

LEVERAGING ON LIS STUDENTS INDUSTRIAL TRAINING AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENHANCING GRADUATE EMPLOYMENT AND EMPLOYABILITY

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Abstract

This study discussed the effects of students' industrial training and the chances for enhanced employment and employability. It used a descriptive survey research design and guided by two research questions, and two hypotheses. All undergraduates from Ignatius Ajuru University of Education who participated in industrial training made up the study's population. Three hundred and forty (340) participants made up the sample size for this study, which used a simple random sampling technique. Impact of Students Industrial Training and Opportunities for Enhanced Employment and Employability Questionnaire (ISITOEQQ) was the name of the questionnaire that was created by the researchers. With the use of the SPSS version 25 computer program, the research questions were answered using the mean and standard deviation, while the hypotheses were tested using the Spearman rank-order correlation coefficient statistics. Tests were conducted at a 0.05 level of significance. It was shown that students' opportunities for industrial training and work have an impact on their employability. As a result, to increase their employability throughout industrial training, students should be encouraged to participate and be ready for field work.

Keywords: Impact, Students Industrial Training, Industrial Training, Opportunities, Employment, Employability.

Introduction

Industrial training for students, commonly referred to as an internship or industrial attachment, is a crucial component of many academic programs. Students can use the knowledge and abilities they have learned in the classroom to apply them to actual circumstances during this time of supervised practical job experience. The purpose of industrial training is to give students the chance to obtain real-world experience, pick up new skills, and gain a deeper understanding of the industry they want to work in. Many academic

programs, particularly those in the technical and engineering professions, have a requirement that all students complete industrial training. It often takes place in the third or final year of study and, depending on the demands of the curriculum, might run anywhere from three months to a full year. Under the guidance of a competent expert, students are required to work in a business or organization that is linked to their field of study during this time.

There are many advantages to industrial training for students. It primarily gives students the chance to put the theoretical knowledge they have learned in the classroom to use in real-world settings. By doing so, they can improve their knowledge of the subject and their ability to solve problems. According to academics, internships can offer students possibilities for career growth, enhanced marketability, job satisfaction, quicker promotion rates, cases of transitioning from school to work, and increased communication skills (Bernice, Omowale, Michael, and Ifeoma, 2017). Additionally, students have the chance to pick up novel abilities and methods that are not covered in the classroom. Students who participate in industrial training are also exposed to the office environment and workplace culture. This aids in preparing them for the change from academic to professional life. Additionally, students get the chance to network with professionals in the sector and develop their professional networks, which can be useful while looking for work after graduation leading to employability.

Employability is a combination of abilities, knowledge, and character traits that make a person suited for a job. It is a crucial component of modern employment because businesses are continuously looking for people who not only meet the qualifications for the position but also have the abilities and traits needed to succeed at work. In today's job market,

employability is essential since it allows people to find work and advance in their careers. Candidates who can adjust to new circumstances, speak well, and collaborate with others are sought after by employers. In addition, they seek workers who are able to adapt and acquire new abilities, as both technology and business procedures are always changing. Additionally, employability aids people in maintaining their competitiveness on the employment market. People who have the required abilities and qualities are more likely to get noticed by employers and land better-paying employment. Additionally, because they are viewed as valued assets by their current employers, those with high employability are more likely to remain with them.

According to Yorke (2006) a person's employability skills are described as "a set of skills, knowledge, and personal characteristics that increase their likelihood of obtaining and succeeding in their chosen occupation(s), for the benefit of themselves, the workforce, the community, and the economy". To ensure that individuals have the capacity to be effective in the workplace—to the benefit of themselves, their employer, and the larger economy—there is a collection of qualities, competencies, and knowledge that all labor market participants should possess. These are the qualities that companies would want their potential hires to possess in order to join and contribute effectively to their company (Harvey 2001). However, in the context of institutions of higher learning, this word frequently refers to graduates' capacity to find jobs after graduation and is typically quantified by data on graduate employment (Crossman & Clarke 2010).

