
Assessment Of Community - Based Resource Centres' Impact On Students' Skills Acquisition In Colleges Of Education In Delta State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The study is set to appraise the availability and adequacy and functionality of community – based resource centres (small and medium scale industries –SMEs) that provide vocational skills for students in Colleges of Education in Delta State during the period of Students' Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES). The descriptive survey research design would be used to carry out the study. The objectives of the study among others were to ascertain the extent to which community- based resource centres are adequate for the provision of vocational skills to students in Colleges of Education. It was also determine the extent to which community based resource centres offer relevant vocational skills to students in colleges of education in Delta State. The population of the study was all the four (4) Colleges of Education in Delta state. Simple random sampling was used to select three and the student sample for the study from the School of Vocational Education in while purposive sampling and accidental sampling was used to select the officials from the SIWES office and the owners of the community-based resource centre in the study area respectively. Structured Questionnaire and Focus Group Discussion Guide (FGDG) were instruments that were used for data collection. Data that was generated was analysed with frequency counts, percentage and charts, while relevant statistical tool were used to test the hypotheses

test. Findings revealed among others that there is adequate community – based resource centres in Delta for the absorption of students for industrial attachment training. The study recommended among others that students should be mandated by the management of Colleges of Education to carry out micro projects with the knowledge and skills acquire during industrial training exercise.

Background to the study

The National Policy on Education (NPE) sees an important aspect of national development as the development of the individual as human oriented resource to the nation (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013). This framework concentrates on the need for the provision of a functional education that focuses on promoting a progressive and united Nigerian nation through the training of adequate, effective and efficient manpower.

Against this backdrop, learning experiences are expected to be appropriate and all-inclusive with a view to providing an educational process that is functional, sustainable and geared towards social, cultural, economic, political, scientific and technological development. For such laudable objectives to be successfully realized there are some fundamental needs that ought to be adequately meet and these basic needs include the resource that are both human and materials oriented (Osarenren-Osaghae&Irabor, 2012).

In recent times, there has been pressure on the socio-economic development amongst developing nations which would require the production of professional and technically skilled graduates who would be self - reliant and employers of labour in future. The main purpose of skills - based subjects such as entrepreneurial, vocational, occupational and technical education among others, is to develop skilled manpower for self-sustenance, reliance, community and national development. Such skillful individuals would be useful to themselves and societies they belong. The acquisition of skills should therefore, focus on the orientation of the individual as well as developing society and this would require the production of skilled graduates to offer adequate manpower and the provision of infrastructural facilities as a matter of priority. Thus, the Community – Based Resource Centres (Small and Medium Scale Industries – SMSIs) where students of tertiary

institutions are deployed over the years needs to be examined to know their levels of adequacy to absorbing large number of students.

The expectations are that recipients of the Nigerian educational processes should be job creators, employers, self – reliant and above all, positive contributors to the economy. On the contrary, these expectations seem not to be achieved as employers employ graduates from institutions of higher learning only to retrain them as a result of deficiencies in their practical performances at work. To this end, Federal Government of Nigeria according to Esene (2011) decided to introduce the Students’ Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) as a way of addressing the problem and covering the lacuna.

The Students’ Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) was established by Industrial Training Fund in 1973 to resolve the problem of inadequate practical skills preparatory for employment in industries by Nigerian graduates of tertiary institutions. Onwuji (2004) stated that SIWES as skills acquisition programme blend theory with practice in industries. These industries, particularly the small and medium scale (SMEs) ones therefore, serve as community - based resource centres where students are attached to be tutored and exposed to acquiring knowledge and skills relevant to their various disciplines. However, whether the industries are adequate to accommodate the large number of students that are captured for placement yearly is something to look into.

According to Ugwuamji (2010) SIWES is a cooperative industrial internship programme that involves institutions of higher learning, industries and the Federal Government of Nigeria. Industrial Training Fund (ITF), Nigerian Universities Commission (NUC), National Board of Technical Education (NBTB) and National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) in Nigeria are stakeholders of SIWES. The scheme therefore, affords students the opportunity of familiarizing and exposing themselves to the needed experience in handling equipment and machinery that are usually not available in their institutions by training them vocational skills acquisition.

