



REPORT ON STUDENT INDUSTRIAL WORK EXPERIENCE SCHEME (SIWES)

HELD AT

DIABOND SHEETS AND BOARD CONCEPT

No 17, AKINSHOLA STREET, DOPEMU, AGEGE, LAGOS STATE

WRITTEN BY

USMAN SOFIAT REKIYAT

MATRIC NO: ND/23/PAD/PT/0404

SUBMITTED TO

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

INSTITUTION OF FINANCIAL AND MANAGEMENT STUDIES (IFMS), PUBLIC
ADMINISTRATION

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF
NATIONAL DIPLOMA (ND)

DURATION: 1ST OCTOBER – 30TH NOVEMBER

CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that **USMAN SOFIAT REKIYAT** with Matriculation Number **ND/23/PAD/PT/0404**, a student of the **DEPARTMENT of PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION** , has successfully completed the Student Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) at **DIABOND SHEETS AND BOARD CONCEPT**. In the Department of the Public Administration Department, Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin.

SIWES SUPERVISOR

()

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the management and staff of Diabond Sheets and Board Concept for the opportunity to undertake my Student Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) at their esteemed company. Their guidance, patience, and support throughout my training have been invaluable in shaping my professional knowledge.

I also extend my appreciation to my supervisors and colleagues at Diabond Sheets and Board Concept, who provided me with hands-on experience in sales and product differentiation. Their mentorship helped me gain a deeper understanding of customer relations and product quality assessment.

My heartfelt gratitude goes to my lecturers and coordinators at IFMS, Public Administration, for their continuous support and for ensuring a seamless SIWES placement. Lastly, I thank my family and friends for their encouragement throughout this learning experience.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report documents my SIWES experience at Diabond Sheets and Board Concept, a company specializing in the decoration and beautification of buildings, both interior and exterior. The training lasted for two months (October 1st – November 30th) and took place at the company's office in Dopemu, Agege, Lagos State.

During my training, I was assigned to the Sales Department, where I learned how to identify different types of boards, their colors, prices, and qualities. I also gained customer service experience, helping clients select the best materials for their needs.

This report provides an in-depth analysis of my responsibilities, the organizational structure, tools used, challenges encountered, skills acquired, and the impact of the training on my career development. The training significantly improved my technical knowledge, interpersonal skills, and problem-solving abilities, which will be beneficial for my future career.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Title Page
2. Acknowledgments
3. Executive Summary
4. Table of Contents

Chapters

Chapter 1: Introduction

- 1.1 Background of SIWES
- 1.2 Objectives of SIWES
- 1.3 Overview of Diabond Sheets and Board Concept
- 1.4 Importance of SIWES to Public Administration Students
- 1.5 Goals and Expectations of the Training

Chapter 2: Organizational Structure and Overview

- 2.1 Overview of Diabond Sheets and Board Concept
- 2.2 Organizational Structure and Departments
- 2.3 Roles and Responsibilities of the Sales Department

Chapter 3: Activities and Responsibilities during Training

- 3.1 Overview of Assigned Duties
- 3.2 Departmental Work Experience
 - 3.2.1 Sales Department Responsibilities
- 3.3 Tools and Technologies Used
- 3.4 Challenges Encountered

Chapter 4: Skills Acquired and Lessons Learned

- 4.1 Technical Skills (Product Knowledge, Pricing, Customer Service)
- 4.2 Interpersonal Skills (Communication, Teamwork, Customer Interaction)

4.3 Problem-Solving and Decision-Making Skills

4.4 Relevance of Skills to Future Career

Chapter 5: Impact of SIWES on Career Development

5.1 Bridging the Gap between Theory and Practice

5.2 Contribution to Professional Growth

5.3 Networking Opportunities

Chapter 6: Challenges and Recommendations

6.1 Challenges Faced During the Training

6.2 Recommendations for Improvement of SIWES

6.3 Suggestions for Future Participants

Chapter 7: Conclusion

7.1 Summary of Experience

7.2 Overall Impact of SIWES

References

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of SIWES

The **Student Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES)** was established by the **Industrial Training Fund (ITF) in 1973** to address the growing concern about the lack of practical experience among students in Nigerian tertiary institutions. The gap between theoretical knowledge acquired in the classroom and the practical skills needed in the workplace was becoming increasingly evident, leading to challenges in employability and professional competence.

SIWES was introduced as a structured program designed to provide students with an opportunity to **gain hands-on experience in real-world industrial and business settings**. By placing students in relevant industries, SIWES ensures that they develop technical skills and competencies that align with their academic disciplines. Over the years, SIWES has grown into a **mandatory industrial training program** for students in science, technology, business administration, and related fields, including public administration.

The scheme is managed and supervised by several organizations, including:

- **The Industrial Training Fund (ITF)** – Responsible for designing policies, overseeing implementation, and ensuring compliance with SIWES regulations.
- **The National Universities Commission (NUC)** – Supervises SIWES for university students.
- **The National Board for Technical Education (NBTE)** – Oversees SIWES for polytechnic and technical students.
- **The National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE)** – Monitors SIWES for colleges of education students.

Institutions of higher learning collaborate with industries to ensure students gain **practical knowledge, technical skills, and professional exposure** before graduating. The **SIWES program typically lasts between three to six months**, depending on the field of study and the institution's requirements.

1.2 Objectives of SIWES

SIWES was designed to serve as a bridge between **academic learning and industrial practice**, helping students develop competencies that will make them employable and efficient in their professional careers. The primary objectives of SIWES include:

1. Exposure to Real-World Industry Practices

Through SIWES, students gain **first-hand experience** of how industries operate, exposing them to **business processes, customer service, and sales operations**. For students placed in technical industries, they learn how **tools, equipment, and technology are applied in real-world settings**.

