

# Relevance of Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme on Business Education Students' Competencies for Self-Reliance in Colleges of Education in Oyo State

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## *Abstract*

This study examined relevance of students' industrial work experience scheme on business education students' competencies for self-reliance in colleges of education in Oyo state. Two research questions and two research hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. Descriptive survey research design was used for the study. The population of the study consisted 501 from colleges of education in Oyo State. Simple random sampling techniques were used to selected 100 respondents for the study. Self-structured questionnaire was used to gather information from the respondents with four likert scale. Mean and standard deviation was used for answering research questions while t-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Based on the findings, the study revealed that SIWES equipped business education students in colleges of education with skills and abilities that enable them functional in the society and be self-reliant. The study conclude that the Student Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) facilitates the post-graduation employment placement of students, enhances their academic growth, and provides them with practical experience in acquiring skills and handling tools. Therefore, recommendations were made that students should get comprehensive and sufficient orientation regarding the significance of SIWES to their academic and professional growth starting from their first year of study and lecturers should be schedule to supervise the students in their places of attachment

*Keyword:* Business Education, Competencies, Students Industrial WorkExperience Scheme

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### **Introduction**

The primary objective of education is to provide individuals with the necessary knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values that are considered beneficial in society. Education is a reliable means to achieve the goals of business education. Business education focuses on providing individuals with practical skills and values that enable them to be self-sufficient and enhance their employability in the professional sphere. This type of education encompasses learning about business and entrepreneurial principles. The Business Education programme in Nigerian higher institutions is available in the following options: According to Osuala (2019), Secretarial Education, Accounting Education, and Marketing/Distributive Education are distinct fields of study. The main goal is to obtain the necessary skills and abilities for securing employment in their chosen professional and occupational fields. According to Orifa (2019), Business Education programmes are educational programmes that focus on developing students' physical and mental abilities, as well as equipping them with the skills necessary for self-reliance. The Business Education programme requires certain materials and equipment, including computers, typewriters, photocopying machines, tape recorders, multi-purpose projectors, word processors, scanning machines, and convertible desks. Only certified and experienced business educators are permitted to utilise this technology and resources. In order to attain success, it is essential to have a sufficient number of instructors to teach courses in business education programmes.

Business education focuses on providing students with the necessary skills, information, and mindset to succeed in the corporate world, benefiting both individuals and the country as a whole. Business education entails instructing students in the fundamental concepts, theories, and processes of business. According to Okoli (2010), business education is a crucial component of overall education that focuses on acquiring skills and competencies for use in office and business-related occupations. In a same vein, Nwanewezi (2010) defines business education as a comprehensive field that includes instruction in office occupations, business instruction, company administration, and economic comprehension. According to Abdulkadri (2011), a notable and significant feature of

a business education curriculum is that its graduates have the ability to work freely as self-employed individuals or as employers of workers. The principle of business education encompasses fundamental instruction in teaching profession, entrepreneurship, business comprehension, workplace dynamics, and vocational procedures. Education in this discipline is provided at several levels, including primary, secondary, and tertiary education, with the most significant focus on higher education.

An efficient business education course necessitates a functional SIWES programme that involves relevant industries where the graduates will be employed. While Business Education students do participate in the Student Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES), Odu (2020) expressed dissatisfaction with the level of experience these students gain from these programmes, stating that it is insufficient for their training requirements. Schools must establish connections with industry to obtain research support and engage in collaborative efforts. This partnership is essential for curriculum development, infrastructure providing, scholarship opportunities, seminars, and field excursions. Gbenedio (2012) observed that several academic programmes often operate independently, lacking strong links between educational institutions and companies, even within the same geographic region. The separation of academic programmes from educational institutions and industries will not effectively contribute to the attainment of educational objectives. Therefore, it is imperative for educational institutions to establish strong partnerships with companies in order to efficiently acquire skills and ensure successful integration of graduates.

Colleges of education require competent and seasoned instructors to teach courses in the business education curriculum. Osuala (2019) asserts that business education courses should be taught by individuals who possess both academic and professional competencies, and who are motivated to meet the demands of the industry. The business education programme in the colleges of education consisted of both male and female business educators. Male professors generally exhibit greater proficiency in mathematics-related courses compared to female lecturers. Conversely, female lecturers tend to hold more skills in courses like

as typewriting, shorthand, word processing, and marketing (Koko, 2020). In a study conducted by Akpan (2018), it was discovered that men lecturers in the Business Education programme demonstrated superior teaching skills in accounting courses compared to their female counterparts. Conversely, female lecturers were found to be highly competent in teaching secretarial and marketing courses. The lecturers collaborate to ensure the successful attainment of the cooperative goals of Business Education in relation to the industrial training plan at educational institutions and the industrial sectors. Industry-based supervisors are overseeing agencies responsible for monitoring students during their internships in various businesses. These supervisors provide training, sign students' logbooks, evaluate their performance, and assign grades accordingly.

