

THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF BUSINESS & MANAGEMENT

Suitability of Industrial Attachment Opportunities in Kenya as Envisaged in the Industrial Training Act: Evidence from Selected Stakeholders

Newton Maina Wanjugu

MBA Student, University of Kabianga, Kenya

Joseph Kiprono Kirui

Lecturer, University of Kabianga, Kenya

Abstract:

The purpose of this study was to assess the suitability of industrial attachment opportunities provided by industrial training providers as envisaged in the Industrial Training Act. The study was conducted in University of Kabianga. The study used descriptive survey design with a sample of 259 students in University of Kabianga who had undertaken industrial attachment. Data for this study was collected using a duly validated and reliable questionnaire. Data was analyzed using frequencies and percentages. The study established that suitability of the training opportunities was rated as moderate by a majority and only a small percentage of respondents rated it as great. Majority of students perceived the places of attachment to be irrelevant to their area of specialization. Confidence with the skills offered at the places of attachment was also minimal for majority of them. The study also found out that the industrial attachment did not offer sufficient preparation to face the world of work with courage. The study recommends that the National Industrial Training Authority monitor to ensure compliance to the provisions of the Act. It also recommends that learning institutions should increase contact, linkage and collaboration with the industry to ensure proper placement of students.

1. Introduction

The education system in Kenya has placed a great emphasis on practical exposure such as industrial attachment to fast-track the socio-economic and technological transformation especially in the realization of her Vision 2030 (Kerre, 2011; Republic of Kenya, 2007). This demands education stakeholders to provide relevant skills to the students for self-employment, job creation and supply of skilled labor for industrialization.

The Industrial Training Act in the spirit of ensuring a reasonably suitable training opportunity sets a clear guideline on who should offer training to the trainees. It provides that any employer wishing to carry out training under the Act should obtain the written permission of the Director-General to do so. Subsequently, no permission can be granted unless the trainer who is to carry out the training has been approved and registered for purposes of training. The registration to train is given only after sufficiently proving to the Director-General that there are reasonable facilities and opportunities for proper training in the field specified in the application. (Industrial Training Act, No 34, 2011).

The other indication for a suitable training opportunity is supervision during the attachment. This can only be ensured by the learning institution having qualified trainers who will work closely with the trainees.

According to the Sessional Paper 2 of 2013, trainees who manage to secure attachment places are not effectively supervised due to inadequacy of supervisory staff and resources in training institutions. Whereas formal industrial training in both private and public sectors involves some forms of attachment, not all of them meet the requirement of industrial attachment. In most of these attachments, trainees do not have a trainer at the industry to guide them (Republic of Kenya, 2013).

Monarth (2008) as cited in Gumbe Svatwa and Mupambireyi, (2012) acknowledges the role that trainers play in making students relevant in meeting society's expectations by stressing the need for trainers to keep their skills up to date and up to scratch. He further states that cutting edge trainers get inside the heads of trainees and creates new thinking and always sends to them the message of always finding new and better ways of doing things.

According to the Industrial Training Act of 2011, every employer carrying out training under this Act shall appoint by name, from among his employees a person responsible for supervising generally the training of persons undergoing training. Where the Director-General is satisfied that an employer has a human resource, personnel or training department capable of satisfactory supervision of persons undergoing training within the organization, the Director-General may exempt the employer from making this appointment (Republic of Kenya, 2012).

In addition to that, at every premises or worksite where persons are undergoing training for a period of not less than three months, the employer shall appoint a training master who shall be responsible for the day to day guidance of the persons undergoing training in matters concerning their trade or occupation. Where twenty-five or more persons are undergoing training in any one premises or worksite, the training master shall devote the whole of his time during normal working hours to the guidance of the persons

undergoing training; and where the number of those undergoing training is less than twenty-five, the training master shall devote that proportion of his time to the guidance of the persons undergoing training as that number bears to twenty-five (Republic of Kenya, 2012).

The reviewed related studies showed limited focus on industrial attachment. Studies have been done on Artisan and Craft and Technical, Vocational, Education and Training (TVET) thereby leaving the area of industrial attachment uncovered. Moreover, studies on industrial attachment focused on challenges affecting industrial attachment and stakeholders' perception on industrial attachment (Kamunzyu 2010; Gumbe et al, 2012). They do not explicitly probe compliance to the established regulation, the Industrial Training Act, which is very clear on how the program should be carried out. Furthermore, analysis of these related studies revealed some challenges and among them is irrelevant or unsuitable places of attachment

If the framework provided in the Act was fully complied with, these challenges would not be there. There was therefore need for this study to assess compliance with provisions of the legislation that should guide industrial attachment.

