

An Examination of Graduates of Estate Management Employers' Skill Expectations and Real Estate Education in Nigeria

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Abstract

The current unemployment challenges facing Nigeria calls for urgent attention from the country's educational planners and those in the helm of affair as there is the need by graduates from the country's tertiary institutions to be more industry/workplace competent through the acquisition of the basic hard and soft skills which are what are often sought after by the employers as they are what are required for carrying out their assignments. This paper attempts to ascertain the basic hard and soft skills often sought after by employers in the Estate Management graduates by employers in Nigeria with a view to sensitising those responsible for drawing up the curricular of undergraduates in the country's tertiary institutions and include such skills in their curriculum so as to enhance the employability of their graduates. The use of survey method was employed in the collection of data for the study while descriptive/inferential statistical methods were adopted for the analysis of data. The results of the analyses were presented in tables. The study revealed that while majority of graduates possess hard skill, they are however lacking in the area of soft skills acquisition. To inculcate these soft skills in the graduate programmes at the tertiary institutions in the country there is dire need for embedding the identified skills in the existing syllabus of the institutions as well as the development of soft skills based campus life among other recommendations.

Keywords: Employability, Estate Management, Employers, Graduates, Hard Skill, Soft Skillent

1. Introduction

The high rate of unemployment in Nigeria today has become very alarming as there are so many individuals who keep seeking employment from different organization on a daily basis. Most times, it is not that there are no job opportunities in the labour market for graduates, but the employers of labour in most cases are not prepare to employ graduates that do not possess those basic employability skills expected of them in carrying out their expected assignments, as these skills would determine their level of productivity/performance when employed into the organization. From experience (employer), it is better to employ an individual who has had a little experience in the labour market than a fresh graduate as such an individual already knows the skills that is required to work in any organization. In the modern day employment market, it is no longer sufficient for a graduate to only possess academic knowledge but need to be imbibed with relevant employability skills in their field of study.

The essence of formal education in general and university education in particular is for better placement in the work place, guarantee better income and enhance the life of the recipients. An

importance of any degree programme is to prepare such students/candidates for the work place after graduation from the tertiary institutions. Students of professional studies programmes such as Real Estate possess an additional advantage over other courses which are not professional in nature as they are usually expected join the professional bodies relating to their course of study with a view to garnering additional skills from such professional bodies and as such employers expect candidates/students with such background to be instantly employable. For most developing countries like Nigeria, government and policy makers often find it difficult to deal with the high rate of unemployed graduates. In the business world today, the adequacy of a graduate not only depends on whether one is able to fulfill paper requirement of specific jobs. It also entails how an individual practically stands relative to others within the group of job seekers. The purpose of education is functionalism. That is, for immediate induction into the society and a preparation for adulthood. In the African setting, the main emphases often centre on social responsibility, job orientation, and political participation, spiritual and moral values. It is therefore generally believed that the central purpose of education has been to prepare people for work, attainment of national development and remain relevant in the comity of nations. However, the situation in Nigeria's educational sector most especially in our tertiary institutions today fall short of expectation as many individual students find themselves studying courses they never intended to study or have flair for, but for one reason or the other they find themselves in such courses/fields. And as if this is not enough, most of such students while in the school are not taught or imbibed with some germane or relevant skills expected of them after graduation and as such often find it extremely difficult to secure employment after graduation. Hence, this study is embarked upon with the sole purpose of identifying such employability skills expected of the graduates Estate Management by the employers in the real estate industry in Nigeria.

2. Review of Relevant Literature

These days' graduates of all discipline roam the streets of major cities looking for jobs irrespective of their course of study. Graduates are filled with extreme regrets considering the rate of the unemployment situation in Nigeria today. On the other hand, the educational system has continued to produce more graduates into the labour market whose performance ability in employment is in heavy doubt.

Dandago and Muhammad (2014) in their work noted that the Nigeria education system has failed to cope with the trend and changes in equipping her graduates with the requisite skills needed for effective job performance virtually in all fields. Collaborative environment is characterized by teamwork and leadership are work skills that employers must possess upon entering the workforce. Employees must be able to explore career opportunities from a selection of disciplines and perspectives. The failure to fulfill this requirement has been identified as one of the causes of the skills gap amongst graduates, and the problem needs to be addressed seriously. Abdullah-Al-Mamun (2012) noted that lack of competencies lead to a new issue for the graduates becoming unemployed. Employers tend to see most new graduates as somewhat self-

centered, unable to integrate within an existing team and expecting to be placed in a senior position without demonstrating the right qualities for leadership etc.