Additionally, a key objective of Nigeria's tertiary institutions is to develop both physical and intellectual capabilities, enabling individuals to become self-sufficient, autonomous, and valuable contributors to society. Nigerian tertiary institutions have a legal obligation to develop the necessary human resources by providing suitable training programmes that enable individuals to acquire the necessary talents, attitudes, skills, and knowledge. Therefore, a crucial assumption regarding human capital is that upon completing formal tertiary education, graduates should possess the ability to smoothly transition from these institutions of higher learning and become efficient workers, independent entrepreneurs, accountable parents, exemplary citizens, altruistic leaders, and maintain a state of well-being. Business education has gained pace as a specialised discipline of training aimed at equipping students or individuals with skills, information, attitude, and understanding. Business education is a crucial component of vocational education that equips individuals with the necessary skills, information, competencies, and aptitudes for work and personal growth. Training individuals in this perspective aims to foster self-reliance and promote capacity development. This approach serves as a progressive means to stimulate industrial training programmes, with the goal of enhancing the competencies of business education students and achieving the objectives outlined in the National Policy on Education.

The College of Education is a component of Nigeria's postsecondary education system. Its primary objective is to provide teachers with the essential teaching skills, competencies, and methodologies. The National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) is the governing authority responsible for overseeing colleges of Education in Nigeria. The purpose of this is to establish a set of Minimum Academic Standards (MAS) for various programmes offered in colleges of education. In addition, the NCCE intentionally or unintentionally failed to include MAS into the education system for crucial human resources development programmes such as the Business Education Programme (Odu, 2020). These colleges have formulated their own Minimum Academic Standards for the instruction and preparation of Business Education NCE graduates. The proposal suggests that upon completion of formal tertiary education, graduates should be capable of smoothly transitioning from these institutions of higher learning to become efficient employees, independent business owners, accountable parents, exemplary citizens, altruistic leaders, and maintain a healthy lifestyle. Presently, Nigeria has a total of 82 Colleges of Education, with nine of them situated in the South-South states of the country. The source of this information is the National Commission for Colleges of Education in the year 2017.

Similarly, educational institutions and industrial sectors establish conducive conditions for students to gain practical experience, expertise, and suitable work ethics. Communities often possess companies with a wealth of qualified workers, well-equipped facilities, and valuable raw materials that can greatly benefit the practical training of business education students. Rossi (2010) proposed that industries can effectively contribute to the training of students in relevant skills aligned with their interests through collaboration with schools. As a result, it is crucial for companies to actively participate in providing skills training to business school students. This will enhance their classroom experiences and equip them with the necessary skills for employment in the industries upon graduation. Business education departments should fully utilise the energies, synergies, and resources of industries. A strong partnership between schools and companies will motivate industries to provide

their expertise, equipment, and expendable materials for the optimal education of kids.

According to Okorie (2001), when industries are involved in teaching students, it can help decrease or eliminate specific flaws in their training, leading to an improvement in their abilities and competences. The Nigerian federal government implemented the Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) in tertiary institutions to address the disparity between theoretical classroom training and practical experience. This initiative, introduced by the Industrial Training Fund, aims to rectify the limitations of theory-based education. Okorie (2001) defines students' industrial work experience as a skill training course that aims to familiarise and equip students at higher education institutions with the practical aspects of working in an industrial setting, in preparation for their post-graduation employment. SIWES is a collaborative agreement between educational institutions and industry that provides practical industrial experience for students pursuing courses that require such exposure during their academic study.

According to Ekpenyong (2018), SIWES offers an opportunity to assess participating students in terms of their academic performance and potential as future employees. If any shortcomings are identified in a student's job performance or work attitude, they can be guided and corrected through effective supervision before they start permanent employment.

Ojukwuet al. (2015) contended that SIWES serves as a means to narrow the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application. It aims to provide students with essential skills to seamlessly transition from academic settings to professional environments. It allows students to gain technical expertise and practical experience to enhance their professional growth in their field of study.

