

Educational Policies Planning and Graduate Employability in Tertiary Education in Rivers State

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Abstract

This study investigated educational policies and planning and graduate employability in tertiary education in Rivers State. Three research questions and null hypotheses were formulated to direct the study. The population of the study comprised of two hundred (200) respondents which was made up of selected academic and non-academic staffs of the 3 public universities in Rivers State and a sample size of 171 respondents were used for the study. The instrument for data collection was a researcher's self-structured questionnaire titled: 'Educational Policies Planning and Graduate Employability in Tertiary Education Questionnaire (EPPGETEQ)'. The data were analyzed using mean and standard deviation. The null hypotheses were tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation at 0.05 level of significance. The findings showed that there was a statistically significant relationship between educational policies planning, educational curricular planning, and educational administrative planning and graduate employability in tertiary education in Rivers State. Based on this and other findings, the researcher recommended the integration of vocational skills acquisition and academic learning as solution to graduate unemployment.

Keywords: Educational policies, Planning, Graduate employability, Tertiary education

INTRODUCTION

Pointing out the role of education as a regenerative process of social values and a fundamental instrument for society's existence, Dewey (1997) defined education as the agent of social regeneration. Thus, for Dewey, education is a fundamental agency for individual and social

development. That is why one of the main purposes of a post-secondary education system is to prepare graduates for the labour market, or to enable individuals to earn sustainable livelihoods through self-employment and the establishment of a company or cooperative. Everyone should be able to make a living for themselves and contribute skills to a developing economy.

There are evidences supporting the fact that appropriate increase in the production of graduates benefits the society by raising work-related competencies thus boosting economic growth (Bakry & Bakry 2005; Omolo, 2010). Moreover, it has been globally recognized that higher education are centers of higher learning, which are considered relevant agents of development in the nation building. For instance, universities generate, disseminate and utilize knowledge. As primary contributors to economic growth, they produce scientists, engineers, professionals, technicians, scholars, managers and men of exquisite capabilities. Thus, the aim of higher education according to National Policy on Education (2013), is to meet the socio-cultural and developmental needs of a country. Higher education provides that opportunity for individuals to develop their potentials and fulfil the need for high-level manpower in a society.

A country's social and economic development depends on the nature and level of higher education. Education and economic development are the fulcrum for any country's development which leads to an enhanced standard of living among citizens. The place higher education occupies in the structure of education is higher than other levels of education. The multiplicity and complexity of views and shades of opinion on the subject matter necessitates an operational definition of higher education, training and employability. There is generally no simple definition of higher education. FRN (2013, p. 30) defines Tertiary Education as "the education given after secondary education in universities, colleges of education, polytechnics, monotchnics including those institutions offering correspondence courses". Higher education qualification at degree level takes a minimum of three to four years or more to complete. It will have a theoretical underpinning at a level which would qualify someone to work in a professional field, usually taught in an environment which also includes advanced research activity. It offers a number of qualifications ranging from Higher National Diplomas and Foundation Degrees to Honors Degrees and as further step, Postgraduate programmes such as Masters Degrees and Doctorates. These are specialist experts supported by a wide range of skills that employers find very useful (Anon, 2017). It also refers to the education received after secondary school. But education **aims at creating a permanent behavioural change in the individual through imparting knowledge**. Formal education is what is imparted in schools from elementary to secondary stage after which a student pursues undergraduate courses in a tertiary institution. The basic purpose of this type of education is to impart knowledge about facts, concepts, events and principles. All these form the foundation upon which skills learned later work smoothly. It is through these concepts learned in earlier classes that students get the ability to solve problems in higher classes.

Educational reforms and planning are at the core to improving the quality of the schools so as to improve the performance of the students (Patrinos, Eduardo & Catherine, 2013). Planning is a continual, progressive process in all educational institutions that aims to keep up with contemporary society's massive technological growth. All educational programmes are

expected to be compatible with internal and external settings, therefore planning becomes the focal point to meet all internal and external issues that the educational institution would adapt to. Educational planning may be approached from four distinct angles: societal demand, labour demand, rate of return, and synthesis (John, 2011). The basic goal of planning, no matter how it is seen, is to attain quality.