2.1 Categories of Employability Skills

Soft skills are abilities for adaptive and constructive behavior that allow individuals to deal effectively with the challenges of life. In particular, social skills, one of the soft skills, help people make informed decisions, solve problems, think critically and creatively, communicate effectively, and build healthy relationships (Soek-Young, 2012).

Soft skills refer to the cluster of personality traits, social graces, facility with language, personal habits, friendliness, and optimism that mark people to varying degrees. Soft skills complement hard skills, which are the technical requirements of a job (Bernd, 2008). Soft skills have strategic roles in determining someone success in his works. Soft skills are defined as involving interpersonal and intrapersonal abilities to facilitate mastered performance in a particular context. Soft skills are defined as skills, abilities and traits that pertain to personality, attitude and behavior rather than the formal or technical knowledge (Abdullah-Al-Mamun, 2012). Soft skills are extremely important that special attention to the development of these soft skills should be integrated in study plans. It is particularly true for the vocational graduates. People with a solid command of soft skills can think on their feet, solve problems, lead a group through teamwork exercises, give critical feedback, motivate fellow 56 employees and set an example for the rest of the workforce (Abdullah-Al-Mamun, 2012). Soft skill is a contemporary way to describe a set of abilities or talents that an individual can bring to the workplace.

Accounts of skill now include communication, problem solving, team working, an ability to improve personal learning and performance, motivation, judgment, leadership and initiative (Irena and Steven, 2009). Certainly soft skills, such as friendliness and team working ability, and traits such as emotional intelligence have been highlighted as the skills that are of greatest importance in the current labor market (Abdullah-Al-Mamun, 2012). Soft skills were identified as solving problems, communicating effectively, working as a team, thinking critically, and possessing interpersonal skills to be the most important employability skills desired by employers (Shane and Bryan, 2010). Soft skills are interpersonal skills, technology skills and communication skills and when individuals possess these skills it would help improve their relevance in the labor market (Seetha, 2014). Seetha (2014) agreed that the skills of leadership, relationship, communication, team working and Information management are the required soft skills to secure and retain placement in a working environment. Soft skills required in the real estate profession includes the following people skills, sales skills, communication skills, analytical skills, ability to synthesize, creative ability, initiatives and working hours.

Shaheen et al (2012) identified the importance of soft skills for education and career success. The aim of the research was to investigate the students' perceptions of the importance of soft skills for their education and employment success. Primary data was used in data collection through the administration of 188 questionnaires to the undergraduate of business management students from four universities in Singapore. The findings revealed that soft skills were useful for social interaction as well as for career advancement. However, respondents did not think that soft skills were important for quality academic performance. The top five important soft skills identified by the students were teamwork and collaboration, decision-making, problem solving, time management, and critical thinking skills. Students were of the opinion that soft skill training should be integrated into appropriate courses as it relates to the students' field of study. Many students' did not also see the need for communication skills to be important; hence, they did not see any need to improve their communication skills. The study therefore recommended that appropriate measures should be put in place to improve the soft skills embedded in students which will however improve the employability skills of the students when they are graduates' and ready for the labor market.

Hard skill is knowledge about and the knowledge in a specific type of work or activity. It includes competencies in a specialized area, analytical ability, and the ability to use appropriate tools and techniques. Hard Skills are the technical knowledge needed to do a job. Hard skills are technical abilities that relate to specific occupational domains such as engineering, marketing, finance, construction estate management etc. They are called hard skills because they are specific, tangible, and often observable. Hard Skill is the general result of experience, training, and education in a particular field of study. Hard skills are the technical skills including programming languages, operating system skills, networks and communications foreign language skills, procedure skills as observed by ArcherDavison (2008). Hard skills are associated with specific technical abilities or academic knowledge required to do a job. These skills are defined as what you know remarked Verica and Marko (2011). Hard skills are usually easy to observe, quantify and measure. Hard skills are easy to train, because the skill sets are brand new to the learner and no unlearning is involved. Hard skills are defined as the use of tools, equipment related to work properly and efficiently, as well as all technical matters (Md Nasir et al, 2011). Hard skill is the ability to perform work in a technically competent manner and to also monitor and understand it in an independent and critical manner. Technical skills are a skill, knowledge or technical competence related to the field of the workers, whether engineering or technical. Hard skills in real estate includes the following valuation, property and facility management, rating and taxation, building economics, urban economics, land law, plant and machinery valuation, environmental impact assessment, advanced valuation, land surveying, measurement and description, geographic information system, ICT in estate management, public health engineering, project planning and control, building component and methods among many others.

