

**EFFECT OF INTERNSHIP ON BUSINESS EDUCATION STUDENTS' SKILLS
DEVELOPMENT IN MICROSOFT SPREADSHEET PROCESSING PACKAGE IN FEDERAL
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION (TECH.), OMOKU – RIVERS STATE**

BY

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Abstract

This study investigates the effect of internship on business education students' skills development in Microsoft spreadsheet processing package in Federal College of Education (Tech.), Omoku – Rivers State. To achieve its main purpose, research questions and one hypothesis were raised. Quasi-experimental research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study consists of 86 year III degree business education students and 45 organizations who participated in SIWES. 15 year III degree business education students and 15 industrial based supervisors were used as sample for the study. The samples were drawn using purposive sampling technique. Researcher's designed checklist was used for data collection. The instrument was validated and subjected to reliability using test-retest method. Pearson product moment correlation for the two clusters gave r-value of 0.76. The r value was converted using the spearman brown prophetic formula to obtain reliability index of 0.86. Data collected for the study were analysed using mean to answer the research questions and factorial Analysis of Variance to test the null hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. It was recommended among others that: SIWES units in tertiary institutions should investigate the relevance of place of SIWES submitted by students and assess experiences of industrial based supervisors in relation to students' field of study as a prerequisite for positing to an organization.

Keywords: *Benchmark, SIWES, Microsoft excel*

Introduction

In every educational programme, there is a benchmark minimum academic standard that spells out the knowledge and skills expected to be acquired by beneficiaries before graduation, anything below the benchmark is considered insufficient for the recipients' self-actualization. Business education as an educational programme has the cardinal objective of producing manpower endowed with analytical and critical knowledge needed in modern business world for the development of a virile economy (Federal Republic of Nigeria, FRN, 2018). In pursuance of this objective, courses to be studied before graduation in Business Education are not limited to that of general education but also encompasses those related to the business world such as: book-keeping (accounting), marketing, commerce, business law, and office management which accommodates secretarial and stenographic practices (Umukoro, 2014). The essence of these courses is to ensure that the recipients acquire knowledge and skills for the proper understanding of the business world around them in order to analyse and take advantage of the opportunities therein as producers of goods and services, as well as rational and intelligent consumers (Ozuruoke and Abdulkarim, 2016).

The integration of technological offerings in today's business world has led to the expansion of the scope of the business education curriculum for undergraduates in Nigerian universities to include courses such as: computer word processing with the code EBE 114 and spreadsheet processing with code ACC 414 as compulsory courses (FRN, 2018). Consequently, it is expected that everything being equal, graduates of this programme should effectively carryout word processing and spreadsheet processing driven by computer applications' software commonly used in the business world. It is worth noting, that to equip the recipients of business education with the required knowledge and skills for spreadsheet processing, the department of business education is supplied with computer and software that support computer spreadsheet processing for teaching and learning. One of the computer applications software that support computer spreadsheet processing installed for business education is Microsoft Excel.

Microsoft Excel as a common Microsoft suit application is designed as electronic spreadsheet. According to Ozuruoke and Abdulkarim (2016), electronic spreadsheet is used for analysing data which makes it a good tool for preparing payroll, financial statements or estimates, budgets and other financial or numeric related documents. Ubani (2008) opined that spreadsheet application skills needed by users include but not limited to: ability to enter data, construct formulas, sort or filter data, use monetary signs, format cells, cut, copy and paste cells, move worksheets, duplicate and rename them. In the light of the foregoing discourse, it is worth noting that despite the popularity and the increase accessibility of Microsoft suit applications in Nigerian tertiary institutions, especially in the computer laboratory of business education, many factors hinder the proper utilization of Microsoft Excel in teaching and learning aimed at developing business education students' skills. For instance, Nwachukwu (2015) discovered the reluctance of business educators in the utilization of Microsoft suit applications in teaching and learning due to computer anxiety. Ndinechi and Ementa (2013) discovered lack of competence and skills for proper utilization of computer application software as factors hindering the utilization of Microsoft applications in teaching and learning business education courses.