One of the key improvements that higher education providers around the world have had to make is to sensitize themselves to the needs of businesses in order to maintain a better

fit between the graduates they produce and industry requirements (Valo 2000). There is no universal agreement on the precise list of employability abilities that graduates should have because the industry is not a uniform entity. With the tremendous changes in the employment system, tertiary education must take more responsibility for developing their students' personal qualities in terms of employability and implement appropriate programs to meet the changing needs of industry. A program for undergraduate students that offers industry training or internships is one way to boost employability skills.

Statement of the Problem

Higher education institutions are under growing pressure to achieve more integration between classroom instruction and on-the-job training. Due to the global increase in unemployment rates brought on by the economic slump, this pressure has grown over the past few years. Graduate unemployment is a problem that affects both developed and developing countries, forcing higher education institutions to adjust their policies and programs to meet this issue. This is due to the fact that companies have harshly criticized higher education institutions for failing to adequately educate their graduates for the workforce and for turning out unemployed graduates. Therefore, the goal of this study is to ascertain the relationship between the effect of students' industrial training and prospects for better employment and employability.

Research Questions

The following research questions will guide the study:

1. To what extent does providing students with relevant on-the-job training influence enhanced employment and employability?
2. To what extent do the students' knowledge acquisition and acquired skills influence enhanced employment and employability?

Literature Review

Conceptual Framework

Students Industrial Training is a skill-training program created to expose and prepare university, polytechnic, college of technology, college of agriculture, and college of education students for the industrial job environment they are expected to encounter after graduation. The program gives students the chance to become familiar with and exposed to managing machinery and equipment that are often unavailable in their institutions. Prior to the creation of the scheme, there was an increasing worry that graduates from our higher education institutions lacked sufficient practical knowledge and that the theoretical education provided at these institutions did not adequately address the needs of labor employers (Otunola, 2020).

In order to familiarize students with the management of industrial equipment and machinery, the Industrial Training Fund (ITF) initiated, designed, and introduced the SIWES Scheme in 1973. The scheme's early years were entirely sponsored by the Industrial Training Fund (ITF). However, the fund left the program in 1978 as a result of financial limitations. In 1979, the Federal Government gave the National Universities Commission (NUC) and the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) control of the program after realizing the

importance of skill development. Management and implementation of the program were once again turned over to the ITF in November 1984, with the Federal Government as the only funder (Duktur et al. 2020).

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A key component of any education is having students put their newly acquired information and abilities to use in the workplace for a variety of reasons. It first enables students to put the knowledge they acquire in the classroom to use in a real-world situation. This can be advantageous since it gives them a glimpse into what their future careers can

entail and gets them ready for any difficulties they might encounter at work. Additionally, it gives students the chance to gain confidence, learn work ethics, and confront challenges at work like teamwork, working under pressure, and dealing with people from all levels of the organizational hierarchy. Finally, it can help students build their networks and make connections in their chosen field while developing their employability skills and personal attributes. By doing this, students can develop their abilities and work experience, making them more appealing to employers (Lam and Ching 2006). These abilities are crucial to ensuring that graduates are employable and can advance in their chosen professions.

Empirical Review

Pillai [et al], (2012) examines the University of Malaya's industrial training program in Malaysia, emphasizing the problems that must be fixed to improve graduates' employability abilities. Regarding the degree to which trainees believed they were prepared for their training and the degree to which the assignments provided to them during their training were appropriate, findings from the feedback gathered from trainees and organizations in the 2008/2009 academic session were analyzed. Additionally, the industry's evaluation of the trainees as well as the trainees' own assessment of specific talents were looked at. The comments are explored in light of the problem that higher education providers all around the world are currently facing: the requirement to provide graduates with employable skills.

The results show that the majority of students were ready to enter the workforce. There were, however, a number of problems that needed correction. Among them were the

necessity to address any potential inconsistencies between the tasks given to trainees and their fields of study and the requirement to improve English language proficiency and specific soft skills throughout their degree program. To guarantee that the training is beneficial to all parties and improves learners' employability skills, ongoing feedback from industry is also required.

