

**ADEQUATE COOPERATIVE EDUCATION IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS: A
PANACEA TO ACHIEVE SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DISCOVERY**

(A study of The Federal Polytechnic, Ilaro, Ogun State.)

AYO-BALOGUN, Atinuke. O

Atinuke.ayobalogun@federalpolyilaro.edu.ng

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Abstract

Cooperative education gives room for students to know how cooperative societies work and also develop students to become professional at the full range of skills needed to run cooperative business operations. The growing demand and popularity of cooperative education in recent years has led to the establishment of cooperative education in some of the higher institution for the delivery of specific curriculum in the institutions. Though, cooperative education is a challenge for Nigeria tertiary institutions since the content and learning experiences are yet to be fully integrated into the curriculum in some institutions of higher learning in the country. Three hundred and Fifty (350) copies of Questionnaire were administered on National Diploma 2 students of two departments (Department of Business Administration and Management and Public Administration) at the Federal Polytechnic, Ilaro to seek their opinions on the course. Their responses were analysed using Multinomial logistic regression technique. The result revealed that proper implementation of adequate cooperative education will enable Nigeria to have a sustainable economic control provided that government make available all the required instruments which will influence students toward teamwork. in higher institutions in Nigeria.

Keywords: cooperative education, institution, challenge, learning, adequate, economic and sustainable.

Introduction

Cooperative education seeks to provide the knowledge, skill and learning experiences to help students develop the skill associated with cooperative society. Cooperative skills could be referred to as working effectively with other members on an equal basis towards commonly held aims and objectives.

Cooperative education is a challenge for Nigeria tertiary institutions since the content and learning experiences are yet to be fully integrated into the curriculum in some institutions of higher learning in the country. But the growing demand and popularity of cooperative education in recent years has led to the establishment of cooperative education in some of the higher institution for the delivery of specific curriculum in the institutions. Higher education institution should have a strategy of an action plan for teaching and research in cooperative education. The real essence of cooperative education is to ensure the improvement of educational quality by equipping the young ones with basic skills that will make them functional and productive in the area of the study.

According to the National Cooperative Business Association (NCBA, 2007), people form cooperatives to exploit new markets and economic opportunities through self-help; provide themselves with services that would not have otherwise been available if provided individually; to strengthen bargaining power; maintain access to competitive markets; acquire needed products and services on a competitive basis; reduce costs; and manage risk.

Hence, cooperatives exist to serve the interests of their members. Essentially, then, a cooperative is an organisation formed by a group of people who meet voluntarily to fulfill mutual economic and social needs through running a democratically controlled enterprise such that the benefits achieved through cooperation are greater than the benefits achieved individually (McBride, 1986; Nilsson, 1997; Krivokapic-Skoko, 2002; ICA, 2005; NCBA, 2007).

Odubanjo 1964:16 cooperative education/training is a means of improving the knowledge, skills and attitude of cooperators in order to survive in the competitive market and to carry out their business activities in a distinctive cooperative way. Cooperative skill can also be learned through trial and error as cooperating is a natural human behaviour with psychological and emotional benefit. These skills include communication, meeting and decision making skill, how to deal with conflict, management skill, team working skill (Nathan Brown 2013). Other skills include negotiation and self-awareness and improvement.

Cooperative education is the one that bridges the gap of the employer, the student and the academic institution which everyone involved benefit from. The employer benefits from the latest theories and fresh ideas from the academic world, the institution gets practical input from the professional community, and the students receive hands-on experience in their chosen field of study.

Institutions systems have traditionally focused on providing basic skills and assuring students to secure jobs. However, enhancing youth development especially undergraduates in job and wealth creation is becoming increasingly important in the socio-economic development of both

developed and developing economies as they account for the significant percentage of the operators of the economy in future (Ogunyemi 2005, Kjeldsen and Nielson 2000). It is now recognised that cooperative education and training opportunities play a key role in cultivating future to empower cooperative business to a greater level of success (Henry 2003).

