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Industry-University Partnerships and Business Education Graduate Employability: Evidence from Stakeholders in Kwara State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT - Grounded in the Triple Helix model's perspectives on university–industry collaboration, this study investigates the contribution of industry–university partnerships to graduate employability in Business Education programmes in Kwara State, Nigeria. This study examines stakeholder perceptions of the effectiveness of existing collaborations in aligning graduate competencies with labour market demands. A descriptive survey design was employed across three universities, i.e., the University of Ilorin, Kwara State University, and Al-Hikmah University, with respondents comprising 10 industrialists and 74 Business Education graduates selected through random sampling. Data were collected using a researcher-designed questionnaire titled Perception of Stakeholders on Industry–University Partnership Questionnaire (PSIUPQ) in line with the study objectives. Both the face and content validities of the questionnaire were assessed, and a reliability coefficient of 0.88 was obtained from the pilot study. Descriptive statistics were used to address the research questions, while inferential statistics tested the hypotheses at the 0.05 significance level. The findings revealed a direction and magnitude of differences between industrialists and graduates in the effectiveness of current partnerships in enhancing employability ($p < 0.05$), as well as significant differences in their views on strategies to strengthen collaboration to improve work readiness. These results indicate a perceptual and alignment gap between academic preparation and industry expectations. The study highlights the need for structured, competency-based partnerships that integrate experiential learning, industry engagement, and technical skill development into Business Education curricula to enhance employability outcomes and support sustainable workforce development in emerging economies.

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INTRODUCTION

The need to form partnerships between industry and universities is a way to ensure graduate employability in a country. In Nigeria, the industry-university partnership has a long history, dating back to 1971, when the Industrial Training Fund (ITF) was established. ITF was charged with promoting and encouraging the acquisition of industrial and practical skills to produce personnel needed for the growth of the Nigerian economy (Audu et al., 2025). Consequently, the country's workforce development was to be achieved by all tertiary institutions nationwide.

The university has been the highest educational institution statutorily charged with the corporate responsibility of transforming and moulding learners from raw materials into finished products who can fit adequately and contribute meaningfully to the development of society through well-developed entrepreneurial aptitudes and attitudes (Oyinlola et al., 2024). Governments around the world have established partnerships to accelerate economic development between industry and universities. Recently, the linkage between industry and university has brought massive economic growth (Xiao et al., 2023). Policymakers and curriculum developers have encouraged university graduates in Nigeria to acquire entrepreneurial competencies to become self-reliant and job providers rather than job seekers.

The relevance of the linkage between the industry and the university in Kwara State is aimed at achieving some goals as enshrined in the National Policy of Education (2004):

1. Achieving national development by training human resources that will meet the needs of all the sectors of the economy;
2. (ii)Developing and instilling in individuals' proper values that will guarantee economic sustenance;
3. (iii)Ensuring the capacity of an individual by understanding their immediate and external environment (NPE, 2004).

In line with the goals mentioned earlier, the university is an institution for acquiring the skills, competencies, and capabilities required for a helpful life. Achieving this requires a symbiotic relationship between the university and industrial captains. Imperatively, the significant role of university education for socio-economic transformation and growth is highly essential (Bamidele, 2024). Generally, universities are established to foster new frontiers of knowledge. According to He et al. (2024), businesses are established to employ the products of universities and other training institutions, thereby putting them in a favorable position.

1.1 Business Education in Nigeria

Business education is an important component of education that involves teaching the skills and operations of the business industry. Business education has many components, as there are many different areas within the business industry. Importantly, business education is one of the major courses offered at the university in Nigeria. Business education is a specialized course of study that focuses on training the recipients on basic business skills and ideals that will make them job providers rather than job seekers. In Nigeria, the course covers specialized areas such as Secretarial/office studies, accounting, marketing, and office technology management. An essential aim of a business education program is the acquisition of skills for gaining employment in organizations. Accordingly, Ofor-Douglas (2024) noted that the business education program is one of the courses in Nigerian universities that updates students' knowledge and competencies to make them self-reliant after graduation. Business education is an aspect of general education that individuals require continuously. It is built on the knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes acquired during the lower levels of education (Okanazu & Okanazu, 2023).