In an effort to fulfill the needs of the labor market, Yusoff et al. (2010) examined employers' evaluations of graduates' and interns' performance at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia's (UKM) Faculty of Engineering and Building Environment. The information was gathered using two separate sets of questionnaires. First, information was gathered from a sample of 302 employers of engineering graduates in the Klang Valley regarding their assessment of the competencies held by new engineers in their employment. Second, information was gathered from 305 employers of interns regarding evaluations of the performance of engineering industrial training students. According to the survey, skills learned in industrial training programs meet the needs of businesses. It demonstrates how crucial the industrial training program is to the study of engineering. Through activities that exposed interns to business processes, the program enhances the employability of undergraduates. Through meaningful work experience, industrial training also improves engineering students' employability abilities. Similar trends in employer agreement rates suggest that UKM students' industrial training has helped them develop qualities that are in line with what companies are looking for.

Methodology

The research used a correlation approach. Young graduates from Ignatius Ajuru University of Education who went on to complete industrial training made up the study's population; 340 students made up the sample for the study, and questionnaires were handed to them to get feedback based on their various perceptions and experiences. In order to get the necessary data from the respondents, a questionnaire titled "Impact of Students Industrial Training and Opportunities for Enhanced Employment and Employability" (ISITOE) was developed. The questionnaire had ten questions that were used to evaluate two (2) hypotheses and respond to two (2) research questions. The Pearson's Product Moment Correlation was used to assess the instrument's reliability.

The instruments had a reliability coefficient of 0.87 (87%). In other words, the instrument was 87 percent reliable according to the reliability index of 0.87. The questionnaire items were scored using the Likert scale, with Very High Extent (VHE) equaling 4, High Extent (HE) equaling 3, Low Extent (LE) equaling 2, and Very Low Extent (VLE) equaling 1, respectively. The 2.50 mean was used as the criterion. An item was considered to have a high extent (HE) if its mean was 2.50 or above; otherwise, it was considered to have a low extent (LE). Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions, while the hypotheses were tested using Spearman rank-order correlation coefficient statistics, with tests carried out at a 0.05 level of significance with the aid of SPSS version 22.

Results

Research Question One

To what extent does providing students with relevant on-the-job training influence enhanced employment and employability?

Table 1: Mean ratings and standard deviation of the respondents on providing students with relevant on-the-job training for enhanced employment and employability.

ITEMS	X	SD	Remark
1. Students go for industrial training	3.85	0.94	High Extent
2. Students are given duration of time to go and learn the practical aspect of their course on the field	3.00	0.73	High Extent
3. There is provision for most students while engaging in industrial training	2.41	0.84	Low extent
4. Students become employable after the training	2.90	0.91	High Extent
5. Students acquire skills while undergoing the training	4.00	0.82	Very High Extent
Cluster Mean	3.23	0.85	High Extent

The table above shows the data presentation and analysis for providing students with relevant on-the-job training for enhanced employment and employability. The mean score and standard deviation of Item 1(3.85 and 0.94), 2 (3.00 and 0.73), 4 (2.90 and 0.91) and 5 (4.00 and 0.82) were above the criterion mean of 2.50 while item 3 (2.41 and 0.84) have a mean score and standard deviation below the criterion mean. The cluster mean and standard deviation (3.23 and 0.85) indicated that providing students with relevant on-the-job training lead to enhanced employment and employability.

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between providing students with relevant on-the-job training and enhanced employment and employability

Table 2: Correlations for providing students with relevant on-the-job training and enhanced employment and employability

		Providing students with relevant on-the-job training	Enhanced employment and employability
Spearman's rho	Providing students with relevant on-the-job training	Correlation Coefficient	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.811**
		N	.000
	Enhanced employment and employability	Correlation Coefficient	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.811**
		N	.000

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

From the results in table 2, the correlation coefficient (r) shows that there is a significant and positive relationship between providing students with relevant on-the-job training and enhanced employment and employability. The *rho* value 0.811 indicates this relationship and it is significant at $p < 0.000 < 0.05$. The correlation coefficient represents a very strong correlation. Therefore, based on this finding the null hypothesis earlier stated is hereby rejected and the alternate upheld. Thus, there is a significant relationship between providing students with relevant on-the-job training and enhanced employment and employability.

