

Assessment of the Industry Performance of Real Estate Graduates in North-Central Nigeria.

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Keyword:

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Abstract

The paper assessed the industry performance of Real Estate graduates in their first job in north-central Nigeria with a view to examine the performance and those areas where the graduates performs best in relation to the real estate area of specialisation. The Performance of real estate professionals at the industry is a key element in testing graduates' achievements. It requires real estate graduates to demonstrate knowledge and skills as well as prove the achieved higher education standards. Performance over the years have been on the shortfall and leaving many graduates jobless, this is what the study seeks to assess and visualise then real estate graduate's performance in their place of work. The study was carried out in north-central Nigeria, utilized both primary and secondary data, a descriptive method (Mean Item Score) and the sampled opinion was ranked, a reliability test was also run using the Likert scale. The results of descriptive analysis across the sampled opinion was shown. The study reveals that, real estate graduates in north-central Nigeria performs relatively

good in their place of work and performs best in the area of Feasibility and Viability studies and valuation, followed by the development appraisal. The study recommends that, the academics and the practitioners should linkup and visualise the gaps between what is been taught and what is required in the industry to better the performance of real estate graduates.

Introduction

A common question nowadays among Nigerian students is the employability prospects of higher education graduates in the Nigeria's dwindling economy and Real Estate graduates are not an exception. The level at which people seek and gain admission into higher institutes of learning has increased in the past years without corresponding increase in the employment base of the economy. This and many more have posed the question as to whether there is no job or the graduates are not meeting up the industrial requirements of the industry in terms of skills and knowledge.

The real estate education is but a significant component and requirement in producing skilled professionals. That is education is an engine of growth, which rests on the quality and quantity of education in any country (Olaniyan and Okemakinde, 2008). Thus, the real estate academics must be poised in producing quality graduate's to meet up with the industry demands for skilled personnel in their firms,

The need to meet the needs of the property market and demands for such professionals makes real estate education relevant to the economy and of growing concern among many academics and industry specialist, Hamza (2019).

A lot of researches have been conducted on industrial performance of real estate graduates at their places of employment and the real estate industries, these studies includes; Davies (2000), Manning and Epley (2006), Ayofe, Ajetola and Oyewole, (2009), Mitra, Abubakar and Sagagi (2011), Egbenta (2015) and Udoekanem (2018) among many other studies.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Performance of real estate professionals at the industry is a key element in testing graduates' achievements. It requires real estate graduates to demonstrate knowledge and skills as well as prove the achieved higher education standards.

Employability skills are those basic skills necessary for seeking, keeping, and doing well on a job. These are the skills, attitudes and actions that enable workers to get along with their fellow workers and supervisors and to make sound, critical decisions (Robinson, 2000). Skills-gap which is can be said to be the difference between skills needed for a job and that, possessed by the applicant or worker.

The real estate education is but a significant component and requirement in producing skilled professionals. That is education is an engine of growth, which rests on the quality and quantity of education in any country (Olaniyan and Okemakinde, 2008). This means that, skill development is an imperative factor in production activities. Udoekanem (2018) defined professional as a person who possess specialized knowledge and abilities which are not possessed by a lay person.

A lot of researches have been conducted on industrial performance of real estate graduates at their places of employment and the real estate industries, these studies includes; Davies (2000) carried out a study on the development of students' employability skills through part-time work. The result showed proves that, graduate applicants seeking their first career jobs do not possess the personal, transferable and employability skills which employers require. The finding suggested that higher education students should undertake work experience to remedy this limitation through part time work. Manning and Epley (2006) which conducted a study to answer the question whether or not universities in United States of American are providing the needed education and skills by corporate real estate professional to be successful. The study asserts that, United States university real estate education providers are teaching much of what is needed by corporate real estate professional. The skills and competencies taught are majorly for middle managers which includes location and market analysis and interpretation, in addition to the more specialized financial, tax, and legal analysis.

Ayofe, Ajetola and Oyewole, (2009) put that in university, students are exposed to study the basics, that is, underlying principles, which might not be sufficient to develop a professional project for a good client. The current curriculum in Estate Management and valuation just provides the needed skills for a pupillage graduate in the real-world situation.

Mitra, Abubakar and Sagagi (2011) conducted a study and the findings suggested that knowledge creation is key to entrepreneurship development in

developing economies such as Nigeria. Ezepue (2008) was cited by Egbenta (2015) asserting “that the problem of mass graduate unemployment in many developing countries is not only a product of disabling socio-economic conditions, but also the inability of graduates to use *tacit* and *explicit* knowledge gained from their studies in an entrepreneurial way”. That is, graduates cannot use their knowledge to identify opportunity in their field of study and explore it.