2.2 Trends in Graduate Employability

Igberaharha, (2013) in Nigeria examined a research on the assessment of accounting and management skills needed by business education graduates for effective job performance in delta state. Two research questions were presented and two null hypotheses were proposed for the research. The researcher implemented a descriptive survey research design for the study and the sample of the study consisted of 255 respondents which were made up of 88 business education lecturers in five tertiary institutions and 167 business education graduates. However, no sampling was carried for this research. The Accounting and Management Skills for Effective Job Performance Questionnaire (AMSEJPO) was used to collect data for the research. Mean was used in answering the research questions while t-test statistics was used to analyze the null hypotheses formulated at 0.05 level of significance level. The findings of the research revealed that both business educators and business education graduates have similar response to the items, affirming that accounting and management skills are highly needed by business education graduates for effective job performance. The research recommended that accounting and management skills should be an integral part of the business education curriculum where business education students would be exposed to the fundamentals of the accounting and management for proper skill acquisition.

Anho, (2011) examined the evaluation of quality and employability of graduates of Nigerian universities. The aim of the study was to conduct a comparative evaluation of how the public and private sector employers perceive the employability of graduates of Nigerian universities. The study used the ex-post-facto research design model concentrating on the longitudinal data covering the period of 2000-2010. The primary data using the distribution of structured questionnaires was used for the collection of data. The stratified purposive sample technique was used and a total of 1,480 respondents that are senior management staff of various organizations were selected for the study. The frequency and percentage statistics were deployed in the analysis of data and used to answer the research question while the t-test statistics was used in analyzing data. The findings of the research revealed that both the private and public sector employers perceived and rated the employability and quality of graduates of Nigerian universities as ranging between average and high difference in the perception and rating of the quality and employability of the graduates by the public and private sectors. Hence, the private sector employers consider graduates of Nigerian university as high quality while the public sector considers the graduates of Nigerian universities as low quality. Both sectors rated the graduates as high quality on the 20 indices of quality. The rating shows that both sectors were favorable in some indices especially in information technology, oral and written communication, entrepreneurship, resource management among others. The study therefore recommended that the need for adequate and appropriate funding and assessment of education sectors and urgent need for reforms of the university system and entry into any Nigerian university should be strictly on merit basis and efforts should be made by authorities to ensure that only qualified students are admitted into the system. Curriculum should be reviewed to suit the needs of the various labour market organizations in the country.

Wilson, Ahmad, and Abu (2012) in their study undertake the examination of graduate employability skills from various countries. The aim of the study was to identify employers' needs in different countries, various definitions related to employability skills, previous research work done in different countries as related to employability skills required and their various recommendations. The study was based on a literature survey of educational reports, empirical and theoretical research papers. The research findings revealed that the definition of skills, employers' expectations and performance requirements varies in different countries. Hence, the research recommended that tertiary institutions should identify this different skills that will best serve the future labor market and align programmes to meet these needs.

Oduma and Ile, (2012) carried out a research on the office employability competencies needed by business education graduates for effective job performance in modern organizations in Nigeria. The aim of the study was to identify office employability competencies needed by business education graduates for effective job performance in the business organizations in Nigeria. The study was a survey was conducted by 134 directors and managers of parastatals and companies in the south-east. Primary data was used in the collection of data. The structured questionnaires contained 34 items to elicit information on the important office and e-office competencies required by business education graduate for effective job performance in today's office. Out of the 134 copies of the questionnaires distributed, 118 copies were returned duly attended to, and this data was used for analysis. The instrument was carefully validated by five experts in the field of business education. Mean scores and standard deviation were used in the analysis. The findings of the research revealed that among other that 10 important office employability competencies which includes: ability to present accounting information, ability to understand account information, ability to determine formats of office documents, ability to design formats of office documents, ability to follow office protocols, competence in stock taking, competence in office records management, ability to take minutes of meetings competence in handling meeting procedures and competence in distributive activities and 13 e-office employability competencies were accepted to business education graduate. The study recommended that among other cordial business between business education department in tertiary institution and business organization to keep well-informed of current technologies.

Ariyawansa, (2008) examined the employability of graduates of Sri Lankan Universities. The aim of the research was to review the determinants of graduates' employability of Sri Lankan Universities. The research reviewed several topics as related to the research study so as to understand different views relating to the problem in general. Primary data was collected through discussions and telephone conversations with top managers in the government sector, private sector and non-government sectors. An examination of a random sample of 50 newspaper advertisements of job opportunities in the weekend paper was made regarding employment opportunities for graduates was done as an alternative method of data collection. The study solely depended on secondary data from reports on the university grants commission, Quality Assurance Council of Sri Lanka and other institutions as well as books and journals. Hence, the

study used Quality Assurance Judgment to review results relating to the degree program in Sri Lankan Universities. Different descriptive statistics data was analyzed to understand the gravity of the problems. The research concludes that the mismatch existing between the degree and demand of labour market as the main reason of this issue. It also noticed that there are booming jobs for graduates in the private sector mainly for science, engineering, management and commerce graduate but lesser opportunities for social sciences and humanities graduates. Employers have high demand for additional competencies such as IT skills, leadership qualities, analytical ability, teamwork and interpersonal relation.