The first variable of the impact of student's industrial training and opportunities for enhanced employment and employability is providing students with relevant on-the-job training. The result of the study as presented revealed that the respondents elicited significant responses that providing students with relevant on-the-job training influences employment

and employability. The study also discovered that there is a positive relationship between providing students with relevant on-the-job training and employment and employability.

Research Question Two

To what extent does students applying the knowledge and skills learnt influence enhanced employment and employability?

Table 3: Mean ratings and standard deviation of the respondents on students' knowledge application and skills learnt for enhanced employment and employability.

ITEMS	X	SD	Remark
1. Students apply good analytical skills to work when employed after graduation	3.00	0.91	High Extent
2. Students possess set of qualities, values, and skills someone should possess if they want to be employed	3.20	0.83	High Extent
3. Students apply good analytical skills to work when employed after graduation	2.90	0.94	Low extent
4. The industrial training has impacted positively in the lives of students	3.20	0.81	High Extent
5. There is an increase in employment since the commencement of students industrial training	3.90	0.72	High Extent
Cluster Mean	3.24	0.84	High Extent

The table above shows the data presentation and analysis for students applying the knowledge and skills learnt for enhanced employment and employability. The mean score and standard deviation of Item 1(3.00 and 0.91), 2 (3.20 and 0.83), 3 (2.90 and 0.94), 4 (3.20 and 0.81) and 5 (3.90 and 0.72) are above the criterion mean of 2.50. The cluster mean and standard deviation (3.24 and 0.84) indicates that students applying the knowledge and skills learnt to work leads to enhanced employment and employability.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between students applying the knowledge and skills learnt and enhanced employment and employability.

Table 4: Correlations for students applying the knowledge and skills learnt and enhanced employment and employability.

			Students applying the knowledge and skills learnt to work	Enhanced employment and employability
Spearman's rho	Students applying the knowledge and skills learnt to work	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.711**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	340	340
	Enhanced employment and employability	Correlation Coefficient	.711**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	340	340

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

From the results in table 4, the correlation coefficient (r) shows that there is a significant and positive relationship between Students applying the knowledge and skills learnt to work and enhanced employment and employability. The *rho* value 0.711 indicates this relationship and it is significant at $p\ 0.000 < 0.05$. The correlation coefficient represents a strong correlation. Therefore, based on this finding, the null hypothesis earlier stated is hereby rejected and the alternate upheld. Thus, there is a significant relationship between students applying the knowledge and skills learnt to work and enhanced employment and employability.

The second variable of the impact of student's industrial training and opportunities for enhanced employment and employability is students applying knowledge and skills learnt to work and enhanced employment and employability. The result of the study as presented

revealed that the respondents elicited significant responses that students applying knowledge and skills learnt to work influences employment and employability. The study also discovered that there is a positive relationship between students applying knowledge and skills learnt and enhanced employment and employability.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made:

- It was recommended that students should be sensitized on the benefits of engaging in industrial training
- Student should be encouraged to engage and be available during the period of industrial training so as to increase their employability skills.

Conclusion

The main purpose of this research was to find out the impact of student's industrial training on opportunities for enhanced employment and employability. The background of the study is clearly articulated and the statement of the problem was clearly made along with purpose of the study. Two research questions and two hypotheses were also drawn to guide the study. This study also clarified concepts that enhanced understanding of the problem under review via literature review. The concept of students industrial training was explained and employment and employability. Some empirical works previously carried out in this area were also revealed. The research design, sample and sampling technique, instrumentation, validation and reliability of instrument, method of data collection and analysis used were also discussed. After carrying out the research, data was presented, analysed and findings were discussed. The results from the two variables equally show that the impact of students'

industrial training have a lot of influence on opportunities for enhanced employment and employability.

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