Business education, as defined by Kolesnik (2022), encompasses a wide range of courses designed to teach students of various ages the fundamental principles of business. These include courses in business management, business law, entrepreneurship, accounting, marketing, statistics, economics, and computer-related studies, among others. Business education is designed to produce skillful and dynamic business educators, office administrators, and businessmen and women who can effectively compete in the job market or become successful entrepreneurs by inculcating in its recipients the attitudes, knowledge, skills, and values required in the business world (Hodges & Burchell, 2023).

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1.2 University Industry Partnership in Nigeria

Figueiredo and Ferreira (2022) explained that a university-industry partnership is a collaboration that exists between them at different levels through the exchange of ideas and knowledge among university graduates and enterprises. It involves the creation of firms and the presentation of shared research through inventions and innovations between companies and enterprises. The university-industry partnerships encourage the development of cutting-edge technologies and methods that could affect business operations. It is one of the instruments for creating an environment that enables innovation and enhances competitiveness, thereby promoting the interests of firms and universities. University-industry collaboration, also known as university-industry partnerships or university-industry engagement, represents a vital convergence of academia and the world of work. Partnership between the university and industry is now seen as an inevitable vehicle for the modern world's knowledge-driven, innovative, and competitive socio-economic and technological milieu. University–Industry Partnership (UIP) is a structured, strategic collaboration between higher education institutions and industry designed to promote knowledge exchange, research advancement, innovation, and workforce readiness. University-Industry Partnership (UIP) comprises interactive collaborations between the university and industry to encourage the transfer or exchange of knowledge and technology. Collaboration between universities and industry creates a dynamic exchange of expertise that strengthens research and development, drives innovation, and improves national and global competitiveness (Becker, 2025). Through these partnerships, universities play a pivotal role in cultivating a highly skilled workforce by providing students with applied knowledge and practical competencies that align with the rapidly evolving demands of the labour market (Ezepue, et al., 2025). Beyond workforce development, university–industry collaborations advance sustainable development by addressing pressing global challenges, including renewable energy, climate change, artificial intelligence, and digital transformation. By integrating academic insight with industrial application, these partnerships enable the co-creation of solutions that stimulate economic growth while mitigating environmental and social impacts (Galan-Muros & Davey, 2019).

PROBLEM STATEMENT

The rising unemployment among Business Education graduates in Nigeria remains a source of concern for policymakers, educators, and industry stakeholders. Recent evidence indicates that Nigeria's unemployment rate is about 33.3% in 2023 (National Bureau of Statistics), with graduates disproportionately affected. This trend has been linked to increased social vices and underutilization of human capital (Umoh, 2025). A major issue underpinning this challenge is the misalignment between university training and industry needs, which limits graduates' employability and productivity. Empirical observations from SIWES supervision and prior studies suggest weak and poorly coordinated university–industry collaboration in Nigeria (Attah et al., 2025). Although students participate in industrial training, many still graduate without adequate entrepreneurial and job-ready skills (Wokekoro & Wey, 2023). Structural inefficiencies such as fragmented internship schedules and limited industry engagement further constrain the effectiveness of these programmes. This study focuses on Business Education graduates in Kwara State, Nigeria, and considers key stakeholders, including graduates and industrialists. It addresses the persistent gap between academic preparation and labour market expectations and its consequences for employability outcomes.

Accordingly, the study aims to empirically examine the perceptions of Business Education graduates and industrialists on the effectiveness of university–industry partnerships in enhancing graduate employability in Kwara State, Nigeria.

STUDY OBJECTIVES

This study examined stakeholders' perceptions of the industry-university partnership for business education graduates in Kwara. In specific terms, the aims are to:

1. Determine the level of perception on industrial-university partnership program among graduates of business education;
2. Determine the level of perception on the strategies that can be used to improve industry-university partnerships for graduates of business education; and

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3. Determine the difference between experiences students gained during the industry-university partnership program.
4. Determine the difference in the responses of industrialists and graduates in terms of the strategies to improving the industry-university partnership.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What is the level of perception on the industry-university partnerships for graduates of business education?
2. What is the level of perception on the strategies that can be used to improve industry-university partnerships for business education graduates?
3. Is there any significant difference in the responses of industrialists and graduates in terms of industry-university partnership.
4. Is there any significant difference in the responses of industrialists and graduates in terms of the strategies to improving the industry-university partnership.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

