

Militating factors against participation of internees in internship training programmes across selected Universities in South Western Nigeria

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Abstract:

This study examined the militating factors against participation of internees in various internship training programmes in South-western Nigeria. Specifically, personal characteristics of participants and constraints against participation in internship programmes by internees were investigated. Multistage sampling technique was adopted to select two hundred and sixty seven internees from selected universities including Ladoke Akintola University of Technology (LAUTECH), Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU), Federal University of Agriculture Abeokuta (FUNAB) and Ekiti State University (EKSU). Data were collected and analyzed using descriptive and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC). The findings indicate that the age of the respondents in all the universities sampled ranged between 24 and 25 years. More male than female respondents participated in the internship programme in most of the selected universities. Result of Correlation analysis ($p < 0.05$) shows that there exist significant relationship between poor funding, supervision, coordination and participation in internship training programmes. It was concluded that adequate funding and proper

preparations will go a long way to improve participation of internees in internship programmes.

Key words: coordination, internship and funding.

INTRODUCTION

Interest in field and industrial training programme of Agriculture is mounting rapidly, as there is an increasing concern by the government on the urgent problem recognized that there was strong need to provide the agricultural and rural populace (particularly the young people) with occupational skills and to broaden the skill of rural artisans, craftsmen and small entrepreneurs, such programmes in the past generally received a low priority.

Farinde *et al* (1997) revealed that youth are known to contribute significantly to agricultural and forestry activities such as land clearing, cultivation, marketing, distribution, and exploration. They also constitute the greater percentage (over 50%) of formidable force for community and national development as they supply a substantial amount of labour (Ekong, 2003). A large proportion of these youths are either in the tertiary institutions or secondary schools receiving one training or the other in various departments such as Agronomy, Agricultural Economics, Animal Production, Soil Science, Agricultural Extension and Home Management. Auta and Arokoyo (1992) reported that only participation of people who are energetic, creative, innovative productive and committed can bring about the expected development in agriculture. It is observed that young people tend to take special interest in conservation and management of natural resources and readily accept and promote sound environmental practices more than adults (Kalim, 1995).

Edozien (2002) reports that Nigeria's future lies in the participation of agricultural students and youth in the agricultural sector of the economy. Oloruntoba (2008) reports that Farm Year Training at Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta Nigeria presents a unique opportunity to reinforce the practical application of all the theoretical inputs that have gone into her products provided the programme was judiciously implemented by committed officials.

However, Fapojuwo *et al.* (2011) report that most agricultural graduates in Nigeria lack the knowledge and skills required to be self-employed and work in a rapidly changing environment.

Okorley (2001) reports that only 20% of the final year university agricultural students surveyed in Ghana indicate a definite willingness to pursue agribusiness as a self-employment venture. He also reports that some Heads of Department of Faculties of Agriculture in Ghana are of the opinion that the current curricula of teaching agriculture in the universities are not adequate enough to address training needs for self-employment in agribusiness.

Agricultural transformation will not take place in developing countries such as Nigeria unless there is improved technical knowledge and willingness of youth to be employed in the sector. The 2020 Vision Initiative has vigorously pushed for sustainable food for all by the year 2020. Thus, if agricultural production is to be sustainable, youth should be empowered with appropriate skills, knowledge and change in attitude towards farming so that young graduates will replace the aged farmers in agriculture. This will enhance agricultural productivity and food security for all in the immediate, medium and long terms on a sustainable basis. This informed the National University Commission's (NUC) policy which makes FPT mandatory for agricultural undergraduates in the fourth year of the five-year degree programme. In the medium or long

run, this measure would enable it to create a propitious environment for producing adequate food in a sustainable manner.

Several studies done elsewhere have indicated and concluded that a gap really exists between the quality of graduates produced and what the market demands (Mpairwe, 2010), For this and other reasons, training institutions and employers have accepted the need to seek mitigatory steps to bridge the gap. Among other steps, institutions of learning have introduced internship programmes also referred to as field attachment in some of their degree and non-degree programmes. There has also been the realisation that imparting the relevant practical skills is a partnership between the training institution and the prospective employers through student internships.

