

Research Article

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BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES FACING STUDENT INDUSTRIAL WORK EXPERIENCE SCHEMEAS PERCEIVED BYLECTURERS IN KWARA STATE COLLEGES OF EDUCATION

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Abstract

This study examined the benefits and challenges facing student industrial work experience scheme as perceived by lecturers in Kwara State Colleges of Education. It adopted descriptive research design of survey type. All 84 lecturers in the Departments whose students go for SIWES constituted the study population. Census sampling technique was used to select all the three public Colleges of Education in Kwara State. Purposive sampling technique was also used to select all the 84 lecturers in the department whose students go for SIWES. Self-designed instrument titled 'Benefits and Challenges Facing Student Industrial Work Experience Scheme Questionnaire'(BCFSIWESQ) was used to collect data. The instrument was validated by three experts, subjected to a reliability test and found a reliability index of 0.82. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer research questions while t-test was used to test hypotheses. The study found among other things that SIWES provides students the latitude to acquire practical knowledge on what they have learnt theoretically in their respective institutions; affords students opportunity to acquire the training required to meet market demand and helps to foster development of entrepreneurial skills in students. The challenges facing SIWES included inadequate funds, ineffective supervision of students, nonchalant attitudes of students, insufficient time, poor motivation of lecturers who supervise students. It was recommended that Kwara State government should ensure adequate provision of fund, to enable managements of the institutions adequately provide all the needed facilities for SIWES and also properly motivate lecturers to effectively supervise students in a way that stated goals of the scheme would be realised.

Keywords: Student, Industrial, Work, Experience, Scheme

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INTRODUCTION

Colleges of Education are established for the purpose of producing resourceful teachers for the Basic Education in Nigeria. However, in the institutions, courses such as Business Education, Home Economics, Agricultural Education, Music Technical Education,and Computer Sciencewhich are practical-based require industrial experience, so as to complement what students are theoretically taught in the classroom; hence, this warranted the creation of Student Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES). According to Aende et al. (2022), in 1973, Federal Ministry of Commerce in conjunction with the Industrial Training Fund (ITF) established SIWES in Nigeria.

SIWES refers to a systemically designed exercise, aimed at acquainting one-the-learning students with hands-on experience of theoretical knowledge already gained in institutions, so as to as to acquire adequate skills to operate effectively in their fields. Okorie (2021) defined SIWES as a skill acquisition programme intended to intimate and prepare tertiary institution students for industrial work situation they meet after graduation. Emeasoba (2019) pointed out that Federal Government of Nigeria, in an attempt to bridge the existing gap between classroom theory-based and practical training, established Industrial Training Fund to ensure smooth running of Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES). Olawuyi (2016) defined SIWES as a students' exercise which aims at upholding standards and efficiency of human resources provided by tertiary institutions in Nigeria. It is a process of matching theoretical learning in institutions with practical experience in industries, needed to become skilled labour. Ahmad and Adamu (2019) opined that SIWES gives students the opportunity of acquiring practical-based work experience, so as to complement the theoretical knowledge which they have achieved in school within the time framework of their undergraduate academic tutelage. Anyaeneh andOchuba(2019) posited thatSIWES helps in acquainting students with new work approaches and know-how required in using facilities and equipment which are not provided in school but very key to performing certain job. Agbonghale and Iserameiya (2017) believed that SIWES is specifically designed to groom tertiary institution (Universities, Polytechnics, Colleges of Education, and Monotechnics) students for conversion from institution environment to the world of work.

