Training Needs of Internship Students of the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences, Ladoke Akintola University of Technology, Ogbomoso, Nigeria

[1]Akintonde, J. O., [2]Farayola, C. O., [1]Oladipo, I. F., [1]Oyediran, C. O., [1]Tiamiyu, A. O. and [3]Ajayi, A. O.
[1]Department of Agricultural Extension and Rural Development, P.M.B. 4000, Ladoke Akintola University of Technology, Ogbomoso, Nigeria.
[2]Department of Agricultural Development and Management, Agricultural and Rural Management Training Institute, Km 18, Ilorin – Ajase-Ipo Highway, P.M.B. 1343, Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria.
[3]Department of Agricultural Extension and Rural Development, *Obafemi Awolowo University*, P.M.B. 13, Ile-Ife, Osun State, Nigeria.
Correspondence details: joakintonde@lautech.edu.ng

Abstract: Qualitative education involves acquiring skill and knowledge, and its application in solving possible identifiable tasks is the motive behind the internship scheme as embedded in the Nigeria University Curriculum of Agriculture. Interns gain work experience not only to satisfy requirements for their different qualifications but also an avenue to acquire skills and potential against future challenges, especially in this era of unemployment. The study therefore, assessed the training needs of internship students of the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences, Ladoke Akintola University of Technology, Ogbomoso, Nigeria. A multistage sampling technique was used to select ninety-three (93) students. Different training units were identified, and areas of training needs were indicated. There were significant relationships between some selected socio–economic variables (age ($r=0.248*$, $P\leq0.017$); sex ($r=0.289**$, $P\leq0.005$); marital status ($r=0.030$, $P\leq0.775$); religion ($r=0.313**$, $P\leq0.002$); department of the student ($r=0.207*$, $P\leq0.407$)) and level of needs of identified training areas. The study suggests improving the internship programme across all training units. The authority should introduce more training units to motivate students' participation and guarantee practical skills and knowledge acquisition.
Keywords: Training needs, Internship students, SIWES

INTRODUCTION

Universities worldwide are mandated to produce the skilled human resources necessary to function effectively in their societies. As a result, their training programmes are tailored towards achieving this mandate. The ability to accomplish this mandate distinguishes one University from the other. It is on these bases that Universities are ranked. Students who meet the mandate successfully and effectively are ranked higher than those who cannot do so effectively (Student Personal Development (SPD) Hub, 2020). University students acquire different skills through training, especially during internships. Training is vital to human capital development and overall industrial advancement; it is further essential in the industrial revolution and the growth of industries. The training is instrumental to a practical, intelligent, competent and reliable employee. It allows for the correctness and meticulous job role performance (Ogbuanya *et al*., 2018; Bag *et al*., 2021). The lack of practical use of theories learned in the classroom by graduates was identified by employers of labour as the primary cause of graduates' abysmal performance when employed. Establishing 'the Students' Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) enabled students to connect the academic world with real industrial situations before graduating from various learning institutions. The scheme was established to allow students to handle equipment and machinery, gather experience and familiarize themselves with situations the school environment cannot afford (Rita, 2017; Molino *et al*., 2020). This study focused on only the students in the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences of Ladoke Akintola University of Technology (LAUTECH), Ogbomoso, Nigeria. These undergraduate students acquired diverse Agricultural skills during the Internship which usually lasted for an Academic Session to corroborate the theories learned in different classes.

Concept of skill acquisition

Skill acquisition may be viewed as making superlative output a general characteristic of one's behaviour in a given field. It gradually changes from less effective behaviour to an extremely proficient one. A skilled worker is adept in the trade or has attained excellence in a particular trade or undertaking. Skill acquisition, therefore, involves painstaking effort, discipline, practice and drill, and reviews. In other words, skill is the ability to do something well, usually gained through training or experience. Skill acquisition, conversely, involves developing a new skill, practice or way of doing things, usually gained through training or experience. Skill Acquisition is the science that underpins movement learning and execution and is more commonly termed motor learning and control. It is common knowledge that about 80% of graduates in most Nigerian Universities find it hard to get employment yearly (SPD-Hub, 2020). This is mainly due to the curricula of the Universities and other tertiary schools that emphasize training for white-collar jobs.