Thus students are attached to Small and Medium Scale Industries (SMEs) which are referred herein as Community - Based Resource Centres to acquire relevant knowledge and skills. It is expected that SIWES should be able to provide avenues for vocational and technical

education and other students in institutions of higher learning to acquire practical skills that they are likely to be needed by employers after graduation. Ugwuamji (2009) believes that students should be aware of what the present society holds for them and adapt accordingly to contemporary technological needs of society.

Statement of the problem

Although the government seems to have continued to commit lots of effort and resource to the development of the educational sector, vocational education graduates seem to fall short of expectations. Wodi and Dokubo (2009) have opined that the SIWES is not adequately implemented, and that it is difficult for graduates of the system to secure employment in the occupations or make a smooth transition from schools to work. In spite of continuous implementation of SIWES in Nigerian institution, graduates from these institutions still find it difficult to get jobs, and when they do employers still have to retrain them to be able to cope with that standards and global best practices.

Against this backdrop, an assessment of community-based resource centers (Small and Medium Scale Industries – SMEs) and their impact on Colleges of Education students' skills acquisition in Delta State, Nigeria becomes imperative.

The Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this research was to assess the adequacy of community (industrial based) resource centres available for the provision of vocational skills to students undergoing the SIWES programme in Colleges of Education in Delta State. Specifically the study was used to:

- ascertain the extent to which community – based resource centres are adequate to provide vocational skills for Colleges of Education students in Delta state.
- determine the quality of vocational skills provided for students by community-based resource centres during SIWES period in Delta State.
- establish the extent to which students in Colleges of Education apply the vocational skills acquired from the community based resource centres in Delta State.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to address the study objectives:

- To what extent are community- based resource centres adequate to provide vocational skills for students in Colleges of Education in Delta State?
- To what extent do community-based resource centres offer quality vocational skills to students in colleges of education in Delta State?
- To what extent do students in Colleges of Education apply the vocational kills acquired from the community based resource centres in Delta State?

Hypotheses of the Study

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance:

HO1: Community-based resource centres do not significantly offer quality vocational skills to students undergoing SIWES from Colleges of Education in Delta State.

HO2: Students in Colleges of Education do not significantly apply vocational skills acquired from the community based resource centres in Delta State after the training.

Significance of the Study

This study will make it possible for SIWES unit in Colleges of Education to have a clearer picture of the level of adequacy of community- based resource centers (small and medium scale industries- SMEs) available for the provision of required vocational skills to Colleges of Education students in Delta State. With such information SIWES unit will be better prepared to meet the challenges ahead with regards to placement of students at the appropriate establishments. In the same vein, it will serve as a checklist for ascertaining the availability of industries, infrastructure, facilities/equipment, for the provision of relevant vocational Skills to students. The study will as well, proffer solutions to identified problems and contributes to existing literature for further researches in similar areas.

Moreover, the study should be able to discover contributions of community resource centres (Small and Medium Scale Industries – SMEs) to the achievement of goals SIWES, as where problems are discovered, workable solutions can be proffered. Finally, the study should also be able arouse enough interest among stakeholder that would lead to policy

formulation and implementation for increased participation of community resource centrestowards sustainable school/community development.

Scope of the Study

The study was delimited to Community- based resource centres available for Colleges of Education students' postage to acquire vocational skills in Delta State.

Methodology

A descriptive survey research design was used to carry out the study. This was concerned with obtaining information regarding the current status of the phenomenon being studied to determine what exists with respect to the variables of the study. It was used to appraise the Community Resources centers available for the provision of vocational skills to students in Colleges of Education in Delta State.

The population of this study were students who participated in SIWES, SIWES officials (SMSE) in the four (4) colleges of education in Delta state as well as owners of Small and Medium Scale Enterprises in the area of the study. The three (3) colleges of education were Federal College of Education (Technical) Asaba, College of Education Agbor, and College of Education Warri respectively..