Quality Assurance Agency (2016) believed, and rightly too, that career and employability outcomes were very important motivators for prospective trainees in higher education and something they expect will be developed during their time at university. When stakeholders spend their energy, time and money in accessing higher education, the expectation is that, it will enhance access to greater life chances than they would not have obtained if they had not attended. This expectation is fulfilled with graduates generally doing better in the labour market by fulfilling the expectations of their employers (Naylor, Smith & Telhaj 2015).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Policy

A policy is a statement of principles(s) with supporting rules of action, guidelines, laid down in general and specific terms that governs the achievement of goals to which a business is directed (Wali, 2018). Policy is a general guide to action that helps in management. It is the compass that directs the management in the day-to-day affairs of the institution (Daniel-Kallo, 2018). Nwangwu (2003) defined policy as the official statement by the Government on the chosen course of action and the procedures for achieving it. To Ezeani (2006) policy is the proposed course of action which government intends to implement in respect of a given problem or situation confronting it. Governments are guided to facilitate the achievement of their own goals by policies (Ololube, 2018b). Cochran (2015) posited that policy comprised political decisions for implementing programmes to achieve societal goals. Ozor (2004) believed that policy is central to the operation and activities of both private organizations and public institutions. Ikelegbe (2006) in a more elaborate form defined policy as the integrated course and programmes of action that government has set and the framework or guide it has designed to direct action and practices in certain problem area. Policy plays a vital role in management of any institution and states the principles by which members of an institution will act (Rahimi & Noruzi, 2011). However, educational policies, according to Adiele (2020) are those processes, guidelines and courses of action that ensures that the structure, educational content and programmes of education at all levels of the educational system meet the needs of the society.

Planning

The formal process of making choices for the future of people and organisations is known as planning. Planning include dealing with goals and objectives, choosing the best methods and programmes to accomplish the goals, identifying and assigning the necessary resources, and ensuring that plans are communicated to all parties involved. Plans are lists of tasks to be completed, as well as the order and time in which they should be completed, in order to reach a certain goal. The method of regulating economic processes that include output is known as

planning. In essence, it entails setting economic aims and techniques for achieving them, particularly the allocation of production and labour resources to various purposes. As a result, planning is a tool for economic strategy in order to attain the optimal group of national income or the highest level of satisfaction for social requirements.

Branch and Robinson believed that planning is a deliberate, organised, and continuous process of identifying various elements and aspects of an organism, determining their current state and interaction, projecting them in concert over a period of time in the future, and formulating and programming a set of actions to achieve the desired result as early as 1968. Longe (2003) defines planning as "the process of creating priorities for future activities in order to overcome economic difficulties arising from the scarcity of resources." To her, planning entails thinking about a country's objectives, desires, and priorities. Similarly, educational planning is the process of deciding ahead of time how available educational resources can be effectively applied to achieve stated educational goals (Adiele, Obasi & Ohia, 2021).

Employability and Graduate Employability

While Higher Education Academy (2017) observed that employability is more difficult than might be imagined. Williams et al. (2015) argued that the definition of employability has shifted throughout history, and continues to be contested. By implication as the society develops and become more complex the definition of employability becomes more sophisticated and all embracing. Employability is a distinct concept from employment because it is possible to be employable but still unemployed. Employability is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for employment due to the existence of some other socioeconomic factors in certain regions or State such as quota system in Nigeria that discriminates against merit or federal character criteria in the federal civil service where mediocrity is exalted above merit.

In Portugal, for example, employability is linked to different factors such as gender, field of study and higher education institution of graduation. Among the graduates surveyed at a national level in 2001 the proportion of unemployed was greater among students from the private sector of higher education (2.1% against 1.8%), and unemployment among female graduates was persistently high during the five years after graduation. The average length of time to find a job was six months, but this varied according to public/private sector of higher education, disciplinary field of study and gender (ODES, 2002).

