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AN EVALUATION OF INDUSTRIAL TRAINING SCHEME AS A CORRELATE OF BUSINESS EDUCATION STUDENT PERFORMANCE IN THEIR LABOR MARKET: A CASE STUDY OF COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, AFAHA NSIT, AKWA IBOM STATE

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ABSTRACT

The study evaluated the industrial training scheme as a correlate of business education student performance in their labor market: a case study of college of education, Afaha Nsit, Akwa Ibom State. In carrying out the study, correlation survey design was adopted. The study was carried out in Akwa Ibom State. The targeted population for the study comprised all Business Education Students in the college. A simple random sampling technique was used to select a total of 50 respondents used for the study. The instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled, "Industrial Training Scheme and Business Education student Performance in Labor Market Questionnaire (ITSBESPLMQ)". Face and content validation of the instrument was carried out by an expert in test, measurement, and evaluation in order to ensure that the instrument has the accuracy, appropriateness, and completeness for the study under consideration. The reliability coefficient obtained was 0.83, and this was high enough to justify the use of the instrument. The researcher subjected the data generated for this study to appropriate statistical technique such descriptive statistics to answer research questions and regression analysis to test the hypothesis.

KEYWORDS: Industrial Training Scheme, Correlation, Business Education, Labor Market, College of Education, Afaha Nsit, Akwa Ibom State

INTRODUCTION

The rising global emphasis on graduate employability has intensified discussions around the quality and relevance of higher education, particularly in the context of business education. As economies become increasingly competitive and dynamic, employers demand graduates who are not only academically qualified but also equipped with practical and industry-relevant skills. In response, higher education institutions have incorporated various experiential learning strategies, among which Industrial Training Schemes (ITS) are prominent. These schemes are designed to bridge the gap between academic theory and real-world practice, providing students with hands-on experience in professional environments. In countries like Nigeria, Industrial Training is often mandatory for business students, aiming to enhance their readiness for labor market participation.

Despite the growing integration of Industrial Training into business education curricula, questions remain regarding its actual impact on student performance post-graduation. Several scholars have highlighted discrepancies between the competencies developed through training schemes and those expected by employers. While training is assumed to improve employability, there is limited empirical evidence evaluating how participation in Industrial Training correlates with business students' success in the labor market (Ogundeko & Sholuade, 2023). This gap suggests a need for systematic evaluation of the effectiveness of Industrial Training Schemes, particularly in

relation to graduate performance indicators such as job acquisition, task competence, and workplace adaptability.

This study therefore seeks to evaluate Industrial Training Schemes as a correlating factor of business student performance in the labor market. By assessing the extent to which participation in these schemes influences graduates' employability and workplace performance, the research aims to provide critical insights for educators, policymakers, and industry stakeholders. The findings are expected to inform future curriculum revisions, improve industrial partnership models, and enhance student preparedness for evolving labor market demands.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Many Business Education graduates continue to face challenges in securing employment despite participating in the Industrial Training (IT) scheme. There is growing concern that the skills acquired during IT may not adequately match the current demands of the labor market. Employers often report gaps in practical competencies, workplace readiness, and professional conduct among graduating students. Variations in placement quality, supervision, and exposure to relevant industrial tasks further complicate the value of the programme. These challenges create uncertainty about the extent to which the Industrial Training scheme correlates with the labor market performance of Business Education students.

OBJECTIVES

1. To find out the extent of business student performance in Labor Market
2. To examine the effect of industrial training schemes on business students' performance in labor market.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What is the extent of business student performance in Labor Market?
2. What is effect of industrial training schemes on business students' performance in labour market?

HYPOTHESIS

1. There is no significant effect of industrial training schemes on business students' performance in labor market

LITERATURE REVIEW

Concept of Industrial Training Scheme

The Industrial Training Scheme (ITS), particularly in Nigeria, is a structured program designed to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge acquired in academic institutions and practical skills required in the industry. A prominent example is the Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES), established in 1973 by the Industrial Training Fund (ITF) (Madu et al. 2023). SIWES is a compulsory program for students in specialized fields such as engineering, technology, applied sciences, and business, aiming to provide them with real-world experience in their respective industries before graduation. This initiative was introduced in response to concerns from employers about the lack of practical skills among graduates, ensuring that students are better prepared for the workforce upon completing their studies.