Nwachokor, Udoeye and Orhena (2016) discovered that to a high extent lack of personnel with the requisite ICT skills, poor maintenance of ICT facilities and epileptic power supply has limited the utilization of ICT offerings such as Microsoft suit application in teaching and learning business education. Azuka (2016) also discovered lack of professional competence on the side of business educators, power outage during critical periods of the practical, excesses in carrying capacity leading to insufficient time to implement computer applications' practical and the lack of adequate budgets for improving hardware as factors hindering the utilization of Microsoft applications in teaching and learning. Hitherto, these factors can be said to have contributed to the gap between the acquisition of theoretical knowledge and skills development in computer applications especially Microsoft Excel among business education students in Nigerian tertiary institutions.

One of the major remedies used to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge acquisition and skills development in Nigerian tertiary institutions is internship. Internship in Nigerian tertiary institutions is commonly known as Student Industrial Work Experience (SIWES) or Industrial Training (IT). SIWES as a form of internship is made mandatory for business education students both at the Nigerian Certificate in Education (NCE) level, National Diploma level and the degree level. This means that before graduation every student of business education is required to undergo SIWES. According to Nse (2012), SIWES as a form of internship programme is designed to expose students of tertiary institutions to practical application of knowledge in order to create a connection between theoretical knowledge acquired within the four walls of the classroom and their practical application in the real world of work. Bupo and Okiridu (2017) noted that the exposure of business education students to practical experiences in the business world through SIWES is relevant to business education programme bearing in mind that the classroom environment is not convenient for real life practical application of Knowledge. Merrit (2008) posited that during internship students develop new, practical and usable skills of the workplace such as: work ethics and values, skills to help them compete effectively, interpersonal skills, communication skills, computer literacy and technology skills, team-working skills and complete work on time.

It is worth noting that SIWES for business education students is meant to last for three consecutive months. At the end of this period, it is expected as enshrined in the objectives of the internship programme by Industrial Training Fund (ITF, 2004) that students who undergo the programme should: (i) acquire industrial skills and experiences related to their course of study; (ii) be given the opportunity to apply their knowledge in real work and actual practice; and (iii) be able to make transition from school to the world of work through contact with later job placement. According to O'Toole (2007), internship such as SIWES is based on collaborative efforts of three stakeholders who are the academic supervisor, the students and the supervisor in the workplace where the interns take place. Supporting this Bupo and

Okiridu (2017) noted that SIWES is designed to help consolidate school/industry collaboration by providing a platform for undergraduate students undergoing courses in Science, Engineering and Technology and other professional courses to acquire necessary practical skills in addition to theoretical knowledge gained in the classroom. Unfortunately, researches on SIWES as an internship programme for business education students in Nigeria have shown a lot of challenges hindering its effectiveness with regard to skills development.

For instance, Okolocha and Okolocha (2012) noted that the increase in population of students (Business education students inclusive) and continuous decreased in the number of private establishments have made most tertiary institutions (Colleges of Education inclusive) to pay less attention on proper placement of student on IT thereby affecting its effectiveness in line with the conceived objectives. Naboth-odums (2014) also noted that improper placement of students and lack of seriousness of most supervisors about the real achievements of the students during and after the internship programme is affecting its effectiveness to attain the predetermined objectives. Bupo and Okiridu (2017) also noted that business education students are faced with difficulty in finding appropriate place for their internship programme. Okoh (2010) suggested the need to ensure the use of appropriate placement of students in relevant industries related to their career path to ensure the effectiveness of internship programmes in Nigeria.