A wide variety of stakeholders such as Governments, graduate employers, higher education providers and of course students and graduates themselves may have an interest in defining employability. It becomes apposite therefore to narrow down the discussion to graduate employability.

Graduate Employability

Harvey and Lock (2002) defined graduate employability as the propensity of the graduate to exhibit attributes that employers anticipate will be necessary for the future effective functioning of their organization. These authors viewed employability from the lens of prospective employers. However, there are different categories of employers from diverse socio-cultural

backgrounds. Even among employers from the same field of study, there may not be unanimity of views on those attributes. Eurostat (2009) and HSV (2007) view graduate employability as being synonymous with graduates' establishment or gaining employment in the job market after graduation. While Harvey (2001) defined graduate employability as the ability of the graduate to get a satisfying job.

Employability goes well beyond the simplistic notion of key skills, and is evidenced in the application of a mix of personal qualities and beliefs, understandings, skilful practices and the ability to reflect productively on experience. Graduate Employability is all about the graduates' ability to demonstrate a rich appreciation of the relevant area of specialization coupled with the propensity to succeed even where others have failed, through skilful practices. An employable graduate is not a routinier but one that has ability to operate in situations of complexity and ambiguity and can transform trials into testimony, convert obstacles and adversity into a springboard for success and prosperity. To Stephenson's (1998), this graduate can work effectively on unfamiliar problems in unfamiliar contexts as well as on familiar problems in familiar contexts (which is a matter of routine).

Graduate employability according to Knight and York, (2004) encompasses the combination of four aspects of higher education: (i) 'understanding of subject matter' or propositional knowledge in the form of mastery of the subject matter of the degree, (ii) skilful practices which can be characterized as procedural knowledge, (iii) 'efficacy beliefs' or belief that one generally can make some impact on situations and events and (iv) 'metacognition' or awareness of what one knows and can do, and of how one learns more.

Higher Education in Nigeria and Graduate employability

The mere possession of a degree certificate from a given higher educational institution alone does not make for employability. It is critical however, that higher education develops students in ways that make them more employable (Pericles Rospigliosi et al. 2014).

Higher Education Training and Employability is that type of educational training obtained in a university or similar institutions that possess some theoretical underpinnings, taught in an environment which includes advanced research and qualifies someone to work in a professional field recognized throughout the world as representing specialist expertise supported by a wide range of skills that employers find very useful. This training imbues the graduates with a set of achievements, skills, understandings and personal attributes that make them more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations, which benefits them, the workforce, community and the economy.

Higher education in Nigeria comprise at present 170 universities (43 Federal, 48 State, and 79 Private), 71 polytechnics, 47 monotechnics and 79 colleges of education (Adiele, 2020). While the National Universities Commission (NUC) performs the supervisory and regulatory role over the universities, the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) and National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) performs similar role over polytechnics/monotechnics, technical colleges and Colleges of Education respectively under the Federal Ministry of Education.

These bodies are charged with the following responsibilities:

- (1) to lay down the Basic Minimum Academic Standards (BMAS) for all universities, polytechnics, monotronics and colleges of education in the Federal Republic of Nigeria and to accredit their degrees or certificates and other academic awards; and
- (2) to ensure that quality is maintained within the academic programmes of the Nigerian Universities, Polytechnics, Monotronics and Colleges of Education System.

The mandates and the resulting functions of NUC, NBTE, and NCCE are indeed structurally similar (Bamiro, 2012). Higher Education in Nigeria according to The National Policy on Education (2004) is aimed at the following:

- a) To contribute to national development through high-level relevant manpower training.
- b) To develop and inculcate proper values for the survival of the individual and society.
- c) To develop the intellectual capability of individual to understand and appreciate their local and external environment.
- d) To acquire both physical and intellectual skills which will enable individuals to be self-reliant and useful members of the society
- e) To promote and encourage scholarship and community services.
- f) To forge and cement national unity; and
- g) To promote national and international understanding and interaction.