According to Dennison (2016),SIWES affords students opportunity to have effective and smooth interaction with sometools that are not accessible within school system. Via the scheme, students are not only prepared for what they will meet in future but also familiar with the practical aspects of their fields of study. Eneh (2018) found that taking students through SIWES exposes them to industrial matters such as the relationship between employers and employees, conditions of work, and rules and regulations in industries. Hassan (2017) revealed that students who pass through SIWES in an industry while in higher institution stands the chance to be employed in that industry immediately after graduation, if possessed the needed skills to operate effectively. Anyaeneh and Ochuba (2019) found that through SIWES, students acquired planning and organising, risk management, filing, team work, time management, leadership, information technology, record keeping, sale and marketing skills. Usman and Tasmin (2015) showed that SIWES assists in cementing institution/industry partnership of undergraduate students undergoing courses in Technology, Engineering, Science and other professional courses, for the purpose of gaining required hands-on skills in addition to the theoretical knowledge acquired in the classroom. Alaba (2018) maintained that SIWES as a programme helps in making students to become not only self-employed but also employers of labour after graduation. Dada (2020) stated that the impacts on SIWES on students cannot be over-emphasised because it helps them in acquiring core skills in their various fields of learning, making them properly fit for employment in the world of work and making them fully equipped in their respective fields. Peter (2023) indicated that SIWES helps in reducing unemployment, curbing social vices among graduates of tertiary institutions and improving national income. Henry (2021) found that introduction of SIWES assists in empowering students with acquisition of skills that would make them employable and also stand qualified to be employers of labour.

Statement of the Problem

Student Industrial Work Experience Scheme as a compulsory course offered by College of Education students in practical-oriented Departments such as Agricultural Education, Home Economics, Business Education, Music, Computer Science, Fine and Applied Arts and Technical Education is a thoughtful idea meant to expose students to hands-on experience, in addition to the theoretical knowledge made available for them in institutions. However, it is surprising that many graduates of Colleges of Education, who had passed through SIWES did not possess the required skills to be employable or become self-employed in their areas of specialisation. This is worrisome and gives

researchers the conviction that SIWES in Colleges of Education in Kwara Stateseems not adequately achieve the purpose for which it is established but this could be due to the presence of some challenges.

Many researchers had conducted various studies related to this present study. For instance, Olawuyi (2016) conducted a study on the SIWES in Nigerian polytechnics: An explanatory analysis. Agbonghale and Iserameiya (2017) investigated influence of student industrial work experience scheme (SIWES) on students' acquisition of entrepreneurial skills in Nigerian public universities in Edo State. Emeasoba (2019) examined business educators' appraisal of relevance of Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) to Business Education programme in Universities in South East, Nigeria. Dada (2020) conducted a study on the impacts and challenges facing student industrial work experience scheme in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Peter(2023) researched into the student industrial work experience scheme: prospects and challenges faced in Nigerian polytechnics. However, none of the studies mentioned focused on benefits and challenges facing student industrial work experience scheme as perceived by lecturers in Kwara State Colleges of Education; hence, this is the academic lacuna filled by this study

Purpose of the Study

The study:

i. examined the benefits of industrial work experience scheme as perceived by lecturers in Kwara State Colleges of Education;
ii. investigated the challenges facing industrial work experience scheme as perceived by lecturers in Kwara State Colleges of Education;
iii. found out the difference in Kwara State Colleges of Education lecturers' perception on thebenefits of industrial work experience scheme based on gender; and
iv. investigated the difference in Kwara State Colleges of Education lecturers' perception on the challenges facing industrial work experience scheme based on gender.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised.

i. What are the benefits of industrial work experience scheme as perceived by lecturers in Kwara State Colleges of Education?
ii. What are the challenges facing industrial work experience scheme as perceived by lecturers in Kwara State Colleges of Education?

Research Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses were formulated.

Ho_1: There is no significantdifference in Kwara State Colleges of Education lecturers' perception on the benefits of industrial work experience scheme based on gender.

Ho_1: There is no significant difference in Kwara State Colleges of Education lecturers' perception on the challenges facing industrial work experience scheme based on gender.

Methodology

The study adopted descriptive research design of survey type.The population of the study comprised all 84 lecturers in all the Departments whose students go for SIWES in Kwara State Colleges of Education. Purposive sampling technique was used to select all the three public Colleges of Education (Kwara State College of Education, Ilorin; Kwara State College of Education, Lafiagi; and Kwara State College of Education, Oro) in the state. Census sampling technique was used to select all the 84 lecturers in the sampled Departments as shown in Table 1.Benefits and Challenges Facing Student Industrial Work Experience Scheme Questionnaire (BCFSIWESQ) was used to collect data for the study. Likert rating scale of Strongly Agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree and Strongly Disagree was used. The researchers decided to use Census sampling technique because all the lecturers in the Departments used were selected.

