

**Participation in Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme and Skills Acquisition
among Library and Information Science Students in Selected Universities in South-South,
Nigeria.**

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated the relationship between participation in students industrial work experience scheme and skills acquisition among Library and information science students in selected Universities in South-South, Nigeria. To accomplish the research purpose, two research questions were formulated to guide the study. Literature was reviewed according to the variables of the study. The correlational survey research design was adopted for this study and the population of the study was 296 (two hundred and ninety six students). This was also used as sample. Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme Skill Acquisition Questionnaire (SIWESSAQ) was the main instrument used for data collection. The reliability index obtained for the instrument was established through Cronbach Alpha Reliability Co-efficient method. The data collected were analyzed using simple regression analysis at 0.05 level of significance. The result of the analysis showed that information consultancy and information repackaging significantly related with Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme. It was concluded that, skills acquisition among Library students significantly predict student's industrial work experience. It was recommended among others that Students should take industrial training very seriously and ensure that they undergo the training in establishments where they stand to benefit from practical training.

Keywords: Participation, Students, skills acquisition, information consultancy skills and information repackaging skills

INTRODUCTION

Over the years universities have been producing graduates into the society with only theoretical knowledge without adequate practical skills in order to earn a living. Employers of labour are no longer interested in employing graduates with only theoretical knowledge rather they make a demand for graduates who possess high level of practical knowledge, skills acquisition and

hands-on experience that will help build up their organization (Ekeng & Inyang, 2019). As a result, graduates roam the streets in search of white-collar jobs. Some join armed robbery gangs and kidnapping business; some are internet fraudsters that cause bankruptcy to some individuals while others are nuisance in the society and to their neighborhood as well as their parents (Orija, 2019).

This should have been reduced if all graduates in Library and Information Science (LIS) and other disciplines practice the skills they acquired in school as well as the six months field experience otherwise known as Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES). However, library and information science students have been taught several skills both theoretical and practical before completion of their academic pursuit. Library and Information Science programme is designed to help undergraduates in the development of a wide range of professional skills in library and information services that can lead to self-employment in the library field like reprography skills and database management skills (Ekeng & Agboke, 2021).

Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) is planned supervised occupational experienced programme involving practical activities conducted outside the regular classroom and in a real industrial set-up. It is a skill development programme designed to expose and prepare students for real work they are likely to meet in their selected courses after graduation from the University. It is the accepted skills training programme which forms part of the approved minimum academic standards in the various degree programmes in all the Nigerian Universities. It is an effort to bridge the gap existing between theory and practice of engineering and technology, science, agriculture, medical, management and other professional educational programmes in Nigeria tertiary institutions. The aim of the SIWES is to provide avenue for students to have industrial exposure in their own disciplines during the course of their study. Such exposure will prepare them to fit more readily into industrial work after their academic career. It is a programme that uses the work environment to expose students to work methods and provide needed experience in handling tools, machinery and equipment that may not be available in educational institutions. Karunaratne and Perera (2015) are of the view that SIWES training provides students with significant benefits in career preparation and income making. It also strengthens their self-confidence and self-satisfaction in the lifelong learning process.

It was on this note that the federal government of Nigeria established SIWES otherwise known as internship. It was designed to provide practical experience to students passing through tertiary institutions. SIWES is a medium by which tertiary institutions students have opportunity to be trained in various skills to enhance self employment after their graduations from the University. The SIWES was initiated and designed by the Industrial Training Funds (ITF) in 1973. It is a programme that involves the students, the Universities and employers of labour. The scheme is funded by Federal Government and jointly coordinated by the Industrial Training Fund (ITF) and the National Universities Commission (NUC).

Education is the bedrock on which the individual life, nations and society is built. It moulds people's character and produce intellectual human capacity for national development. Universities on the other hand are the institutions where people pass through in order to acquire knowledge and skills that will enhanced their productivity and give them good life. University education is more than making individual to attain next level in long life but also a critical component of national

development worldwide. University provides high level of skills necessary for every labour market as well as training essential for potential teachers, doctors, nurses, civil servant and other professionals. It helps individual to develop the capacity for analytical skills that drive local and international economics. The development of analytical skills will lead to effective and efficient governance of the entire society.

The objective of Library and Information Science (LIS) department is to impact in-depth knowledge and skills acquisition to students that will lead them to become professionals with expertise in the field of library and information science. They are expected to acquire theoretical knowledge and practical skills to develop and enhance job performance. Library and Information Science (LIS) has relevant skills for prospective professionals are equipped with intellectual knowledge that make them competent in facing challenges in the society after graduation such include: organization of knowledge, information repackaging, information consultancy, indexing and abstracting, entrepreneurship information, database management, publishing and book trade, information reprography and many other course taught in the library school for self-development, professionalism as well as individual self-reliance in the field (Lawal, Edet, & Edem 2008).