2. Enhancement of Technical and Interpersonal Skills

SIWES provides students with opportunities to develop:

- **Technical skills**, such as product knowledge, pricing, inventory management, and customer interaction.
- **Interpersonal skills**, including teamwork, problem-solving, communication, and negotiation skills.

These skills are essential for professional growth and career success.

3. Bridging the Gap Between Theory and Practical Knowledge

Many students learn concepts theoretically in the classroom but struggle to apply them in real-world scenarios. SIWES ensures that students can **practically apply what they have learned** by

working in business environments, handling real-life challenges, and making professional decisions.

4. Preparing Students for the Workplace

SIWES serves as an early career development experience, giving students an **understanding of workplace ethics, professionalism, time management, and customer relations**. This prepares them for employment or entrepreneurship after graduation.

5. Building a Professional Network

Through industrial training, students interact with professionals in their field, building **relationships and connections** that may be useful for future job opportunities, mentorship, and career advancement.

1.3 Overview of Diabond Sheets and Board Concept

Diabond Sheets and Board Concept is a company specializing in the **decoration and beautification of buildings, both interior and exterior**. The company provides a wide range of **decorative boards, wall panels, and finishing materials** used in **homes, offices, hotels, and commercial buildings**.

1.3.1 Location and Operations

The company operates from **17, Akinshola Street, Dopemu, Agege, Lagos State**. It serves both **individual customers and large businesses**, offering products that enhance the aesthetic and functional aspects of buildings.

1.3.2 Products and Services

Diabond Sheets and Board Concept deals in various types of decorative and construction boards, including:

- **PVC Boards** – Used for ceilings and wall decorations.

- **MDF (Medium Density Fiberboard)** – Commonly used for furniture and interior finishing.
- **Plywood and Chipboard** – Suitable for construction and decoration.
- **Aluminum Composite Panels** – Used for modern building facades.

The company also provides **consultation services** to help customers choose the best materials for their projects based on **quality, durability, and budget**.

1.3.3 Importance of Diabond Sheets and Board Concept in the Industry

The demand for **high-quality finishing materials** in the construction and real estate sector has increased significantly in Nigeria. Companies like **Diabond Sheets and Board Concept** play a vital role in **enhancing the aesthetic appeal and functionality of buildings**, making them **more attractive, durable, and valuable**.

1.4 Importance of SIWES to Public Administration Students

While **Public Administration** primarily focuses on governance, policy-making, and management, **SIWES plays a crucial role in developing skills that are valuable in business administration, customer service, and organizational leadership**.

1.4.1 Enhancing Customer Service and Communication Skills

Public administration professionals often work in **government offices, businesses, and customer-oriented roles**. The training at Diabond Sheets and Board Concept helped me develop:

- **Effective communication skills**, enabling me to interact professionally with customers.
- **Customer service skills**, such as handling inquiries, complaints, and sales transactions.

1.4.2 Practical Knowledge of Business Operations

Through SIWES, I gained insight into how businesses operate, including:

- **Inventory and stock management.**
- **Pricing and financial transactions.**
- **Sales strategies and marketing techniques.**

1.4.3 Decision-Making and Problem-Solving

Handling customer demands, recommending the best products, and managing business operations helped me develop **critical thinking and problem-solving skills**, which are essential for public administration professionals.

1.4.4 Exposure to Organizational Management

The training provided me with an opportunity to understand **organizational structures, departmental roles, and team dynamics**, which are crucial in both **public and private sector administration**.

1.5 Goals and Expectations of the Training

At the beginning of my SIWES program at **Diabond Sheets and Board Concept**, I had specific goals and expectations. These included:

1.5.1 Gaining First-Hand Experience in the Sales Department

Since the **Sales Department** plays a crucial role in **customer engagement and business growth**, I aimed to understand:

- How to **interact with customers professionally**.
- The process of **handling transactions and product recommendations**.

1.5.2 Understanding Different Types of Boards, Their Colors, Prices, and Uses

One of my primary objectives was to **learn about the different board types**, their:

- **Functions** (e.g., MDF vs. PVC boards).

- **Price variations** based on quality and demand.
- **Color options** and aesthetic suitability for different projects.

1.5.3 Learning Professional Customer Interaction

Since **customer service is crucial in business and public administration**, I aimed to:

- **Improve my communication skills.**
- **Understand how to assist customers in selecting products.**
- **Develop negotiation and persuasion skills.**

1.5.4 Applying Theoretical Knowledge to Real-Life Situations

Lastly, I wanted to **bridge the gap between academic knowledge and practical application** by observing how businesses operate and making meaningful contributions during my training.

This chapter has provided an overview of **SIWES, its objectives, and the importance of industrial training in bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical skills.** It also introduced **Diabond Sheets and Board Concept**, highlighting its role in the **decorative and building materials industry.** Furthermore, the chapter outlined the significance of **SIWES for Public Administration students**, emphasizing the relevance of **customer service, sales, and organizational management skills.**

With this foundation, the next chapters will explore the **organizational structure, roles, responsibilities, and activities undertaken during my training.**

CHAPTER TWO

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND OVERVIEW

2.1 Overview of Diabond Sheets and Board Concept

Diabond Sheets and Board Concept is a company dedicated to the **beautification and decoration of buildings**, offering a wide range of **decorative and construction boards** for both **interior and exterior designs**. The company caters to **homeowners, architects, builders, and interior designers**, providing materials that enhance the aesthetics and durability of structures.