2. Objectives of the Study

2.1. General Objective

The purpose of this study was to assess the suitability of industrial attachment opportunities provided by industrial training providers as envisaged in the Industrial Training Act.

2.2. Specific Objectives

Specifically, the study investigated:

The relevance of the training opportunity to the student's area of specialization

The level of confidence with the skills offered at the place of industrial attachment

Sufficiency of the training and supervision at the place of industrial attachment

3. Research Methodology

The study was carried out in University of Kabianga located in Kericho County in Kenya. The respondents were 259 fourth year students who had just resumed studies from industrial attachment. The research design for the study was descriptive survey. The choice of the design was dictated by its effectiveness to secure evidence concerning all existing situations or current conditions, identify standards or norms with which to compare present conditions in order to determine how to take the next step having determined the present position and desired position. According to Mugenda (2008) descriptive survey design is used when collecting information about peoples' attitudes, opinions, and habits.

Data for this study was collected using a duly validated and reliable questionnaire. To enhance validity study supervisors were consulted. The suggestions and the advices offered were used as a basis to modify the research instruments and make them more adaptable to the study. A pilot study was used to conduct a pre-test of the instrument and split half technique was used where the questionnaire yielded a Guttman split-half coefficient of 0.837. Data was analyzed using frequencies and percentages and the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.0 was used in analysis. The ethical issues considered included; informed consent, privacy and confidentiality, anonymity and researcher responsibility.

4. Results, Presentation and Discussion

4.1. Objective 1: Relevance of the Place of Attachment to the Area of Study

The students were asked to rate how relevant the place of attachment was to their area of study. Their responses were as shown in Figure 4.2

	Frequency	Percentage
Not relevant	148	57.1%
Relevant	69	26.7%
Very relevant	42	16.2%
Total	259	100%

Table 1: Relevance of the place of attachment to the area of study

Table 1 shows that 148 (57.1%) of the respondents rated the place of attachment as not relevant to their area of study. A further 69 (26.7%) rated the place of attachment as relevant while only 42 (16.2%) rated it as very relevant. This indicates that more than half of the respondents perceived the places they secured attachment as irrelevant to their areas of study.

This means that the skills offered are not an extension of what they learnt in classroom setting at the institution. The Industrial Training Act's intent is for the attachment providers to recognize prior learning of the students and build on it. This would not be realized in a place that is irrelevant to the field of study.

4.2. Objective 2: Level of Confidence with the Skill learnt at place of Attachment

The students were asked to rate their confidence with the skills they learnt at the place of attachment. Their responses were as shown in Table 2

Rating	Frequency	Percentage
Not at all	170	65.6%
To Some Extent	79	30.5%
Moderate Extent	4	1.5%
Great Extent	4	1.5%
Very Great Extent	2	0.8%
Total	259	100%

Table 2: Confidence with the skill learnt at place of attachment

From Table 4.20, 170 (65.6%) of the students said they did not have confidence with the skills learnt at the place of attachment. 79 (30.5%) said they had confidence to some extent, an equal number of 4 (1.5%) said they had great and moderate confidence while only 2 (0.8%) said they had very great confidence with the skills they learnt at the place of attachment. This is a clear indication that majority of the students have no much confidence with the skills they obtained from the places they were attached. This could be resulting from the unsuitability and irrelevance of the place of attachment.

4.3. Objective 3: Sufficiency of Training and Supervision of Attachees

The student was asked to indicate the number of attachees placed in the same organization at the same time. They were also expected to say if the place of attachment had a person in-charge of the attachment program. The findings were as shown in Table 3.

		Number of Attachees in the same organization	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative percentage
Someone in the organization to whom all attachees report to	Yes	Less than 5	0	0.0%	0.0%
		5-10	8	3.1%	3.1%
		11-15	1	0.4%	3.5%
		16-20	0	0.0%	3.5%
		21-25	0	0.0%	3.5%
		26 and above	0	0.0%	3.5%
	No	Less than 5	40	15.4%	18.9%
		5-10	103	39.8%	58.7%
		11-15	3	1.1%	59.8%
		16-20	0	0.0%	59.8%
		21-25	52	20.1%	79.9%
		26 and above	52	20.1%	100.0%

Table 3: Training and supervision of attachees

From Table 3, only a total of 9 (3.5%) of the respondents indicated that the place they were attached had a person in-charge of the attachment program. Among the said organizations, 8 had 5-10 attachees while the other 1 had 11-15 attachees. The majority, 250 (96.5%), did not have a person in-charge of the attachment program.