Earlier researches on the influence of SIWES as an internship programme on students who participated in the scheme showed mixed results. For instance, Robert (2011) conducted a study to examine the relationship between business internship and students' retention, academic performance and degree of completion. The results of the study showed that internship has a greater impact on students' academic performance measured by improved GPA scores, students who took internship are more likely to graduates on time and internship has a positive impact on retention. Ukwueze (2011) evaluated the extent to which SIWES programme has impacted on students' viability in the job market after graduation through the level of employability skills developed by the students through the scheme. The results show that greater level of employability skills is achievable in the area of using computer to process information and computer troubleshooting through fruitful participation in SIWES program. Thilakerathne and Madurapperuma (2014) also conducted an examination of accounting internship on subsequent academic performance. The results of the study showed statistically-significant performance of internship student as measured by their average marks. Ojokuku, Emeahara, Aboyade and Chris-Israel (2015) conducted a study to investigate the influence of Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme on professional development of library and information science students in South-West, Nigeria. The findings revealed that majority of LIS students understudied had their trainings in the libraries. It is for this reason that the present study was conducted to fill the existing gap in literature relating to internship and business education students' skill development in Microsoft spreadsheet processing packages.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to investigate the effect of internship on Business Education Students' Skills Development in Microsoft spreadsheet processing package in Federal College of Education (Tech.), Omoku – Rivers State. Specifically, the study seeks to :

1. Determine the appropriateness of the place of internship with regards to skills development in Microsoft spreadsheet utilization.
2. Determine the Microsoft spreadsheet processing experience of business education students' industrial based supervisor during SIWES.
3. Determine the Microsoft spreadsheet processing skills performance levels of business education students participating in SIWES programme.

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

1. What is the appropriateness of the place of internship with regards to skills development in Microsoft spreadsheet utilization?
2. What is the Microsoft spreadsheet processing experience of business education students' industrial based supervisor during SIWES?
3. What are the Microsoft spreadsheet processing skills performance levels of business education students as a result of participation in SIWES programme?

Hypothesis

The following hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance:

H_{01} : SIWES has no significant effect on business education students' Microsoft spreadsheet skills performance.

Methodology

Quasi-experimental research design was adopted for this study. This research design was employed because; the study is designed to collect data based on participants' self-assessment using researcher's designed instrument on the variables under investigation. This research design is deemed appropriate since the industrial based supervisors and participating students were required to fill the assessment checklist designed for data collection on the variables under investigation. This is because in this case, true experimentation is not possible considering the fact that the research cannot have control of their assessment.

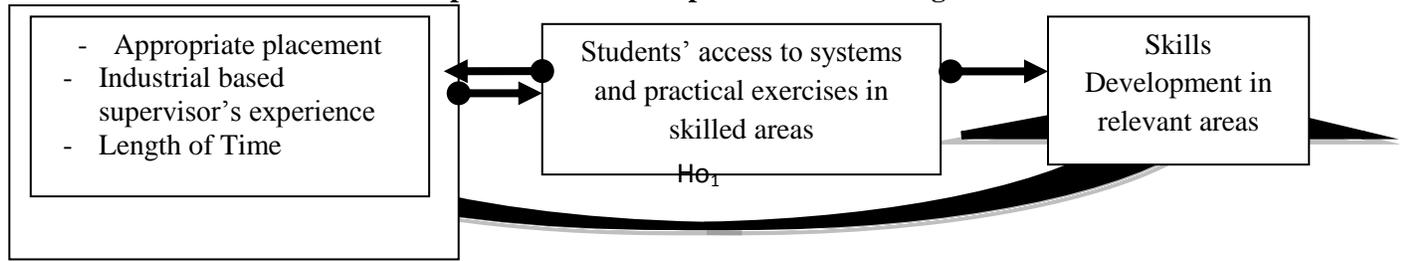
The population of the study consists of 86 Business education degree III students who took part in the mandatory SIWES programme for three months during the 2018/2019 academic session and 45 participating organizations. However, because of the nature of the study which requires workplace placement for internship, a total of 15 Business education year III students and 15 participating industrial based supervisors in organizations where business education students were attached for their internship were used as the sample of the study. Purposive sampling technique was used to select the students based on three criteria (i). the organization of internship has a computer system that can be accessible to the student, (ii). the business education student is willing to participate in assessing the industrial based supervisor and (ii). the industrial based supervisor is willing to participate in the assessment of students.

