0.65	Agree
	<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>3.51</b>	<b>0.76</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>

All the means scores for both male and female employers in Onitsha metropolis are above the criterion mean of 2.49. This also implied that overschooling affect the job satisfaction of business education graduates employed in private organization in Onitsha Metropolis.

**Hypothesis 1:** There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female private business employers’ opeceptions on the effects of overschooling on job performance of business education graduates.

**Table 3. T-test summary of the difference of the respondents’ ratings on the effects of overschooling on job performance of business education graduates**

**N: 144: Level of significance 0.05**

Variable	N	Mean	SD	DF	T-cal	T-crit	Remarks
Male	100	3.69	0.74				
				143	0.02	1.96	NS
Female	44	3.49	0.73				

Table 3 indicates no significant difference in the mean ratings of the employers in all the identified aspects of job performance with t-value less than the critical t-value of 1.96. The null hypothesis is therefore retained.

Looking at the value of the mean score. It was observed that all are above the criterion mean of 2.49 indicating their perception that overschooling affects the job performance of business education graduates.

**Hypothesis 2:** There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female private business employers’ perception on the effects of overschooling on job satisfaction of business education graduates.

**Table 4. T-test summary of the difference of the respondents ratings on the effects of overschooling on job satisfaction of business education graduates****N: 144: Level of significance 0.05**

Variable	N	Mean	SD	DF	T-cal	T-crit	Remarks
Male	100	3.51	0.76				
				143	0.36	1.96	NS
Female	44	3.49	0.73				

Table 4 indicates no significant difference in the mean ratings of the employers in all the 10 identified items on job satisfaction with t-value less than the critical t-values of 1-96. The null hypothesis was therefore retained since all the values of the means are above the criterion mean of 2.49. It implies that private employers agree that overschooling affects the job satisfaction of business education graduates.

### Discussion of Findings

Table 1 shows the summary of the respondents' ratings on the effects of overschooling on job performance of business education graduates in private organizations. The findings revealed that the respondents agreed with all the items on job performance. The fact that all the items had mean ratings above the criterion mean of 2.49 indicated that the respondents agreed on all the items as effects of overschooling on Job performance of business education graduates. Also the grand mean of 3.69 indicates that the respondents agreed that overschooling affects the job performance of business education graduates. This is in consonance with Adams (1963) who affirmed that overschooled workers who find themselves in schools and other working environments are usually vulnerable to low morale and poor job performance. When people are paid below their expectations or when they take jobs just not to be idle, the tendency is that they will not perform up to expectation due to lack of motivation. It is on this background that Owoeye (2007) opined that variables of job performance are virtues which workers should uphold in any school system.

The analysis of null hypothesis 1 shows that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female employers in private organizations since the calculated t-value 0.02 is less than the critical value of 1.96 at 0.05 levels of significance and 143 degree of freedom. This agrees with Tusan (2007) who maintained that overschooling causes lower productivity, less satisfaction with job, general poor attitude to people in the society which makes overschoolers more prone to conflict. This shows that overschoolers behave alike irrespective of the sex of their employers.

Findings with regards to the second research question revealed that the respondents agreed that all the items affect the job satisfaction of business education graduates employed in private organization. This is because all the mean scores were above the criterion mean of 2.49. Also the grand mean of 3.5 indicated that all the items were agreed on by the employers. This agrees with Onwuchekwa (2008) who opined that nature of work and the amount of challenges in a job affect job satisfaction. This also agrees with Abramis (2004) who affirms that pays, work itself, promotion and working condition influence workers' job satisfaction. This is because their investments in education in terms of resources and time are bound to make them to be dissatisfied in their jobs.

The analysis of the null hypothesis 2 indicated that the calculated t-value of 0.36 was less than the critical value of 1.96 at 0.05 Levels of significance and 143 degree of freedom. This is in agreement with Miner and Green (2013) who affirmed that dissatisfied workers experience

lower productivity in the workplace, performance, more job stress and higher turnover rates. Overschooled business education graduates whether they work in the school or in the office do not have job satisfaction whenever they compare themselves with their counterparts in other workplace who receive equitable income.

### Conclusion

It can be concluded from the findings of this study that overschooling affects the employability of business education graduates in Onitsha metropolis thereby influencing their job performance and job satisfaction. Many business education graduates who overschooled find it difficult to get equitable job making them to settle for jobs that give them no job satisfaction and which consequently influence their job performance.

### Recommendations

- 1) Business education graduates should be encouraged to embrace self-employment as soon as they graduate to avoid overschooling.
- 2) The federal and state governments as well as other stakeholders in Nigeria should promote entrepreneurship development by providing adequate entrepreneurship infrastructures and resources for schools.
- 3) The federal and state governments should create more job opportunities by building more industries to absorb the teeming population of graduates produced every year by tertiary institutions of learning.
- 4) Employers of labour should constantly appraise and upgrade overschooled workers to increase their productivity and job satisfaction.
- 5) The rich in our society and philanthropists should build more industries instead of more private schools to reduce proliferation of schools.

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