Three (3) Colleges of Education in Delta State were selected for the study through the use of simple random sampling technique. Similarly simple random sampling was employed to select students from School of Vocational Education in the three selected Colleges of Education that were used for the study. Purposive and accidental sampling techniques were used to select respondents from SIWES offices as well as the operators of the Community Based Resource Centres respectively. On the whole, 800 respondents were selected for the purpose of data collection through questionnaire.

Structured questionnaire and Focus Group Discussion Guide were used as instruments for data collection in the study. The questionnaire was designed in a modified Likert scale format of four response patterns and had two sections, 'A; and 'B' with particular

considerations to both the demographic and subject related areas. The FGD guide was meant to complement data obtained with the questionnaire.

The research instrument was subjected to face and content validation by research expert Measurement and Evaluation and Social Sciences disciplines before producing the final draft, which would eventually be administered to respondents, while the analyses of the data was carried out with frequency counts, percentage, mean scores and charts, and appropriate statistical tool was used to test the hypotheses.

Data Presentation, Analysis and Results

Demographic Data Analysis

Table 1: Sex Distribution of Respondents

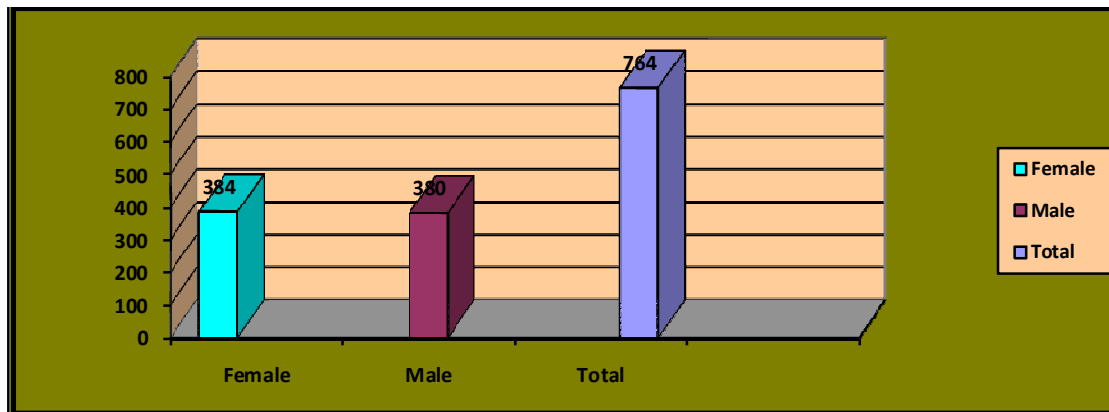


Table 1 shows that 384 (50.3%) of the respondents was female while the male respondents were represented by 380 (49.7%). Thus the total number of respondents used was 764.

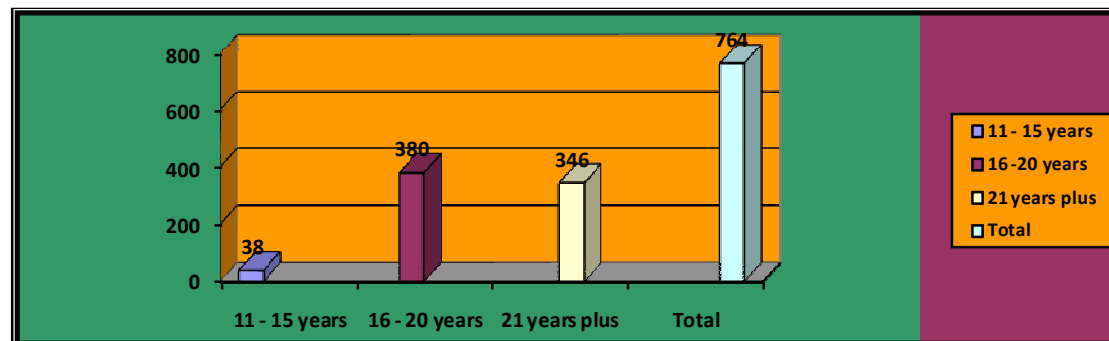


Table 2: Age Distribution of Respondents

Table 2 reveals that 38 (5%) of the respondents were found within the ages of 11 to 15 years. 380 (49.7%) were within the ages of 16 to 20 years while 346 (45.3%) had ages from 21 years and above. **Analysis of Research Questions**

