

SCHOOL AND INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIP: SOCIAL INHIBITORS OF VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL STUDENTS COMPETENCY ACQUISITION UNDER STUDENTS INDUSTRIAL WORK EXPERIENCE SCHEME (SIWES)

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Abstract

This study used descriptive survey research design to identify the social factors hindering students under Students Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) from acquiring work place competencies. To achieve this objective, the researchers formulated three research questions. The researchers then constructed a questionnaire after extensive review of related literature to identify the social factors inhibiting students under SIWES programme from acquiring work place competencies. The questionnaire was validated by three experts from department of vocational teacher education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka. The reliability of the questionnaire was computed using Cronbach Alpha Statistic. The questionnaire was administered to 58 SIWES students and 58 industry based supervisors. The data collected from the questionnaire were analyzed. The result of the analysis identified the social factors inhibiting students from acquiring work place competencies during SIWES Programme. Based on this result, the paper recommended among others, that parent should monitor and encourage their sons and daughters during SIWES programme, Students should be careful during SIWES period with their relationship with workers in SIWES practice organization.

Introduction

Technical education is a type of education that is concerned with acquisition of scientific knowledge, attitudes and practical skills for the production of goods and services. Scientific knowledge, attitudes and practical skills can be acquired on the job training and in school settings. Acquisition of practical skills using on the job training approach has a number of advantages, as trainee can work in the industry where he or she received training or in another similar industry without any transition training. Acquisition of practical skills in school settings on the other hand has some limitations. Such limitations include inability of some schools to provide training materials, equipment and machines similar to those found in industries. Another limitation is the failure of some schools to provide learning experiences leading

to the production of goods and services similar to those taking place in industries. To compensate for such limitations the curriculum of technical education has long included industrial training and is still part of technical education. For instance, the Federal Government of Nigeria, FGN (2013) through national policy on education stated that the curriculum of each trade in technical college shall consist of four components; (1) General education, (ii) theory and related courses, workshop practices, (iv) industrial training/production work and Entrepreneurial training. The industrial training captured in FGN (2013) is a kind of cooperative or partnership education between school and industry where students are exposed to industry based skills that are necessary for smooth transition from classroom to the world of work (Mofesola,

2012). Industrial training in Nigeria is organized, monitored and appraised by Industrial Training Fund (ITF) through Student Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES). The objectives of SIWES according to Eze (1998) are to: provide an avenue for students in higher institutions of learning to acquire Industrial skills and experiences in their course of study, prepare students for the industrial work situation they will meet after graduation, expose students to work methods and techniques in handling equipment and machinery that may not be available in their institutions, make the transition from school to the world of work easier and enhance students contacts for the job placement, provide students with an opportunity to apply the knowledge in real work situation to their training thereby bridging the gap between theory and practice, enlist and strengthen employers involvement in the entire education process and prepare students for employment in industry and commerce. From these objectives one can conclude that SIWES is a skill development programme designed to prepare students for employment in industry or commerce.

The categories of students that participate in SIWES Programme include students of university, polytechnic/monotechnic and college of education in specific disciplines such as engineering, technical education, computer science and commerce among others. In each of these institutions, SIWES programme serves as a core course in which the qualified students must be exposed to industrial training in form of SIWES for specified number of months. The duration for SIWES programme in universities is six months while in polytechnics/monotechnics and colleges of education is four months (Mofesola, 2012). SIWES programme has been in existence in Nigerian tertiary institutions for more than three decades and therefore attracted continuous appraisals with the view of improving them. There are number of studies conducted with aim of appraising SIWES in the area of meeting its objectives. Olaitan (1991) foretold that SIWES is fast

degenerating into a mere formality. Chukwumezie (2003) pointed that student trainees are not assigned to challenging jobs or well evaluated. In appraising SIWES in Federal College of Agriculture Akure, Mofesola (2012) found inadequate, monitoring of students on Industrial training, and lack of cooperation, delay in release of funds for supervisors and students industrial training allowances. The study conducted by Olabiyi, Okafor and Peter (2012) on managing the challenges of industrial work experience scheme in developing workforce among the youths in South-West, Nigeria revealed the absence of approved job specification for the course, inadequate participation of students in skill acquiring projects and poor supervision of students. Each of these studies made some recommendations based on their findings. It is clear now that stakeholders in SIWES Programme are aware of these problems and the corresponding recommendations for achieving its objectives.

The above cited studies explored a sub-set of areas that militate against the smooth running of SIWES Programme. In other words, there are some areas that need to be explored in order to find additional factors hindering the smooth running of SIWES Programme. Social factors such as peer group, parental and student-industry-based relationship could influence the effectiveness of SIWES Programme. Before investigating the influence of these factors on students' performance during SIWES Programme, it is imperative to review their influence on students in school setting.