It is therefore only rational that graduates of higher educational institution are equipped with the appropriate skills, cutting-edge capabilities and attributes to enable them be successful in an ever changing global social and economic environment. The economic and public policy landscape is replete with people who place premium on the role of higher education as that of preparing their graduates for the workplace. Furthermore, the expectations of parents from higher educational outcomes are being raised especially when viewed from the lens of the significant increase in the cost of acquiring a degree in recent decades. Stakeholders of all stripes are actually looking for appropriate return from the universities on their investments in higher education in terms of quality or skilful service delivery.

Graduate Employment and Employability in Nigeria

Possession of the requisite skills, attitudes, qualifications, experience at times may be a necessary but not a sufficient condition for graduate employability. There are other factors that determine graduate employability in Nigeria such as the federal Character commission, State of origin, ethnicity, religion and relationship. The Federal Character Commission (FCC) is a Federal Executive body established by Act No 34 of 1996 to implement and enforce the Federal Character Principle of fairness and equity in the distribution of public posts and socio-economic infrastructures among the various federating units of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. In many parts of the country, certain civil service employments are the exclusive preserve of indigenes of the State,

Problems identified by the Nigerian developmental plans of 1962-85 according to Fajana, (2000) included shortages of skilled manpower, uneven distribution of available

manpower among regions and between urban and rural areas, unemployment in the informal sector as well as widespread under-employment particularly in the informal sector, inadequate or undeveloped organizations and institutions for mobilizing human effort, lack of incentives for people to engage in particular activities which were important for national development, and a rapidly growing population. Therefore, in the middle of the 1970s, the policy of increased enrolment and turnout of university graduates were aimed at easing some of the observed developmental problems. The understanding was that by providing the required quality and quantity of different manpower the nation would advance at a faster rate. But since the graduates were products of the credentialists school of thought and were not imbued with the appropriate skills for self-employment the proliferation of higher educational enrolment and massive turn out of graduates only led to graduate unemployment just as free education opened the doors of learning in Portugal without the corresponding skills which resulted in massive graduate unemployment.

According to Gboyega and Atoyebi (2002), the factors that led to the explosion in the number of higher educational institutions in Nigeria range from need to meet the goals of the national policy on education of the 1970's, which provided for equal educational opportunities for all citizens at all levels (primary, secondary and tertiary), through establishment of specialized universities (of Agriculture, Education and Technology) to the quest for private and state ownership of universities, to the need to meet the educational needs of qualified candidates who could not be admitted in the Federal Universities. This invariably led to the production of a large number of graduates who were ill-equipped and ill-prepared for the tasks ahead.

While commenting on the employability or marketability of the product of our higher Educational institutions, Jaja (2013) claimed that they were not marketable and cannot compare favourably with their counterparts in other parts of the world. This translated into many unemployable graduates roaming the streets of Nigeria. He therefore suggested that the universities should begin to train their products on skills (higher educational training) they can use (presumably for self-employment) rather than waiting for government employment.

EMPIRICAL REVIEW

Felix (2018) conducted a study on how excellent education planning affects public secondary schools in Bayelsa State. The study's participants include (75) principals from various secondary schools in Bayelsa State. The study's sample comprise of 50 respondents (principals), who were chosen using a simple random sampling approach. The study's data was gathered using a self-created questionnaire named Planning for Quality Education Questionnaire, which was created by the researcher (PQEQ). Three specialists at the Department of Educational Foundations in the Faculty of Education, Niger Delta University Wilberforce Island, Bayelsa State, verified the instrument in the areas of tests and measurement and educational administration/management. The test re-test procedure was employed to confirm the study's dependability. The study questions were analysed using the mean and standard deviation, and a criteria mean of 2.50 was determined. Any item with a value greater than 2.50 was approved; otherwise, it was rejected. According to the findings of the research, great education entails healthy learners, a healthy environment, content expressed in appropriate curriculum and

resources, a process in which qualified instructors are child-centered, and beautiful results. Learners should be thoroughly examined by school officials to ensure that they are physically and mentally fit for learning, and school facilities should be properly maintained to improve learning, according to the results.