2.1.1 Nature of Business and Operations

Diabond Sheets and Board Concept specializes in selling **high-quality decorative boards**, ensuring that customers get **durable, stylish, and cost-effective materials** for their projects. The company offers products suitable for:

- **Wall paneling and ceilings.**
- **Office and home interior decorations.**
- **Commercial and residential building enhancements.**

2.1.2 Location and Customer Base

Located at **17, Akinshola Street, Dopemu, Agege, Lagos State**, the company serves **both walk-in customers and large-scale businesses**, including **construction firms, hotels, and interior design agencies**.

2.1.3 Products Offered

Diabond Sheets and Board Concept provides a variety of decorative boards, including:

- **PVC Boards** – Used for ceilings and wall coverings.

- **MDF (Medium Density Fiberboard)** – Ideal for furniture and decorative designs.
- **Plywood and Chipboard** – Common in construction and furniture making.
- **Aluminum Composite Panels** – Used for modern exterior designs and cladding.

These products come in different **colors, textures, and quality grades**, allowing customers to select the most suitable option for their needs.

2.1.4 Importance of the Company in the Industry

With the increasing demand for **modern and stylish home and office decorations**, Diabond Sheets and Board Concept plays a crucial role in **providing quality materials that improve the aesthetic and functional value of buildings**. The company's products are used in:

- **Hotels and hospitality centers** to create welcoming environments.
- **Offices and corporate buildings** for professional and elegant appearances.
- **Residential homes** for modern and stylish interior designs.

2.2 Organizational Structure and Departments

To ensure **efficient operations and excellent customer service**, Diabond Sheets and Board Concept is structured into different departments, each with specific responsibilities.

2.2.1 Sales Department

The **Sales Department** is the backbone of the company, handling **customer transactions, pricing, and product recommendations**. It plays a crucial role in **advising customers on the best products**, ensuring they select the right materials for their projects.

2.2.2 Customer Service and Support

This department works closely with sales personnel to **handle inquiries, complaints, and after-sales services**. It ensures customers receive **satisfactory service and support** when choosing products.

2.2.3 Inventory and Stock Management

Responsible for **managing stock levels, restocking products, and ensuring that the right materials are available**, this department ensures that there is no shortage of in-demand products.

2.2.4 Accounts and Finance Department

Handles **financial transactions, pricing strategies, and budgeting**, ensuring that all sales and purchases are properly recorded.

2.2.5 Management and Administration

Oversees the overall **operations, employee supervision, and business strategy**, ensuring that the company runs efficiently.

2.3 Roles and Responsibilities of the Sales Department

The **Sales Department** plays a crucial role in ensuring that customers receive **the best product recommendations** based on their needs. Since **Diabond Sheets and Board Concept** is a product-based company, the success of the business heavily depends on **effective sales strategies, customer satisfaction, and product knowledge**.

2.3.1 My Responsibilities in the Sales Department

During my SIWES training, I worked in the **Sales Department**, where I was responsible for the following:

1. Attending to Customers

- Welcoming and assisting customers.
- Understanding customer needs and guiding them in choosing the best products.
- Answering customer inquiries regarding product specifications, prices, and availability.

2. Understanding the Various Types of Boards, Their Quality, and Prices

- Learning about different board types, their textures, and their uses.
- Understanding price variations based on **quality, durability, and brand**.
- Differentiating between **premium-quality and budget-friendly boards**.

3. Providing Accurate Product Information to Customers

- Explaining the benefits of different boards to customers.
- Educating customers on the **best products for interior vs. exterior use**.
- Recommending alternatives when a specific product was out of stock.

4. Assisting in Pricing and Sales Transactions

- Understanding the pricing strategy used by the company.
- Assisting in preparing **sales receipts and invoices**.
- Handling **basic cash and electronic payment transactions**.

5. Managing Customer Orders and Requests

- Taking customer orders and ensuring their timely processing.
- Keeping records of popular products to understand customer preferences.

6. Learning Sales and Negotiation Skills

- Observing how experienced sales representatives **handle negotiations**.
- Practicing persuasive communication to **convince customers to buy quality products**.

2.3.2 Importance of the Sales Department in the Company

The **Sales Department** is the heart of Diabond Sheets and Board Concept, as it generates revenue and ensures customer satisfaction. Its key functions include:

1. Revenue Generation

The department directly contributes to the company's profitability by **selling products and meeting sales targets**.

2. Customer Relationship Management

By offering excellent service, the sales team builds **long-term relationships with customers**, ensuring **repeat business and customer loyalty**.

3. Market Awareness and Business Growth

Through customer interactions, the Sales Department gathers valuable insights into **market trends, customer preferences, and product demands**, helping the company improve its offerings.

This chapter has provided an in-depth look at **Diabond Sheets and Board Concept's organizational structure**, highlighting the **various departments and their roles**. The chapter also focused on the **Sales Department**, which plays a key role in **customer service, revenue generation, and business growth**.

During my SIWES training, I gained **valuable experience in sales, customer interactions, product knowledge, and pricing strategies**. These skills will be beneficial in my future career, helping me excel in **business operations, customer service, and administrative roles**.

The next chapter will explore the **daily activities, responsibilities, and challenges faced during the training**.

CHAPTER THREE

ACTIVITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES DURING TRAINING

3.1 Overview of Assigned Duties

During my Student Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) training at **Diabond Sheets and Board Concept**, I was assigned to the **Sales Department**, where my primary responsibility was **assisting customers in selecting the appropriate boards** for their needs. My role required me to understand the **different types of boards, their quality, prices, and intended uses** to ensure that customers received the best products for their projects.

