



A TECHNICAL REPORT

ON

STUDENT INDUSTRIAL WORK EXPERIENCE SCHEME (SIWES)

UNDERTAKEN AT

SMC PLAZA

UPPER GAA-AKANBI, ILORIN KWARA STATE

BY

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CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The industrial training scheme is a periodical training for students in Nigeria tertiary institutions which exposes them to practical knowledge for what is been studied in their various lecture rooms. It is a compulsory standard in the university curriculum which bridges the gap between the lecture room theoretical learning and the practical application of this knowledge gained.

It focuses on exposing students to styles and equipments, professional works mentored and ways of safeguarding work areas, workers, industrial and organizational activities. It is founded by federal government of Nigeria and jointly coordinated by the Industrial Training Fund (I.T.F) and National University Commission (NUC)

1.1. MEANING OF SIWES

SIWES stands for Student Industrial Working Experience Scheme. The Student Industrial Working Experience Scheme (SIWES) is a planned and supervised training intervention based on stated, specific learning and career objectives geared towards developing the occupational competencies of the participants. It is a program required to be undertaken by all students of tertiary institutions in Nigeria pursuing courses in “specialized engineering, technical business, applied science and applied arts.”

The federal government on 8th October 1971 established the industrial training (ITF) in order to acquaint students on industrial method. SIWES which is a subsidiary was initiated to improve the students’ technical abilities to expose them to industrial culture thereby getting acquainted with the role to play towards the

technological advancement of the nation. It creates an avenue on environment in which the students are being exposed to areas of their various disciplines which enhances their mental and creative minds in the aspects of technology and development. It creates an avenue on environment in which the students are being exposed to areas of their various disciplines which enhances their mental and creative minds in the aspects of technology and development. It is therefore to carry out throughout their stay in the higher institution.

1.2 PURPOSE OF SIWES

The Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) is the accepted skills training program, which forms part of the approved minimum academic standards in the various degree programs for all the Nigerian Universities. It is an effort to bridge the gap existing between theory and practice of engineering and technology, science, agriculture, media, management and other professional educational programs in the Nigerian tertiary institutions. It is aimed at exposing students to machines and equipment, professional work methods and ways of safe-guarding the work areas and workers in industries and other organization.

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF SIWES

Specially, the objectives of the Student's Industrial Work Experience Scheme are to;

- i. Prepare students for the work situation they are likely to meet after graduation.
- ii. Provides an avenue for students in the Nigeria Universities to acquire industrial skills and experience in their course of study.

- iii. To make transition from the university to the world of work and thus enhancing students contacts for better job placements.
- iv. Enlist and strengthen employers' involvement in the entire educational process of preparing university graduates for employment in industry.
- v. Provides students with an opportunity to apply their theoretical knowledge in real work situation, thereby bridging the gap between university work and actual practices; and expose students to work methods and techniques in handling equipment and machinery that may not be available in the Universities.

CHAPTER TWO

2.1. SMC PLAZA

HISTORY OF SMC PLAZA

SMC Plaza, located at Upper Gaa Akanbi, Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria, was established with the primary focus of providing sales of provisions and daily needs to the residents of Ilorin and its environs. The business operates as a retail and wholesale establishment, catering to the growing demand for household essentials and consumables in the region.

While specific details about the plaza's operational milestones and historical evolution are limited, its establishment signifies a response to the increasing consumer demand for quality provisions and daily essentials. The plaza has become a trusted shopping destination for individuals and families seeking reliable and affordable household products.

Through its operations, SMC Plaza continues to play a vital role in enhancing the retail landscape in Ilorin, providing essential goods and contributing to the economic development of Kwara State.

OBJECTIVES

- **Customer Satisfaction:** To provide high-quality products and excellent customer service, ensuring a satisfying shopping experience for all customers.
- **Affordability and Accessibility:** To offer products at competitive prices, making household essentials accessible to all members of the community.
- **Product Variety:** To maintain a diverse range of provisions and daily needs to meet the different preferences and requirements of customers.

- **Community Support:** To contribute to the local economy by providing employment opportunities and supporting small-scale suppliers.
- **Expansion and Growth:** To continuously expand product offerings and explore opportunities for business growth within and beyond Ilorin.
- **Technology Integration:** To leverage technology for efficient inventory management, customer engagement, and seamless sales operations.
- **Sustainability Practices:** To adopt sustainable business practices that promote environmental responsibility and resource conservation.