Joel and Adesoji (2021) evaluated the dynamics of higher education and graduate employability in Nigeria. He stated that higher education institutions are increasingly expected to engage with the challenges of the contemporary world, However, in Nigeria, Higher education is facing a lot of challenges and unable to meet the basic demand of what it is established to achieve. This paper is therefore an attempt to examine the dynamics of Higher Education and Graduate Employability in Nigeria with the main aim of discussing the challenges facing the universities in general and how these could be addressed in the transformation and employability of the graduates.

Anyanwu (2011) attempted a review of higher education in Nigeria, highlighted their roles and the expectation of the recipients of the educational content. The failures on service delivery by the products of higher educational institutions were also pointed out. This necessitated higher education training. The paper showed how credentialism-the placement of emphasis on credentials and not the requisite skills resulted in graduate unemployment. Furthermore, the influence of flawed educational system characterized by absence of the vocational skills acquisition needed to exploit abundant natural resources on massive rate of unemployment were shown. Vocational and Technical Education and other non-formal vocational sectors were defined and shown as sources for increasing and engendering graduate employability not only in Nigeria but around the world. Graduate employability which engenders poverty reduction and elimination of unemployment and inequality across the country was defined. Acquisition of multiple disciplinary competencies through vocational skills acquisition among graduates and undergraduates as a vehicle for mainstreaming Nigeria into the realm of graduate employability was recommended, while the elongation of the duration needed to obtain a given bachelor's degree in universities to accommodate the acquisition of multidisciplinary competences is advocated.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Planning for quality education in tertiary institutions cannot be over emphasised as its absence is an impediment towards boosting and improving a nation's educational system. When students enrol or are sponsored by their parents or guardians into higher educational institutions, the objective among others is to prepare for the future by acquiring certain knowledge, skills and capacities to enable them live a happy and rewarding life. Being rational human beings, all stakeholders in the educational process especially the recipients have a choice to make and such choice would be guided by the capacity of the system to offer the best training that satisfies the yearnings of the student. The consequences of programme and course levels should be such that enhances survival in the national and international competition for students, as they have to be on the lookout for what attracts and interests the students, and adjust their curriculum to such. Tertiary institutions most especially in public tertiary institutions are faced with problems of poor curriculum planning, lack of implementation of educational policies, amongst others. All these are the basic challenges towards the attainment of quality education in the state. It is line

with the above that this study tends to investigate how educational policies and planning will help to enhance graduate employability in tertiary education in Rivers State.

AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The aim of this study is to investigate educational policies and planning for graduate employability in tertiary education in Rivers State. The following specific objectives of the study are to:

1. determine the relationship between educational policies planning and graduate employability in tertiary education in Rivers State.
2. establish the relationship between educational curriculum planning and graduate employability in tertiary education in Rivers State.
3. ascertain the relationship between educational administrative planning and graduate employability in tertiary education in Rivers State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study

1. To what extent does educational policies planning relate to graduate employability in tertiary education in Rivers State?
2. How does educational curriculum planning affect graduate employability in tertiary education in Rivers State?
3. To what extent does educational administrative planning relate to graduate employability in tertiary education in Rivers State?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study

1. There is no significant relationship between educational policies planning and graduate employability in tertiary education in Rivers State.
2. There is no significant relationship between educational curriculum planning and graduate employability in tertiary education in Rivers State.
3. There is no significant relationship between educational administrative planning and graduate employability in tertiary education in Rivers State.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed the correlational coefficient research design. The population for this study comprised of two hundred (200) respondents which was made up of selected academic and non-academic staff of the 3 public universities in Rivers State, which are University of Port Harcourt, Rivers State University and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education all of them in Rivers State. The sample of this study was 171 respondents which was determined using the Taro Yamane formula. The simple random sampling technique was utilized to select the samples for this study. Data collection for the study was collected through the use of structured questionnaires. The questionnaire was titled: 'Educational Policies and Planning for Graduate Employability in Tertiary Education Questionnaire (EPPGETEQ)'. The structured questionnaire underwent face and content validity testing so as to ensure that the items on the instruments actually measure the

constructs they were intended to measure. Validation was done by professionals in the Department of Education Management, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt. Data analysis for this study was done using the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) 23.0 version. Mean and standard deviation were used to describe the set of data used for the study and to answer the research questions, while a Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) coefficient was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 alpha level of significance.