My daily activities included:

- **Attending to customers and understanding their specific needs.**
- **Providing recommendations on board types, colors, and prices.**
- **Handling sales transactions and ensuring accurate pricing.**
- **Organizing and managing stock to track available products.**
- **Learning effective communication and customer service skills.**

This training period provided me with an opportunity to develop my **sales, negotiation, and product knowledge skills**, which are essential in a business setting.

3.2 Departmental Work Experience

3.2.1 Sales Department Responsibilities

The **Sales Department** is an essential part of **Diabond Sheets and Board Concept**, as it directly impacts revenue generation and customer satisfaction. My experience in this department involved handling several key tasks that contributed to both my personal development and the smooth operation of the company.

1. Assisting Customers in Selecting the Right Product

One of my major responsibilities was **helping customers choose the best product** based on their requirements. This involved:

- **Understanding customer needs** – Whether they needed a board for an office, home, or commercial space.
- **Recommending the right board type** – Explaining the difference between **PVC, MDF, plywood, and aluminum composite panels**.
- **Advising on colors and quality** – Informing customers about the available colors and helping them select the most suitable option for their project.

Through this process, I learned how to **match customer preferences with product specifications**, ensuring they were satisfied with their purchases.

2. Providing Accurate Pricing and Product Descriptions

Customers often asked about **product prices and specifications**, and I was responsible for giving them **accurate information**. This included:

- **Checking the price list** to ensure the correct amount was quoted.
- **Explaining price differences** based on **board quality, thickness, and brand**.
- **Helping customers compare options** to make informed decisions.

This role improved my **attention to detail and accuracy** when dealing with product pricing and descriptions.

3. Assisting in Sales Transactions and Processing Orders

I worked closely with other sales representatives to **complete transactions and ensure customer satisfaction**. My tasks included:

- **Recording customer orders and confirming product availability**.
- **Processing cash and electronic payments**.

- **Preparing receipts and invoices for customers.**
- **Ensuring customers received the correct products based on their orders.**

Handling these responsibilities helped me understand **business transactions, pricing strategies, and customer engagement.**

4. Managing Stock and Organizing Products

Since the company deals with **various types of boards**, it was important to **keep track of available stock**. My role in inventory management involved:

- **Checking stock levels and updating records when sales were made.**
- **Organizing the store to ensure easy access to different board types.**
- **Notifying supervisors when products were running low.**

By participating in stock management, I gained knowledge about **inventory control and product arrangement**, which are crucial in retail and business operations.

5. Learning Effective Customer Service and Communication

A major aspect of my training was interacting with customers professionally. I learned how to:

- **Communicate effectively and confidently with customers.**
- **Handle customer complaints and inquiries politely.**
- **Build relationships with customers to encourage repeat business.**

This experience helped me **develop interpersonal skills and confidence in handling sales interactions.**

3.3 Tools and Technologies Used

To perform my duties effectively, I had to **utilize several tools and resources** that helped me in customer service and sales operations. Some of the tools I used include:

1. Product Catalogs for Reference

The **product catalog** contained details about different board types, including:

- **Material composition** (e.g., PVC, MDF, aluminum composite).
- **Available colors and textures.**
- **Recommended applications (interior vs. exterior use).**

This helped me provide **accurate product descriptions** to customers.

2. Price Lists for Customer Information

Price lists were essential in helping customers **compare different board types and make informed choices.** I used these lists to:

- **Quote accurate prices for each product.**
- **Explain price variations based on quality and brand.**
- **Provide customers with budget-friendly options.**

3. Sales Records and Inventory Lists

Keeping track of **sales and available stock** was an important part of my duties. These records helped in:

- **Monitoring product availability.**
- **Ensuring customers did not order out-of-stock items.**
- **Preventing overpricing or underpricing errors.**

4. Sales Registers and Transaction Systems

During my training, I observed and assisted in the **recording of customer purchases** using sales registers. I also learned how to:

- **Process payments using cash and electronic methods.**

- **Issue receipts and invoices to customers.**
- **Verify completed transactions to ensure accuracy.**

These tools **helped streamline sales operations**, ensuring **efficient customer service and transaction processing**.

3.4 Challenges Encountered

While my training experience was highly beneficial, I faced **several challenges** that required adaptability and patience.

1. Understanding the Different Board Types and Their Uses

At the beginning of my training, I struggled with **identifying the various board materials, their colors, prices, and specific applications**. However, through constant learning, I was able to:

- Differentiate between **PVC, MDF, plywood, and aluminum composite boards**.
- Understand **which board types were best suited for specific projects**.
- Accurately describe the benefits of each board type to customers.

2. Communicating Effectively with Customers

Interacting with different customers required me to **adjust my communication style** based on their preferences. Some challenges I faced included:

- Handling **impatient customers** who wanted immediate assistance.
- Explaining **technical product details** in a simple and understandable way.
- Managing **multiple customers at once** during busy sales periods.

With time, I improved my **communication, patience, and customer engagement skills**.

3. Adapting to a Fast-Paced Sales Environment

Since the Sales Department is the **busiest section of the company**, I had to:

- Work **quickly and efficiently** to assist customers.
- Keep up with **pricing updates and product availability**.
- Maintain **accuracy while handling multiple sales transactions**.

Despite the initial pressure, I gradually adapted to the fast-paced nature of sales, learning **time management and multitasking skills**.

This chapter has provided an in-depth look at my **daily activities, responsibilities, tools used, and challenges faced** during my SIWES training at **Diabond Sheets and Board Concept**.

Through my **practical experience in the Sales Department**, I developed **essential skills in customer service, sales transactions, product knowledge, and inventory management**.

The next chapter will focus on the **technical and interpersonal skills acquired** during my training and how they relate to my future career.