Despite the inadequate cooperative education in Nigeria tertiary institutions, cooperative society has come to provide cultural, social and economic benefits to all sectors across the country. Cooperative societies in Nigeria play very important roles in different sectors such as trade, agriculture, oil industry etc which contributes massively towards the economic development. Ability is a function of the level of education, skills attitude and experience of the individuals. Several studies have shown that the major crucial factors leading to cooperative societies failure or mismanagement in the country are the lack of cooperative skill by the management.

Objectives of Cooperative Education

Cooperative education is understood towards different ways of realising opportunities. This is what makes it distinctive in its focus on the realisation of opportunity.

Cooperative education seeks to provide students with the knowledge, skills and motivation to encourage mutual and self-help. Cooperative education according to Saunders College of Business Policy Manual is structured to achieve the following objectives.

- To expose students to the cooperative work environment.
- To give students the opportunity to assess career opportunities in the industry.
- To assist students in planning their remaining curriculum in order to achieve their career goals and objectives.
- To develop students' ability to analyse and integrate the academic cognitive knowledge in their major field of study with the experience gained from the co-op employment
- To improve performance and efficiency
- To become competent experts in all aspects of cooperative field
- To improve students' knowledge and skill in cooperative

Benefits of Co-operative Education for Students, Employers, and Institutions.

Students:

- Co-operative education combines academic study with alternating work terms. The employment is a practical application directed towards the student's academic course of study. The co-operative education student is paid for their work experience, which is supervised and evaluated by both the employer and the co-operative education institution.
- Co-operative Education gives students an opportunity to test skills learned in the classroom and to expand their knowledge through related work experience. This experience provides students with a chance to practice the latest theories and approaches in their particular discipline. Working in several industries gives them a competitive edge when going out into the workforce and the opportunity to earn for their education.

- By alternating work terms with study terms, students are able to test theoretical knowledge gained in the classroom. It allows the student to develop skills, explore career options and network with potential employers.
- Employers are a key partner in this process because their participation ensures that students receive a well-rounded education in both the classroom and the workforce. Businesses also benefit from the program. Students bring new ideas, fresh perspectives and enthusiasm to the workplace.
- Cooperative students can be used for a wide range of assignments including specific projects to standard duties and procedures. Cooperative employers have continuous access to diversely talented and highly motivated students. They can meet their short-term human resource needs by working on certain projects and give employers opportunity to assess student performance for long-term recruiting needs.

Employers:

- Co-op students are an ideal source of manpower to fill temporary human resource needs during staff leaves or for short-term projects.
- Co-op programs offer year-round access to students employing co-op students can reduce future recruiting costs --- co-op employment aids in the vetting of students for future hiring of motivated and skilled employees.
- Co-op students can help create a bridge between the employer and the student's academic institution, and employers can provide valuable feedback about course curricula and content.
- Employment of co-op students gives a supervisor the opportunity to mentor bright and enthusiastic students, as well as the chance to take part in the training of their future colleagues.

Institutions:

- Increased enrollment as cooperative programs attracts top quality, superior, well-motivated students.
- Cooperative students who enrich the general educational community of the campus upon returning from work terms.
- Well-qualified graduates who are prepared to assume a productive role in society.
- Enhanced visibility and reputation through interactions with the community.
- Feedback from employers on the quality and relevance of program curriculum.
- Information on current research and development in employer sectors, with opportunities for collaborative projects

Challenges of Cooperative Education in Nigeria

Despite the high potential and bright future for cooperative education, there are imminent challenges that cooperative education faces. However, cooperative has some problems relating to its principles and practice as implemented in various countries. For instance, there is no general

consensus on what constitutes a cooperative education. In most instances, cooperative education focuses on the student's personal growth, rather than institutional growth and career development. Wilson, et. al. (1996) contends that cooperative education must involve conceiving, defining and presenting cooperative education as "a curriculum model that links work and academics – a model based on sound learning theory".