Based on the above antecedents, the following objectives are set for the study;

- To identify the personal characteristics of internees;
- To highlight the problems militating against internship training programmes in the selected institutions;

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in Ladoke Akintola University of Technology (LAUTECH) in Ogbomoso North Local Government Area of Oyo State, Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU) in Ife Central Local Government Area of Osun State, University of Ado Ekiti (EKSU) situated in Ado Ekiti, Ekiti State as well as federal University of Agriculture in Abeokuta (FUNAAB), Ogun State. Ogbomoso in Oyo State lies on $5^{\circ} 10^1$ North of the equator and $4^{\circ} 10^1$ East of the Greenwich Meridian and it is gateway to the Northern part of Nigeria from the South; it is located between Ilorin and Oyo. The climatic condition is influenced by

two major winds which are hot and dry wind. The type of crops grown well in the area (Ogbomoso) include Yam, Cassava, Potatoes and grain crops like millet, maize, guinea corn.

Ile – Ife in Osun State lies on 7° 8' North of the equator and 4° 5' East of the Greenwich meridian. Ile-Ife is an ancient Yoruba city in South-western Nigeria and it is located in present day Osun State. Ile-Ife has a moderate rainfall of 2000 - 3000mm per year. It has high temperature of about 27°C and high relative humidity of over 90% and it has a long period of raining season between 6-8 months and 3-4 month of dry seasons. Heavy rainfall in Ile-Ife makes it conducive in the cultivation of tree crops like cocoa, oil palm, kolanut and food crops like yam, cassava and maize.

Ado Ekiti is the capital of Ekiti State in south-west Nigeria. Ado Ekiti is inhabited by Yoruba- speaking people and is blessed with many institutions including University of Ado Ekiti and a Federal Polytechnic. It has a moderate rainfall of 2600 - 3500mm per year. It has high temperature of about 26°C and high relative humidity of over 72% and it has a long period of raining season between 6-8 months and 3-4 month of dry seasons. Heavy rainfall in the area gives rise to the growth of tree crops like cocoa, oil palm, kolanut and food crops like yam, cassava and maize.

The population of the study were 2012/2013 internees (2,564) that participated in the internship training programme in the selected South-west Universities namely (LAUTECH, OAU, FUNAAB and EKSU).

Multistage sampling procedure was employed for this study. The first stage involved random selection of two federal and two state universities in south-west of Nigeria. The next stage involved purposive selection of the Faculty of Agriculture from each of the selected institutions. All the Departments that are participating in the internship training programme in each of the Faculties of Agriculture from the

selected institutions were considered. Then, fifteen percent of all the students in each of the departments from LAUTECH, OAU, EKSU and FUNAAB were chosen. Proportional sampling procedure was adopted to randomly select 15% of the internees from the selected Universities. List of the students were collected from the SIWES coordinator on departmental basis and 15% were sampled per department to ensure wide coverage of 267 respondents (Internees) for this study.

Structured questionnaire was used to collect information related to internees' level of performance in internship training. The instrument was examined by many scholars and researchers in order to validate its content. Then, it was pretested in a university not included in the study to test its reliability which was found to be appropriate to carry out the study.

Data collected was analysed with descriptive and inferential statistical tools. Descriptive statistics such as frequency counts, means, percentages, charts were employed in the presentation of some data values. The mean was computed by using the following formula:

$$\text{Mean } \left(\bar{x} \right) = \frac{\sum x}{N}$$

Where $\sum x$ = sum of all the data value,
N = Number of data values

Inferential statistics used was Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) to determine the constraints against participation in internship programmes. The Pearson correlation coefficient is an index of the extent of the relationship between an independent variables and the dependent variable. The Pearson correlation coefficient (r) was obtained as follows:

$$r = \frac{\Sigma X Y - (\Sigma X) \left(\frac{\Sigma Y}{N} \right)}{\sqrt{\left(\Sigma X^2 - \frac{(\Sigma X)^2}{N} \right) - \left(\Sigma Y^2 - \frac{(\Sigma Y)^2}{N} \right)}}$$