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The instrument was validated by three experts, tested for a reliability and found a reliability index of 0.82. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer research questions, while t-test was used to test hypotheses. The mean scores less than 2.50 were considered 'Disagree' while the mean scores from 2.50 and above were regarded as 'Agree'.

Table 1

Number of Lecturers in Each Department, Based on Institution

Department	**Number of lecturers in Kwara State College of Education, Ilorin**	**Number of lecturers in Kwara State College of Education, Lafiagi**	**Number of Lecturers in Kwara State College of Education, Oro**
Agricultural Education	06	06	07
Business Education	10	10	11
Computer	05	04	05
Fine and Applied Arts	02	Course not offered	02
Home Economics	05	04	02
Music	01	Course not offered	Course not offered
Technical Education	04	Course not offered	Course not offered
Total	**33**	**24**	**27**

Results

Research question 1: What are the benefits of industrial work experience scheme as perceived by lecturers in Kwara State Colleges of Education?

Table 2

Benefits of Industrial Work Experience Scheme as Perceived by Lecturers in Kwara State Colleges of Education

S/N	Items	$\bar{X}$	SD	Decision
1.	provides students the latitude to acquire practical knowledge on what they have learnt theoretically in their respective institutions	3.74	1.11	Agree
2.	affords students opportunity to acquire the training required to meet market demand	4.03	1.38	Agree
3.	helps to foster development of entrepreneurial skills in students	4.26	1.50	Agree
4.	acquaint students with the ethics of work places such as factories, industries, commercial enterprises, firms, etc	4.52	1.74	Agree
5.	assists in sharpening students' brains, thereby breeding innovations, creativities and initiatives	3.83	1.29	Agree
6.	is an effective strategy for making students self-employed after graduation	3.64	1.07	Agree
7.	is capable of reducing unemployment among graduates	3.02	.95	Agree
8.	serves as a channel for enhancing economic growth and development in Nigeria	4.17	1.36	Agree
9.	gives room for synergy between institutions and industries, an avenue for achieving a perfect match between what is produced by the first and what is needed by the latter	3.54	1.21	Agree
10.	assists in facilitating effective and maximum use of the locally produced raw materials	3.70	1.55	Agree

$\bar{X}$: 0.01-2.49 = Disagree; 2.50-5.00 = Agree

Table 2presentedthe benefits of industrial work experience scheme as perceived by lecturers in Kwara State Colleges of Education. As shown on the table, items 1 to 5 (provides students the latitude to acquire practical knowledge on what they have learnt theoretically in their respective institutions; affords students opportunity to acquire the training required to meet market demand; helps to foster development of entrepreneurial skills in students; acquaint students with the ethics of work places such as factories, industries, commercial enterprises, firms, etc; and assists in sharpening students' brains, thereby breeding innovations, creativities and initiatives) had $\bar{X}$: 3.74, 4.03, 4.26, 4.52 and

3.98 which were not less than 2.50; hence, considered agree. Also, items 6 to 10 (is an effective strategy for making students self-employed after graduation; is capable of reducing unemployment among graduates; serves as a channel for enhancing economic growth and development in Nigeria; gives room for synergy between institutions and industries, an avenue for achieving a perfect match between what is produced by the first and what is needed by the latter; and assists in facilitating effective and maximum use of the locally produced raw materials) had $\bar{X}$: 3.64, 3.02, 4.22, 3.54 and 3.72; therefore, considered agree.

Research question 2: What are the challenges facing industrial work experience scheme as perceived by lecturers in Kwara State Colleges of Education?