CHAPTER FOUR

SKILLS ACQUIRED AND LESSONS LEARNED

During my **two-month training** at **Diabond Sheets and Board Concept**, I acquired several important skills that have significantly enhanced both my **professional and personal development**. These skills were gained through **hands-on experience, interactions with customers, and collaboration with colleagues** in the **Sales Department**.

The skills I developed can be broadly categorized into:

- **Technical skills** – knowledge and abilities related to product handling, sales, and stock management.
- **Interpersonal skills** – essential for communication, teamwork, and customer relations.
- **Problem-solving and decision-making skills** – necessary for handling customer complaints and ensuring smooth sales operations.

Each of these skill sets contributed to my overall growth and will be valuable in my **future career in Public Administration**.

4.1 Technical Skills

Technical skills refer to **the knowledge and expertise required** to perform specific tasks effectively in a workplace setting. During my time at **Diabond Sheets and Board Concept**, I developed various technical skills that were essential in the **Sales Department**, particularly in dealing with customers and managing products.

1. Product Knowledge

One of the most important technical skills I acquired was **understanding the different types of boards used for interior and exterior decorations**. This included:

- **Differentiating between various board materials** such as PVC, MDF, plywood, and aluminum composite panels.
- **Identifying board quality and durability** based on material composition.
- **Understanding the available colors and textures** and their suitability for different design projects.
- **Explaining product specifications to customers** to help them make informed purchasing decisions.

Having **detailed product knowledge** enabled me to assist customers effectively and recommend the best options based on their needs.

2. Sales and Customer Assistance

Working in the **Sales Department** required me to develop skills in **guiding customers through the buying process**. I learned how to:

- **Ask relevant questions** to determine customer needs.
- **Provide clear product recommendations** based on budget and design preferences.
- **Ensure customer satisfaction** by helping them select **high-quality** and **suitable** products.

This experience strengthened my **sales, persuasion, and customer service skills**, which are essential for any business environment.

3. Pricing and Product Evaluation

Understanding **how products are priced** based on **quality, demand, and availability** was another critical skill I gained. I learned:

- **How to calculate product prices based on company pricing guidelines.**
- **How to compare different board qualities and their corresponding costs.**
- **How to explain price differences to customers in a way that highlighted value rather than just cost.**

This skill **enhanced my financial awareness and business evaluation abilities**, which are useful in many professional settings.

4. Stock Management

Keeping track of available products was an essential part of my role. I learned:

- **How to monitor inventory levels** and report low-stock items.
- **How to organize products for easy accessibility.**
- **How to ensure customers were informed about product availability.**

Through stock management, I understood the **importance of keeping accurate records and maintaining an organized workspace**, which are valuable skills in any business or administrative role.

4.2 Interpersonal Skills

Interpersonal skills are critical in any workplace, especially in **customer-oriented businesses** like Diabond Sheets and Board Concept. My training experience helped me **develop and improve my ability to communicate, collaborate, and engage with both customers and colleagues.**

1. Communication Skills

Effective communication was one of the most important interpersonal skills I developed. I learned how to:

- **Communicate clearly and professionally with customers.**
- **Listen actively to customer inquiries and concerns.**
- **Explain technical product details in simple and understandable terms.**
- **Use polite and professional language when handling difficult customers.**

Improving my **verbal and non-verbal communication skills** enabled me to interact confidently with customers and ensure their needs were met.

2. Customer Relations

Good customer service is essential in any business. Through my interactions with customers, I learned how to:

- **Remain patient and professional, even when dealing with difficult customers.**
- **Build trust and rapport with customers by providing honest and helpful information.**
- **Handle customer complaints effectively by offering solutions rather than excuses.**
- **Ensure customer satisfaction by making sure their needs were met efficiently.**

Developing **strong customer relations skills** taught me the **importance of maintaining a positive and helpful attitude**, which is beneficial in any career path.

3. Teamwork and Collaboration

During my training, I worked alongside **experienced sales staff** who guided me through various tasks. Through this, I learned:

- **The importance of teamwork in achieving organizational goals.**
- **How to share responsibilities and assist colleagues when needed.**
- **How to contribute to a positive and cooperative work environment.**

By working in a team, I developed skills in **collaboration, coordination, and conflict resolution**, all of which are essential in professional settings.

4.3 Problem-Solving and Decision-Making Skills

Every work environment presents **challenges that require quick thinking and effective decision-making**. During my training, I encountered **various situations that required me to solve problems efficiently**.

1. Handling Customer Complaints and Inquiries

Some customers were dissatisfied due to **pricing concerns, product unavailability, or misunderstandings about product quality**. In such cases, I had to:

- **Listen attentively to customer concerns and identify the core issue.**
- **Provide helpful explanations and alternatives where necessary.**
- **Seek assistance from my supervisor if a problem required higher-level decision-making.**

Through this experience, I improved my ability to **remain calm under pressure and resolve issues professionally**.

2. Making Quick and Effective Decisions

In a busy sales environment, I had to make decisions **on the spot** to ensure smooth customer service. Some situations that required decision-making included:

- **Recommending alternative products** when a customer's preferred option was unavailable.
- **Prioritizing customers based on urgency and complexity of their needs.**
- **Deciding how to communicate pricing differences in a way that highlighted value rather than just cost.**

Developing **problem-solving and decision-making skills** helped me become more **confident and efficient** in handling customer interactions.

4.4 Relevance of Skills to Future Career

The skills I gained during my training at **Diabond Sheets and Board Concept** are highly relevant to my future career in **Public Administration**. Public administration involves **managing people, resources, and services efficiently**, and the skills I acquired will help me in the following ways:

1. Business Operations and Management

- Understanding **sales, pricing, and customer service** will be valuable in administrative roles that involve **business transactions and financial management**.
- Knowledge of **inventory control and stock management** will help in managing **resources effectively**.