Sodipo, (2014) reviewed the employability of tertiary education graduates in Nigeria. The aim of the research was to identify what employers want, recognize the gaps in the required skills and how these skills can be integrated into the curriculum students are exposed to before they graduate from the tertiary institution. The method of data collection was via the review of several research works that has been carried out as it regards to this study. Findings revealed that according to Philips consulting 2014, the current education system does not appear to be producing graduates with generic and essential skills, therefore there would be an increase in the rate of unemployment among Nigerian graduates. They further revealed that 24million jobs are needed over the next ten years to reduce the current unemployment by half. The research recommended that before institutions turn out their graduates to face the labor market, the skill they lack which is creating the gap in their knowledge and making unemployment must be taught as an essential part of the curriculum. There should be no disconnection between post graduate employments i.e. the reality of the labor market should be integrated into the institutions curriculum.

Alao et al, (2008) studied the employers' satisfaction survey of the university graduate of Botswana graduates. The aim of the research was to prepare students to meet the expectations of the work environment and to inform the university management in the areas where the education curriculum needs to be reviewed. The method of data collection was through the primary method where questionnaires were administered to respondents. The sampling frame consisted of all organizations who hire graduates including schools, clinics and government offices. The data analysis was based on the use of SPSS and descriptive statistics such as tables and charts were generated. The findings discovered that employer' found communication skills, computer skills, interpersonal skills, critical thinking skills, problem solving skills, flexibility skills, adaptability skills, planning skills, organizational skills, leadership skills, analytical skills and research skills are very important skills employees' should possess before getting into the labor market. The study recommended that the university students should be exposed to more practical work experience as it relates to their course of study during the cause of learning rather than just being exposed to only the theory aspect of the course of study. Employers' should ensure that the university management is aware of the employability skills they expect every graduate to possess as it relates to their various course of study.

Garwe, (2013) examined the holistic initiatives for enhancing graduates' employability in Zimbabwe. The aim of the study was to establish initiatives for enhancing graduates' employability and building successful future career for students. The method of data collection was through the primary and secondary method. The primary data entailed interviewing key individuals from relevant sectors in the labor market. The finding showed that creating curricula relevant to the economic and social needs had the greatest impacts. Students being exposed to work environment as it relates to their course of study is also of utmost importance as it also helps to build a successful career in academia and industry. The study recommended the government to strengthen her efforts on small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and also promote interantionalisim through scholarship programs as this would improve graduate employment opportunities.

Adeyeye and Tugbobo, (2010) carried out an analysis of the factors influencing hiring/placement of University graduates in Nigeria. The aim of the research was to identify the increasing rate of graduate unemployment and the analysis of the factors influencing labour market demand for university graduates in Nigeria. Primary data, which included the distribution of structured questionnaires and unstructured interview questions, was used for the collection of data. The population of the study comprised of public and private organizations in Lagos. 110 copies of structured questionnaires were sent out to senior and top management staff in the organizations answered the questions. The descriptive statistics was used to analyze data collected. From the research questions, four hypotheses were postulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance level by using the chi-square. The study revealed that experience is the only factor that can guarantee competencies and skills required in the labour force. Responses on the issue of the work experience were from 95 respondents used for the study. 76% argued that the amount of years' experience an individual has determines the competency skills they will possess. The study also revealed that some courses are not marketable for the current labour market. 95 copies of the questionnaires were distributed, but only 82 of those who responded detected that some courses studied by graduates are not relevant or useful to many organizations in the labour market. The study also revealed that graduates from other countries are preferred to Nigerian graduates. The study recommended that policy makers should ensure that the quality of university's academic activities in Nigeria should be improved. The university management should create a quality feedback system with organizations, to ensure they are aware of the constant change in the labour market. The university should restructure her mode of information within the four walls of learning that does not encourage too much of abstract learning which may not be relevant to the labour market. Graduate unemployment can be reduced by reviewing the present admission policy in Nigeria. Work force planners should ensure that only the number that required by the economy is admitted into the universities.