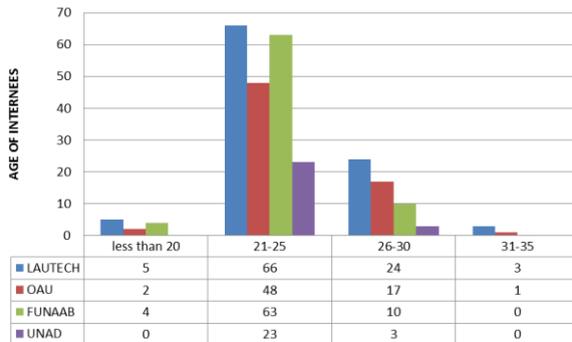
Where:

- X = Independent variables
- X² = Square of score on independent variables
- Y = Dependent variable
- Y² = Square of score independent variables
- XY = Product of X and Y
- Σ = summation of scores
- N = Number of Raw scores
- $\sqrt{\quad}$ = Square root

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Figure 4.1 indicated that internees were between 21 and 25 years in LAUTECH (67.4%), OAU (70.6%), FUNAAB (81.8%) and EKSU (88.5%). The mean age of most of the respondents was 25 years in LAUTECH while the mean age of internees from OAU, FUNAAB and EKSU was 24 years. The mean age of the respondents is an indication that they are youths (Ajayi, 2006). They are still undergoing learning processes which will invariably fashion out their future job attainment. This stage in life of the youths is very crucial as it connotes period when they are proactively wishing to satisfy the curiosity of their minds which will definitely affect their future attainment and may have either direct or indirect influence in the home and society at large since they are future generation of any community. The result is in line with the previous finding by Ojediran (1997) which claimed that for a country to attain economic stability, the agricultural sector must be vibrant and the youths must be encouraged to imbibe farming as a noble profession. Youths have the potential to overcome some of the major constraints to expanding animal production in developing countries such as pest control, feeding, genetic improvement and protection

against predators because they are often more open to new ideas and practices than adult farmers. They play an important role in awareness on different subjects (Ijere, 1992).



Mean = (LAUTECH=25), OAU=24, FUNAAB=24, EKSU=24, POOLED=24
 Source: Data analysis, 2013

Figure 1: Age of the respondents

Table 1 indicated the distribution of respondents by sex. The findings revealed that 58.2 percent of the respondents from LAUTECH were male while 41.8 percent of them were female. About 64.7 percent of the respondents from OAU were male while 35.3 percent were female, 66.2 percent of the respondents from FUNAAB were male while 33.8 percent were female. Also, 34.6 percent of the respondents from EKSU were male while 65.4 percent were female. On the overall, 60.0 percent were male while 40.0 percent were female from all the focal universities. The result of the finding therefore indicates that more of male than female respondents participated in internship programmes in the most of the selected universities except in EKSU where more of female than male participated in the programmes. This is an indication that male are more involved in agricultural activities since it is tedious and laborious. Some internship training programmes are geared for boys and girls, yet female students are more likely to

participate in work-based internships than male students. The finding is contrary to the report of Haimson and Bellotti (2001) which claimed that female students are more likely to participate in work-based internships than male students and as such additional work-based internships involving activities and settings that appeal to male students need to be developed. Also, additional work-based internships involving activities and settings that appeal to male students need to be developed (Haimson and Bellotti, 2001).

Internees' Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	159	60.0
Female	108	40.0
Total	267	100.0

Table 1: Gender of Internees Source: Data analysis, 2013

Table 2 showed the distribution of respondents by marital status. It was revealed that most of respondents in LAUTECH (89.8%), OAU (98.5%), FUNAAB (80.5%), and EKSU (100.0%) were single. However, more of internees in FUNAAB (19.5%) and LAUTECH (10.2%) were married. Evidently, most students remained single probably in order to be focused on the training and avoid the tendency of marriage pressure diverting their attention. The finding still tends to favour the singles category which indicates vividly that most of the internees are youths. Majority of the internees participated in the internship programme and these youths are known to contribute significantly to agricultural and forestry activities such as land clearing, cultivation, marketing, distribution, and exploration (Farinde *et al.*, 1997). The result is in line with that of Ovwigho and Ifie (2004) which stated that youths were considered as people who were not yet married and depended on their parents for social and economic survival.