2. Customer Relations and Communication

- The ability to **interact professionally with customers** will be useful when dealing with the **public, stakeholders, and employees** in administrative roles.
- My **improved communication skills** will help in **negotiations, conflict resolution, and public service delivery**.

3. Problem-Solving and Decision-Making

- The problem-solving skills I developed will be useful when **handling workplace challenges and making policy decisions**.
- Decision-making abilities will help in **assessing situations quickly and implementing appropriate solutions**.

My SIWES training at **Diabond Sheets and Board Concept** provided me with **valuable hands-on experience** in **sales, customer service, teamwork, and problem-solving**. These skills have significantly enhanced my **professional capabilities and preparedness for future administrative roles**.

The next chapter will discuss how my **SIWES experience has contributed to my overall career development**, focusing on its impact on **bridging the gap between theory and practice, networking opportunities, and professional growth**.

CHAPTER FIVE

IMPACT OF SIWES ON CAREER DEVELOPMENT

The **Student Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES)** has played a **vital role** in my professional growth by providing me with **real-world exposure** that enhances the theoretical knowledge gained in the classroom. Before my **industrial training at Diabond Sheets and Board Concept**, my understanding of business operations and customer service was largely theoretical. However, through **practical engagement in a structured work environment**, I gained valuable **insights, skills, and professional connections** that will be beneficial to my future career.

This chapter explores the **impact of SIWES on my career development**, focusing on:

- **Bridging the gap between theory and practice.**
- **Contributing to my professional growth.**
- **Providing networking opportunities.**

5.1 Bridging the Gap Between Theory and Practice

One of the **primary objectives** of SIWES is to bridge the gap between **academic learning and real-world application**. Public Administration as a field involves **organizational management, governance, and service delivery**, all of which require **practical experience** to fully grasp their complexities.

1. Transition from Theoretical Knowledge to Practical Experience

Before my **industrial training**, I had limited exposure to the **actual business environment**, making it difficult to understand how **customer service, product management, and sales strategies** functioned in real-life situations. However, **SIWES provided me with firsthand experience** by allowing me to work in a real **sales and customer service environment**.

Through my work at **Diabond Sheets and Board Concept**, I was able to:

- **Apply theoretical knowledge** of business transactions in real-world sales situations.
- **Understand how pricing, product selection, and inventory control** affect business operations.
- **Learn professional communication skills** through customer interactions.
- **Improve my problem-solving abilities** when handling customer inquiries and complaints.

2. Gaining Practical Insight into Business Operations

My training allowed me to witness the **day-to-day challenges and processes** involved in running a business. I gained insight into:

- **How businesses handle customer relations and sales.**
- **How products are stocked, priced, and marketed to customers.**
- **How employees collaborate to ensure smooth operations.**

This **practical experience** gave me a **clearer understanding of workplace dynamics**, preparing me for future roles in administrative and managerial positions.

5.2 Contribution to Professional Growth

SIWES has played a significant role in **enhancing my professional growth**, equipping me with skills and knowledge that will be valuable in my future career.

1. Improved Understanding of Business Transactions and Sales Strategies

During my training, I learned how **sales strategies are developed and implemented** to attract and retain customers. This included:

- **Understanding consumer behavior** and how customers make purchasing decisions.
- **Learning how to negotiate and persuade customers effectively.**
- **Recognizing the importance of product knowledge in making successful sales.**

These **business-related skills** will be useful in any **administrative or management role**, where **decision-making, resource management, and customer relations** play a key role.

2. Increased Confidence in Customer Interaction

Interacting with customers on a **daily basis** helped me develop confidence in:

- **Communicating professionally and effectively.**
- **Handling customer complaints with patience and composure.**
- **Providing clear and accurate product information.**

Being able to communicate effectively is a valuable skill that applies not only in business but also in **public administration, governance, and managerial roles**.

3. Development of a Structured Approach to Problem-Solving

Throughout my training, I faced **various challenges**, such as:

- **Customers being indecisive about products.**
- **Handling price negotiations professionally.**
- **Explaining product differences and justifying price variations.**

To overcome these challenges, I learned to:

- **Analyze problems systematically.**
- **Consider multiple solutions before making decisions.**
- **Maintain a professional approach when handling difficult situations.**

These **problem-solving skills** will be **invaluable in my future career**, especially in **administration, governance, and organizational management**.

5.3 Networking Opportunities

Another **major benefit** of SIWES was the **opportunity to connect with industry professionals**.

Networking is an important aspect of career growth, as it helps in:

- **Building professional relationships that could lead to future career opportunities.**
- **Gaining insights from experienced professionals.**
- **Learning from real-world challenges and best practices.**

1. Interaction with Industry Professionals

During my training, I worked alongside **experienced sales and customer service personnel** who provided:

- **Guidance on how to handle business operations.**
- **Practical insights into customer relationship management.**
- **Advice on career development and professional growth.**

By **observing and learning** from these professionals, I gained a **better understanding of workplace expectations and best practices**.

2. Expanding My Professional Network

The relationships I built during my training could prove valuable in the future.

- **I now have professional contacts who may serve as mentors or references in my career.**
- **I have a better understanding of how to navigate the job market and business industry.**

These **networking opportunities** may help me in securing **future job placements, business collaborations, or professional recommendations**.

The **SIWES** experience at **Diabond Sheets and Board Concept** has had a **tremendous impact on my career development** by:

- **Bridging the gap between theoretical learning and practical experience.**
- **Enhancing my understanding of business transactions and customer relations.**
- **Boosting my confidence in handling professional responsibilities.**
- **Providing valuable networking opportunities with industry professionals.**

The skills, knowledge, and **hands-on experience** I gained during my training have **prepared me for future career challenges** and will be **instrumental in my growth as a Public Administration professional**.