Information consultancy skills are services where an individual render a professional expert advice to organization or institutions and can render special expertise in a technical field. Information repackaging skills is a systematic process of adding value to information services. It is a way of reformatting and synthesizing raw information from various sources for effective usage and dissemination to appropriate client. Baba, (2013) mentioned that, the act of beginning a company, arranging business deals and taking risks in order to make profit through the skills acquired in education is an important aspect of student's life. Library and information science students have been taught this handiwork which could help them become self-employed as well as professional in the discipline. However, it has been observed that, there is low utilization of these skills. Therefore, some students do not attend the training, some students show nonchalant attitude toward SIWESS training. Therefore, this study is intended to find out the relationship between participation in Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme and skills acquisition among library and information science students in Universities in South-South zone Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Every year many graduate from higher institutions roam the city streets searching for employment. Some of these graduates are considered incompetent by their potential employers as they cannot be trusted to handle some equipment or machines. SIWES programme is very relevant to human resources development because it exposes them beyond their usual environment. It exposes students to practical experiences and gets them to fit in well into their chosen careers. There is no doubt that the SIWES or industrial training conceived as an avenue for bridging the gap between theory and practice, is important for LIS undergraduate training in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. LIS departments in tertiary institutions in Nigeria have been involved in the scheme. However, in spite of the many years of existence of the SIWES and the continuing participation of LIS students in the scheme, doubts are still being expressed over the competencies and skill levels of graduates of LIS from tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

SIWES was meant to bridge the gap between theoretical learning in class and practical knowledge of students in higher institutions, and also expose them to new techniques and technology available in the industry for efficiency as well as self development of undergraduates. This was meant to add more skills to what is taught in library and information science departments in order to equip them with more practical knowledge and skills such as publishing/book trade skills, information consultancy skills, information repackaging skills, reprography skills, abstracting skills, database management and indexing skills, are not utilized effectively. This study was motivated by the fact that over the years the researcher has observed that LIS students do not utilize the SIWES available to them. There is no empirical evidence on the level of utilizations of SIWES and LIS skills acquired in South-South federal universities. As such this research work on SIWES and skills acquisition among library and information science students is intended to ascertain if the participation in industrial work experience schemes is imparting adequate and relevant knowledge and skills to students of library and information science in the south- south universities in Nigeria. .

Objectives

The purpose of this study was to find out the relationship between participation in student's Industrial Work Experience scheme and skills acquisition among Library and information science students in the Universities in south-south Zone Nigeria. Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. Determine the relationship between participation in student's industrial work experience scheme and information consultancy skills acquisition among LIS students
2. Examine the relationship between participation in student's industrial work experience scheme and information repackaging skills acquisition among LIS students

Research questions

The following research questions were provided as guide to the research.

1. How does participation in student's industrial work experience Scheme relate with information consultancy skill acquisition among LIS students?
2. To what extent does participation in student's industrial work experience Scheme relate with information repackaging skill acquisition among LIS students?

Methodology

The research design adopted for this study is correlational survey design and the population of the study was 296 (two hundred and ninety six students). The sampling techniques adopted for this study is purposive sampling technique and census. The instrument used for data collection was questionnaire. The instrument was developed by taking into consideration all the variables selected for the study. Each response in the questionnaire was given a degree of scores which ranges from 1 - 2 points as: Agreed and Disagreed. This instrument was validated by experts and the reliability was measured using reliability index obtained for the instrument was established through Cronbach Alpha Reliability Co-efficient method. The data collected were analyzed using simple regression analysis split-half reliability coefficient.

RESULTS

Research question one

How does participation in student's industrial work experience Scheme relate with information consultancy skills acquisition among LIS students?

The result of the analysis is presented in Table 1.

The simple regression analysis of the relationship between information consultancy skill acquisition on the student's industrial work experience produced an adjusted R^2 of .383. This indicated that the information consultancy skill acquisition accounted for 38.3% of the determinant student's industrial work experience in the study area. This finding is a critical indication that information consultancy skill acquisition is relatively high in the area of the study. The F-value of the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) obtained from the regression table was $F = 181.071$ and the sig. value of .000 (or $p < .05$) at the degree of freedom (df) 1 and 98. The implication of this result is that information consultancy skill acquisition is significant predictor of student's industrial work experience.

Table 1

Simple regression result of the relationship between participation in student's industrial work experience scheme and information consultancy skills acquisition among LIS

Model	R	R. square	Adjusted Square	R. Std error of the estimate	
1	.621(a)	.385	.383	2.45138	
Model	Sum of square	df	Mean square	F	p-value
Regression	1088.108	1	1088.108	181.071*	.000(a)
Residual	1736.683	289	6.009		
Total	2824.790	290			
Variables	Unstandardized regression weight B	Standardized regression weight	Beta weight	t	p-value
(Constant)	20.874	1.142		18.276	.000
information consultancy	.878	.065	.621	13.456	.000

* Significant at .05 level.