Equally important is the importance for An innovation and continuous improvement in cooperative development that is determined by the amount of research in cooperative education, which is neglected in great extent. Research in cooperative matters at all levels – micro, meso and macro levels need to be emphasised for cooperative education to have a future.

Innovation and continuous improvement in cooperative development it's another way to determine the amount of research in cooperative education which has not be utilised to some extent. Cooperative research should cut across all level matters at all levels – micro, meso and macro levels need to be emphasised for cooperative education to have a future.

The development of curricula and teaching methodologies is another area that calls for a debate. Most of the accredited programmes offered by tertiary training institutions are accredited by national non-cooperative accreditation authorities – mostly under Ministries responsible for Education. Equally important, capacity building programmes conducted in the form of seminars, Tailor made Programmes, and workshops are not accredited. Thus, some form of accreditation of cooperative education through cooperative education accreditation bodies is required. In the USA, for example, there is National Commission for Cooperative Education (NCCE) that accredits and promotes cooperative education. There is also a global World Association for Cooperative Education (WACE) formed in 1991 through the transformation of the World Council and Assembly on Cooperative Education. Most of the Cooperative training institutions are faced with limited budget allocations from the government that limits their operations, initiation of development projects, and research.

Another challenge relates to the need of re-training teaching staff in cooperative education as some of those recruited into teaching staff do not necessarily have their earlier training from cooperative training institutions. Such retraining requires money, which institutions may not necessarily have. There are opportunities for training institutions to collaborate and network at regional and global levels. These collaborations could be in many fields ranging from exchange of teachers, students and materials. Furthermore, collaboration in cooperative research needs to be cultivated and nurtured.

Methodology

The method of analysis used in this study is Multinomial logistic regression technique. It is the linear regression analysis to conduct when the dependent variable is nominal with more than two levels. Thus it is an extension of logistic regression, which analyses dichotomous (Binary) dependents. Multinomial regression is used to describe data and to explain the relationship between one dependent nominal variable and one or more continuous level (interval or ratio scale) independent variables. Standard linear regression requires the dependent variable to be of

continuous level (interval or ratio) scale. Logistic regression jumps the gap by assuming that a dependent variable is a stochastic event. And the dependent variable describes the outcome of this stochastic event with a density function (a function of cumulated probabilities ranging 0 to 1).

Model Specification

Linear regression model of multinomial logistic regression is defined as;

$$\text{logit}(y = 1) = \log \left(\frac{p(y = 1)}{1 - (p = y)} \right) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 x_1 + \beta_2 x_2 + \dots \beta_p x_n \text{ for } n = 1, 2, \dots n$$

$$\text{logit}(y = 2) = \log \left(\frac{p(y = 2)}{1 - (p = 2)} \right) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 x_1 + \beta_2 x_2 + \dots \beta_p x_n \text{ for } n = 1, 2, \dots n$$

Data Presentation and analysis

Table 1.0

Model Fitting Information

Model	Model Fitting Criteria			Likelihood Ratio Tests		
	AIC	BIC	-2 Log Likelihood	Chi-Square	Df	Sig.
Intercept Only	617.869	633.301	609.869			
Final	400.558	601.170	296.558	313.312	48	.000

Table 1.2

Likelihood Ratio Tests

Effect	Model Fitting Criteria			Likelihood Ratio Tests		
	AIC of Reduced Model	BIC of Reduced Model	-2 Log Likelihood of Reduced Model	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Intercept	400.558	601.170	296.558 ^a	.000	0	.
Q4	407.466	546.352	335.466	38.908	16	.001
Q7	472.353	611.239	400.353	103.795	16	.000
Q14	428.311	567.196	356.311	59.753	16	.065

Source: Field Survey June 2017

Model fitting information (Table 1.0), **Model:** These indicate the parameters of the model for which the model fit is calculated. “Intercept only” describes a model that does not control for any predictor variables and simply fit an intercept to predict the outcome variable. “Final” describes a model that includes the specified predictor variables and has been arrived at through an iterative process that maximises the log likelihood of the outcome seen in the outcome variable

Chi-square is a log likelihood ratio of the model summary in which all the parameter coefficient are non-zero based on the chi-square statistic of 313.312 with a sig. value of 0.000 which is less than the critical value of 0.05%.