These findings reveal that findings by Monarth (2008) as cited in a study by Gumbe et al where he states that a trainer has a critical role of shaping trainees and the quality of a training have not been considered.

It also shows a gap with the intent of the Act. According to the Industrial Training Act of 2011, every employer carrying out training should appoint by name, from among his employees a person responsible for supervising generally the training of persons undergoing training. Where 25 or more persons are undergoing training in any one premises or worksite, the training master shall devote the whole of his time during normal working hours to the guidance of the persons undergoing training (Republic of Kenya, 2012).

4.4. General Suitability of Training Opportunities

The purpose of research objective was to establish suitability of training opportunities provided by industrial training providers as envisaged in the Act. To accept or reject the null hypothesis, 'There are no suitable training opportunities provided by industrial training providers as envisaged in the Act', respondents' perspectives were investigated through the following discussed questions.

4.5. General Evaluation of the Training Provider

The students were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed that the training opportunity offered was suitable. They were to rate the on a scale of 1-5. The response was as shown in Table 4.

Rating	Frequency	Percentage
Not at all	84	32.2%
To some Extent	98	37.9%
Moderate Extent	64	24.8%
Great Extent	13	5.1%
Very Great Extent	0	0%
Total	259	100%

Table 4: Suitability of Training Provider

Table 4 shows that only 13 (5.1%) of the students perceived the place they were attached as suitable for learning. The place of attachment was rated moderately suitable by 64 (24.8%), suitable to some extent by 98 (37.9%) and not suitable by 84 (32.2%). This is a clear indication that the majority of the respondents did not consider the places they were attached as offering suitable learning opportunities for them.

This agrees with the findings of the studies by Kigwilu and Kamunzyu which found the unsuitability of the places of attachment to be a challenge facing industrial attachment (Kamunzyu, 2010; Kigwilu, 2014)

It also confirms Connor's observation that students join companies which have little scope for graduate training (Connor, 2008).

The findings are not in agreement with the expectation of the Industrial Training Act that the attachment providers offer reasonable facilities and opportunities for proper training in the field specified in the application. ((Republic of Kenya, 2012).)

5. Summary, Conclusions & Recommendations

5.1. Summary

The study found out that the suitability of the training opportunities was rated as moderate and a smaller percentage of respondents rated it as great. Majority of students specifically perceived the places of attachment to be irrelevant to their area of specialization. Confidence with the skills offered at the places of attachment was also minimal for majority of them. The study also found that many organizations have not placed someone to be in-charge of industrial attachment hence insufficient training and supervision.

5.2. Conclusions

It was concluded that the opportunities provided for training are not as suitable as required and as envisioned in the Act. There is no confidence in the skills obtained at the place of attachment. Additionally, the attachment providers are not compliant to the provisions that require them to ensure they seek authority to train attachees.

5.3. Recommendations

The National Industrial Training Authority should ensure reinforcement of the Act by regularly monitoring the implementation and compliance to the Act. This will ensure we have organizations that meet the required reasonable standards for a place to offer a suitable opportunity for training. There should also be a campaign to help increase awareness about the Act to the various stakeholders.

6. References

- i. Connor, H Shaw, S (2008) 'Graduate training and development: current trends and issues, Education and Training Journal.'
- ii. Kamunzyu E. N. (2010), Challenges Facing Hospitality Industrial Attachment as a Learning Experience in Selected Institutions in Nairobi- Kenya. Unpublished Master's thesis, Kenyatta University.
- iii. Kerre, B. W. (2011). Technologically-driven education for industrial growth. Journal of KIM School of Management, 3 (ISSN 2074-4730).
- iv. Kigwilu P. C. (2014), Determinants of Effective Implementation of Artisan and Craft Curriculum in Catholic Sponsored Community Colleges in Nairobi Region, Kenya. Unpublished Master's Thesis, Catholic University of Eastern Africa.
- v. Monarth, H. (2008) 'Trainers: Superstars of the Organization' Training and Development Journal, Vol. 6
- vi. Mugenda, A.G. (2008). Social Science Research Theories and Principles, Nairobi: Kijabi Printing Press.
- vii. Republic of Kenya (2007). Kenya Vision 2030: A globally competitive and prosperous Kenya. Nairobi: Government Printers.
- viii. Republic of Kenya (2012). Industrial Training Act, No 34, 2011. Nairobi: Government Printers.
- ix. Republic of Kenya (2013). Sessional paper No 2: National Industrial Training and Attachment Policy. Nairobi: Government Printer.