Table 3

Challenges Facing Industrial Work Experience Scheme as Perceived by Lecturers in Kwara State Colleges of Education

S/N	Items	$\bar{X}$	SD	Decision
1.	Inadequate funds	3.94	0.98	Agree
2.	Ineffective supervision of students	4.42	1.55	Agree
3.	Nonchalant attitudes of students	4.08	1.36	Agree
4.	Insufficient time	4.77	1.52	Agree
5.	Poor motivation of lecturers who supervise students	3.69	1.11	Agree
6.	Compromise in places where students are posted to acquire the required skills	3.95	1.34	Agree
7.	Denial of students access to the machines or equipment which would make them acquire the needed skills	2.97	0.75	Agree
8.	Lack of fund for students to make use of the knowledge and skills gained to start on their own after graduation	4.51	1.48	Agree

$\bar{X}$: 0.01-2.49 = Disagree; 2.50-5.00 = Agree

Table 3 presented the challenges facing industrial work experience scheme as perceived by lecturers in Kwara State Colleges of Education. As shown on the table, items 1 to 4 (inadequate fund, ineffective supervision, nonchalant attitudes of students and insufficient time) had $\bar{X}$: 3.94, 4.42, 4.08 and 4.77 which were not less than 2.50; hence, adjudged agree. In addition, item 5 to 8 (Poor motivation of lecturers who supervise students, Compromise in places where students are posted to acquire the required skills, Denial of students access to the machines or equipment which would make them acquire the needed skills and Lack of fund for students to make use of the knowledge and skills gained to start on their own after graduation) had$\bar{X}$: 3.69, 3.95, 2.97 and 4.51 which were not less than 2.50; hence, considered agree.

Hypotheses testing

Ho_1: There is no significant difference in Kwara State Colleges of Education lecturers' perception on the benefits of industrial work experience scheme based on gender.

Table 4

T-test Showing the Difference Significant Difference in Kwara State Colleges of Education Lecturers' Perception on the Benefits of Industrial Work Experience Scheme Based on Gender

Gender	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	t-cal.	p-value	Decision
Male	65	3.73	1.20			
				2.31	.074	Ho_1 Accepted
Female	19	3.97	1.44			

Table 4 showed calculated t-value (2.31), mean difference of 0.24 and the p-value (0.74) which is greater than the significance level (0.05). Hence, null hypothesis one was accepted. This shows that there was no significant difference in Kwara State Colleges of Education lecturers' perception on the benefits of industrial work experience scheme based on gender.

Ho_2: There is no significant difference in Kwara State Colleges of Education lecturers' perception on the challenges facing industrial work experience scheme based on gender.

[1]Kamaldeen Olohundare Sulyman [2]Bukola Rianat Asifat [3]Nafisat Onaopemipo Opeloye [4]Ismaila Kolawole Ishola

Table 5

T-test Showing the Difference Significant Difference in Kwara State Colleges of Education Lecturers' Perception on the Challenges Facing Industrial Work Experience Scheme Based on Gender

Gender	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	t-cal.	p-value	Decision
Male	65	3.87	1.20			
				2.17	.063	Ho_2 Accepted
Female	19	4.21	1.44			

Table 5 showed calculated t-value (2.17), mean difference of 0.34 and the p-value (0.63) which is greater than the significance level (0.05). Hence, null hypothesis two was accepted. This shows that there was no significant difference in Kwara State Colleges of Education lecturers' perception on the challenges facing industrial work experience scheme based on gender.

Discussions

The result showed that the benefits of SIWES as perceived by lecturers in Kwara State Colleges of Education were: provides students the latitude to acquire practical knowledge on what they have learnt theoretically in their respective institutions; affords students opportunity to acquire the training required to meet market demand; helps to foster development of entrepreneurial skills in students; acquaint students with the ethics of work places such as factories, industries, commercial enterprises, firms, etc.; assists in sharpening students' brains, thereby breeding innovations, creativities and initiatives; is an effective strategy for making students self-employed after graduation; is capable of reducing unemployment among graduates; serves as a channel for enhancing economic growth and development in Nigeria; gives room for synergy between institutions and industries, an avenue for achieving a perfect match between what is produced by the first and what is needed by the latter; and assists in facilitating effective and maximum use of the locally produced raw materials.This outcome could be as a result of the advantages inherent in SIWES which the lecturers were aware of. This finding supports the finding of Erin (2015) which revealed that SIWES assists to put into practice what that they are being taught theoretically; provides students with the opportunity of gathering industrial experience; gives them the chance to acquire knowledge on organizational culture; and makes them to develop the spirit of creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship. This finding agrees with the position of Ahmed and Adamu (2019) that through SIWES, students acquire the knowledge needed to become self-employed as well as employers of labour, students acquire the skills needed to fit into the labour market, students are open to opportunity to get part-time job before the completion of their programme and unemployment level in the country could be reduced.