3. The Study Area

Lagos state is a state in the southwestern Nigeria. It is bounded in the west by the Rebulic of Benin, to the north and east by Ogun State with the Atlantic Ocean providing a coastline on the

south. It has a total of 3,577 square kilometers, 787 square kilometers is made up of lagoons and creeks including Lagos Lagoon, Lagos Harbour, Five Cowrie Creek, Ebute-Metta Creek, Port Novo Creek, New Canal, Badagry Creek, Kuramo Waters and Lighthouse Creek. However, this research would be limited to studying the capital of Lagos State, which is Ikeja. Ikeja is the capital of Lagos State and it is an outer ring suburb of the city of Lagos. Ikeja is divided into Opebi, Oregun, Akiode, Alausa, Agidingbi, Ojodu, GRA, and Maryland. According to the 2006 census, the population of Ikeja was estimated to be 313,196 with an area of 10km. The city lies on an elevation of 128ft (39m) above sea level. Ikeja is strictly an urban area consisting of different banks, boutiques, office buildings, restaurants, supermarkets, hotels, clubs, petrol stations etc. It is a very beautiful, neat and peaceful area with both citizens and foreigners coming in and out of it every day. It is filled with infrastructural facilities good roads, streetlights amongst others. The researcher chose Ikeja as the area of study because it is the central of Lagos where many economic activities take place and where many real estate firms can easily be located.



Fig 1: A Map of the City of Lagos With the Study Area Marked Out

Source: Map – Wikipedia

4. Research Methods

Primary data for the study were collected with the aid of questionnaires distributed among estate surveying and valuation firms (employers), graduates of estate management (employees) in Ikeja area of Lagos State while personal interviews were conducted with the some lecturers in the some tertiary institutions offering Estate Management in Ogun and Lagos States. A total of forty (40) questionnaires were administered to registered estate surveying and valuing firms representing the employers out of which twenty five (25) questionnaires were retrieved while another set of twenty (20) questionnaires were administered to the graduates of Estate Management working in the firms to take care of the views of the employees all of which were all retrieved. The questionnaires distribution and returned rates are as shown in Table 1 below. The data so collected with the aid of questionnaires were analyzed using descriptive and analytical statistical tools.

Table 1: Questionnaire Distribution to the Respondent Stakeholders and Response Rate

Respondents	No. Distributed	No. Retrieved	% Retrieved
Estate Surveying & Valuation Firms (Employers)	40	25	63
Estate Management Graduates (Employees)	20	20	100
Total	60	45	75

5. Data Analysis and Discussion

This section deals with the analysis and discussion of the data collected for the study.

5.1 Gender

Table 2: Gender of Respondents

Sub-division	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	18	72
Female	7	28
Total	25	100

From table 2 above, the data collected and analyzed, regarding the employers of graduates of Estate Management in the sampled estate surveying firms, a total number of eighteen (18) representing 72% were male respondents while seven (7) representing 28% were female respondents. From this analysis it can be said that there are more men in the real estate profession than women and this is could be attributed to the nature demands required in the

profession. Hence, it is much easier for men to work in the real estate than for women and more importantly, estate firms mostly tend to employ men than women in their firms as a result of the peculiar nature of women generally.

5.2 Years of Experience

From the table above, out of the 25 questionnaires administered, a total of seven (7) representing 28% of the respondents have working experiences spanning a period of 1-5 years, while a total of eight (8) representing 32% of the respondents have working experiences of 6-10 years, a total of two (4) representing 16% of the respondents have working experiences of 11-15 years, a total of three (3) representing 12% of the respondents have working experiences of 16-20 years, and the remaining three (3) respondents representing 12% have working experiences of 20 years and above.

Table 3: Years of Experience

Years of Experience	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1 - 5 Years	7	28
5 - 10 Years	8	32
11 - 16 Years	4	16
16 - 20 Years	3	12
20 Years and Above	3	12
Total	25	100

From table 3, it could be concluded that those who provided answers to the questions asked are more than qualified to give answers considering their different levels of working experiences acquired. Hence, the information supplied by them can be considered to be very reliable for this research work.

5.3 Education Qualification

From the table below, a total of nine (11) representing 44% of the respondents possess the HND degree, a total of ten (10) representing 40% of the respondents are B.Sc. degree holders and a total of three (3) representing 12% of the respondents are M.Sc. degree holders.