Research question two

To what extent does participation in student's industrial work experience Scheme relate with information repackaging skills acquisition among LIS students?

The independent variable in this research question is information repackaging skill acquisition; while the dependent variable is student's industrial work experience. Simple

regression analysis was employed to test this research question. The result of the analysis is presented in Table 2.

The simple regression analysis of the relationship between information repackaging skill acquisition on the student's industrial work experience produced an adjusted R^2 of .620. This indicated that the information repackaging skill acquisition accounted for 62.0 % of the determinant student's industrial work experience in the study area. This finding is a critical indication that information repackaging skill acquisition is relatively high in the area of the study. The F-value of the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) obtained from the regression table was $F = 474.410$ and the sig. value of .000 (or $p < .05$) at the degree of freedom (df) 1 and 98. The implication of this result is that information repackaging skill acquisition is a significant predictor of student's industrial work experience.

Table 2: Simple regression result of the relationship between participation in student's industrial work experience scheme and information repackaging skills acquisition among LIS

Model	R	R. square	Adjusted Square	R. Std error of the estimate	
1	.788(a)	.621	.620	1.92360	
Model	Sum of square	df	Mean square	F	p-value
Regression	1755.425	1	1755.425	474.410*	.000(a)
Residual	1069.365	289	3.700		
Total	2824.790	290			
Variables	Unstandardized regression weight B	Standardized regression weight	Beta weight	t	p-value
(Constant)	10.393	1.187		8.759	.000
information repackaging	1.467	.067	.788	21.781	.000

* Significant at .05 level.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The result of the first research question revealed that there is a significant relationship between information consultancy skill acquisition and student's industrial work experience. The result of the second research question showed that Information consultancy service skills acquisition training has a significant relationship with student's industrial work experience. The finding of this research question is in line with the study of Raimi (2015) who revealed that quality of service rendered in the library is a function of the knowledge and skills acquired by library and information science students. Since they are future librarians, they should be given adequate opportunities to acquire all round skills that would make them deliver effective services in their future endeavors.

Harrington and Dymarz (2016) also showed that University of Western Ontario carried out a research on consultants in Academic Libraries: challenges, renewing, and extending the dialogue. They focused on trends in academic libraries to hire consultants for internal crises, change management projects, strategic planning processes, outcomes assessment, evidence-based

decision making, information literacy in structure, and more. They continued by saying, although we hear informally about the use of consultants in academic libraries the practice has gone unexamined, they explained that historical and linguistic analysis of consultants in academic libraries using a critical framework for this research. They mentioned that a chronological history of consulting in libraries act as our literature review.

The result of the second research question revealed that information repackaging skill acquisition has a significant relationship with student's industrial work experience. The finding of this research question is in line with the view of Dongardive (2017) who noted that Information repackaging is a way of improving library services, particularly in this era of electronic information. Libraries provide repackaging information in the following ways; translation, literacy, scientific and technical information, economic information, selective dissemination of information etc. he noted that information repackaging involves selection, analyzing, and processing information with a view of communicating a message in a convenient and effective form to a target audience defined for that purpose. Saying it is very essential for information centers to have a thorough knowledge of the audience, the message and the message carrier.

Baba, (2013) also mentioned that, the act of beginning a company, arranging business deals and taking risks in order to make profit through the skills acquired in education is an important aspect of student's life. As such student's industrial work experience was established to enhance skills acquisition and promote self-employment in order to support the economy. Usman & Tasmin (2015) also found out that the scheme is yielding positive result by promoting creativity and poverty alleviation strategies, which will generate job creation avenues to Nigeria's teeming graduates. The acquired skills will unlock economic potentials of Nigerian citizens through innovation with the industry. It will also help individual to participate in economic and individual social life.

CONCLUSION

The scheme has exposed LIS students to new work methods and experience needed in handling equipments and facilities have not available in the school but needed to perform certain jobshave been gained. LIS students with the help of SIWES were able to bridge the gap between knowledge acquired in the school the relevent practical skills required in library. However, LIS students are faced with some challenges during their trainings which include; transportation problems and inability to secure relevant and related places of training. Hence, for LIS students to be professionally and competently trained in their course of studies, the initiators of the scheme needs to develop a better approach that will face out the challenges faced by the students during the course of their studies.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Students should take industrial training very seriously and ensure that they undergo the training in establishments where they stand to benefit.
2. Government and well meaning individuals should establish more companies and lucrative businesses, so that students can go for attachment, and acquire relevant skills in their areas of specialization.



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