FUNCTIONS/ DUTIES

- **Product Availability and Stock Management:** Ensuring a consistent supply of quality provisions and daily needs to meet customer demands. Regularly updating inventory to prevent stock shortages or excesses.
- **Customer Support Services:** Providing excellent customer service, assisting shoppers in finding products, addressing inquiries, and ensuring a satisfactory shopping experience.
- **Staff Training and Development:** Conducting regular training sessions to enhance staff knowledge on product handling, customer relations, and efficient sales techniques.
- **Pricing and Sales Strategy:** Implementing competitive pricing strategies and promotional offers to attract and retain customers while ensuring business profitability.
- **Security and Loss Prevention:** Enforcing safety measures to protect goods and customers, including CCTV surveillance and trained security personnel to prevent theft and other security risks.

- **Facility Maintenance:** Ensuring the cleanliness, organization, and proper functioning of the plaza, including storage rooms, shelves, and payment counters.
- **Inclusivity and Accessibility:** Creating a welcoming shopping environment for all customers, including provisions for persons with disabilities and easy navigation within the store.
- **Financial Management and Accountability:** Keeping accurate records of sales, expenses, and profit margins to maintain financial transparency and stability.
- **Health and Safety Compliance:** Adhering to health regulations by ensuring proper storage of perishable goods, maintaining hygiene, and implementing necessary food safety measures.
- **Community Engagement:** Engaging in corporate social responsibility by supporting local community programs, offering discounts to senior citizens, or participating in charitable activities.

SECTIONS AND UNITS

Here are some common sections or units that you will find in SMC Plaza:

- **Grocery Stores:** Outlets offering a wide range of food items, including grains, canned goods, and beverages.
- **Personal Care Shops:** Retailers providing toiletries, beauty products, and hygiene essentials.
- **Household Supplies Vendors:** Stores selling cleaning agents, kitchenware, and other domestic necessities.
- **Beverage Centers:** Shops specializing in both alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks.

- **Convenience Stores:** Units offering a mix of snacks, magazines, and quick-grab items for customers on the move.
- **Pharmacies:** Sections dedicated to over-the-counter medicines and health-related products.
- **Fresh Produce Stalls:** Areas where vendors sell fruits, vegetables, and other perishable goods.
- **Bakeries:** Shops providing freshly baked bread, pastries, and other confectioneries.
- **Butcheries:** Units specializing in fresh meat products.
- **Dairy Product Outlets:** Stores offering milk, cheese, yogurt, and related items.

CHAPTER THREE

3.1 OUTLINE OF WORK DONE

During my period of training at SMC Plaza, Ilorin, which specializes in the sales of provisions and daily needs, I was assigned to the Sales and Inventory Department and introduced to my supervisor. I received an orientation on the plaza's operational structure, customer service approach, and the core principles of retail management. From the Sales and Inventory Unit, I learned the fundamentals of stock management and customer relations. I gained insights into how to organize and display products for maximum visibility and easy accessibility. This included restocking shelves, arranging items according to categories, and ensuring that products with closer expiry dates were given priority in sales.

I also acquired knowledge about point-of-sale (POS) transactions, where I learned how to operate a POS machine, process customer payments, and issue receipts. Additionally, I was introduced to cash handling procedures, including balancing sales records at the end of the day to ensure accuracy in financial transactions. I became familiar with the importance of customer service, which involved attending to customers' inquiries, assisting them in locating products, and ensuring they had a satisfactory shopping experience.

In the Inventory Management Unit, I learned about stock-taking procedures, such as checking incoming goods, recording stock levels, and identifying shortages. This experience emphasized the significance of maintaining accurate inventory records to avoid stock depletion or overstocking. The training also exposed me to supplier interactions, where I observed and assisted in receiving goods from suppliers, verifying their quality and quantity, and updating stock records accordingly.

In the Marketing and Promotions Unit, I was introduced to sales strategies aimed at boosting revenue. I learned how to set up promotional displays, advertise discount sales, and engage customers in product recommendations based on their preferences. I also became familiar with the use of digital marketing tools, such as social media and online platforms, to reach a wider customer base and promote new stock arrivals.