Tunde (2018) explained that the primary objective of SIWES is to expose students to industrial work environments, allowing them to apply theoretical knowledge in practical settings.

This exposure helps students understand workplace dynamics, develop technical competencies, and gain hands-on experience with equipment and processes that may not be available in their academic institutions (Madu et al. 2023). Furthermore, SIWES fosters collaboration between educational institutions and industries, promoting a mutual understanding of the skills and competencies required in the job market. By integrating practical training into the academic curriculum, SIWES enhances the employability of graduates and contributes to the development of a skilled workforce in Nigeria.

In addition to skill development, SIWES serves as a platform for students to build professional networks, understand organizational cultures, and develop soft skills such as communication, teamwork, and problem-solving. These experiences are invaluable in preparing students for the challenges of the modern workplace. Moreover, the program encourages industries to participate actively in the educational process, providing feedback to institutions on curriculum relevance and helping to shape training programs that meet current industry needs. Through SIWES, the gap between academia and industry is narrowed, leading to a more competent and industry-ready graduate population.

CONCEPT OF BUSINESS STUDENT PERFORMANCE

Business student performance refers to the measurable outcomes that reflect a student's understanding and mastery of business-related academic content. It is commonly assessed using Grade Point Average (GPA), test scores, coursework grades, and final examination results. According to Adekunle and Tafamel (2016), business student performance is "the degree to which a student has achieved the intended learning outcomes of a business education program, typically evidenced through academic results" This view is reinforced by Ogunleye et al. (2020), who define it as "the observable and quantifiable output of learning efforts in business education, captured mainly through CGPA and examinations.

Sarwar and Sarwar (2012) describe it as "a composite measure of a student's academic achievements, particularly in business courses, that reflects their ability to apply economic and management principles effectively". Similarly, Nguyen and Nguyen (2020) note that performance in business programs involves "the acquisition and demonstration of business knowledge, often evaluated through continuous assessments and final grades".

From an institutional assessment standpoint, Luthans et al. (2022) define academic performance as "students' cumulative demonstration of course-related knowledge and skills, often measured by GPA, project quality, and exam results in business disciplines". In the same vein, Afolabi et al. (2021) define business student performance as "the outcome of formal academic assessments aimed at measuring a student's learning progress and intellectual engagement within the business curriculum". These definitions highlight the centrality of performance as a standardized metric for tracking academic progress in business education.

TYPES OF INDUSTRIAL TRAINING SCHEMES

Industrial Training Schemes are structured programs designed to equip students, interns, and trainees with practical experience in real-world workplaces. These schemes vary in structure and purpose, depending on the educational institution, industry requirements, and learner availability. Below are the major types of industrial training schemes:

- **Sandwich Industrial Training Scheme**

This type involves alternating periods of academic study and industrial work experience. It is designed to give students practical exposure at intervals throughout their course duration. Typically, students spend a semester in school and the next in an industrial setting. It helps them blend theoretical knowledge with real-world application. It also allows for continuous learning and improvement across both settings. Many technical institutions favor this method due to its balanced approach.

- **Block Release Scheme**

The block release scheme allows students or employees to leave their normal academic or work schedule for a block period, often lasting weeks or months, solely for training. During this time, trainees are fully immersed in the industrial environment. It is intensive and uninterrupted, giving enough time for skill mastery. This format is common in technical colleges and polytechnics. It promotes focus and depth of learning. After the block period, individuals return to their institutions or jobs.

- **Day Release Scheme**

Here, students or workers are released one or two days per week for training while spending the remaining days at school or work. This scheme maintains a steady academic or work routine. It is ideal when continuity is essential in both training and regular duties. It also ensures consistent exposure to both theory and practice weekly. Industries that operate on fixed schedules often prefer this. It encourages better time management and discipline among trainees.

- **Part-Time Training Scheme**

This type is specifically designed for individuals who cannot afford full-time training. It usually takes place during evenings or weekends. The schedule accommodates working-class individuals or students with other commitments. Though slower than full-time schemes, it provides flexibility. It allows people to earn and learn simultaneously. It is commonly offered in continuing education programs or night schools. Practical exposure may be limited but is tailored to available time.