Data Presentation, Result and Findings

Research Question One: To what extent does educational policies planning relate to graduate employability in tertiary education in Rivers State?

Table 1: Responses on Educational Policies Planning Relate to Graduate Employability

S/N	Cluster B	Response (N=165)		
		Mean	SD	Decision
1	Effective implementation of educational policies on planning helps to enhance graduate employability	2.56	0.51	Accept
2	Formulation of educational policies which encourages practical's help to enhance graduate employability	3.29	0.46	Accept
3	Formulation of educational policies which encourages hand-on experience help to enhance graduate employability	2.83	0.38	Accept

Table 1 showed that educational policies planning relates to graduate employability in tertiary education in Rivers State. The result showed that the respondents accepted that Effective implementation of educational policies on planning helps to enhance graduate employability; Formulation of educational policies which encourages practical's help to enhance graduate employability; and Formulation of educational policies which encourages hand-on experience help to enhance graduate employability.

Research Question Two: To what extent does educational curricular planning relate to graduate employability in tertiary education in Rivers State?

Table 2: Responses on Educational Curricular Planning Relate to Graduate Employability

S/N	Cluster B	Response (N=165)		
		Mean	SD	Decision
4	Planning of educational curricular to include field trips and practical will help to enhance graduate employability	2.56	0.51	Accept
5	Preparation of educational curricular which encourages hands-on- experience help to enhance graduate employability	3.29	0.46	Accept
6	Planning of educational curricular to include industrial training and teaching practice will help to enhance graduate employability	2.83	0.38	Accept

Table 2 showed that educational curricular planning relate to graduate employability in tertiary education in Rivers State. The result showed that the respondents accepted that Planning of educational curricular to include field trips and practical sessions will help to enhance graduate

employability; Preparation of educational curricular which encourages hands-on-experience help to enhance graduate employability; and Planning of educational curricular to include industrial training and teaching practice will help to enhance graduate employability.

Research Question Three: To what extent does educational administrative planning relate to graduate employability in tertiary education in Rivers State?

Table 3: Responses on Educational Administrative Planning Relate to Graduate Employability

S/N	Cluster C	Response (N=165)		
		Mean	SD	Decision
7	Effective administration of tertiary educational curriculum will help to enhance graduate employability	2.71	1.08	Accept
8	Timely implementation of educational policies will aid to enhance graduate employability	2.60	0.01	Accept
9	Provision of equipment and facilities for hands-on-experience and practical session will help to prepare graduate's for employment opportunities'	2.71	0.46	Accept

In Table 5, the results showed that educational administrative planning relate to graduate employability in tertiary education in Rivers State. The result showed that the respondents accepted that Effective administration of tertiary educational curriculum will help to enhance graduate employability; Timely implementation of educational policies will aid to enhance graduate employability; and Provision of equipment and facilities for hands-on-experience and practical will help to prepare graduates for employment opportunities.

Hypotheses Testing

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between educational policies planning and graduate employability in tertiary education in Rivers State.

Table 4: Relationship between Educational Policies Planning and Graduate Employability in Tertiary Education in Rivers State

		Correlations		
		Educational Policies Planning	Graduate Employability	Decision
Educational Policies Planning	Pearson Correlation	1	.662	Rejected
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	
Graduate Employability	N	165	165	
	Pearson Correlation	.662	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		
	N	165	165	

*S= Significant $p < 0.05$

The result from SPSS analysis, shows the relationship between educational policies planning and graduate employability in tertiary education in Rivers State. Pearson correlation coefficient demonstrates a strong positive relationship between the two variables $r = .662$, indicating that

there exists a strong positive relationship between educational policies planning and graduate employability in tertiary education in Rivers State. Furthermore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between educational policies planning and graduate employability in tertiary education in Rivers State was rejected and the alternate hypothesis upheld [(P =.000) p<0.05].