A researcher's designed instrument called "SIWES and Microsoft Spreadsheet Processing Skills Assessment Checklist (SIWESMISPSAC) was used for the study. The instrument items focused on assessing the appropriateness of the place of SIWES programme, industrial based supervisors' experience in Microsoft spreadsheet utilization and the students' skills development in Microsoft spreadsheet through participation in SIWES. The assessment checklist is made up of 15 items, 5 items to research question 1 and 10 items to research questions 2 and 3. The instrument is designed based on four points rating scales of: Very Appropriate (VA – 4 points), Moderately Appropriate (MA – 3 points), Poorly Appropriate (PA – 2 points), Inappropriate (I - 1 point) and Highly Experienced/Performed (HE/P – 4 points), Moderately Experienced/Performed (ME/P – 3 points), Poor Experienced/Performed (PE/P – 2 points), and Inexperienced/Unable to Perform (I/UP – 1 point).

The face validity of the instruments was determined by an expert in Educational Measurement and Evaluation in the Faculty of Education, University of Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. The reliability of stability for the checklist was determined using test retest method. The test-retest was done in an interval of two weeks using 15 NCE II Business Education students who participated in SIWES during the 2018/2019 academic session and were placed in business centres. The correlation between the two administrations was computed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC) to obtain r – value of 0.76 for the two clusters. The r value was converted using the spearman brown prophetic formula to have reliability co-efficient of 0.86. This shows that the instrument is stable and can produce same results overtime. The data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics of mean and cluster means scores

to answer the research questions. The null hypotheses were tested using factorial Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) at 0.05 level of significance.

Proposed Skills Development Model through SIWES



Research Question 1: What is the appropriateness of the place of internship with regards to skills development in Microsoft spreadsheet utilization?

Table 1: Summary of Mean Responses on the Appropriateness of the Place of Internship with Regards to Skills Development in Microsoft Spreadsheet Utilization

Items	N	Mean	Stdev.	Decisions
Organization has functional computer system	15	2.40	1.06	PA
Computer has functional version 2010 Microsoft suit application or 2007 version	15	2.23	.70	PA
IT students allowed to utilize the Microsoft suit for work experience	15	2.53	.99	MA
Organization uses Microsoft spreadsheet for routine tasks	15	2.53	.99	MA
IT students allowed to utilize Microsoft spreadsheet for organization tasks	15	2.67	1.05	MA
Cluster mean and Std deviation	15	2.48	0.96	PA

Source: Field Survey, 2019

Table 1 shows that the respondents are of the opinion that the functionality of the computer system and Microsoft suit application version 2010 or 2007 are poorly adequate in their place of industrial attachment with mean scores of 2.40, 2.23 and standard deviation scores of 1.06 and 0.70 respectively. The respondents are also of the opinion that access to utilize Microsoft suit for work experience, the use of Microsoft spreadsheet for organization's routine tasks and IT students' access to utilize Microsoft spreadsheet for organization tasks are moderately adequate with mean scores of 2.53, 2.67 and standard deviation of 0.99 and 1.05 respectively. However, when the cluster mean and standard deviation scores of 2.48 and 0.96 are considered, it can be concluded that the place of students' industrial experience with regards to skills development in Microsoft spreadsheet is poorly appropriate.

Research Question 2: What is the Microsoft spreadsheet processing experience of business education students' industrial based supervisor during SIWES?

Table 2: Summary of Mean Responses on Microsoft Spreadsheet Processing Experience of Business Education Students' Industrial Based Supervisor on SIWES

Items	N	Mean	Stdev.	Decisions
Ability to enter data into cells of a worksheet	15	2.13	1.06	PE
Ability to select, sort, copy, move and delete data in a worksheet	15	2.53	1.13	ME
Ability to edit rows and columns in a worksheet	15	2.27	1.10	PE
Ability to copy, move, delete and rename a worksheet	15	2.13	.92	PE
Ability to create and calculate financial data using in-built financial formula	15	2.07	1.03	PE
Ability to create logical formulas using spreadsheet functions	15	2.13	1.06	PE
Ability to format numbers and text content in a spreadsheet	15	1.80	.94	PE
Ability to adjust spreadsheet page settings	15	2.07	.96	PE
Ability to create and format charts using spreadsheet	15	1.87	.99	PE
Ability to spell check and correct spreadsheet content before finally printing	15	1.87	.92	PE
Cluster Mean and Standard deviation	15	2.09	1.01	PE