In the next chapter, I will discuss the **challenges I faced during my SIWES training** and **provide recommendations** for improving the program in the future.

CHAPTER SIX

CHALLENGES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The **Student Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES)** is designed to provide students with hands-on experience in real work environments. While my training at **Diabond Sheets and Board Concept** was beneficial in many ways, it was not without challenges. Some of these challenges were expected, while others required me to **develop problem-solving skills** and **adaptability** to navigate effectively.

This chapter highlights:

- The **challenges faced** during my training.
- **Recommendations** for improving the SIWES program.
- **Suggestions** for future SIWES participants.

6.1 Challenges Faced During the Training

During my **two-month training**, I encountered various challenges that tested my **ability to learn, adapt, and perform effectively** in a business environment. These challenges included:

1. Difficulty Understanding Product Differentiation

At the beginning of my training, I found it **challenging to differentiate between the various types of boards** used for interior and exterior decorations.

- Each board had **different qualities, colors, and prices**, and it was initially **overwhelming** to learn all the variations.
- Customers often asked **detailed questions** about product specifications, and I struggled to provide accurate answers at first.
- Understanding the **pricing structure** and the factors that determine product costs was another challenge.

2. Handling Customer Expectations

As a sales assistant, I had to interact with **different types of customers**, each with unique preferences and demands. Some key challenges included:

- Customers who **insisted on unavailable products**, requiring me to suggest alternatives without losing their interest.
- Handling **difficult customers** who were dissatisfied with pricing or product availability.
- Learning **effective negotiation skills** to ensure both customer satisfaction and business profitability.

3. Adapting to a New Work Environment

Transitioning from an **academic setting** to a **real workplace** required significant **adjustment**. Some difficulties I faced included:

- **Long working hours** compared to my school schedule.
- Learning to **follow workplace etiquette and professional behavior** in a business setting.
- Keeping up with the **fast-paced environment** of the sales department, especially during busy hours.

4. Managing Work Pressure and Responsibilities

As a trainee in the **Sales Department**, I had to **multitask** and manage responsibilities such as:

- **Attending to customers** while simultaneously learning about products.
- Keeping **accurate records** of sales and price listings.
- Ensuring customers **received timely assistance**, even during peak hours.

This required me to **develop time management skills** and **prioritize tasks effectively**.

6.2 Recommendations for Improvement of SIWES

Despite its many benefits, the SIWES program can be further improved to enhance students' learning experiences. The following recommendations could help future participants gain even more from their training:

1. Comprehensive Pre-Training Sessions

Before students begin their **SIWES training**, institutions should organize **detailed workshops** to:

- Educate students on **what to expect in a work environment**.
- Provide basic training on **business operations, customer relations, and product knowledge**.
- Teach essential **workplace communication skills** to prepare students for interactions with colleagues and customers.

A **well-structured pre-training session** would help students feel more confident and prepared before they start their industrial attachment.

2. Extended Training Duration

A **longer training period** (e.g., **four to six months**) would allow students to:

- Gain **deeper practical experience** by working in different departments.
- Improve their **understanding of company operations** and professional responsibilities.
- Have more time to **develop and refine their technical and interpersonal skills**.

A **two-month training period** is often too short for students to fully grasp the complexities of a business environment. **Extending the duration** would significantly enhance the learning experience.

3. Closer Supervision and Mentorship

During my training, I realized that **mentorship and supervision** play a crucial role in helping students learn effectively. To improve SIWES, companies should:

- **Assign mentors** to guide students and ensure they understand their roles.
- Conduct **regular progress evaluations** to help students improve their skills.
- Provide **structured training sessions** to enhance learning and skill development.

A **strong support system** within the organization would help students transition smoothly into the work environment.

4. Improved Coordination Between Institutions and Companies

To ensure that students receive the **best possible training experience**, there should be **better communication between schools and participating organizations**.

- Schools should **regularly check in** with students to ensure they are gaining meaningful experience.
- Companies should **provide structured training plans** rather than assigning students to **basic, repetitive tasks**.
- There should be a **feedback system** where students can report challenges and receive guidance.

6.3 Suggestions for Future SIWES Participants

To help future students **maximize their industrial training experience**, I recommend the following:

1. Be Open to Learning

SIWES is a **valuable opportunity to gain practical experience**, so students should:

- **Ask questions** and seek clarification on unfamiliar tasks.

- **Take initiative** and show interest in learning new things.
- **Observe experienced staff** and learn from their professional skills and work ethics.

An **open-minded and proactive approach** will make the training **more beneficial**.

2. Develop Good Customer Relations Skills

Since many industries involve **customer interaction**, students should:

- **Practice active listening** to understand customer needs.
- **Communicate clearly and professionally** with customers and colleagues.
- **Be patient and courteous**, even when handling difficult situations.

Good **customer service and communication skills** are valuable in **any professional career**.

3. Stay Organized and Take Notes

To make the most of the SIWES experience, students should:

- **Keep a daily journal** to document their activities, experiences, and challenges.
- **Review their notes regularly** to reinforce knowledge and track progress.
- Use their notes when **writing reports** to ensure accuracy and completeness.

Staying organized helps in **retaining important lessons learned during training**.

4. Build Professional Relationships

Networking is **an essential part of career growth**. Students should:

- **Connect with professionals** in their field of study.
- **Seek advice from experienced colleagues** and supervisors.
- **Maintain good relationships** with their trainers, as they may serve as **future references or mentors**.