Parents are the first and most important agent of socialization of a child. The type of role played by parents in the upbringing of a child to a large extent determines his or her future behaviours. Good parenting makes a child to respect members of the society, do home work, attend school regularly and promptly and participate in activities that bring progress in the community and society at large. Bad parenting on the other hand result to child's anti-social behaviours such as disrespect to the members of society, truancy and engagement in

social vices like drug addiction and armed robbery among host of others. There are countless of studies that investigated the influence of parental involvements on the academic performance students. Yusuf, Agbonna and Yusuf (2009) investigated the influence of parenting styles on junior secondary school students performance in social studies in Ilorin-Nigeria. The result of the study showed that indulgent and authoritative parents tend to have higher positive influence on academic performance of their children. Furthermore, the study also showed that parent with authoritarian and permissive (un involved) parenting styles tend to have negative influence on their children performance in schools. In sum total, the study revealed that parental involvement has influence on academic performance of students. In another related study, Jethro and Aina (2012) conducted a study on the effects of parental involvements on the academic performance of students in elementary schools. The conclusion from the study is that parental involvement in student's education has a powerful impact on their attainment.

Peer group consists of people of almost the same age and social status. The peer group is the first social group outside the home in which the child attempts to gain acceptance and recognition. Peer group has great influence on a child's behaviour and by extension academic achievement. The Influence of peer Group on the Academic Performance of Students, like Parental involvement has been investigated. Anderson (2003) conducted a study on the influence of peer group on the academic performance of secondary school students. The study after data collection and analysis concluded that peer group has influence on the academic performance of secondary school students. Korir and Kipkemboi (2014) conducted study on impact of school environment and peer influence on student's academic performance in Vihiga. The study after data collection and analysis established that school environment and peer influence

made significant contribution to the student's academic performance.

Student teacher- relationship is another issue that has been investigated and discovered that it has tremendous influence on academic performance of students. Ogunniyi (2006) conducted research to ascertain the impact of teacher- student's relationship on academic performance of students. Ogunniyi (2006) found the significant difference between male and female teacher-student relatives. Ayaz, Shah and Khan (2013) carried out a study on impact of student- teacher relationship on student's academic achievement at secondary level in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The study revealed significant correlation between students marks and connectivity, communication and total score dimension. There is also significant correlation between connectivity, availability, communication, moderate correlation between connectivity and availability and high correlation between connectivity and total score. In summary student-teacher relationship influence some variables which in turn affect the academic performance of students. Since the outlined variables affect student performance at secondary school level, it follows that there may be positive correlation between performance at secondary school and tertiary level where SIWES actually take place. This study therefore, designed to find out whether the above mentioned three factors influence or hinders students from acquisition of competencies during SIWES Programme.

Statement of the Problem

Students industrial work experience scheme (SIWES) aimed at equipping students with industry based knowledge, skills and attitudes so that they can be employed in industry or set up their business outfits and work effectively after graduation. To achieve this objective, qualified students are allowed to be trained in industry for four or six months depending on the type of school students/participants come from. To encourage students to participate fully in the scheme students are allowed to make

choice of the industry they wish to do their SIWES programme as long as such industry is relevant to their field of study. Furthermore, the scheme takes care of their transportation and other needs. Government on the other hand encourages the participating industries to take good care of students during SIWES Programme. Despite all these encouragements and good arrangements, stakeholders in SIWES Programme from time to time come up with problems ranging from administration, government policies to acquisition of inadequate competencies among others through researches, conferences seminars and workshops. So far government has succeeded in solving some of these problems.

Purpose of the study

The issue of competency of students after undergoing SIWES programme leaves much to be desired. This is evident in the inability of majority of the graduates to practice their profession effectively. That explain why, many industries have to retrain these graduates after employment so that they can fit into the industry's working environment. The problem of low competency of graduates remains unsolved despite numerous strategies. This study set to find out whether social factors such as peer group, parental involvement and student-industry workers relationship hinders students from acquisition of work place competencies during SIWES programme.

The major purpose of this study is to identify the social inhibitors of students acquisition of work place competencies during SIWES Programme. Specifically, the study sought to identify;

1. The parental involvements inhibiting students from acquiring work place competencies during SIWES Programme
2. The peer group involvements inhibiting students from acquiring work place competencies during SIWES Programme.
3. Student- industry workers relationships inhibiting students from acquiring work place competencies during SIWES Programme.

