BUSINESS EDUCATION AND INDUSTRIAL TRAINING FUND (ITF) COLLABORATION FOR MANPOWER TRAINING THROUGH STUDENTS INDUSTRIAL WORK EXPERIENCE SCHEME (SIWES)

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Abstract

Over the years, Industrial Training Fund (ITF) through her Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) has contributed immensely in manpower training in the country. This is mostly to students studying relevant courses that demand the training. The purpose of the study was to investigate into the collaboration of business education and ITF through their SIWES programme, regarding manpower training in the country. A survey research was used to carry out the study. A four point Likert-type rating scale was used to collect data for the study. The population comprises of all the students of tertiary institutions that are reading courses that enable them go for SIWES. A sample of 120 students was picked at random for the study from university, colleges of education and polytechnics. 40 of the respondents were randomly picked from each of the institutions. Based on the responses gathered, it was discovered that there is a significant relationship between business education and ITF and also the SIWES programme embarked upon by ITF has tremendous effects on the students of business education. This has hitherto helped them in extracting various avenues that can make them become even self-reliant. This has also helped in developing skilled manpower in the country. It is also recommended that SIWES, Seminars and workshops programmes should be strengthened in business education to educate undergraduates and lecturers on institutions and industries collaboration.

***Key words**: Training, Industrial Training Fund, Manpower, Collaboration, Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme and Business Education.*

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Introduction

Vocational business education is a course that focuses on the preparation, development and training of students on skills towards managing personal business as well as engaging in public and private organisations. Business education according to Okoye (2013) in Udegbunam, Igomu, Enenchukwu and gbinoghodua (2018) could be divided into two namely education for business and education about business. Education for business according to Okoye provides professional training in method of business making, techniques in business making, tactics to attract clients and make profits, scheming ideas for profitable venture, appropriate attitude and behaviour of a good business man. Education about business on the other hand prepares individual to know how and when to buy goods for profitable outcome (in-season and out season), where to obtain goods for better sales, where to situate business for continued existence, when to make best sales (increased overturn rate), when to make sales for increased profit, tricks in season forecast for good business making and self-conviction indicator about risk taking in business.

Business education as a vocational course is for preparing minds towards engaging into personal business (self-reliant) activities to end a fruitful living in the society. The goal of business education according Anao in Nwazor and udigbunam (2016) as quoted by undegbunam, Igomu, Enenchukwu of gigbinoghodua (2018) is the production of manpower that possesses the requisite knowledge, skills and attitudes for harnessing other resources and bring them into cooperative relationships yielding goods and services demanded by society for satisfaction of other wants and needs for national development.

According to Nwosu and Ojo (2014), manpower training is an activity which aims to improve and develop the attitudes, skills, and knowledge of employees in order to meet certain standards and organizational goal. The main goals of manpower training are: (i) to increase the average skill level of the force (ii) provide sufficient numbers of workers with the specialised skills necessary to meet future industrial needs.

Training motivates employees to work harder and to have a closer relationship between their efforts and performance. According to Nwachukwu as cited in Asaju (2008), a man who is trained has confidence in his ability to perform. He believes that he has control of his environment and is equipped to tolerate occasional

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disappointments, frustrations and inconveniences. Manpower training increases the employees' belief that he knows what is expected of him regarding the job, the knowledge of which enables him to originate ideas as how best to carry out the tasks required of the job. For an organization to achieve its objectives there must be a continuous review of manpower training to ensure their effectiveness throughout the organization. It is also believe that a vast majority of new employees have not been prepared to perform the job they may encounter in their organization irrespective of the technical or professional education level. Therefore, there is a need for SIWES programme which introduce students at various level in tertiary institutions to embark on practical aspects of their classroom theory. According to Aroge (2012) there is the need for training and retraining of the workers to perform new jobs and adapt to changing technology. Training needs arise mainly from the problems that lack of training may have created. It is also needed because of transfer, promotion and changes in work schedules.

Business education and Industrial Training Fund (ITF) collaboration is the joint efforts between academic institution and the industry to create a smooth molding ground for students to acquire skills and knowledge of practical to world of work. It is against this background that Oviawe, Uwameiye & Uddin (2017) in Udegbunam, Igomu, Enenchukwu Igbinoghodua (2018) remarked that, school industry collaboration is the partnership between formal education and industrial sector to create an enabling environment for students to acquire hands on experience knowledge, skills and appropriate attitude to world of work. Within communities are industries that have a highly skilled workforce of production, functional facilities and raw materials that could be very useful in the practical training of business education students. These industries through collaboration with schools could be made to meaningfully contribute to the training of students in appropriate skills that relate to their areas of interest.

Jim (2017) in Udegbunam, Igomu, Enenchukwu and Igbinoghodua (2018) noted available programmes in business education that needed school-industry collaboration to include SIWES, organization of school-industry liaison offices, skill acquisition programmes for students, special skills training/retraining for lecturers, curriculum planning and review, research collaboration and agents, scholarship to technical education students and among others.

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Asele (2013), adding value to all citizens of Nigeria, specially the youths. For students of the tertiary institutions, the ITF helps in their smooth transition from school to work place by exposing them to the practical aspect of the theories learnt in the formal setting. This is done through the Student Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) which is a training programme designed to expose and prepare students of universities, polytechnics and colleges of education for the industrial work situation they would likely meet after graduation. Asele (2013) also disclosed that the Industrial Training Fund initiated SIWES in 1973 and it commenced in 1974 as part of the vision of the fund to expose students to on-the-job experiences while still in school. Such exposure would prepare them to better fit into the industrial work experience after graduation.