Ho1: There is no significant difference in the responses of industrialists and graduates in terms of industry-university partnership.
Ho2: No difference in responses of graduates and industrialists on the strategies for improving industry-university partnership.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Despite the growing body of literature on industry–university partnerships, important gaps remain evident. While studies such as those by Marinho et al. (2020) and Aliu and Aigbayboa (2021) highlight the positive contributions of such collaborations to productivity and graduate employability, contrasting findings by Omajuwa and Oroka (2025) indicate no significant relationship with knowledge enhancement, reflecting inconsistency in empirical evidence. In addition, several studies, including Ottache (2022), Edokpolor et al. (2023), and Ediagbonya et al. (2024), have focused on specific dimensions such as policy frameworks, employability outcomes, self-efficacy, ICT skills, and entrepreneurial intentions, thereby neglecting a holistic examination of partnership dynamics. Furthermore, most of these studies adopt quantitative approaches, limiting in-depth understanding of stakeholders' perceptions and lived experiences. Contextually, existing research has largely been conducted outside Kwara State, as seen in Azubuike (2023) and Gutierrez et al. (2024), making their findings less applicable to the unique institutional and economic realities of the study area. Moreover, studies such as Jargalsaikhan et al. (2024) and Nwaichi et al. (2025) have examined collaboration from perspectives of research quality and innovation systems rather than business education graduates. Consequently, there is a paucity of integrative, qualitative studies that simultaneously examine the nature of industry–university partnerships, strategies for their improvement, and the experiential outcomes of business education graduates. This study, therefore, addresses these gaps by providing a qualitative, stakeholder-driven analysis within the context of Kwara State, Nigeria.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The framework adopted is the Triple Helix Model, proposed by Etzkowitz and Leydesdorff (1995). Consequently, the model highlights the interconnectedness among universities, industries, and the government to foster economic growth. Notably, the model has been adopted across various fields to explain collaboration between universities and industry. Hence, the model consists of three primary components: universities, industries, and government. Universities play important roles by providing the knowledge and skills necessary for innovation and growth. Industries, on the other hand, provide the practical application and implementation of the knowledge and skills generated by universities.

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The government facilitates the collaboration between universities and industries, providing funding and support for growth. Emphatically, the interplay among universities, industry, and government is driving innovation and economic growth. This interrelationship is evident in several ways. Universities transfer knowledge and skills to industry, thereby driving the development of new products, services, and processes. Universities and industries collaborate on research and development projects that yield new technologies and innovations.

The Triple Helix Model can be used to understand the collaboration between universities and industries. Universities can develop curricula that are relevant to industry needs, thereby producing skilled graduates. Universities can offer internships and work-based learning opportunities for students, thereby developing practical skills. It can also lead to the development of skilled graduates who meet industry needs.

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study is anchored on the Experiential Learning Theory of David A. Kolb (1984), the Triple Helix Model of Etzkowitz, Henry, and Loet Leydesdorff (1995), and the Situated Learning Theory of Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger (1991). These theories collectively explain the structure of industry–university collaboration, the processes through which learning occurs in real-world environments, and the experiences gained by students during such engagements.

The first component, industry–university partnership, represents the collaboration between academic institutions and industries. This includes programs such as internships, SIWES, industrial training, and collaborative curriculum development. This component is theoretically supported by the Triple Helix Model, which emphasizes the interaction between universities and industry in knowledge production and innovation.

The second component, improvement strategies, acts as an intervening variable. It includes mechanisms such as enhanced curriculum alignment, stronger collaboration frameworks, policy support, and continuous feedback between stakeholders. These strategies are necessary to strengthen the effectiveness of the partnership.

The third component, students' experiences and outcomes, represents the dependent variable. It includes skills acquisition, employability, workplace readiness, and professional competence gained through participation in partnership programs. This aligns with Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory and the Situated Learning Theory of Lave and Wenger, which emphasize learning through real-world engagement and participation in professional communities.

METHODS AND MATERIALS

This study employed a quantitative descriptive survey design to examine existing industry–university partnerships without manipulating variables. The design was appropriate for capturing stakeholders' perceptions—specifically Business Education graduates and industrial representatives—regarding the effectiveness of collaboration in Kwara State, Nigeria. The study population comprised three universities offering Business Education programs (representing 50% of the universities in the state) and industries participating in the Students' Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES).