Table 4: Educational Qualification

Sub-division	Frequency	Percentage (%)
HND	11	44
B.Sc.	10	40
M.Sc.	3	12
Total	25	100

This analysis however, shows that there are more HND degree holders in the real estate profession than the B.Sc. or M.Sc. degree holders. This could be as a result of the practicability involved in every polytechnic in every course studied. With respect to Estate Management, the students are exposed to three (3) months of SIWES training and then a one (1) year industrial training exercise after their Ordinary National Diploma prior to proceeding for Higher National Diploma, it could also be as a result of the cumbersome process that is usually encountered in getting into the federal or state universities, or even due to the excessive bills that are paid in the private universities as compared to the polytechnics.

5.4 Professional Qualification

From the table below, a total of five (5) representing 20% of the respondents are probationers of the Nigerian Institution of Estate Surveyors and Valuers in Nigeria, a total of fifteen (17) representing 60% of the respondents are Associate members of the Nigerian Institution of Estate Surveyors and Valuers, and a total of two (2) representing 8% of the respondents are Fellows of the Nigerian Institution of Estate Surveyors and Valuers, while the last respondent which represents 4% is a member of the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors. From this analysis it can be said that most employers are registered associates of the Nigerian Institution of Estate Surveyors and Valuers, this is very impressive as it signifies that many individuals do not just stop their real estate qualification at the higher institutions but proceed into to acquire more knowledge in real estate practice.

Table 5: Professional Qualification

Professional Qualification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Probationers	5	20
ANIVS	17	68
FNIVS	2	8
Others	1	4
Total	25	100

5.5 Graduates Employment

The respondents were asked on how often they employed graduates into their organizations. From the analysis, three (3) respondents representing 12% employ graduates quarterly, two (2) respondents representing 8% employ graduates quarterly, eight (8) respondents representing 32% employ graduates yearly and twelve (12) respondents representing 48% employ graduates only when the need arises i.e. others. From this result majority of the real estate employers employ graduates only when the need arises. This simply means that real estate graduates would only be employed when the need arises and not when they graduate from the tertiary institution. This process however, increases the rate of unemployed graduates in the real estate profession as many graduates after the completion of their higher education qualification and their national youth service are not guaranteed of a job in real estate firms. Hence, many graduates are forced

to look for job opportunities in other sectors of the economy therefore reducing the number of professional hands that can be added to the real estate profession.

5.6 Employability Skills Preference in Graduates by Employees

The respondents were asked the most preferred employability skills they want every real estate graduate to possess. From the analysis three (3) respondents representing 12% prefer real estate graduates that possess hard skills and twenty-two (22) respondents representing 88% prefer real estate graduates that possess both hard skills and soft skills.

Table 6: Preferred Employability Skills in Graduates

Skills	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Soft Skills	0	0
Hard Skills	3	12
Hard and Soft Skill	22	88
Total	25	100

It can however be deduced that most of the employers in the real estate profession prefer graduates with not just hard skills i.e. skills acquired within the four walls of the tertiary institution but also soft skills i.e. skills that are acquired from our daily lives in our various environments. This therefore means that graduates should not just rely on hard skills acquired but should go further in acquiring soft skills which most often times are not thought in tertiary institutions, as possessing both the soft and hard skills give any real estate graduate an edge over any other graduates who does not possess this skills or possess just one of the two skills.

5.6 Valued/Relevant Employability Skills by Real Estate Employers

The respondents were asked to identify the most important employability skills that would make a real estate graduate employable. The respondents had the option of choosing from the hard skills, soft skills and the real estate skills, this was to enable the researcher provide answers to the objectives of this research work.

Table 7: Rating of Hard Skills Expected of Real Estate Graduates Employers

HARD SKILLS	SA(5)	A(4)	U(3)	D(2)	SD(1)	M	R
Feasibility and Viability Studies	8	17	0	0	0	4.32	1 st
Applied Property & Facility Mgt.	10	13	1	1	0	4.28	2 nd
Land use and Resources Mgt.	7	18	0	0	0	4.28	2 nd
ICT	8	16	1	0	0	4.28	2 nd
Real Estate Portfolio Mgt.	9	14	2	1	0	4.24	5 th
Advanced valuation	9	13	2	1	0	4.20	6 th

Quantity Surveying	13	5	6	1	0	4.20	6 th
Plant and Machinery Valuation	5	18	1	1	0	4.08	8 th
Project Planning and Control	4	19	2	0	0	4.08	8 th
Geographic Information System	5	18	1	1	0	4.08	8 th
Building Components	6	16	2	1	0	4.08	8 th
Land Law	7	14	2	2	0	4.04	12 th
Building Economics	4	17	4	0	0	4.00	13 th
Environmental Impact Assess.	5	15	5	0	0	4.00	13 th
Project Dissertation	4	16	5	0	0	3.96	15 th
Rating and Taxation	4	16	4	1	0	3.92	16 th
Research Methodology	3	13	8	1	0	3.72	17 th
Land Surveying	2	15	4	4	0	3.52	18 th
Principles of Accounting	0	16	6	3	0	3.52	19 th