Table 3: RQ1: Extent of adequacy of community - based centre

SN	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Decision
3.	Community - based resource in my locality are more than enough for students' industrial attachment programme.	278	412	40	34	3.2	Agree
4.	There are numerous small and medium scale establishments that absorb students for practical work experience.	432	210	44	78	3.3	Agree
5.	Posting students for industrial work experience is usually difficult because of limited business outfits in Delta state.	102	82	330	250	2.0	Disagree
6.	There are more organizations that can accommodate students for industrial work experience in Delta State but they are often reluctant to do so.	426	281	27	30	3.4	Agree
7.	Small and medium scale industries in Delta State provide adequate vocational skills for students on industrial training.	370	247	69	78	3.2	Agree
	Grand mean					3.2	Agree

Table 3 shows that most of the respondents were of the view that community based resource centres are adequate enough to accommodate students on industrial training scheme in Delta State.

Majority of the respondents were in agreement with items 3, 4, 6 and 7 which bother on adequacy of community – based resource centres within the study area except for item 5 which had to do with difficulty in posting students for industrial attachment due to insufficient

resource centres. The grand mean of 3.2 further attest to the submission that community – based resource centres’ adequacy for students’ industrial training programmes allocation.

Table 4: RQ2: Quality of vocational skills offered by community based – resource centres

SN	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Decision
8.	Community – based resource centres provide quality industrial training for students they absorb.	410	211	87	56	3.3	Agree
9.	Most business organizations based in communities maintain high standard of training for students on industrial work attachment.	381	254	60	69	3.2	Agree
10.	Small industrial outfits in most host communities to Colleges of Education do not give serious attention to the quality of training they offer students on attachment.	26	125	263	350	1.8	Disagree
11.	Most students attest that they receive high quality training during their industrial work experience.	422	196	67	79	3.3	Agree
12.	Students demonstrate high level of competence after their industrial work experience due to the quality of training they are offered.	348	299	72	45	3.2	Agree
Grand mean						3.0	Agree

Table 4 reveals that available community – based resources in Delta state provide quality vocational skills training for students that are posted there for practical experience. Majority of the respondents conceded to items 8, 9, 11 and 12 which settled on the quality of industrial training offered to students during the period of their attachment.

Except for item 10 which maintains that small industrial outfits do not give serious attention to students and receive negative responses from participants, the grand mean score of 3.0 further established that community – based resource provide quality training for students sent to them.

Table 5: RQ3: Application of vocational skills acquired for SIWES by students

SN	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Decision
13.	A good number of students practice what they learnt from industrial work experience in their daily activities.	140	134	278	212	2.3	Disagree
14.	Students establish small and medium outfits after their exposure to industrial work experience.	178	144	210	232	2.4	Disagree
15.	Some students use the skills they acquire from industrial work experience to get employments.	347	283	80	54	3.2	Agree
16.	A good number of students hardly practice what they learnt from industrial work experience in real life.	152	132	230	250	2.2	Disagree
17.	Most students are only interested in getting scores from institutional based supervisors than applying the skills they acquired in school.	127	130	226	281	2.1	Disagree
18.	Some students are able to teach and train others on the new skills they acquired from industrial work experience.	128	119	247	270	2.1	Disagree
19.	Students apply their industrial work experience skills greatly to all their academic works.	201	117	245	201	2.4	Disagree
Grand mean						2.4	Disagree

Table 5 indicates that respondents disagreed with items 13, 14, 16, 17, 18 and 19 which were directed towards maintain that students' utilize the skills and knowledge acquired during industrial training programmes. However, positive responses were generated for item 15 which states that some students use the skills they acquired from industrial training experience to get employment.