Research Questions

The following research questions were formed to guide the study

1. What are the parental involvements that inhibit student from acquiring work place competencies during SIWES Programme.?
2. What are the peer group involvements that inhibit students from acquiring work place competencies during SIWES Programme?
3. What are the student- industry workers relationships inhibiting students from acquiring work place competencies during SIWES Programme?

Methodology

Design of the Study

The study was conducted using descriptive survey research design. The design enables the researchers to elicit information from students and industry workers on the social factors preventing SIWES students from acquiring work place competencies during programme.

Area of the Study

The study was conducted in Abia State College of Education (Technical) Arochukwu, Abia State.

Population and Sample

The targeted population for the study consisted of 116 students and industry based supervisors, 58 students made up of students from schools of Business, Computer Science, Technical and Vocational Education while 58 from Industries where the students conducted their SIWES programme (2013/2014). No sampling was conducted since the population of the study was manageable.

Instrument

The instrument for data collection for the study was a structured questionnaire developed by the researchers after extensive review of related literature. The questionnaire has four sections; the first section concerned with personal data of the respondents while the remaining three sections centered on seeking information on

social factors preventing the running of SIWES Programme. The questionnaire was validated by three experts from the department of vocational teacher education, university of Nigeria, Nsukka, Enugu State. The questionnaire was pilot tested on students from Enugu State College of Education (Technical), Enugu. The data collected from the pilot testing was use to calculate the reliability of the questionnaire using Cronbach Alpha The Cornb. A. K., Jibril, G.O, Igboka & B.E. Okoro 0.873.

Method of Data Collection

116 copies of the validated questionnaire were administered to the respondents by the researchers. The administered questionnaires were collected. Out of the 116 copies of the questionnaire administered, 94 were duly filled and collected. This gave returned rate of 81.03%. This percentage was enough for data analysis. The data generated from the questionnaire were analyzed using mean and standard deviation. Any item with a mean of 3.50 and above was considered a factor inhibiting students from acquiring work place competences while those with means less than 3.50 represent non-factors.

Data Analysis and Results

Research Question 1

What are the Parental Involvements that Inhibit Students from acquiring work place competencies during SIWES Programme?

Table 1: Mean Responses of Students and Industry based Supervisors on the Parental Involvements that Inhibit Students from acquiring work place competencies during SIWES Programme. N = 94

S/N	ITEM	X ⁻	SD	Remark
1.	Parents do not monitor their sons or daughters during SIWES programme	3.98	0.36	Factor
2.	Parents do not support their sons or daughters financially during SIWES Programme	2.45	0.76	Factor
3.	Parents do not ask their sons or daughters about their weekly or monthly progress report during SIWES Programme	3.98	0.78	Factor
4.	Parents do not support their sons or daughters psychologically during SIWES Programme	4.47	0.24	Factor
5.	Parents do not respond to their sons or daughters complains during SIWES Programme	3.86	0.37	Factor
6.	Parents do not communicate regularly with their sons or daughters during SIWES Programme	3.79	0.78	Factor
7.	Parents do not visit their sons or daughters during SIWES programme	4.12	0.87	Factor
8.	Parents do not punish their sons or daughters for wrong doing accordingly during the SIWES Programme	3.87	0.28	Factor
9.	Parents do not reward their sons or daughters handsomely for outstanding performance during SIWES Programme	4.47	0.35	Factor
10.	Most parents do not know the importance of SIWES Programme	3.78	0.98	Factor
11.	Parents do not discuss with their sons and daughters on the importance of any skill they acquired in the industry.	3.78	0.28	Factor

The data presented in table 1 shows that all the items have mean greater than 3.50. This implies that all the items are parent involvements that prevents students from acquiring work place competencies during SIWES Programme. Table 1 also shows standard deviation of the

items with lower values. These lower values indicated that both students and industry based supervisors are in very close agreement on the parental involvements that inhibit student from acquiring work place competencies.

Research Question 2

What are the peer group involvements that inhibit students from acquiring work place competencies during SIWES programme?

Table 2: Mean responses of students and industry based supervisors on the peer group involvements that inhibit students from acquiring work place competencies during SIWES programme. N = 94

S/N	ITEM	$\bar{X}$	SD	Remark
11.	Peer group of SIWES students who are not undergoing SIWES programme take them to some places other than their places of work.	3.92	0.27	Factor
12.	Peer group of SIWES students who are not undergoing SIWES programme engage them in late night activities.	4.57	0.68	Factor
13.	Peer group of SIWES students who are not participating in SIWES programme make SIWES students to place less value in place of work.	3.28	0.58	Factor

Table 2 displayed the means and standard deviations of the items proposed to be the factors responsible for preventing students from acquiring work place competencies. From the table, item13 has the mean of less than 3.50. This implies that it does not represent the peer group factors preventing students from acquiring workplace competencies. The rest of

the items have means of greater than 3.50. Therefore, they are considered to be the factors responsible for preventing students from acquiring work place competences The standard deviations of the items are very small, indicating the closeness of the respondents opinions on peer group involvements.