Table 2: Distribution of respondents by marital status

Marital status	LAUTECH (Frequency, %)	OAU (Frequency, %)	FUNAAB (Frequency, %)	EKSU (Frequency, %)	POOLED (Frequency, %)
Single	88(89.8)	67(98.5)	62(80.5)	26(100.0)	241(90.3)
Married	10(10.2)	1(1.5)	15(19.5)	-	26(9.7)
Total	98(100.0)	68(100.0)	77(100.0)	26(100.0)	269(100.0)

Source: Data analysis, 2013

Table 3 indicates that LAUTECH introduced more entrepreneurial schemes into its training module. These include Crop Types Collection (CTC), horticulture, and snailry. However, CTC, horticulture and snailry, training programmes were not commonly emphasized in the curriculum in OAU, FUNAAB and EKSU. Also, apiary programme was very scanty in EKSU as well. The finding therefore revealed that poultry production was the most widely introduced programme in the selected universities. Moreover, different programmes are often integrated into the curriculum of most schools in order to motivate their practical experiences and internships have been identified as the training and experience component of that curriculum. They are career-oriented endeavours of practical application. The result supports previous finding that high schools focus the curriculum around internships so as to make learning real (Littke, 2004). This implies that student internships seem to have a sound educational foundation and philosophical basis. In order to increase practical perspectives of Agricultural training in the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences to meet the requirements of employers, students normally go through practical training both in the teaching and research farm. The teaching and research farm has about 10 different units which students must pass through during their practical year. This supports Olaifa (2003) report that identified training programmes in LAUTECH teaching and research farm as Apiary, Fisheries, Poultry, Piggery, Rabbitary, Sheep, Goat and Cattle, Feed mills, Crop type collection (C.T.C), Arable and permanent crops units.

Table 3: Distribution of respondents by training programme

Training programme introduced	LAUTECH (Frequency, %)	OAU (Frequency, %)	FUNAAB (Frequency, %)	EKSU(Frequency, %)	POOLED (Frequency, %)
Apiary	97(99.0)	66(97.1)	29(37.7)	3(11.5)	193(72.3)
Pasture management	84(85.7)	50(73.5)	32(41.6)	13(50.0)	178(66.7)
Cattle/sheep	96(98.0)	65(95.6)	59(76.6)	20(76.9)	238(89.1)
Crop Types Collection	91(92.9)	16(23.5)	22(28.6)	8(30.8)	136(50.9)
Fishery	98(100.0)	66(97.1)	56(72.7)	18(69.2)	236(88.6)
Poultry production	96(98.0)	68(100.0)	62(80.5)	24(92.3)	248(92.9)
Piggery	95(96.9)	67(98.5)	46(59.7)	19(73.1)	225(84.3)
Snailry	57(58.2)	11(16.2)	37(48.1)	7(26.9)	112(41.0)
Rabbitary	84(85.7)	66(97.1)	39(50.6)	19 (73.1)	206(77.1)
Crop production	92(93.9)	65(95.6)	42(54.5)	15(57.7)	212(79.4)
Horticulture	43(43.9)	14(20.6)	28(36.4)	11(42.3)	96(36.0)
Processing of agricultural products	8(82.3)	62(91.0)	65(84.4)	17(65.4)	206(77.2)
Farm mechanization	73(74.5)	62(91.2)	64(83.1)	18(69.2)	215(80.5)

*** Multiple responses**

Source: Data analysis, 2013

Table 4 indicated that poor funding of programme was the major militating problem against internees' participation in internship programme in LAUTECH (wms = 2.24), OAU (wms = 2.40) and EKSU (wms = 2.23) while inadequate facilities was the most commonly identified militating factor in FUNAAB (wms = 2.09). The result of the finding therefore revealed that poor funding was the most severe constraint militating against the effectiveness of internship training programme. This implies that fund is necessary to implement some important structures, machineries and skill acquires in order to provide a learning environment for actualizing internee's expectations in the focal universities. Adequate funding of internship training programmes is an important impetus meeting internees' expectations. The finding is in line with the previous study by Stasz and Brewer (1998) which claimed that work-based internship programmes have associated costs for their design, delivery and sometimes for student participation and this may have negative effects on some aspects of their school performance and may interfere with students' homework time.