Nigeria, like other developing countries, is faced with several problems ranging from youth and graduate unemployment, high levels of poverty, insurgency, conflict and diseases, insincerity, over-dependency on foreign-made goods, low economic growth and development, lack of capacity and required skills to move the economy forward and

urbanization. Unemployment has become a major problem bedevilling the lives of youths and graduates, causing frustration, depression, sadness and dependency on family members and friends. The high level of unemployment among this population in Nigeria has contributed to the high rate of insecurity, violence in elections and poverty (SPD-Hub, 2020). On this premise, this research work was pursued to determine the training needs of internship students of the Faculty of Agricultural sciences, LAUTECH, Ogbomoso, Nigeria. Specifically, the study described the socio-economic characteristics of the students; examined the existing training units / students' participation in the LAUTECH Teaching and Research Farm; investigated areas of training needs and the level of need. The study further tested for relationships between the measured variables.

METHODOLOGY

The study was carried out in the Teaching and Research Farm of the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences, Ladoke Akintola University of Technology Ogbomoso, Oyo State. The programme's fourth year is called the internship year based on the Faculty Curricula. A multistage sampling technique was employed to select respondents for this study. First stage involved the selection of five percent (5%) from the total number of registered one thousand, eight hundred and fifty-five students (1,850) across the six Departments in the faculty, while the second stage involved the selection of ninety-three (93) students through simple random sampling technique which represented the sample size of the study. A validated questionnaire was used to elicit information from the sampled students. Descriptive statistics (frequency counts, percentages, mean and ranking) and Pearson Product Moment Correlation were statistical tools used to analyse the study's data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Socioeconomic characteristics of the respondents

This section explained the socio-economic characteristics of the sampled students. Table 1 revealed that 58.1% of the respondents were between 20 and 25, while 41.9% were above 25. The mean age was 25.03 years. This result indicates that the faculty students are young and expected to be productive during their internship programme. It is also likely that the sampled students will exploit the opportunity of being youths and derive possible pleasure from having acquired what they are supposed to know at every training unit during the internship period. More than half (61.3%) of the respondents were female, while only 38.7% were male. This implies that internship programme is designed for both genders.

The result further revealed that most respondents (86.0%) were single, and 14.0% were married. This implies that the population of the single students is more than that of married students. This may be true because University programme is not an adult literacy class. On religion, more than half (58.1%) of the respondents were Christian, while 41.9% were Muslim. This result implies that Christians and Muslims constituted the student population in the faculty. The religious affiliation of these students may influence their zeal and readiness to learn from different training units available in the Faculty's Teaching and Research Farm.

Table1: Distribution of respondents by socioeconomic characteristics N=93

Socioeconomic characteristics	Frequency	Percentage	Mean
Age (years)			
20-25	54	58.1	25.03
25 and above	39	41.9	
Sex			
Male	36	38.7	
Female	57	61.3	
Marital Status			
Married	13	14.0	
Unmarried	80	86.0	
Religion			
Christian	54	58.1	
Muslims	39	41.9	
Department			
AER	24	25.8	
AEC	2	2.2	
ANB	10	10.8	
APH	32	34.4	
CPS	9	9.7	
CEP	16	17.2	

Source: Field survey, 2022.

Furthermore, the study discovered that, only 17.2% of the sampled students were from the Department of Crop Protection and Environmental Sciences (CEP), whereas 25.8% came from the Department of Agricultural Extension and Rural Development (AER), 2.2%, 10.8%, 34.4%, and 9.7% of the students were from the Department of Agricultural Economics (AEC), Animal Nutrition and Biotechnology (ANB), Animal Production and Health Sciences (APH), and Crop Production and Soil Sciences (CPS), respectively. This result implies that the sampled internship students were from different departments that constituted the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences at the University. They received related practical training in each field, making them employable and eventually self-employed or an entrepreneur after graduation. This is in line with the submission of Adeosun *et al*. (2021), who opined that internships or immersion programs are work-based educational experiences related to specific jobs, positions, occupations or professions. They are career-oriented curricula endeavours of practical application (Mhaka, 2020).