- **Vocational Apprenticeship Scheme**

This is a traditional form of training where learners, known as apprentices, work directly under experienced professionals for an extended period. Apprentices learn by doing, gradually gaining skills and responsibilities. This scheme is often used in technical trades like carpentry, welding, and electrical work. It focuses on hands-on learning over several months or years. Apprentices receive mentorship and real-time feedback. Certification may follow after successful completion and assessment.

- **On-the-Job Training (OJT)**

OJT involves learning practical skills while performing actual job duties in the workplace. The trainee is placed under a supervisor or skilled worker. This method emphasizes immediate

application of skills in a real environment. It's widely used across many industries including retail, healthcare, and IT. It is cost-effective and encourages fast learning. However, its success heavily depends on the quality of supervision and workplace culture.

- **Institution-Based Industrial Training**

This form of training is conducted within an educational or vocational institution using industry-grade equipment and settings. It simulates the industrial environment to prepare students before actual placement. It is common in technical colleges with well-equipped workshops and labs. Students learn procedures, equipment handling, and safety protocols. The scheme bridges the gap for students who have not yet secured external placements. It also builds confidence before entering the workforce.

EFFECT OF INDUSTRIAL TRAINING SCHEMES ON BUSINESS STUDENTS PERFORMANCE

Industrial Training Schemes (ITS) are structured experiences that expose business students to practical work environments. These schemes bridge academic knowledge with industrial relevance, significantly influencing the overall performance and career readiness of students. Below are key effects of ITS on business students' academic and professional growth:

- **Enhancement of Practical Skills**

Industrial training enhances business students' technical competencies by placing them in real job environments where they perform tasks aligned with their academic discipline. This exposure develops their ability to translate theory into practice, giving them a strong functional grasp of core business operations.

- **Improved Academic Performance**

The knowledge gained during training improves students' understanding of theoretical concepts, leading to better academic outcomes. Students return from industrial placements with broader perspectives and are able to contextualize classroom content, often resulting in improved grades and academic participation (Ademiluyi & Ademiluyi, 2018).

- **Development of Soft Skills**

Business students also develop essential soft skills such as time management, teamwork, and communication through direct interaction in industrial settings. These competencies, which are often not fully taught in classrooms, are crucial to success in professional environments.

- **Increased Employability**

Industrial training boosts employability by equipping students with practical industry experiences and technical proficiencies that meet employer demands. This real-world readiness makes them more competitive in job placements and reduces onboarding time for organizations. (Clement et al. 2022).

- **Enhanced Career Clarity and Motivation**

Exposure to actual workplace structures and challenges helps business students clarify their career interests. Many report increased motivation and clearer professional goals following their industrial training experience, which contributes to better performance in their final academic years (Ariyo et al., 2020).

EXTENT OF BUSINESS STUDENT PERFORMANCE IN THEIR LABOR MARKET

The performance of business students in the labor market is a critical indicator of the effectiveness of higher education programs in preparing graduates for real-world challenges. Recent studies have highlighted a growing concern regarding the employability of business graduates, particularly in developing countries. For instance, Ogundeko and Sholuade (2023) observed that Nigerian university graduates, especially those from accounting programs, often lack essential employable skills required in complex business environments, suggesting a significant skills gap between academic training and industry expectations.

Employers' assessments further corroborate this skills mismatch. Agboola (2022) found that employers perceive a deficiency in graduates' utilization of employability skills, which adversely affects organizational growth and sustainable development in Nigeria. This indicates that while graduates may possess theoretical knowledge, their practical application and soft skills are often inadequate for the demands of the labor market.

Moreover, the curriculum content and instructional methods employed in business education programs have been scrutinized for their role in this performance gap. Ore (2023) reported that the business education curriculum in Nigerian public universities does not sufficiently equip students with the soft skills necessary to excel in the workplace. The study recommends integrating workplace job requirements into the curriculum to enhance the employability skills of business education students.

International perspectives also shed light on this issue. Hossain et al. (2020) conducted a study using Partial Least Squares (PLS) and found that various factors, including skills and social mobility, significantly affect business graduates' employability. The research emphasizes the need for educational institutions to focus on comprehensive skill development to improve graduates' performance in the labor market.