Additionally, I honed my organizational and teamwork skills by collaborating with other employees to ensure smooth daily operations. I assisted in maintaining cleanliness and orderliness within the store, ensuring that the shopping environment was conducive for customers. I also learned the importance of time management in handling multiple tasks efficiently within a fast-paced retail setting.

The experience at SMC Plaza helped me develop practical skills in customer service, sales management, and inventory control. It also highlighted the importance of accuracy, teamwork, and professionalism in a retail business environment. This training has equipped me with valuable knowledge and hands-on experience that will be beneficial for my future career in business and management.

3.2 DESCRIPTION OF WORK DONE

This section provides an explanation of the work done during the training program

- **Administrative Support:** I was involved in organizing and maintaining sales records, inventory logs, and customer transaction reports to ensure smooth daily operations.
- **Stock Management:** I assisted in monitoring stock levels, restocking shelves, and arranging products systematically to enhance accessibility and presentation.

- Customer Service: I attended to customers, provided product recommendations, handled inquiries, and ensured a positive shopping experience.
- Sales Assistance: I participated in processing sales transactions, handling cash and digital payments, and ensuring accurate record-keeping.
- ICT Integration: I utilized digital tools to update inventory records, track sales trends, and generate reports for business analysis.
- Marketing and Promotion: I assisted in implementing promotional strategies, including arranging product displays and informing customers about ongoing discounts.
- Store Maintenance: I contributed to keeping the store environment clean, organized, and welcoming for customers.
- Supplier Coordination: I assisted in receiving deliveries, verifying supply quantities, and updating stock records accordingly.
- Financial Documentation: I helped in preparing daily sales reports, reconciling transactions, and ensuring accurate bookkeeping.
- Public Relations and Communication: I supported customer engagement through verbal communication and promotional messaging to enhance customer satisfaction and business growth.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.1 KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS/ EXPERIENCE ACQUIRED

- **Sales and Marketing Techniques:** I learned effective sales strategies, including product promotion, customer persuasion, and upselling techniques to maximize sales and customer satisfaction.
- **Customer Service Skills:** I gained hands-on experience in handling customer inquiries, complaints, and requests professionally, ensuring a positive shopping experience.
- **Inventory Management:** I developed skills in stock-taking, product arrangement, and monitoring inventory levels to prevent shortages or overstocking.
- **Cash Handling and Financial Transactions:** I acquired proficiency in processing payments using cash, POS machines, and mobile transfers, ensuring accuracy in financial transactions.
- **Retail Operations:** I learned the day-to-day management of a retail store, including product display, store organization, and maintaining a clean and appealing shopping environment.
- **Product Knowledge:** I became familiar with different types of provisions and daily needs, including their uses, storage requirements, and expiration monitoring for quality assurance.
- **Teamwork and Collaboration:** Working with colleagues at SMC Plaza helped me understand the importance of teamwork in achieving sales targets and providing excellent customer service.
- **Problem-Solving Abilities:** I developed the ability to address customer complaints, resolve conflicts, and manage unexpected challenges in a retail setting.

- **Communication Skills:** Through regular interaction with customers and colleagues, I honed my verbal and written communication abilities, ensuring clear and effective information exchange.
- **Time Management:** Managing multiple tasks such as attending to customers, restocking shelves, and recording sales helped me improve my ability to prioritize and manage time efficiently.
- **Record-Keeping and Documentation:** I learned how to maintain accurate sales records, track daily earnings, and document business transactions for accountability.
- **Adaptability and Flexibility:** I enhanced my ability to work under pressure, adjust to different work shifts, and handle high customer influx during peak business hours.
- **Business Ethics and Professionalism:** I gained insights into maintaining integrity in sales, providing honest product recommendations, and fostering trust with customers.
- **Basic Digital Skills:** I developed familiarity with using digital tools such as POS machines and inventory management systems to improve efficiency in retail operations.
- **Entrepreneurial Insights:** Observing business operations at SMC Plaza provided me with valuable knowledge on how to run and manage a small-scale business successfully.

4.2 PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED DURING THE TRAINING

The success of my training is undisputed, but it was not devoid of rough edges. I experienced some challenges, among these are:

- **Transportation Costs:** One of the major challenges I faced was the high cost of transportation. Commuting daily to SMC Plaza in Ilorin required an average

expense of ₦800, which was financially straining, especially since no remuneration or allowance was provided to cover the costs. This made it difficult to manage my finances effectively throughout the internship period.