Table 4: Distribution of respondents by problem militating against participating in internship training programme

	Category	LAUTECH		OAU		FUNAAB		EKSU		Pooled	
		wms	Rank	wms	rank	wms	wms	rank	wms	rank	rank
1	Poor funding of programme	2.24	1 st	2.40	1 st	2.05	2 nd	2.23	1 st	2.22	1 st
2	Inadequate number of supervisors	1.50	5 th	1.51	6 th	1.58	5 th	1.54	5 th	1.53	6 th
3	Poor coordination of programme	1.46	6 th	1.76	5 th	1.65	4 th	1.35	6 th	1.58	5 th
4	Poor motivation of staffs and students	1.62	4 th	1.94	4 th	1.52	6 th	1.77	4 th	1.68	4 th
5	Inadequate facilities	1.97	3 rd	2.29	3 rd	2.09	1 st	1.85	2 nd	2.07	2 nd
6	Inadequate farm inputs	2.01	2 nd	2.34	2 nd	1.84	3 rd	1.81	3 rd	2.02	3 rd
7	Only short time available for training	1.35	7 th	0.76	7 th	1.09	7 th	1.19	7 th	1.10	7 th

wms = weighted mean scores

Source: Data analysis, 2013

The information in table 5 shows that positive and significant relationship exist between poor motivation of staff ($r = - 0.104$), short time available for training ($r = 0.054$) and level of participation of internees in internship programmes. Conversely, there exists significant but negative relationship between poor coordination of programme ($r = - 0.912$); poor funding ($r = - 0.292$); inadequate supervision ($r = - 0.510$); poor motivation of staff ($r = - 0.104$); inadequate facilities ($r = - 0.204$); inadequate farm input ($r = - 0.102$) and level of participation of internees in various internship programmes.

The implication of the findings of this study is that those variables with negative and significant values indicate inverse relationship to participation of internees in internship programmes. That is, the more there is poor funding, inadequate supervisors, poor coordination of programmes, inadequate facilities, inadequate farm inputs, the lower the level of participation of internees in internship programmes. In simple terms, those constraints to could be described as very severe constraints to participation level of internees. However, the constraints with positive coefficients are those that could

not be considered as so serious as to threaten the participation level of internees. For instance poor funding will limit the availability of relevance training and human resources.

The findings further conform to the findings of Cleaver (1999) who found out that lack of material resources and proper organizational structures are real impediments to participation in educational and agricultural projects. In the case of poor funding, it will be very difficult to motivate staff as well as inadequate supervision due to inadequate facilities such as farm inputs.

Table 5: Summary of Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation of internees establishing relationship and perception of internees to internship programme for future job relevance

Constraints to participation in internship programme	r-Value	P- value	Remark
1) Poor funding	- 0.292*	0.064	S
2) Inadequate Supervision	- 0.510**	0.040	S
3) Poor Coordination of programme	- 0.912***	0.007	S
4) Poor motivation of Staff	- 0.104*	0.009	S
5) Inadequate Facilities	- 0.204*	0.001	S
6) Inadequate farm input	- 0.102*	0.096	S
7) Short time available for training programmes.	0.054*	0.081	S

Source: Data Analysis (2013)

***** Correlation coefficient significant at 0.01 level (2 tailed)**

**** Correlation coefficient significant at 0.05 level (2 tailed)**

***Correlation coefficient significant at 0.1 level (2 tailed)**

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

It was concluded that major constraints against participation of internees in internship programmes across our institutions involve amount of funding, quality of supervision and facilities provided and quantity of time allotted for the programme. It is hereby recommended that those in charge of training

programmes through internship should provide enabling environment for supervisors and internees to thrive.

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