The grand mean score of 2.4 further reveal that most students on their own do not apply or utilize the vocational skills and knowledge they acquire from industrial training exercises significantly.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: Community-based resource centres do not significantly offer sub-standard vocational skills and knowledge to students undergoing SIWES from Colleges of Education in Delta State.

In order to confirm or refute hypothesis one, item 9 in table 4 was subjected to chi-square test and the result is shown below.

Table 6: Summary of computed Chi – square (χ^2)

χ^2 cal.	χ^2 crit.	P	Degree of Freedom	Remark
0.08	7.815	0.05	3	Accept

Decision Rule:

Since the χ^2 calculated is 0.08 and less than ($<$) χ^2 critical value of 7.815 with 3 as degree of freedom at 0.05 significance level, the null hypothesis which stated that community-based resource centres do not significantly offer sub-standard vocational skills and knowledge to students undergoing SIWES from Colleges of Education in Delta State was accepted while the alternative hypothesis was rejected. This implied that community – based resource centres provide quality vocational skills training for students on industrial attachment programmes in the study area.

Hypothesis 2: Colleges of Education Students in Delta state do not significantly establish personal vocational skills businesses after industrial training programme experience.

In order to accept or reject the second null hypothesis, item 16 in table 4 was subjected to chi-square test and the result is shown below. **Table 7: Table summary of computed Chi – square (χ^2)**

χ^2 cal.	χ^2 crit.	P	Degree of Freedom	Remark
0.01	3.841	0.05	1	Accept

Decision Rule:

Since the χ^2 calculated is 0.01 and less than ($<$) χ^2 critical value of 3.841 with degree of freedom of 1 at 0.05 significant level, the null hypothesis which stated that Colleges of Education Students in Delta state do not significantly establish personal vocational skills businesses after industrial training programmes was accepted while the alternative hypothesis was rejected. This implied that students who are exposed to the industrial training for vocational skills acquisition fail to set up businesses of their own after the industrial training programmes.

Summary of Findings

It was found that:

- Community – based resource centres were adequate to accommodate students on industrial training exercise posted within the study area.
- Community – based resource centres provide quality vocational skills and knowledge for students posted to acquire relevant skills from their establishments.

- Most students do not make much use of the knowledge and vocational skills acquired from industrial training programmes after they must have passed the programme. It is difficult to find some of the students who set up their personal businesses at the end of the programme. Perhaps capital could be a more likely challenge for them to go into private businesses.

Discussion of Findings

Based on the analysis carried out in this study, results show that:

- Community – based resource centres were adequate to absorb students on industrial training programmes in Delta state. This finding however, contradicts the views of Olugbenga (2009) about the state of inadequacy of community – based resource centres to provide spaces for students’ industrial training allocation.

Furthermore, the finding confirms the submissions from the Focus Group Discussion analysis in which most of the participants maintained that there were enough community – based resource centres to cater for industrial training needs of students in training in Colleges of Education and even more.

- Community – based resource centres were equally found to be providing quality vocational skills training and knowledge to students posted to them for practical experience training in various vocational skills. This finding corroborates the submissions of Ukwueze (2011) that greater level of employability skills is achievable through fruitful participation in SIWES programme. This also confirms the assertions of the Focus Group participants who were of the opinion that students receive quality

knowledge and training from community – based resource centres once they are willing to learn.

- Most students were found not readily applying or utilizing various skills and knowledge they acquire from industrial training experience. A good number of students were only found to be concerned with getting good scores and grades in school at the end of the industrial training programme. None was found to have established a personal business after the industrial training experience.

The finding simply conceded to the position of Aderonke (2011) that SIWES provides students with relevant skills and knowledge for possible transition from College to the world of work but whether the students practically utilize such skills maximally was not emphasized.