No wonder, Agboola and Ademiluyi in Ademiluyi and Ademiluyi (2018) remarked, evidence abounds that Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme has had salutary effect on student personality, comportment, knowledge and experience. They further stated that SIWES represents the students' first real exposure to the real nature of his career, with all its intricacies, detours, opportunities and challenges. The training received during the internship is expected to enable the student have real life experience which can make him a better learner and a more seasoned professional.

Oriazowanlan and Umunna (2012), Bupo and Okiridu (2017) and Shaibu (2010) explained the objectives of the Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) as reported in Information Guidelines include:To provide opportunity for students to supplement the theoretical learning with practical activities in their various disciplines;To expose and prepare students for industrial work situations they are likely to meet after their graduation;To expose students to work methods and experiences in handling equipment and machinery that may not be available in their various educational institutions;To enlist and strengthen employees' involvement in the entire educational process of preparing students for employment in industry; and assessing the pedigree of students available for job opportunities in the future;To prepare the students for a business career by merging their analytical power with self-reliance thereby bridging the gap between theory and practice as well as making transition from school to work easier.

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Statement of the Problem

The SIWES programme have great impact on manpower training as compulsory course of study in business education department and other related courses in Nigeria. It is expected that Business Education undergraduates would acquire relevant manpower training (skills) that will enable them became successful worker after graduation. But, a wide gap seem to exist in the expectations and perceptions of academic institutions and the labour markets this may be as a result of poor understanding of the indices of collaboration. Uwalaka in Iwuoha and Peters (2019) noted that many graduate from Nigerian institutions are not qualified for employment in the world of work. This is linked to lack of practical experiences caused by insufficient facilities as well as poor communication between school and industries. This trend creates doubts as to whether business education graduates possess/acquire required training to successfully engage in the world of work. Thus, this study examine, the extend Business education and Industrial Training Fund (ITF) collaboration for manpower training through Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) towards manpower development.

Research Questions

The following questions are posed to guide the study:

1. What is the relationship between business education and ITF SIWES programme?
2. What is the influence of SIWES on business education students as it relates to manpower training?

Method

A survey design was used in the study. The study looked into the opinions/views of students concerning Business Education and Industrial Training Fund collaboration for manpower training through students industrial work experience scheme. The population for the study included all the students in tertiary institutions who are qualified by the virtue of their courses to embark on SIWES programme. The sample of the study included 120 students picked from University, colleges of education and polytechnics. This shows that forty (40) of the students from each of these institutions were picked at random and used as respondents for the study. To answer the research questions, a structural questionnaire comprising seven (7) items was used for data collection. The population of the study consists of 120 students drawn

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from Federal College of Education, Pankshin, Plateau State Polytechnic, BarkinLadi and University of Jos in Plateau State. 40 of the respondents were picked at random from these institutions as samples of the study.

This is a survey research and the questionnaire is a four point likert scale used for collection of data for the study. The likert scale consists of the points as follows: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Strongly Disagree (SD) and Disagree (D), representing 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. A mean score of 2.5 and above is upheld and accepted, while a mean score of below 2.5 is rejected.

The items in the likert scale below were extracted from the research questions that guide the study. The likert scale is as shown below.

Table 1: *Opinion of Business Education undergraduate students on Business Education and Industrial Training Fund collaboration.*

S/N	Items	SA 4	A 3	SDD 2	DSD 1	Mean
1	Business education has practical courses that need training.	80	15	15	10	3.37
2	Collaboration of business education and ITF yields good result and motivates performance.	70	15	20	15	3.16
3	Business education has relationship with SIWES programme.	60	20	25	15	3.04
4	SIWES programme motivates students to study harder and extract ideas for self-reliance.	40	30	10	40	2.58
5	Business education students benefits from SIWES programme.	50	30	15	25	2.87
6	SIWES programme has effects on business education students.	30	30	30	30	2.50
7	Business education and SIWES programme expose students to various fields of office work as they put theories into practical.	55	30	20	15	3.04

Discussion of Findings

The mean responses of the respondents were from 2.5 and above and were all upheld and accepted. In research question 1, there is a significant relationship between business education and ITF SIWES programme. In research question 2, the mean scores were also from 2.5 and above and were all upheld and accepted. This shows that SIWES programme has effect on business education students as it relates to manpower training. From all indications, the SIWES programme embarked upon by the students of business education help in exposing the students to various spheres of

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office work. This also expose them to managerial skills that can enable them become self-reliant and put extra efforts in their work places, or even establishing their businesses using the managerial skills at their disposal.

Conclusion

The study has revealed that there is a significant relationship between business education and ITF. The presence and involvement of SIWES in seeing to students' industrial attachment is quite commendable. It has great effect and impact on the students. This is because it makes the students of business education to have a wider exposure on the managerial skills and requisite knowledge and ideas expected. The collaboration has helped in widening the scope of manpower training in the country and has equally motivated the students and also staff in enhancing productivity in the country. This has corroborated with the opinion of Aroge (2012) who stated that training and development help to ensure that organizational members possess the knowledge and skills they need to perform their jobs effectively, take on new responsibilities and adapt to changing conditions, which has help in building skilled manpower to man various sectors of Nigerian economy.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are proffered for business education and Industrial Training Fund (ITF):

1) Business education and Industrial Training Fund (ITF) collaboration should be strengthened, thus, increasing manpower training through practical skills in industries.
2) SIWES, Seminars and workshops programmes should be strengthened in business education to educate undergraduates and lectures on institutions and industries collaboration.

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