Key: SA - Strongly Agree, A – Agree, U – Undecided, SD – Strongly Disagree, M – Mean, R – Rank

From the analysis shown in the table above, feasibility and viability studies was ranked first by the respondents amongst the hard skill requirement by real estate graduates, while property/facility management, information and communication technology and land use and resources management were 2nd of the hard skills considered imperative for real estate graduates to possess with a view to performing up to optimum in the real estate industry. Meanwhile, other hard skill considered to be inevitable for real estate graduates are as shown in the table above. Graduates possessing the identified important hard skills stand better chances of being employed by employers than graduates who does not possess these hard skills.

Table 8: Ranking of Basic Soft Skills Required of Real Estate Graduate by Employers in Nigeria

SOFT SKILLS	SA (5)	A (4)	U(3)	D (2)	SD (1)	M	R
Integrity	22	3	0	0	0	4.88	1 st
Time Management	20	5	0	0	0	4.80	2 nd
Punctuality	16	9	0	0	0	4.64	3 rd
Communication	16	9	0	0	0	4.64	3 rd
Positive Work Ethics	15	10	0	0	0	4.60	5 th
Good Attitude	15	10	0	0	0	4.60	5 th
Dedication	15	10	0	0	0	4.60	5 th
Courtesy	14	11	0	0	0	4.56	8 th

Motivational Skills	13	12	0	0	0	4.52	9 th
Interpersonal Skills	12	13	0	0	0	4.48	10 th
Self-Directed	11	13	1	0	0	4.40	11 th
Emphatic	5	17	3	0	0	4.04	12 th

Key: SA - Strongly Agree, A – Agree, U – Undecided, SD – Strongly Disagree, M – Mean, R - Rank

From the analysis of the data collected from the respondents in estate firms, integrity was ranked 1st which indicates the most important soft skill real estate graduates require to stand the test of time in the real estate profession. This is the skill everyone on the face of the earth requires, in the real estate sector having integrity is very important due to the fact that the profession entails that both the estate firms and their clients remain loyal to each other at every point in time to enable cordial relationships and also ensure that none of the parties concerned future is jeopardized.

Time management was ranked 2nd important soft skills real estate graduates should possess upon employment. In the real estate profession there is usually a lot of executions to be carried out at the same time therefore it is important that every individual involved in the real estate profession need to be good time managers so that many transactions can be made with their varying profits. Therefore, real estate graduate seeking employment in the real estate sector must be very good at managing time.

Effective Communication and punctuality were both ranked 3rd amongst important soft skill real estate graduates needs to possess for employment in the real estate firms. Communication and punctuality are very important soft skill, as estate surveyors would at every point in time needs to communicate effectively with their clients on various matters that may arise during the cause of any transaction and due to the fact that they are required to meet up with clients for every appointment scheduled.

Positive work ethics, good attitude and dedication to duties were ranked 5th amongst the important soft skill real estate graduate require to possess, courtesy was ranked the 8th important soft skill estate management graduates needs to possess, motivational skill was ranked by the respondents the 9th important soft skill, the respondents ranked inter-personal skills as the 10th important soft skill, while being self- directed was identified by the respondents as the 11th important soft skill and the least important soft skill required by the respondent firms is for graduates to be emphatic.

However, from this analysis it can be said that the real estate graduates should focus more on possessing the most sought after soft skills by real estate employers, because possessing both the soft skills and hard skills as a graduate make it easier for one to be employed in the real estate profession.

5.7 Personal Skills/Attributes Expected of the Real Estate Graduates

The respondents were further asked of their opinion regarding estate management graduates possessing not just the hard skills and the soft skills but also possessing personal skills that relates to the real estate profession

Table 9: Personal Real Estate Skills/Attributes Expected Real Estate Graduates

REAL ESTATE SKILLS	SA (5)	A (4)	U (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	M	R
Ability to Communicate with Clients	19	6	0	0	0	4.76	1 st
Negotiation Power	17	8	0	0	0	4.68	2 nd
Team Work	15	10	0	0	0	4.60	3 rd
Writing of Reports	15	10	0	0	0	4.60	3 rd
Professional Ethics	13	12	0	0	0	4.52	5 th
Ability to Solve Problems	13	12	0	0	0	4.52	5 th
Critical Thinking	13	11	1	0	0	4.48	7 th
Ability to Manage Stress	10	14	0	0	0	4.24	8 th
Strength of Working Hours	8	12	4	1	0	4.08	9 th
Ability to Drive	5	15	5	1	0	4.08	9 th