Research Question 3

What are the students-industry workers relationships inhibiting students from acquiring work place competencies during SIWES Programme?

Table 3: Mean response of students and industry based supervisors on students-industry workers relationships inhibiting students from acquiring work place competencies during SIWES Programme. N = 94

S/N	ITEM	$\bar{X}$	SD	Remark
15.	SIWES students see the industry workers as their mates.	4.46	0.71	Factor
16.	SIWES students do not willingly take instructions from industry workers.	3.37	0.27	Factor
17.	SIWES students do not respect industry workers.	3.68	0.27	Factor
18.	SIWES students do not perform the work assign to them properly.	3.68	0.47	Factor

19.	SIWES students do not ask questions in areas where they do not understand.				
20.	SIWES students demand monthly allowance in their places of work.	3.58	0.26	Factor	
21.	SIWES students often frown at the assignment given to them by industry workers.	3.45	0.56	Factor	
22.	There is a communication gap between SIWES students and industry workers.	3.80	0.46	Factor	
23.	Industry workers are not very friendly to SIWES students.	3.78	1.45	Factor	
24.	Industry workers are autocratic	3.57	0.45	Factor	
25.	Industry workers do not give SIWES students challenging work.	4.67	0.98	Factor	
26.	Industry workers do not create enough time to supervise the work assigned to SIWES students properly.	3.78	0.56	Factor	
27.	Industry workers do not cooperate with SIWES students.	3.57	0.29	Factor	
28.	SIWES students do not stick to industrial rules and regulations.	4.67	0.67	Factor	
29.	SIWES students do not complete the work given to them on time.	3.57	0.45	Factor	

All the items in table 3 have means greater than 3.50. This indicated that all the items are factors responsible for influencing students-industrial workers relationships. Furthermore, all the items have small values of standard deviations of less than one. These values show that the respondents have very close opinions regarding the factors responsible for influencing students-industrial workers relationships.

Discussion of the Findings

The data presented in table 1 provided answer to research question one. The result revealed that all the items represent the parental involvements that prevent SIWES student from acquiring work place competencies. This result is in line with the finding of Jerthro and Ania that parental involvements in students' education have a powerful impact on their attainment. A change of parenting style of not monitoring their children, supporting them, asking about their weekly progress reports, responding to their complains, etc. will surely make SIWES students to participate fully in the scheme. This will of course increase the acquisition of workplace competencies.

The data from table two indicated that all the items except one, serve as the peer group influences. This result supports the finding of

Yusuf, Agbonna and Yusuf (2009) who discovered that parenting styles had influence on the performance of the students. Therefore, selecting of good friends by SIWES student will go a long way in making them to participate fully in SIWES programme. This will certainly enable them to acquire all the work place competencies available to them.

Tables 3 revealed that all the items represent the student-industry workers relationships that prevent SIWES students from acquiring work place competencies. The result shares the same finding with that of Korior and Kipkemboi (2014) who stated that students-teacher-relationship influence academic performance. Thus, for students to acquire enough work place competencies in SIWES programme, they must maintain a cordial relationship with industry workers. A good relationship will make industry workers to ensure that students under than acquire the required workplace competencies

Conclusion

Technical education provides students with knowledge, skills and attitudes that will enable the students to work in industry or in places where applied science technology is required.

However, the knowledge and skills provided by technical schools are not enough for technical students to work in industry effectively. To compensate for this short coming, technical students in Nigeria are exposed to industrial training in form of students industrial work experience scheme (SIWES). Stakeholders through researcher identified numerous problems preventing the smooth running of the scheme. Such problems include administrative, government policies as well as student problems. The problems identified so far are sub-set of myriad of problems associated with SIWES Programme. This study therefore, focused on another area of the problem preventing SIWES students from acquiring work place competencies social factors. The researches through data collection and analysis discovered a number of social factors responsible for preventing SIWES students from acquiring workplace competencies during SIWES Programme.

Recommendations

The researchers therefore, proposed the following recommendations based on the findings of the study.

1. Parent should monitor and encourage their sons and daughters both financially and psychologically during SIWES programme.
2. SIWES students should be careful in keeping company of bad friends.
3. SIWES students should maintain good relationships with industry workers.

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