These relationships could open doors to **career opportunities** in the future.

5. Adapt to Workplace Culture

Every company has its own **workplace culture and expectations**. Students should:

- Learn to **follow company rules and regulations**.
- Adapt to **professional behavior and workplace ethics**.
- Respect colleagues and **maintain a positive attitude** towards work.

Being able to **adapt to different work environments** is a valuable skill for any career.

Although my SIWES training at **Diabond Sheets and Board Concept** was a **rewarding experience**, I encountered challenges that required **adaptation, problem-solving, and continuous learning**. These challenges helped me **grow professionally and develop essential workplace skills**.

To improve the **SIWES program**, institutions should provide **better pre-training sessions**, increase the **training duration**, and encourage **closer mentorship and supervision**. Future SIWES participants should **be proactive, develop good communication skills, and stay organized** to make the most of their training.

In the next chapter, I will provide a **summary of my experience and overall impact of SIWES** on my personal and professional development.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSION

The **Student Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES)** is a crucial part of a student's education, providing an opportunity to apply **theoretical knowledge** in a **real-world work environment**. My two-month training at **Diabond Sheets and Board Concept** was an eye-opening experience that significantly contributed to my **professional and personal growth**.

This chapter provides a **summary of my experience** and the **overall impact of SIWES** on my future career.

7.1 Summary of Experience

During my training at **Diabond Sheets and Board Concept**, I was assigned to the **Sales Department**, where I was responsible for:

- **Attending to customers and providing product recommendations.**
- **Learning about different types of boards**, including their colors, quality, and prices.
- **Understanding product pricing strategies** and how to meet customer needs.
- **Developing sales and negotiation skills** to handle various customer inquiries.

At the beginning of my training, I encountered **challenges**, such as:

- **Difficulty in product differentiation** due to the wide variety of boards available.
- **Handling customer expectations**, especially when their preferred products were unavailable.
- **Adapting to the fast-paced sales environment** and managing multiple responsibilities at once.

However, over time, I was able to **overcome these challenges** through continuous learning, practice, and guidance from experienced staff members. By the end of my training, I had

developed **stronger communication skills, problem-solving abilities, and a deeper understanding of sales operations.**

This experience not only enhanced my **technical knowledge** but also helped me build **interpersonal and decision-making skills**, which are essential for a successful career in **Public Administration**

7.2 Overall Impact of SIWES

My SIWES experience had a **significant impact** on both my **professional and personal development**. The skills I gained will be beneficial in my future career and have prepared me for **real-world workplace challenges**.

1. Technical and Business Knowledge

- I now understand **how sales departments operate** and the importance of **customer service**.
- I gained valuable **product knowledge**, which taught me how to **evaluate and differentiate between various goods based on quality and pricing**.
- I learned the **importance of accurate pricing and inventory management** in running a business successfully.

2. Improved Communication and Interpersonal Skills

- My ability to **communicate professionally with customers** improved significantly.
- I learned how to **handle customer inquiries and complaints with patience and confidence**.
- My experience in **teamwork and collaboration** helped me understand the importance of working effectively in a business environment.

3. Problem-Solving and Decision-Making Abilities

- I developed the ability to **think quickly and provide solutions**, especially when handling customer demands.
- I learned to **analyze situations** and make **informed decisions**, such as recommending alternative products when necessary.

4. Career Readiness and Professional Growth

- This experience has **prepared me for future administrative roles** by enhancing my **critical thinking and organizational skills**.
- I now understand **business operations**, which is essential for managing public and private sector organizations.
- My ability to **adapt to new environments and learn on the job** has been strengthened, which will be useful in my future career.

Final Thoughts

SIWES has been a **transformational experience**, allowing me to develop **practical skills that complement my academic studies**. The training at **Diabond Sheets and Board Concept** helped me build a **strong foundation in sales, customer relations, and business management**, which will be valuable in my future career in **Public Administration**.

I am grateful for the opportunity to **apply my classroom knowledge** in a **real-world work setting**, and I am confident that the skills I have gained will **positively impact my professional journey**.

The SIWES program is an essential part of a student's academic journey, and I strongly recommend that future students **take full advantage of this opportunity** to learn, grow, and prepare for the demands of their careers.

REFERENCE

- Industrial Training Fund (ITF). (1973). The Student Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES): Bridging the Gap Between Theory and Practice. ITF Publications.
- Okoh, E. (2018). Business Operations and Customer Relations in Sales Management. Lagos: Ade & Sons Publishers.
- Adebayo, T. &Oladimeji, K. (2020). Principles of Sales and Marketing in the Business Industry. Ibadan: University Press.
- Nwosu, P. (2017). Customer Service and Effective Communication Skills in Business. Abuja: Public Management Publishers.
- Industrial Training Fund (ITF). (2022). About SIWES: Objectives and Benefits. Retrieved from www.itf.gov.ng
- Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC). (2021). SIWES and its Impact on Students' Career Development. Retrieved from www.nerdc.gov.ng
- BusinessDay Nigeria. (2023). Understanding the Role of Sales Departments in Business Growth. Retrieved from www.businessday.ng
- Diabond Sheets and Board Concept. (2024). Company Profile and Business Operations. Retrieved from company records, Lagos.
- Institution of Applied Sciences, Public Administration Department. (2024). SIWES Guidelines and Training Objectives. Internal Documentation.
- Diabond Sheets and Board Concept (2024). Product Catalogs and Price Lists. Internal Company Materials.
- SIWES Logbook. (2024). Personal Training Experience and Daily Activity Record.
- Supervisory Report from Diabond Sheets and Board Concept. (2024). Assessment of Training Performance and Skills Acquired.