Existing training units and students' participation

Table 2 revealed the multiple responses of students with respect to different training units and students' participation during internship programme and all the responding students indicated Cattle, Sheep and Goat, Farm mechanization, Feed mill, Crop type collection, Arable, Garri processing, Piggery, Rabbitry (Cane rat/Rabbit) and Permanent unit (permanent crops such as cashew, mango) as the available training units where they participated. Also 98.9%, 97.8%, 95.7% and 87.1% of the students indicated poultry, Apiary, Fishery and Snailery. The variation in the responses may be due to some students' absenteeism during the internship orientation programme where students were introduced to the various units on the farm. This result implies that, the internship students in the Faculty participated and were exposed to different practical trainings that are virtually excluded in the classroom lectures which give them opportunities to acquire requisite skills, knowledge and the management of the various units for profit which they may need in the industry. This conforms with Elarde & Chong (2012) who opined that internships provide students with practical experience, which cannot be fully simulated in the classroom. Consequently, interns are better prepared to cope with the challenges of the work environment and their job performance may be accelerated (Maertz *et al*., 2014)

Table2: Distribution of respondents by existing training units during Internship

Training units	*Frequency	Percentage
Fishery	87	95.7
Cattle sheep and goat	93	100.0
Apiary	91	97.8
Farm mechanization	93	100.0
Feed mill	93	100.0
Poultry	92	98.9
Crop type collection	93	100.0
Arable	93	100.0
Garri processing	93	100.0
Piggery	93	100.0
Snailery	81	87.1
Rabbitary (cane rat/rabbit)	93	100.0
Permanent	93	100.0

Source: Filed survey, 2022; *: Multiple responses.

Areas of training needs and level of need

The students rated the various areas of training identified on a three-point rating scale of high, moderate and low, while the mean was computed and ranked accordingly. The result was presented in Table 3. Data presented showed that Animal vaccination has the highest weighted mean score (WMS) of 2.7 and was ranked first (1st). This was followed by fishery, i.e. (especially practical hatchery) and animal pregnant delivery, each with WMS of 2.6 (2nd), respectively. Furthermore, mechanization, which includes tractor driving and coupling of implements, apiary management from the establishment to honey harvesting, piggery routine management and castration, cattle milking and seedlings raising/nursery, all with WMS of 2.5 and they were ranked fourth (4th) respectively based on the areas of training needs and their levels of need as indicated by the sampled students. Global Positioning System (GPS) was ranked ninth (9th) with a WMS of 2.1. These results revealed the training needs and levels of need among the internship students. The variation in their level of need may be due to differences in their interest towards each of the identified training units, different disciplines/departments and the attitude of the trainers during the Internship, as some students may develop interest during the training process if there is encouragement on the part of the trainers therefore, if the students develop a negative attitude

toward a specific training unit that may hinder the acquisition of expected skills and knowledge from such unit, which contradicts the objective of Internship Scheme. Bukaliya (2012) also confirmed that students acquire the necessary skills and expertise during the Internship.

Table3: Distribution of respondents by areas of training needs and level of need

Areas of training needs	Frequency (percentage)				
	Level of need				
	High	Moderate	Low	WMS	Rank
Mechanization (tractor driving and coupling)	57(61.3)	28(30.1)	8(8.6)	2.5	4th
Apiary (establishment to harvesting)	52(55.9)	39(41.9)	2(2.2)	2.5	4th
Fishery (hatching)	69(74.2)	14(15.1)	10(10.8)	2.6	2nd
Piggery (routine management and castration)	51(54.8)	33(35.5)	9(9.7)	2.5	4th
Animal vaccination	66(71.0)	21(22.6)	6(6.5)	2.7	1st
Use of GPS	28(30.1)	47(50.5)	18(19.4)	2.1	9th
Animal pregnant delivery	64(68.8)	23(24.7)	6(6.5)	2.6	2nd
Cattle milking	60(64.5)	21(22.6)	12(12.9)	2.5	4th
Seedling raising/nursery	47(50.5)	42(45.2)	4(4.3)	2.5	4th