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between educational curricular planning and graduate employability in tertiary education in Rivers State

Table 5: Relationship between Educational Curricular Planning and Graduate Employability in Tertiary Education in Rivers State

		Correlations		Decision
		Educational Curricular Planning	Graduate Employability	
Educational Curricular Planning	Pearson Correlation	1	.820	Rejected
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	
Graduate Employability	N	165	165	
	Pearson Correlation	.820	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		
	N	165	165	

*S= Significant p<0.05

The result from SPSS analysis, shows the relationship between educational curricular planning and graduate employability in tertiary education in Rivers State. Pearson correlation coefficient demonstrates a strong positive relationship between the two variables r=.820, indicating that there exists a strong positive relationship between educational curricular planning and graduate employability in tertiary education in Rivers State. Furthermore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between educational curricular planning and graduate employability in tertiary education in Rivers State was rejected and the alternate hypothesis upheld [(P =.000) p<0.05].

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant relationship between educational administrative planning and graduate employability in tertiary education in Rivers State

Table 6: Relationship between Educational Administrative Planning and Graduate Employability in Tertiary Education in Rivers State

		Correlations		Decision
		Educational Administrative Planning	Graduate Employability	
Educational Administrative Planning	Pearson Correlation	1	.820	Rejected
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	
Graduate Employability	N	165	165	
	Pearson Correlation	.820	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		
	N	165	165	

*S= Significant p<0.05

The result from SPSS analysis, shows the relationship between educational administrative planning and graduate employability in tertiary education in Rivers State. Pearson correlation coefficient demonstrates a strong positive relationship between the two variables $r=.820$, indicating that there exists a strong positive relationship between educational administrative planning and graduate employability in tertiary education in Rivers State. Furthermore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between educational administrative planning and graduate employability in tertiary education in Rivers State was rejected and the alternate hypothesis upheld [(P =.000) $p<0.05$].

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Findings from this study showed that there exists a strong positive relationship between educational policies planning and graduate employability in tertiary education in Rivers State. This is in line with the study by Felix (2018) who conducted a study on how excellent education planning affects public secondary schools in Bayelsa State. The findings of the research, great education entails healthy learners, a healthy environment, content expressed in appropriate curriculum and resources, a process in which qualified instructors are child-centered, and beautiful results

Findings from this study showed that there exists a strong positive relationship between educational curricular planning and graduate employability in tertiary education in Rivers State. This is in line with the study by Anyanwu (2011) who reviewed of higher education in Nigeria, highlighted their roles and the expectation of the recipients of the educational content; and stated that acquisition of multiple disciplinary competencies through vocational skills acquisition among graduates and undergraduates as a vehicle for mainstreaming Nigeria into the realm of graduate employability.

It also showed that there exists a strong positive relationship between educational administrative planning and graduate employability in tertiary education in Rivers State. This is in line with the study by Felix (2018) who conducted a study on how excellent education planning affects public secondary schools in Bayelsa State. The findings of the research, great education entails healthy learners, a healthy environment, content expressed in appropriate curriculum and resources, a process in which qualified instructors are child-centered, and beautiful results.

CONCLUSION

The major thrust of this study was to determine the relationship between educational policies and planning and graduate employability in tertiary education in Rivers State. The main purpose was to find educational policies planning, educational curricular planning and educational administrative planning influence graduate employability in tertiary education in Rivers State. Based on the findings it was concluded that educational policies and planning influenced graduate employability in tertiary education in Rivers State.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following were recommended;

1. Integrate vocational skills acquisition and academic learning as solution to graduate unemployment
2. Employers of labour are looking for work ready graduates with clear evidence of job specific skills in addition to high level attributes. To remain highly competitive in the job market, the graduates need to develop their employability throughout their time at university.
3. There is urgent need to steer educational policies towards multiple disciplinary competences. Skills acquisition should be implemented across the country as remedy to the economic downturn.

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