Beyond these job-specific skills, some certain job skills are nearly universally sought by employers as some task must be performed by humans instead of machines. The good news is that job-seekers with weaknesses in a specific area can improve their skills through continued training, professional development, or obtaining coaching/mentoring from someone who understands these skills. As identified in this study, industrial performance of real estate graduates will be examined in north-central Nigeria.

METHODOLOGY

The findings for this study will be based on data from Questionnaires and Field survey, internet survey, books and journals reviews. This validates the findings for the study to be as quantitative as possible. Kothari (2004) posits primary data is that which is collected for the first time on the field directly by the researcher and secondary data is that which was originally collected and processed by someone else which was later used by a researcher in another study. Literature reviews here was based on secondary data from different sources which includes research reports, textbooks, academic journals and dissertations among others. The study also employed primary data through the administration of questionnaires to the practicing real estate professionals and senior staffs of the ministry of lands and housing in the study states. Statutory instruments and current trends in the profession on real estate education was studied to get an in-depth background on the subject and profession with much emphasis given to the performance of real estate students in the labor market.

Simple Descriptive Statistics

Simple descriptive statistics like simple percentages, cumulative percentages, frequency counts and the mean item score were used in describing the characteristics of the respondents more especially their attributes, occurrence, and distribution across the study areas.

Simple Percentage

This will be adopted to show the frequency of occurrence of an event with respect to the total occurrence.

$$\text{Simple percentage} = \frac{\text{number of observed cases } (n)}{\text{total Number of expected cases } (N)} \times \frac{100}{1}$$

Likert Scaling

In order to measure the degree of importance of the responses, a five-point Likert scale was employed to determine the performance of real estate graduates in the industry.

The rating points were as follows, Strongly Agree (SA) = 5; Agree (A) =4; Undecided (U) = 3; Disagree (DA) = 2; Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1. Values denoting respondents' extent of agreement or disagreement to the question raised will be weighted as such and a composite index derived which will measure their consensus opinions. The following cut-off index was used;

Benchmark for Decision Making

POINTS	CUT-OFF INDEX	DECISIONS	DECISIONS
5	4.50 – 5.0	Strongly Agree	Very Good
4	3.50 – 4.49	Agree	Good
3	2.50 – 3.49	Undecided	Fair
2	1.50 – 2.49	Disagree	Poor
1	1.00 – 1.49	Strongly Disagree	Very Poor

Mean Item Score (MIS)

The mean items ranking was adopted to determine the prospects regarding real estate education which is objective two and the performance level of graduates of real estate in the place of work which is objective four, and to measure their level of influence it has on the growth, the study's objective three, which is the major objective of this study. The sum of each item was then divided by the total number of respondents to arrive at a mean value which will be used to rank their relative position of impact. It is based on this mean value that decisions were reached. It is expressed mathematically as;

$$MIS = \frac{5n5 + 4n4 + 3n3 + 2n2 + n1}{(N)}$$

Where; N = Total Number of respondents, **n₁** = Number of respondents for ‘strongly disagree’, **n₂**= Number of respondents for ‘disagree’, **n₃** = Number of respondents for ‘not sure’, **n₄**= Number of respondents for ‘agree’ and **n₅**= Number of respondents for ‘strongly agree’.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This section presented the results from analysis of data obtained for the study and subsequently discusses the results accordingly. The results show how the categories of properties have different investment potentials over each other and their risk portfolios.

A descriptive assessment of graduate performance

The table is an inquiry on the performance of real estate graduates and the area they perform best. It examines the employers view on the quality of graduates incubated from our tertiary institutions and their performance level.

VARIABLES	FREQUENCY (N)	PERCENTAGES (%)
PERFORMANCE OF GRADUATE		
V GOOD	18	47.4
GOOD	10	26.3
AVERAGE	10	26.3
POOR	0	0
VERY POOR	0	0
TOTAL	38	100
AREA WHERE GRADUATES PERFORM BETTER		
FEASIBILITY APPRAISAL	13	34.2
DEVELOPMENT APPRAISAL	10	26.32
VALUATION	13	34.2
PROPERTY MANAGEMENT	1	2.6
AGENCY	1	2.6
OTHERS	0	0
TOTAL	38	100

Source: Field Survey, 2019.

