



# **Impacts of Students' Industrial Work Experience Scheme on Business Education Students' Professional Development in Rivers State**

**Dr. Amadi, E.A. & Agbai, G.A.**

**Department of Business Education  
Faculty of Education  
Rivers State University  
PMB 5080, Port Harcourt, Nigeria**

## **ABSTRACT**

This study examined the impact of students' industrial work experience scheme on Business Education students' professional development in Rivers State. The student industrial work experience scheme has help the students to enhance their practical performance in their future job, expose students to practical knowledge of their courses, widened students understanding generally about job and study and exposes student to practical knowledge of their course. Business Education students meets their stipulated objective through exposure of students to students industrial work experience scheme to enhance the occupational competencies of participations students, prepares them well for the world of work situation they are to meet after graduation, afford their institutions the opportunity to related training to the needs of the industry and helped in acquiring industrial skills and experience regarding their studies. Recommendations made amongst others includes that lectures should be schedules to supervise the students in their places of attachment, industrial training fund should make provision for industrial training placement for students, more time should be allocated for student industrial work experience scheme and above all, the students industrial work experience scheme programme should be looked into for an upward review hauling of weak areas to strengthen the scheme

**Keywords:** Impacts, Students' Industrial Work Experience Scheme, Business Education Students, Professional Development

## **INTRODUCTION**

Student Industrial Work Experience Scheme is one of the training required of every student in vocational or Business Education programme which was introduced in 1974 due to the inability of engineering and technology students in Nigeria universities and polytechnics to meet the practical aspects of their training. That is, the needs to enable students match their theoretical schools knowledge with the practical aspect of their training in industry. According to Ekpenyong (2011), one of the principles underlying any industrial work experience scheme for students in institutions of learning is the desire to marry the practical with the theoretical learning which characterizes conventional classroom situations with a view to striking a balance between theory and practice.

The researchers viewed that it is in realization of this that the industrial training fund when it was established, set out to study the extent to which the theoretical knowledge that students in Business Education and other allied fields in Nigerian institutions offering technology based courses related to the kind of work experience expected of them by employers. According to the law that established the Student Industrial Work Experience Scheme, the objectives of Student Industrial Work Experience Scheme among others include to: provide an avenue for students in institutions of higher learning to acquire industrial skills and experience in their approved course of study expose and prepare students for

industrial work situation they are likely to meet after the graduation expose students to work methods and techniques in handling equipment and machinery that may not be available in the educational institution. Provide students with opportunity to apply their knowledge in real work situation thereby bridging the gap between theory and practices. Enlist and strengthen employer's involvement in the entire educational process of preparing students for employment in industry and; prepare the student for a business career by merging their analytical power with self-reliance (Ukuweze, 2011).

Student Industrial Work Experience Scheme is a skill training programme that required of all students of aforementioned disciplines to participate in the programmes Credit units are assigned to Student Industrial Work Experience Scheme which is incorporated into the calculation of Gross Point Average and cumulative point average. Student Industrial Work Experience Scheme programme, provides students the opportunity to work in one or more areas of industry and this enables them to relate their theoretical knowledge to the practical work situation, which is a realistic way of determining the relevance of theory to practice. The duration of Student Industrial Work Experience Scheme for relevant categories of students is four months in polytechnic at the end of National Diploma I, four months in colleges of education at the end of Nigeria Certificate in Education II and six months in the universities at the end of 200 or 300 or 400 levels depending on the discipline (Oladran; Benjamin & Aiyelabowo, 2012). Student Industrial Work Experience Scheme as a training requirement needs to be assessed from time to time in order to determine whether it is meeting its stated objectives. In relation to this, the researchers tend to examine the relevance of Student Industrial Work Experience Scheme to Business Education students in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