Source: Field Survey, 2019

Table 2 shows that business education students on SIWES rated their industrial based supervisors as poorly experienced on the ability to enter data into cells of a worksheet, ability to edit rows and columns in a worksheet, ability to copy, move, delete and rename a worksheet, ability to create and calculate financial data using in-built financial formula, ability to create logical formulas using spreadsheet functions, ability to format numbers and text content in a spreadsheet, ability to adjust spreadsheet page settings, ability to create and format charts using spreadsheet, and ability to spell check and correct spreadsheet content before finally printing with mean scores of 2.13, 2.27, 2.07, 1.80, 2.07, 1.87 and standard deviation scores of 1.06, 1.10, 0.92, 1.03, 1.06, 0.94, 0.96, and 0.99 respectively. However, the respondents rating their industrial based supervisors moderately experienced on the ability to select, sort, copy, move and delete data in a worksheet with mean score of 2.53 and standard deviation of 1.13. It is also worth noting that when the cluster mean and standard deviation scores of 2.09 and 1.01 are considered, it can be concluded that business education students' industrial based supervisors are poorly experienced in Microsoft spreadsheet processing application.

Research Question 3: What are the Microsoft spreadsheet processing skills performance levels of business education students as a result of participation in SIWES programme?

Table 3: Summary of Mean Responses on Microsoft Spreadsheet Processing Skills Performance Level of Business Education Students on SIWES

Items	N	Mean	Stdev.	Decisions
Ability to enter data into cells of a worksheet	15	1.73	.59	PP
Ability to select, sort, copy, move and delete data in a worksheet	15	1.73	.59	PP
Ability to edit rows and columns in a worksheet	15	1.73	.70	PP
Ability to copy, move, delete and rename a worksheet	15	1.60	.51	PP

Ability to create and calculate financial data using in-built financial formula	15	1.93	.59	PP
Ability to create logical formulas using spreadsheet functions	15	2.20	.78	PP
Ability to format numbers and text content in a spreadsheet	15	1.67	.49	PP
Ability to adjust spreadsheet page settings	15	1.47	.52	PP
Ability to create and format charts using spreadsheet	15	1.60	.51	PP
Ability to spell check and correct spreadsheet content before finally printing	15	1.53	.52	PP
Cluster Mean and Standard deviation	15	1.72	0.58	PP

Source: Field Survey, 2019

Table 3 shows that industrial based supervisors rated business education students poor on ability to enter data into cells of a worksheet, ability to select, sort, copy, move and delete data in a worksheet, ability to edit rows and columns in a worksheet, ability to copy, move, delete and rename a worksheet, ability to create and calculate financial data using in-built financial formula, ability to create logical formulas using spreadsheet functions, ability to format numbers and text content in a spreadsheet, ability to adjust spreadsheet page settings, ability to create and format charts using spreadsheet, and ability to spell check and correct spreadsheet content before finally printing with mean scores of 1.73, 1.60, 1.93, 2.20, 1.67, 1.47, 1.53 and standard deviation scores of 0.59, 0.70, 0.51, 0.59, 0.78, 0.49, 0.52, and 0.51 respectively. In the same vein, when the cluster mean and standard deviation scores of 1.72 and 0.58 are considered, it can be concluded that Microsoft spreadsheet processing skills performance levels of business education students as a result of participation in SIWES programme is poor.

Test of Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1: SIWES has no significant effect on business education students' Microsoft spreadsheet skills performance

Table 4: Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: Students' Microsoft Spreadsheet Skills Performance

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	81.600 ^a	13	6.277	0.00	0.00	1.000
Intercept	3817.333	1	3817.333	0.00	0.00	1.000
Appropriateness of place of SIWES	45.750	6	7.625	0.01	0.00	1.000
Industrial based supervisor's experience	18.250	6	3.042	0.01	0.00	1.000
Appropriateness * Experience	2.250	1	2.250	0.01	0.00	1.000
Error	.000	1	.000			
Total	5160.000	15				
Corrected Total	81.600	14				

a. R Squared = 1.000 (Adjusted R Squared = 1.000)