Source: Field Survey, 2022
Figures in parentheses are percentages
WMS: Weighted Mean Score
GPS: Global Positioning System

Test of hypothesis

Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was used to determine a significant relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The results in Table 4 revealed that some of the selected socio – economic characteristics of the Internship students such as age ($r=0.248*$, $p≤0.017$); sex ($r=0.289**$, $p≤0.005$); marital status ($r=0.030$, $p≤0.775$); religion ($r=0.313**$, $p≤0.002$); department ($r=0.207*$, $p≤0.407$) exhibited a significant relationship with the level of needs of identified training areas. The result implies that all the aforementioned socio-economic variables (age, sex, marital status, religion, and department) influence the level of need for the identified training areas among the students. The relationship between the students' level of need for different identified internship training units and their socio-economic characteristics may also be attributed to students' attitudinal differences and interest towards various disciplines of agriculture in the Faculty.

Table4: Test of significant relationship between the selected socio-economic characteristics and level of training needs among Internship students using Pearson product Moment Correlation (PPMC) analysis.

Socioeconomic Variables	Correlation Coefficients	P-value	Decision	Remark
Age	0.248*	0.017	S	Reject H$_o$
Sex	0.289**	0.005	S	Reject H$_o$
Marital status	0.030	0.775	NS	Accept H$_o$
Religion	0.313**	0.002	S	Reject H$_o$
Department	0.207*	0.047	S	Reject H$_o$

Source: Data Analysis, 2022
**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)
*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS
This study revealed several Teaching and Research Farm units under the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences, LAUTECH. Despite the exposure of sampled students to different training units, almost all the students indicated other areas of agricultural training units where they required skills and knowledge (such as mechanization and GPS), where they were exposed to during the internship programme. The study, therefore, recommends improving internship training to enhance practical skills and knowledge acquisition. As a result of the training opportunities in Agricultural programmes, admission seekers should be encouraged to pursue those programmes as it offers opportunities for self-employment especially in this era of unemployment challenge.

REFERENCES
Adeosun, O. T., Shittu, A. I., & Owolabi, T. J. (2022). University internship systems and preparation of young people for world of work in the 4th industrial revolution. *Rajagiri Management Journal*, *16* (2), 164-179.

Bag, S., Yadav, G., Dhamija, P. and Kataria, K.K. (2021). "Key resources for industry adoption and its effect on sustainable production and circular economy: an empirical study". *Journal of Cleaner Production,* 281: 125233

Bukaliya, R. (2012). The potential benefits and challenges of internship programmes in an ODL institution: A case for the Zimbabwe Open University. *International journal on new trends in education and their implications*, *3*(1), 118-133.

Elarde, J. V., & Chong, F. F. (2012, October). The pedagogical value of" eduployment" information technology internships in rural areas. In *Proceedings of the 13th annual conference on Information technology education* (pp. 189-194).

Maertz, C., Stoeberl, P., & Marks, J. (2014). Building successful internships: lessons from the research for interns, schools, and employers. *Career Development International*, *19*(1), 123-142.

Mhaka, S. (2019). *Perceptions on the Fourth Industrial Revolution and Agricultural Economics-The Case of the University of Pretoria Alumni*. University of Pretoria (South Africa).

Molino, M., Cortese, C. G., & Ghislieri, C. (2020). The promotion of technology acceptance and work engagement in industry 4.0: From personal resources to information and training. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, *17*(7), 2438.

Ogbuanya, T. C., Njoku, C. A., Kemi, P. O., & Ogunkelu, M. O. (2018). Evaluating the effectiveness of Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) programme to ensure quality of technical, vocational education and training in technical colleges in Lagos State. *International Journal of Vocational and Technical Education*, *10*(7), 61-69.

Ebere, C., Ibe, V. S. O., & Ononogbu, N. (2017). Evaluation of student's industrial work experience scheme (SIWES) on the attainment of employable skills by agricultural education graduates in Abia state. *International Journal of Agriculture and Home Economics Education*, *4*(1), 115-127.

Students Personal Development (SPD)-Hub (2020). Relevant skill acquisition: Importance to an Undergraduate. https//spdh.medium.com