The finding further showed that inadequate fund, ineffective supervision of students, nonchalant attitudes of students, insufficient time,poor motivation of lecturers who supervise students, compromise in places where students are posted to acquire the required skills, denial of students access to the machines or equipment which would make

them acquire the needed skills and lack of fund for students to make use of the knowledge and skills gained to start on their own after graduation were the challenges facing challenges facing industrial work experience scheme as perceived by lecturers in Kwara State Colleges of Education. The reason lecturers accepted all these challenges could be as a result of the firsthand information which they had about the SIWES. This finding is in tandem with the finding of Dada (2020) which revealed that the challenges facing student industrial work experience scheme in tertiary institutions in Nigeria were poor supervision of students, shortage of fund, poor attitude of students and in accessibility of students to machines and tools needed to acquire the needed skills.

The finding of the study revealed that there was no significant difference in Kwara State Colleges of Education lecturers' perception on the benefits of industrial work experience scheme based on gender. The reason for this result could be that both male and female lecturers saw that SIWES was beneficial to students. This finding is in agreement with the finding of Henry (2021) which revealed that there was no significant difference in the opinions of lecturers on the problems facing student industrial work experience scheme in polytechnics in Nigeria. The finding of corroborates the finding of Dada (2020)which showed that there was no significant difference in the lecturers' opinions on the benefits of student industrial work experience scheme in tertiary institutions in Nigeria based on gender.

The finding of the study showed that there was no significant difference in Kwara State Colleges of Education lecturers' perception on the challenges facing industrial work experience scheme based on gender. The reason for the finding could be as a result of the fact that both female and male lecturers participated in supervision of students on SIWES and they both had knowledge about the challenges facing the exercise. This finding is in consonance with the finding of Henry (2021) which revealed that there was no significant difference in the lecturers' opinions on challenges facing student industrial work experience scheme in polytechnics in South-west, Nigeria.

Conclusion

The study concluded that SIWES provides students the latitude to acquire practical knowledge on what they have learnt theoretically in their respective institutions; affords students opportunity to acquire the training required to meet market demand; helps to foster development of entrepreneurial skills in students; acquaint students with the ethics of work places such as factories, industries, commercial enterprises, firms, etc.; and assists in sharpening students' brains, thereby breeding innovations, creativities and initiatives. The challenges facing SIWES were inadequate fund, ineffective supervision of students, nonchalant attitudes of students, insufficient time, poor motivation of lecturers who supervise students, compromise in places where students are posted to acquire the required skills, denial of students access to the machines or equipment which would make them acquire the needed skills and lack of fund for students to make use of the knowledge and skills gained to start on their own after graduation. Gender did not cause significant difference in the lecturers' perception on benefits and challenges facing SIWES.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made:

i. Kwara State government should ensure adequate provision of fund,to enable managements of the institutions adequately provide all the needed facilities for SIWES and also properly motivate lecturers to effectively supervise students in a way that stated goals of the scheme would be realised.
ii. any student reported or found not regular at his or her place of placement should be serious punished by carrying-over the course and redo it in subsequent year, so as to serve as a deterrent to others and facilitate effective realisation of the SIWES goals
iii. government should make available for students, a loan facility with little or no interest which would enable them to start their enterprises after completing their SIWES, so as to reduce the rate of unemployment.
iv. managements of the industries, factories, companies, and the likes should help students, by exposing them to all the machines or tools which would make them acquire the needed practical skills and serious punishment should be given to any staff member who compromises with students, so as to achieve the goals of SIWES.

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