The Business Education programme is anticipated to have a direct connection to the realm of employment. The purpose of Business Education is to equip individuals with practical skills that enable them to secure employment and generate income. In order for industrial work experience to allow students to use their academic knowledge and skills in a real-world industrial employment setting,

it is necessary for the routine operation management of industries to be relevant to their academic discipline. As a result of the training provided in the workplace during the industrial attachment phase, many students may be deemed qualified for permanent employment in the industries or companies where they received their training. This significantly contributes to the reduction of graduate unemployment, effectively closing the gap between theoretical classroom education and practical training. This issue is commonly observed in the students' industrial job experience in Nigerian higher education institutions. The objectives of the Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme, as stated by the Industrial Training Fund (2014), are as follows: to allow students to enhance their theoretical knowledge with practical industrial activities in their respective fields of study; to familiarise and prepare students for the work environment they are likely to encounter upon graduation and to expose students to different work methods and provide them with hands-on experience in operating equipment and machinery that may not be accessible in their educational institutions.

The student attachment programme is anticipated to last for a duration ranging from three to six months. This programme will be coordinated and executed by three entities: the government, educational institutions, and the industry. Additionally, educational agencies such as the national universities commission (NUC), the National Board Technical Education (NBTE), and the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) will assume supervisory roles in this initiative. Each school is expected to establish a coordinating unit with specialised individuals assigned to integrate relevant industries into the process. These personnel will conduct investigations to determine the sectors' relevance and ensure their preparedness to accept students for placement. Both educational institutions and companies are anticipated to collaborate in order to provide students with effective and efficient practical training. The Students' Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) is a scheme designed to enhance students' skills by connecting the theoretical knowledge acquired in the classroom with practical application. Nevertheless, despite its commendable goals, the programme has encountered numerous obstacles, including firms

refusing to accept students, universities failing to provide adequate supervision, and insufficient funding to sustain the programme, among other issues. Hence, the study aims to evaluate the significance of SIWES (Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme) on the competencies of business education students in colleges of education in Oyo State, with a focus on their ability to be self-reliant.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) is a programme that aims to develop human capital by providing students with the opportunity to gain practical experience in an industry setting. This experience allows students to apply the theories and principles they have learned in their academic studies. Nevertheless, the high occurrence of participants in the SIWES programme being unable to get job afterwards or perform well if they do get employed raises concerns about the ongoing significance of SIWES in Nigeria's current industrial development efforts. According to Erin (2015), there is often a surplus of job opportunities, but graduates typically lack the necessary qualifications and skills to secure and maintain employment. According to Oduma (2016), technology advancements in modern offices not only lead to the elimination of certain jobs that require specific training, but also lead to the improvement of other employment and the introduction of new office occupations. Employers allocate resources to enhance the skills and capabilities of their workforce, ensuring they can effectively contribute to the organisation and carry out their responsibilities with professionalism. This is due to a mismatch between the skills possessed by graduates and the expectations of employers in professional employment, particularly in modern organisations. A significant number of business education graduates have considerable challenges in obtaining employment or establishing their own businesses and achieving self-sufficiency, primarily due to a deficiency in essential skills and abilities. Hence, a successful business education curriculum necessitates the implementation of a functional SIWES programme that provides graduates with opportunities to work in relevant industries. The researcher expressed concern about the lack

of essential abilities and competencies among business education graduates to effectively navigate the professional realm. The majority of business education students in Colleges of Education lack proficiency in computer and typewriting skills, as well as accounting and managerial competencies. The study aimed to determine the significance of SIWES on the capabilities of business education students for self-reliance in institutions of education in Oyo State.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to assess the relevance of SIWES on business education students' competencies for self-reliance in colleges of education in Oyo State. Specifically, the study sought to assess:

1. the relevance of SIWES to the development of business education students' competencies for self-reliance in colleges of education in Oyo State.
2. the challenges facing business education students' during SIWES to acquired entrepreneurial skills needed for self-reliance in colleges of education in Oyo State.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study.

1. What is the relevance of SIWES to the development of business education students' competencies for self-reliance in colleges of education in Oyo State?
2. What are the challenges facing business education students' during SIWES to acquired entrepreneurial skills needed for self-reliance in colleges of education in Oyo State?

### **Research Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses were tested at .05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant difference on the responses of male and female business education students on the relevance of SIWES to the development of business education students' competencies for self-reliance in colleges of education in Oyo State.
2. There is no significant difference on the responses of male

and female Business Education students on the challenges facing business education students' during SIWES to acquired entrepreneurial skills needed for self-reliance in colleges of education in Oyo State.