Based on this research finding, Cox and Snell R. Square gives 0.741 which indicates that about 74.1% of adequate Cooperate Education in Tertiary Institutions a remedy to sustainable economic discovery. However, the Nagelkerke R. Square represents the adjusted version of the former R. Square that adjusts the scale of the statistic to cover the full range of the 0 & 1. For this research, the Nagelkerke R. Square give rise to a value of 0.765 which indicates good model. Also implies that 76.5% of the variation in Adequate Cooperate Education in Tertiary Institutions is jointly explained by sustainable economic discovery (Cooperative learning places too much emphasis on developing student's social skills, Cooperative Education in tertiary institutions a solution to achieve sustainable economic delivery and the teaching strategies of cooperative education in the Polytechnic influence student's attitude towards team work). These estimates are used in evaluating logit model specified below;

$$\text{logit}(y = 1) = \log \left(\frac{p(y = 1)}{1 - (p = y)} \right) = \beta_0 + \beta_1x_1 + \beta_2x_2 + \beta_3x_3$$

Where:

X₁=Cooperative learning places too much emphasis on developing student's social skills.

X₂= Cooperative Education in tertiary institutions a solution to achieve sustainable economic delivery.

X₃= the teaching strategies of cooperative education in the Polytechnic influence student's attitude towards teamwork.

Hypothesis Result

Hypothesis one

H₀: Cooperative learning does not place much emphasis on developing student's social skills

H₁: Cooperative learning places much emphasis on developing student's social skills.

Hypothesis Two

H₀: Cooperative Education in tertiary institutions is not a solution to achieve sustainable economic delivery

H₁: Cooperative Education in tertiary institutions is a solution to achieve sustainable economic delivery.

Hypothesis Three

H₀: The teaching strategies of cooperative education in the Polytechnic does not influence students' attitude towards team work

H₁: The teaching strategies of cooperative education in the Polytechnic influence students' attitude towards team work

From the likelihood ratio test it revealed that the chi-square statistic values for three research hypothesis (Cooperative learning places too much emphasis on developing student's social skills, Cooperative Education in tertiary institutions a solution to achieve sustainable economic delivery and the teaching strategies of cooperative education in the Polytechnic influence student's attitude towards teamwork) are 38.908, 103.795 and 59.753 with significant values of 0.001, 0.000 and 0.065 respectively which shows that only one of the three hypothesis is not significant at 0.05% level of significant.

Discussions

Since the significant values of the first and second hypothesis are less than 0.05% based on the findings of this study, the null hypothesis was rejected which concluded that cooperative learning places much emphasis on developing student's social skills and Cooperative Education in tertiary institutions helps to achieve sustainable economic delivery. On the other hand, the result fails to reject the null hypothesis in hypothesis three which concluded that the teaching strategies of cooperative education in the Polytechnic does not influences student's attitude towards teamwork.

Conclusion

The major aim of this study is to find out how adequate cooperative education in tertiary institutions will help in achieving sustainable economic discovery. Conclusively, the strategies used in the teaching of cooperative education in the Polytechnic do not influence student's attitudes towards teamwork, it also places much emphasis on developing student's social skills and that Cooperative Education in tertiary institutions helps to achieve sustainable economic delivery. Based on the findings of this study, the present issue on sustainable economic

development clearly portrays that higher institutions need to bring cooperative education program in a new strategies via teaching skills in other to influence students' attitudes towards teamwork.

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