Students' Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) plays significant role on Business Education Students as regards professional development without which transition from the class room to the world of work will be inadequate and haphazard. Without this training students will graduates as half baked. Students industrial work experience scheme is a skill development programme designed to prepare students of Nigerian tertiary institutions for transition from the college environment to work (Akerejola, 2008). Ugwuanyi and Ezema (2010) opined that work experience is an educational programmes in which students participate in work activities while attending school. This work experience programmes gives students the opportunity to be part of an actual work situation outside the classroom. The impact of students industrial work experience Scheme has thus, been a cause of concern to education and economic planners, particularly with respect to graduate employment. While some institutions and programmes permit students industrial work experience scheme for only three or six months, others go for up to one year. There have been several research literatures, in the area of student work experience and its impact on student development of fitness for the challenges of the job market. Ugwuanyi and Ezema (2010) noted that students industrial work experience plays a significant role in human resource development in Nigeria. Aderonke (2011) examined students industrial work experience and the dynamics of sustainable skills acquisition and utilization in Nigeria with a view to determining the viability or otherwise of government continuing investment in the scheme. Aderonke concluded that students industrial work experience is a good strategy for sustainable skill development and utilization in Nigeria. Under graduate career success, however, has typically been defined in terms of the likelihood of receiving a full time job offer after graduation. This is only achievable when there is evidence of employability skills acquisition from the programme. The present study measured the level of relevant and necessary employability skills acquired for full time job immediately after graduation. According to Mafe (2009), adequate exposure of student to the industrial work experience scheme will enhance their performance practically in their future work.

Business Education has been defined in several ways most of which highlight its vocational nature Pohan and Nwaokolo (2007) defined Business Education as that programme that prepares students for entry into job advancement within business and prepares them to have their own business affairs and function intelligently as consumers and citizens in business economy. Business Education like other manpower programme is usually designed with the necessary skills required to obtain gainful employment that is why Robert (2009) defined Business Education as a programme designed to develop special competences in business skills and techniques. The Business Education programme is a unique

programme of study that exposes the students to skills and knowledge about the present business world. Usoro in Akpan (2014) noted that, Business Education is an aspect of Vocational Education that deals with the acquisition of skills needed for business success. Business Education is education for and about business which involves the learning that relates businesses and their environment systematically. It is a career undertaken and focused on one or more cognate fields classified as education. Business education is an educational process or context which has its primary aim at preparing the individual for a role in enterprise such as employees, entrepreneurs, and employer or simply self-employed. Not only does business education prepare students to succeed in business, it also prepares students to become teachers of business subjects and courses (Akubudike & Fiberesima, 2010). This will not be possible if the students do not get practical knowledge of the business activities. So then, the need to expose the students to practical experiences in the business world, through the Students Industrial Work Experience Programme, is exigent to the Business Education programme.

### **CONCLUSION**

The researchers concluded that student industrial work experience scheme programme has actually met 60 percent of its objectives helping many students over the years till date to acquire industrial skills and experience, also the student now stands the chance of being called back to work after their graduation. Again the researchers concluded that some of the student faced by Business Education includes the challenges of getting firms that would not just absorb them in their core areas of competence, but pay them monthly allowance, also most organization don't allow the students to handle and operate most of the equipment, machine and instrument.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The researchers recommend the following;

1. Lectures should be schedule to supervise the students in their places of attachment.
2. Industrial Training Fund should make provision for Industrial Training placement for IT students
3. The department of Business Education should seek for partnership with companies to which students can be sent for Industrial Attachment.
4. More time should be allocated for student industrial work experience scheme. The three months period should be changed to six months.
5. Above all, the Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme programme should be looked into again for an upward review and overhauling of weak areas to strengthen the scheme.

### **REFERENCES**

- Akerejola (2008) Information and Guidelines for Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme [Http://www.iftnigeria.org/docs/siwes-op-guide.pdf](http://www.iftnigeria.org/docs/siwes-op-guide.pdf)
- Akpan, U. I. (2014). Business education curriculum and the new technologies in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. *Nigerian Journal of Business Education*, 2(1), 69-75.
- Akubudike, M., & Fiberesima D. (2010). Contemporary problems affecting training of Business Education students in River state: *African Journal of Education Research and Administration*, 3(4), 54-60.
- Aliyu, M.M. (2006). Business education in Nigeria: Trends and Issues. Ilorin Goshen Print media. *Nigerian Journal of Business Education*, 4(1), 2017-278.
- Mafe, O. A. T. (2009). Guide to Successful Participation in SIWES. Panaf Publishing Inc., Abuja and Lagos.
- Oladiran, S. O., Benjamin, O. O., & Aiyelabowo, O. P. (2012). Managing the challenges of Industrial Work Experience Scheme in developing workforce among the youths in South-West Nigeria.
- Pohan, G. & Nwaokolo, D. (2007). Basic ICT Skills and Keyboarding for Office Technology and Management. Accra: Kwesi Publisher.
- Robert, R.W. (2007). Vocational and practical arts education history, development and principles: Harper and Rows publisher.