The extent of business students' performance in the labor market is influenced by a combination of inadequate practical skills, curriculum deficiencies, and a lack of alignment between academic training and industry needs. Addressing these challenges requires a concerted effort from educational institutions to revamp curricula, incorporate practical skill development, and foster stronger collaborations with industry stakeholders to ensure that graduates are well-prepared for the dynamic demands of the labor market.

METHODOLOGY

In carrying out the study, correlation survey design was adopted. The study was carried out in Akwa Ibom State. The targeted population for the study comprised all Business Education Students in the college. A simple random sampling technique was used to select a total of 50 respondents used for the study. The instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled, "Industrial Training Scheme and Business Education student Performance in Labor Market Questionnaire (ITSBESPLMQ)". Face and content validation of the instrument was carried out by an expert in test, measurement, and evaluation in order to ensure that the instrument has the accuracy, appropriateness, and completeness for the study under consideration. The reliability coefficient obtained was 0.83, and this was high enough to justify the use of the instrument. The researcher subjected the data generated for this study to appropriate statistical technique such descriptive statistics to answer research questions and regression analysis to test the hypothesis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS.

Research questions 1:

The research question sought to find out the extent of business student performance in labor market. To answer the research percentage analysis was performed on the data, (see table 1).

Table 1:

Percentage analysis of the extent of business student performance in labor market.

Extent	Frequency	Percentage
VHE	27	54
HE	23	46
TOTAL	**50**	**100%**

****The highest percentage frequency**

***The least percentage frequency**

SOURCE: Field survey

The above table 1 presents the result of the descriptive analysis of the extent of business student performance in Labor Market. From the result of the data analysis, it was observed that the highest percentage (54%) of the respondents affirmed that the extent of business students performance in labor market VERY HIGH (VHE), while the least percentage (46%) of the respondents affirmed that the extent is HIGH (HE). This finding agrees with the opinion of Ariyo et al., (2020) who stated that exposure to actual workplace structures and challenges helps business students clarify their career interests. Many report increased motivation and clearer professional goals following their industrial training experience, which contributes to better performance in their final academic years.

Hypothesis one

The null hypothesis states that there is significant effect of industrial training schemes on business student's performance in labor market. In order to test the hypothesis simple regression was used to analyse the data, (see table 2).

TABLE 2

Simple regression of industrial training schemes on business student's performance in labour market.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. error of the Estimate	R Square Change
1	0.96a	0.91	0.904	0.51	0.96

***Significant at 0.05 level; df =48; N =50; critical r–value = 0.279**

The table shows that the calculated R-value 0.96 was greater than the critical R-value of 0.279 at 0.5 alpha level with 48 degree of freedom. The R-square value of 0.96 predicts 96% of relationship between industrial training schemes and business student's performance. This rate of percentage is highly positive and therefore means that there is significant joint influence of industrial training schemes and business student's performance. The finding agrees with the Clement et al. (2022), who in their statement said that industrial training boosts employability by equipping students with practical industry experiences and technical proficiencies that meet employer demands. This real-world readiness makes them more competitive in job placements and reduces onboarding time for organizations.

CONCLUSION

The evaluation of Industrial Training Schemes as a correlating factor of business student performance in the labor market reveals a significant connection between structured industry exposure and graduate employability. The findings suggest that participation in industrial training enhances students' practical skills, workplace adaptability, and job readiness, thereby improving their overall labor market outcomes. To maximize these benefits, institutions must ensure the relevance and quality of training programs through stronger partnerships with industry stakeholders. Such alignment will not only enhance the effectiveness of industrial training but also contribute meaningfully to the production of competent, work-ready graduates who meet the evolving demands of the labor market.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Educational institutions should review and continuously update the structure and content of Industrial Training Schemes to reflect current labor market demands.
- There should be stronger partnerships between universities, polytechnics, and corporate organizations to facilitate better placement opportunities, mentorship, and feedback mechanisms during industrial training.
- Institutions should establish standardized tools for assessing the effectiveness of industrial training programs.

- Supervisors, both in schools and host organizations, should provide continuous mentoring and performance reviews for students during their industrial training.

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