Source: Field Survey, 2019

Table 4 shows that appropriateness of place of SIWES has 45.750 sum of squares, 6 degree of freedom, 7.625 mean square and F ratio of 0.01 that is significant at 0.001 alpha. This means that the main effect of appropriateness of place of SIWES is significant as $F(6, 1) = 7.625, p < 0.05$. The result also show that

industrial based supervisor's experience has 18.250 sum of squares, 6 degree of freedom, 3.042 mean square and F ratio of 0.01 that is statistically significant at 0.001 alpha. This means that the main effect of industrial based supervisor's experience is significant as $F(6, 1) = 3.042, p < 0.05$. The results also show that the interactive effect of appropriateness of place of SIWES and industrial based supervisor's experience has 2.250 sum of squares, 1 degree of freedom, 2.250 mean square and F ratio of 0.01 that is statistically significant as $F(6, 1) = 2.250, p < 0.05$. Based on these results, it can be concluded that SIWES as factored by appropriateness of place of SIWES and industrial based supervisor's experience has significant effect on business education students' Microsoft spreadsheet skills performance.

Discussion

The major findings of the study show that the place of students' industrial experience with regards to skills development in Microsoft spreadsheet is poorly appropriate. This result emanated from the fact that students are placed without recourse to the kind of skills the place of industrial attachment can provide them. The findings of this study is supported by the discovery of Okolocha and Okolocha (2012) who noted that the increase in population of students (Business education students inclusive) and continuous decreased in the number of private establishments have made most tertiary institutions to pay less attention on proper placement of student on IT. It is also supported by the earlier position of Naboth (2014) who also noted that improper placement of students is affecting the effectiveness of SIWES to attain its predetermined objectives.

The results of the study also show that business education students' industrial based supervisors are poorly experienced in Microsoft spreadsheet processing application. This is due to the fact that many of the students on SIWES rated their supervisor as poorly experienced in Microsoft spreadsheet application. The results also show that Microsoft spreadsheet processing skills performance levels of business education students as a result of participation in SIWES programme is poor. These findings is contrary to the discovery of Ukwueze (2011) who discovered that SIWES programme has impacted on students' level of employability skills related to using computer to process information. The results are also contrary to the findings of Ojokuku, Emeahara, Aboyade and Chris-Israel (2015) that show SIWES provides avenue for technical skill development. It is however worth noting that these two earlier studies investigation include other skills apart from skills relating to computer software utilization such as: Microsoft spreadsheet utilization. This may have also contributed to the difference in results.

The results of the study also show that SIWES factored by factored by appropriateness of place of SIWES and industrial based supervisor's experience has significant effect on business education students' Microsoft spreadsheet skills performance. The finding is supported by the findings of Robert (2011) who discovered that internship has a greater impact on students' performance measured by improved GPA scores. It is also supported by Ukwueze (2011) who discovered that SIWES program significantly impacted on students' employability skills development. The findings of Thilakerathne and Madurapperuma (2014) also supported the fact that internship significantly better performance of student as measured by their average marks.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that business education students are not appropriately placed on SIWES and that most of the industrial based supervisor's do not possessed the experienced relevant to skills development in Microsoft spreadsheet application. It can also be concluded that the appropriateness of place of SIWES and the experience of the industrial based supervisor have significant effect on the subsequent skills development of business education students. Consequently, if SIWES must be effective in bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge acquisition in institutions and practical skills development, there is need to device measures to ascertain the appropriateness of students' secured place of SIWES as well as the experience of participating industrial based supervisors in line with the student's field of study. This is because continuous inappropriate placement and

collaboration with industrial based supervisor who has no requisite knowledge and skills in the students' field of study will only amount to guide students to experiences not relevant to their future career.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and the conclusions drawn, the following recommendations are put forward:

- i. SIWES units in tertiary institutions should investigate the relevance of place of industrial attachment submitted by students before approving their posting.
- ii. SIWES units in tertiary institutions should assess the experiences of industrial based supervisors in relation to students' field of study as a prerequisite for positing their students to an organization.
- iii. Business education students should be sensitized on the need to attach themselves with organizations where they can have access to develop skills relevant to their career choice.

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