

AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS AND ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY PROGRAMME, CEADESE STUDENTS-INDUSTRIAL LINKAGE POLICY DOCUMENT.

Introduction

Failure of the research findings by our students to satisfy and match the growing contemporary needs of the industry had been a long standing and an ongoing issue. The industrialists view the low commercialization potential of our research, and lack of interest among academics to collaborate with them as prominent barriers. This programme (Agricultural Economics and Environmental Policy) has recognized the potential mutual benefits derivable from collaboration between our students and industry. The committee emphasized that all efforts must be put in place to assure the chosen linkage industrial management that students sent on internship are not on covert operations to steal trade secrets and business strategies. They are meant to: first, promote the level of interactions between them (our students) and the organizations/industries they are posted to for their internship. Second, it must be stressed to our industrial counterparts that most of our students in school lack the time for effective laboratory and other physical facilities exposure to carry out their research and development works. The hindrance because of their large number in school is another factor to be emphasized along this line. Internship in the industries must be emphasized as going a long way to mitigating this as they will have the full concentration to learn in practical terms while linkage partners will also benefit (learn) maximally from them. Third, the Centre should also stress to our potential industrial partners that the internship is introduced to remove the weak link between our students with the industry resulting in serious mismatches between supply and demand for skills after graduation from the university.

It is also recommended by the Committee that our Masters' degree students should embark on their internship immediately after their course work (which lasts for a year/two semesters) and spend two months in relevant private agribusiness organizations of their choice (not minding the size) for their internship. While on internship with the organization, they are expected to be able to generate ideas of what they want to do for their research work and conceptualize such appropriately. This they can do by interacting with officials in the industry in order to learn about the prevailing challenges/needs and determine how such challenges can be translated into their own research work with the hope of finding workable solutions. The students after the two months are then expected to come back to the campus to

discuss their research proposals for approval with their Supervisors and thereafter present such for their Pre-Data Seminar. After the Masters Students research work and findings, such student is expected to make a post-data seminar presentation with the invitation of the Industrial Supervisor and other supervisory team members.

The PhD students on their part are expected to go back to the industry where they did their first internship (expected to be two months) for the second internship. This will enable them to do their bench work for another two months before the presentation of their progress reports and thereafter Final and Second Seminar (Post-Data) presentation.

What the Industry Stands to Benefit from the Linkage

The industrial linkage internship creates the following benefits for the counterpart industries:

1. The student's research process during the internship will assist in the better understanding of the challenges of the industry and provide solutions to the identified problems. This will go a long way in improving the industry's efficiency and maximize their business potentials.
2. Research and Development: The University-Industry linkage, through creative innovation and development of emerging ideas, could result in the development of new products for the industries.
3. Consultancy: The linkage will likewise provide avenue for University's involvement in the industries business activities. This will in-turn provide opportunities for the industries to enjoy indirect consultancy services on sectors of their businesses from the University in order to enhance the performance of the industries.
4. Based on the highlighted points above, the benefits of the University-Industry linkages to the growth of the industries, and consequently, economic development of the country can be showcased. This could take the form of Annual University's Public Lecture Series to be delivered by a selected industry at a time. The lecture could focus on the industry's experience of partnering with the University, as well as the impact of the University-Industry linkages on the performance and growth of the selected industry. This will strengthen the University-Industry partnership; encourage the industries to fund academic researches, while also encouraging other industries to join the partnership (University-Industry linkage).

5. The University-Industry linkage is an opportunity for the industries to participate in the process of rejuvenating the falling standard of education in the country through their contributions in serving in students' research supervisory committees as Industrial Supervisors.

What the Students will Benefit from the Linkage

1. Wholesome knowledge: The students will learn both the theoretical and practical aspects of their subject of study.
2. The real-life industry experiences enjoyed by the students will enhance easy and robust conceptualization of their research ideas.
3. The internship experience could serve as a valuable job experience for the students. This is especially with respect to the students interested in establishing similar type of business in the future. This is vital for the growth of the Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (SMEs) sector in Nigeria, and consequently, economic growth of the country.
4. The industry internship will help students to gain and develop entrepreneurial and some other relevant personal skills, needed for personal and career development in life.
5. From the industry internship experience, the students will be able to form useful career networks, which could serve as source of job opportunities for them in the near future.

Suggested Places for Students Internship

The list below is not exhaustive. The key thing is that our students should do their internship in places where they will gain knowledge relevant to their areas of specialization and be able to solve existing problems facing agribusiness enterprises in their respective countries.

- (i) Big private agribusiness organizations such as Zartec located in Ibadan, Oyo State, Obasanjo Farm located in Ogun State, Shongai Farm located in Porto-Novo, Republic of Benin etc. are relevant.
- (ii) Smallholder agribusiness farms that are either into production, processing, packaging or marketing of agricultural products are also examples.
- (iii) Work with Farmers groups / Associations.
- (iv) Cement companies
- (v) Agro-allied food industry
- (vi) UAC foods
- (vii) Chi farms

- (viii) Agro-chemical
- (ix) Niji Lucas farm
- (x) Shoprite
- (xi) Petroleum or Oil and Gas industries.

In conclusion, efforts must be put in top gear to ensure the following:

- (1) The Industrial Supervisor should be made to complete the feedback portion of the students' logbook not only for the students benefit but to help the programme to take some corrective measures.
- (2) While students are on internship, the Academic Supervisors should equally be made to visit at unannounced dates for proper monitoring with respect to academic and welfare considerations.