Key: SA - Strongly Agree, A – Agree, U – Undecided, SD – Strongly Disagree, M – Mean, R - Rank

From this analysis, respondents ranked the ability to communicate with clients 1st amongst important real estate personal skill real estate need to possess. This could be attributed to the fact that communication could be regarded as the bedrock of all transactions in the real estate profession as everything centers on communication. The real estate profession entails dealing with different individuals (clients) from different facet of the world and for any surveyor to able to retain her clients good communication must ensue between the parties involved in the transaction, as different clients should be treated differently.

The 2nd important real estate personal skill required by the graduate of estate management is negotiation power. This is what real estate really entails as buying and selling of properties cannot be done without. It is therefore important for estate surveyors to possess good negotiation skill for any transaction that would be embarked upon, the values arrived at for any transaction should not be over-valued and not be under-valued as the consequences of this could be grave. In other words, real estate graduates seeking

employment in the real estate profession must ensure that their ability to negotiate is very high.

The 3rd important real estate personal skill identified by the respondents is the ability to write good reports and team work spirit. Hence, they are both ranked 3rd by the respondents. Writing of reports is absolutely inevitable in the real estate profession; these reports could either be valuation reports, proposals, letter of reminders amongst others. It is therefore very important that any real estate graduate seeking employment in the real estate firms must have the ability to write good reports which requires different formats and this depends on the company and also the type of report that is requested for. Also having a good team spirit is very important in the real estate profession as most of the time any work that ought to be done is usually done with the help of not just one person but a good number of individuals. This is why most real estate organizations divide their employees into various sections such as the valuation unit, facility management unit, agency unit, development unit, property management unit amongst others; this is to ensure that various individuals in various teams understand the nature of the work expected of them. Therefore, it is very important for real estate graduates to possess the team work spirit and the ability to write reports.

The next real estate personal skill important for employment in the real estate profession is the ability of graduates to solve problems and understand professional ethics. They were both ranked 5th by the respondents of estate firms. Problems could set in at any point in time; therefore employers are interested in graduates that could be able to solve any problems that the organization might have from time to time and not graduates that would compound them or have no solution to the problems that the organization might have. The graduates are also expected to understand the professional ethics of the real estate profession.

Critical thinking was ranked as the 7th important real estate personal skill real estate graduates should possess, the ability of graduates to manage stress was ranked as the 8th important real estate personal skill, the graduates strength of working hours and the ability to drive was ranked as the 9th real estate personal skill. Little or no consideration is given to the ability of the real estate graduate to drive and as such, the skills were is ranked 9th by the respondents.

6. Recommendation and Conclusion

The study revealed that most of the employers expect estate management graduates to possess both hard skills and soft skills and not just focus on either of the soft or hard skills. From the nineteen hard skills identified in the literature, the five most important skills expected by employers for graduate employment are Feasibility and Viability Studies, Applied Property and Facility Management, Land use and Resources Management, ICT in Estate Management, and

Real Estate Portfolio Management, while the three most important soft skills required from real estate graduates by employers are integrity, time management and punctuality.

Also, the study further indicated that employers also expect estate management graduates to possess very important real estate skills as they would be required in real estate firms. Out of the ten skills identified from literature, the ability to communicate with clients, negotiation power, team work, writing of reports, professional ethics and the ability to solve problems were the most important real estate skills employers of real estate graduates expect graduates to possess.

Finally, the study revealed that employees in the real estate profession expect estate management graduates to possess both soft skills and personal skills besides from the hard skills learnt in the formal training. The three most important soft skills are integrity, dedication and time management while the three important personal skills are diligence, initiative and honesty.

In conclusion, the academia in the real estate profession should engage undergraduates in more practical work which has regards to the real estate practice. The undergraduates should be encouraged to have practical working experiences during long holidays and not just during the six months or one year industrial training as the case may be that is mandatory in every tertiary institution, as this would help undergraduates to be aware of the several need and demands required in the real estate profession before graduation from the tertiary institution.

Employers and academia in the real estate profession need to collaborate and work together with a view to identifying areas in which the graduates are deficient and improve/enhance same and more importantly this would help the academia aware of the changes taking place in the real estate industry at every point in time and assist the academia to adjust their curriculum to meet the demands of the profession and at the end of the day prepare the undergraduate for employment.

Finally, it is important that the graduate of Estate Management be inculcated not only with soft skills and hard skills but also with real estate skills education training.

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