From the above table, presents a descriptive assessment of graduate performance on their first job and the area they perform best. It reveals that 18

(47.4%) out of the thirty-eight responses assert that they perform very good, 10 (26.3%) are of the opinion that, their performance is good and another 10 (26.3%) of the responses asserts they perform averagely. Leaving poo and very poor with no responses. From the table, it can be deduced that graduates of real estate perform good at their place of assignment.

In the area where they perform best, the table also reveals that, the graduates perform best in the area of feasibility and viability studies and valuation with the same response of 13 (34.2) respondents. While development appraisal has 10 (26.32) responses, with property management and agency having 1 (2.6) responses. This proves that, graduates do better in the area of feasibility and viability studies and valuation in their place of assignment. It also reveals that, the area of property management, agency and real estate marketing needs improvement by the institution, so as the graduates can actively perform well in those area.

Opinion of sampled respondents on the performance of Real Estate graduates at their place of work

S/NO	FACTORS	SA	A	U	DA	SD	MEAN	RANK	REMARK
A	They are punctual to work	1	14	10	10	2	3.05	4 th	Agree
B	They have good communication skill	1	2	16	17	2	2.55	7 th	Undecided
C	They report back promptly when given a task	4	17	2	10	5	3.13	2 nd	Agree
D	They maintain good relationship with other co-workers	1	14	10	10	3	3.00	6 th	Agree
E	They carryout field work with little supervision	1	14	10	11	2	3.02	5 th	Agree
F	They have good marketing skills	1	5	6	24	2	2.45	8 th	Undecided
G	Demonstrate a thorough understanding of the practices, ideas and concept of the profession	0	0	1	36	1	1.95	9 th	Undecided
H	Shares ideas by assisting others with work related problems	7	9	4	17	1	3.11	3 rd	Agree

I	They usually have good report writing skills	1	15	11	10	1	3.13	2 nd	Agree
J	They have good IT skills	1	16	18	11	1	3.84	1 st	Agree
SOURCE: FIELD SURVEY (2019)									

From the above table above, it can be seen that practicing real estate firms in north-central Nigerian states rate the performance of their employees (graduates of Estate Management and Valuation).

The table reveals a summary result of the opinions of sampled real estate professionals and their view on the performance of real estate graduates in their firms. “They have good IT skills” ranked first with mean ranking of 3.84, followed by a tie in the ranks, as “They usually have good report writing skills” and “They report back promptly when given a task” ranking second with the mean rank of 3.13 both, next is “Shares ideas by assisting others with work related problems” which ranked third with mean ranking of 3.11, “They are punctual to work” ranked fourth with mean ranking of 3.05, “They carryout field work with little supervision” ranked fifth with mean ranking of 3.02 while “They maintain good relationship with other co-workers” ranked sixth with mean ranking of 3.00. “They have good communication skill” ranked seventh with mean ranking of 2.55, followed by “They have good marketing skills” ranking eighth with mean rank of 2.45, next was “Demonstrate a thorough understanding of the practices, ideas and concept of the profession” ranked last with mean ranking of 1.95. Furthermore, the table indicates that the real estate professionals employing real estate graduates mutually agree that the six out of the ten suggested factors examining the performance of graduates are satisfactory since they are up to the agreed cut off index of 3.00 while they were undecided on the as to whether the remaining three factors are satisfying or not since it is below the cut off index of 3.00.

Reliability Statistics for Graduates Performance			
Cronbach's Alpha	Part 1	Value	.713
		N of Items	7 ^a
	Part 2	Value	.805
		N of Items	3 ^b
Total N of Items			10

The table above reveal the internal consistency of opinions in table above. It shows that all the items under consideration have a reliability level of above 0.7 which is higher than the benchmark for reliability test set for in research work.

Conclusions

The study of the industrial performance of real estate graduates in north-central Nigeria is carried out in the sampled states of Niger and Kwara, reason been that, these states are the only states in the region that houses a federal University, a federal polytechnic and a state polytechnic each. From the analyses of the generated data, the study reveals that, generally, real estate graduates perform well in the industry and contribute to the achievement and set target of the firms they work with. The study further indicates that, the real estate professionals employing real estate graduates mutually agree that the ranked 1-6 out of the ten suggested factors examining the performance of graduates are satisfactory since they are up to the agreed cut off index of 3.00 while they were undecided on the as to whether the remaining three factors are satisfying or not since it is below the cut off index of 3.00. However, real estate graduates perform better in the area of feasibility and viability studies, valuation and development appraisal. This study proves that, specialization needs to be introduced in the course of real estate programmes, especially at postgraduate level. The study also recommends that, the academics and the practitioners should linkup and visualise the gaps between what is been taught and what is required in the industry to better the performance of real estate graduates.

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