However, the study revealed that most students were only interested in making good academic scores and grades after their industrial training experience than establishing businesses of their own. The Focus Group submissions equally revealed that a good number of students never bothered about opening businesses of their own after the period of industrial training rather, they were more concerned with obtaining good grades and reports from both industrial and institution based supervisors

Summary

This study was carried out to assess community - based resource centres'impact on students' vocational and other skills acquisition in Colleges of Education in Delta state, Nigeria. Descriptive survey research design was adopted to carry out the study while the population of

the study comprised students on Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES), SIWES officials from various Colleges of Education and owners / operators of Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (SMSE) in the selected area. Three research questions and two hypotheses were raised and postulated respectively to guide the study.

Simple random sampling technique was used to select three Colleges of Education in Delta state namely: Federal College of Education (Technical) Asaba, College of Education Agbor and College of Education Warri respectively.

For the selection of respondents, purposive sampling technique was adopted to select both SIWES students and official while accidental sampling technique was used to select Small and Medium Scale Enterprises owners. In all a total of eight hundred (800) respondents were selected and engaged in the collection of data.

Both structured questionnaire and Focus Group Discussion Guide (FGDG) were designed by the researchers and forwarded to two research experts for face and contents validation. Corrections made on the instruments by the experts were effected on the final copies of before they were taking to the field for administration and data collection. Data collected were analysed using frequency counts, tables, chats and mean scores while hypotheses earlier postulated were tested with chi – square statistical tool.

The results of the study showed that there were adequate community based resource centres to absorb students on industrial work experience scheme from Colleges of Education in Delta state. Relevant vocational skills and knowledge were equally provided community – based resource centres for students on industrial training exercise. However, most students were found to be interested in obtaining good grades from supervisors and were not very

keen in establishing their personal businesses at the end of the programme.

Conclusion

This study made extensive attempt to assess community – based resource centres impact on students’ vocational and other skills acquisition in Colleges of Education with a view to establishing the level of adequacy, quality of training offered or given to students as well as students willingness to utilizing various vocational skills and knowledge gained through the industrial training exercise. The study was able to reveal that community based resource centres were very much in number to absorb students dispatched for the mandatory industrial training in College of Education in Delta state without problems.

Apart from adequacy in number, various quality vocational and other relevant skills as well as knowledge were provided by the operators of community based resource centres as against the initial perception that students were not being exposed to quality training by business owners during the period of industrial training exercise. Respondents were able to note that students attested to the fact that they were allowed to operate actively by the organization they were posted and closely monitored by industrial based supervisors alongside the supervisions they received from their institution based supervisors.

It therefore, became pertinent to submit that community - based resource centre should be appreciated for not only being available for the absorption of students sent to them for industrial training but for also being ready and willing to offer them quality training that enables to acquire relevant vocational and other skills as well as adequate knowledge. Thus students has been found to be safe and protected to carry out industrial work experience

scheme in the state without any form of fear for accommodation by centres and effective training delivery.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

- There is need for management of Colleges of Education in Delta state to offer written appreciation letters and awards to most of the community – based resource centres that absorb students posted to them for industrial training exercise. This would be a kind of motivation to them.
- The state government should also be made to identify and support all the community – based resource centres that admit students on industrial training programmes and assist them with finance and equipment as much as they could. This would equal provide more spaces for students’ allocation during such training exercises.
- Management and supervisors should at the same encourage students to look beyond obtaining good scores and grade while in industrial training but to think of creating jobs for themselves and other members of society.

Limitations of the Study

The study faced some funding challenge which made the researchers to work with three Colleges of Education only as against using all the College of Education in Delta state which was the original plan. Sample size was equally reduced while the numbers of research assistants were brought down too against the proposed plans. However, the researchers

succeeded in completing the study within the stipulated period by managing the available resources effectively and efficiently.

Implications for Further Studies

The results obtained from this study has given another opening for subsequent researches to be carried out in the area of community – based resource centres training and re-training of their operators. As this would determine the extent to which they aspire to consolidate and expand their knowledge and skills with the current trends to enable them offer contemporary vocational skills and knowledge to students on attachment in their organizations.

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