- **Limited Hands-on Experience:** While my internship provided an opportunity to observe the sales and management processes at SMC Plaza, there were times when I was assigned menial tasks unrelated to my field of study. Instead of gaining practical experience in office technology and management, I often found myself restocking shelves, running errands, or performing routine tasks that did not enhance my professional development.
- **Inadequate Supervision:** At times, I struggled with inadequate guidance and supervision during my internship. There were instances where my tasks were not clearly defined, leading to confusion and inefficiency. The lack of regular feedback from supervisors made it difficult to track my progress and improve in areas where I needed support.
- **Technological Challenges:** SMC Plaza relied on traditional bookkeeping and manual inventory systems rather than modern office and management technologies. This limitation restricted my exposure to digital tools such as inventory management software and automated sales systems, which are crucial in contemporary business operations.
- **Communication Barriers:** Effective communication was sometimes a challenge due to unclear instructions and differences in work expectations. Miscommunication between staff and interns often led to misunderstandings, errors in tasks, and inefficiencies in service delivery.
- **Workload and Time Management:** Balancing my internship duties with personal responsibilities posed a significant challenge. The nature of the work at SMC Plaza required long hours of standing and attending to customers, which left me physically exhausted. Managing time effectively between

assigned tasks and other obligations became difficult due to the heavy workload.

- Safety Concerns: Although the work environment at SMC Plaza was relatively safe, there were concerns about ergonomics and the working conditions. Long hours of standing without proper seating arrangements often led to physical discomfort and fatigue. Additionally, handling heavy stock items without adequate safety measures posed a minor risk of injury.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1. CONCLUSION

During my period of training at SMC Plaza, Ilorin, which specializes in the sales of provisions and daily needs, I was assigned to various departments and introduced to my supervisor. I received an orientation on the store's operational structure, sales strategies, and customer service principles. This introduction provided me with a clear understanding of how retail businesses function and the importance of effective sales techniques in ensuring customer satisfaction.

From the Inventory Management Department, I gained in-depth knowledge of stock control and proper record-keeping. I learned how to receive, arrange, and display goods to enhance visibility and accessibility for customers. Additionally, I was trained on inventory tracking systems, monitoring stock levels, and managing restocking procedures to prevent shortages and overstocking. I also acquired skills in handling expired or damaged goods, ensuring compliance with store policies and regulations.

In the Sales and Customer Service Unit, I was trained on effective communication skills and customer relationship management. I learned how to interact with customers professionally, address their inquiries, and assist them in making purchasing decisions. I also gained experience in handling cash transactions, using point-of-sale (POS) systems, and issuing receipts. Additionally, I was exposed to various sales promotion techniques, including discounts, loyalty programs, and product bundling, aimed at increasing customer engagement and revenue generation.

At the Store Administration and Logistics Unit, I observed how supplies were sourced, received, and distributed efficiently. I learned about supplier coordination, procurement processes, and inventory documentation. I also participated in store organization, ensuring a clean and well-arranged shopping environment to enhance the customer experience.

Moreover, I developed important professional skills such as time management, teamwork, and problem-solving. I understood the significance of maintaining a positive work attitude, adapting to dynamic retail environments, and meeting customer expectations. My experience at SMC Plaza has provided me with practical knowledge of retail operations and essential business practices, which will be beneficial in my future career.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Comprehensive Orientation Program:** Institutions and organizations offering SIWES placements should provide thorough orientation programs for students.
- **Structured Learning Objectives:** There should be clearly defined learning objectives tailored to the student's field of study. This ensures that students engage in relevant activities that enhance their practical skills and align with their academic curriculum.
- **Enhanced Supervision and Mentorship:** Organizations should assign experienced professionals to mentor students throughout their SIWES period.
- **Provision of Adequate Resources:** To facilitate effective learning, organizations must provide students with access to the necessary tools, equipment, and resources. For example, in academic or educational settings,

access to teaching aids, digital tools, and reference materials can significantly enhance the training experience.

- **Comprehensive Assessment and Feedback Mechanism:** At the end of the SIWES program, a robust evaluation system should be implemented to assess the student's performance.