### **Methodology**

A descriptive survey design was used to achieve the purpose of the study. This design according to Kothari and Garg (2014) is the method of securing information concerning a phenomenon under study from all or a selected number of respondents of the concerned universe. The population of the study consisted of 501 students. Simple random sampling techniques were used to selected 100 respondents from five colleges of education and eight industries in the study area. Self-structured questionnaire was used to gather information from the respondents. The instrument tagged: Relevance of Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme on Business Education Students Competencies for Self-Reliance in Colleges of Education Questionnaire (RSIWESBESCSRCEQ). The instrument had a 4-point rating scale coded as: 4=Mostly Relevant; 3=Relevant; 2=Merely Relevant; 1=Not Relevant. The instrument was subjected to face validation by three experts from Department of Business Education and Entrepreneurship, Emmanuel Alayande University of Education, Oyo and necessary corrections and suggestions by the experts were affected by the researchers to get the final draft of the instrument with 20 items. Cronbach Alpha was used to determine the internal consistency of instrument. Reliability coefficient of 0.86 grand was obtained. Mean with standard deviation was used for answering research questions while t-test was used to test the hypotheses of no significant difference at .05 level of significance. Items with a mean value of 2.50 or higher were considered as "Agreed," while those with a mean value below 2.50 were considered as "Disagreed." In terms of hypotheses, if the calculated t-value was lower than the tabulated t-value, it indicated that there was no significant difference in the responses, and the null hypothesis was not rejected. Conversely, if the calculated t-value was higher, the null hypothesis was rejected.

## Results

**Research Question 1:** What is the relevance of SIWES to the development of business education students' competencies for self-reliance in colleges of education in Oyo State?

**Table 1: Mean and standard deviation on the relevance of SIWES to the development of business education students' competencies for self-reliance in colleges of education.**

S/N	Items	X	SD	Remarks
1	Accounting Skills	3.51	0.92	Relevant
2	Marketing Skills	3.56	0.98	Relevant
3	Management Skills	3.67	0.91	Relevant
4	Employability Skills	3.50	0.97	Relevant
5	Information and Communication Technology Skills	3.52	1.15	Relevant
6	Innovative and Creativity Skills	3.66	1.06	Relevant
7	Critical Thinking Skills	3.56	0.98	Relevant
8	Office competencies	3.75	0.95	Relevant
9	Analytical Skills	3.61	0.70	Relevant
10	Human resource management skills	3.21	1.05	Relevant
	Cluster Mean/ Standard Deviation	3.20	0.87	Relevant

X = Mean, SD = Standard deviation

Source: Field Study, 2024

Result in Table 1 revealed that the respondent agreed that all 10 are mostly relevant for business education students. This shows that all these are relevant for business education students should acquire for self-reliance. The values are less than 2.50 indicates that the response of the respondents is not divergent.

**Research Question 2:** What are the challenges facing business education students' during SIWES to acquired entrepreneurial skills needed for self-reliance in colleges of education in Oyo State?

**Table 2: Mean and standard deviation on the challenges facing business education students' during SIWES to acquired entrepreneurial skills needed for self-reliance in colleges of education.**

S/N	Items	X	SD	Remarks
1	Difficulty in scheduling meeting with Human Resources manager of the organization to seek for I.T. placement	3.611.29		Agreed
2	Challenges in submitting an application for I.T. placement to the organization.	3.670.93		Agreed
3	Business education students are experiencing difficulties in receiving feedback on their application for I.T. placement.	3.301.05		Agreed
4	Negotiating the payment amount with the organisation poses challenges for business education students	3.371.09		Agreed
5	Most employers do not provide opportunities for students to intern with them.	3.55	0.98	Agreed
6	Business education students find it challenging to establish a rapport with the organization's management.	3.480.97		Agreed
7	Facing difficulties in receiving adequate supervision from my college lecturers	3.681.00		Agreed
8	Struggling with writing a comprehensive SIWES report.	3.540.84		Agreed
9	Encountering difficulties in submitting the SIWES report to the school.			Agreed
10	Facing challenges in receiving the stipend from the I.T. office.	3.14	0.77	Agreed
<b>Cluster Mean/ Standard Deviation</b>		<b>3.13</b>	<b>0.88</b>	<b>Agreed</b>

Source: Field Study, 2024

Result in Table 2 revealed that the respondent agreed that all 10 are the challenges business education students facing during SIWES exercise. The values are less than 2.50 indicates that the response of the respondents is not divergent.

### Testing of Hypotheses

**Research Hypothesis 1:** There is no significant difference on the responses of male and female business education students on the relevance of SIWES to the development of business education students' competencies for self-reliance in colleges of education in Oyo State.

**Table 3: T-test analysis of the respondents on the relevance of SIWES to the development of business education students' competencies for self-reliance in colleges of education**

Group	N	X	SD	df	Z-cal	Z-Crit	Decision
Male	31	3.49	0.96	99	0.74	1.96	Not Significant
Female	69	4.52	0.98				

Define N = ??, X = ??, SD = ?? df = ???, Z-cal = ????, Z-crit =

Result in Table 3 shows that there was no significant difference on the t-test analysis of the respondents on the relevance of SIWES to the development of business education students' competencies for self-reliance in colleges of education. The calculated t-value of 0.74 was less than the critical value of 1.96 at 99 degree of freedom. Therefore, the null hypothesis 3 was not rejected.

**Research Hypothesis 2:** There is no significant difference on the responses of male and female Business Education students on the challenges facing business education students' during SIWES to acquired entrepreneurial skills needed for self-reliance in colleges of education in Oyo State.

**Table 3: T-test analysis of the respondents on the challenges facing business education students' during SIWES to acquired entrepreneurial skills needed for self-reliance in colleges of education**

Group	N	X	SD	df	Z-cal	Z-Crit	Decision
Male	31	3.32	0.72	99	.18	1.96	Not Significant
Female	69	3.35	0.71				

#### Define as in Table 2

Result in Table 4 shows that there was no significant difference on the t-test analysis of the respondents on the relevance of SIWES to the development of business education students' competencies for self-reliance in colleges of education. The calculated t-value of 0.18 was less than the critical value of 1.96 at 99 degree of freedom. Therefore, the null hypothesis 2 was not rejected.

#### Discussion of Findings

Research question one revealed that respondents agreed that all items in the table above are relevant for business education students to acquire during SIWES for self-reliant. This implies that SIWES helps business education students to developed accounting skills, management skills, marketing skills, employability skills, ICT skills, innovative and creativity skills, critical thinking skills, analytical skills, human relation skills and technical skills. This induced that all these skills are essential for business education students to acquire during SIWES exercise for them to be self-dependent. This corroborated with the findings of Mofesola (2012) found that the participants largely agreed that SIWES enhanced the practical relevance of classroom learning by providing them with practical experience and necessary skills. Table 3 shows that there is significant difference between male and female business education students on the relevance of SIWES to the development of business education students' competencies for self-reliance in colleges of education. This is in line with findings of Ojukwu et al. (2015) in their findings agreed that SIWES provides avenue for technical skill, experience and professional development.

Research question two showed that respondents are in support of all items mentioned in the table above. This shows that all these challenges hindered business education students to acquire relevant skills when undergone SIWES in colleges of education. This suggests that the difficulties include arranging a meeting with the Human Resources manager to inquire about an I.T. placement, submitting an I.T. request to the organisation, receiving a response on the application, and reaching an agreement on the compensation amount. The findings align with the research conducted by Oladiran et al. (2022), which revealed that students encountered difficulties in securing appropriate placements for their Industrial training. The researcher also discovered that pupils face rejection from industries, which presents additional difficulties. While the students encountered some challenges in learning from the workforce of the organisations, they also struggled to establish a connection with the management of the organisations. The possible explanation for this situation could be because the management is preoccupied with more urgent matters, and the duration of the training is too brief to accommodate extensive engagement. The participants also observed that they encountered challenges in obtaining guidance from professors at the university. This finding aligns with the research conducted by Oladiran et al. (2022), which revealed a lack of sufficient oversight of students by both teachers and supervisors during work experience.

### **Conclusion**

The study indicates that SIWES is pertinent to the students' course of study since it fulfils the primary purpose of the federal government in establishing SIWES, which is to provide students with practical skills in addition to theoretical classroom learning. The Student Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) facilitates the post-graduation employment placement of students, enhances their academic growth, and provides them with practical experience in acquiring skills and handling tools.

### Recommendations

Recommendations were made based on the findings.

1. Students should get comprehensive and sufficient orientation regarding the significance of SIWES to their academic and professional growth starting from their first year of study.
2. Lecturers should be schedule to supervise the students in their places of attachment
3. Active participation in SIWES is essential for the advancement of students' academic careers.

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