Participants included 400-level Business Education students who had completed SIWES and industrial representatives from organizations that were actively hosting students. Purposive sampling was first used to identify respondents with direct SIWES experience to ensure informed perspectives on industry–university collaboration. Subsequently, simple random sampling was applied to select 74

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eligible students, thereby reducing selection bias. Ten industrialists were included due to the limited number of industries consistently participating in SIWES within the study area. Although numerically small, these industry participants were treated as key informants with substantial practical engagement in university collaboration.

Data were collected using a structured, researcher-developed instrument titled the Perception of Stakeholders on Industry–University Partnership Questionnaire (PSIUPQ). Experts in Business Education and industry validated the instrument to ensure face, content, and construct validity. Items were measured on a four-point Likert scale. Reliability was established through a test–retest procedure conducted with students outside the study area at a two-week interval, yielding a reliability coefficient of 0.88, indicating high internal consistency.

The questionnaires were administered and retrieved in person, resulting in a 100% response rate. Descriptive statistics were used to address the research questions, while inferential statistics tested the hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 The level of the industry-university partnerships for business education graduates

The results in Table 1 reveal that industry–university partnerships play a significant role in enhancing the development of business education graduates across multiple dimensions. Respondents generally agreed that such collaborations provide valuable learning experiences and foster a better understanding of the educational system, as reflected in the highest mean score (X = 3.01). This suggests that exposure to real-world industry practices helps bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application, making learning more relevant and impactful. Similarly, the high mean scores for employability skill acquisition (X = 2.96) and the provision of a trained workforce (X = 2.88) indicate that these partnerships are effective in preparing graduates to meet professional and industry expectations.

Furthermore, the findings highlight that industry–university partnerships contribute to aligning education with labor market demands. Items such as meeting labor market needs (X = 2.80), connecting schools with local businesses (X = 2.77), and providing career exploration opportunities (X = 2.74) all recorded relatively high mean scores. This implies that collaboration between academia and industry enhances students' awareness of career pathways and facilitates smoother transitions into the workforce. In addition, the improvement of practical training quality (X = 2.71) and the integration of graduates into the labor sector (X = 2.67) further demonstrate that such partnerships strengthen the relevance and applicability of business education programs.

However, some areas recorded comparatively lower mean scores, indicating aspects that require improvement. For instance, entrepreneurial development (X = 2.28) was only moderately agreed upon, suggesting that while partnerships exist, they may not be fully optimized to promote innovation and entrepreneurial capacity among students. More notably, the provision of resources to enrich the curriculum (X = 1.51) received the lowest mean score, indicating a significant gap in resource support from industry partners. This finding points to the need for stronger commitment from industries in terms of funding, infrastructure, and instructional resources to enhance curriculum delivery.

Overall, the results suggest that while industry–university partnerships are largely effective in improving employability, practical learning, and workforce readiness, there is still a need to strengthen resource contributions and entrepreneurial support. A more balanced and strategic collaboration—where industries actively contribute not only to training but also to curriculum development and innovation—would further enhance the outcomes of business education graduates and ensure sustainable alignment with evolving industry needs.

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Table 1. Industry-university partnership for business education graduates

No.	Statement	X	SD
1	Industry and universities provide students with the opportunity to acquire employability skills	2.96	0.63
2	Industries and universities provide a trained workforce to meet the needs of the industry and professional sector	2.88	0.60
3	The quality and relevance of practical training in business education can be improved by industries and universities	2.71	0.52
4	Industries and university increase the entrepreneurial development in the university	2.28	0.43
5	There is a high level of integration of business education graduates into the labor sector by the industries and universities	2.67	0.50
6	Industries and universities bring resources to enrich the curriculum	1.51	0.31
7	Provide business education graduates with the learning experience and a new understanding of the educational system	3.01	0.71
8	Industries and universities provide opportunities for business education graduate career exploration	2.74	0.53
9	Industries and universities help connect schools with local businesses	2.77	0.55
10	It helps meet the labor market needs of business and industries	2.80	0.57

4.2 The level of strategies for improving the industry-university partnership for business education graduates

Table 2 indicates that respondents agreed with the statement. The results show that creating opportunities for business education graduates to participate in social entrepreneurship contests and providing adequate funding for university infrastructure were the strategies for improving industry–university partnerships for business education graduates, and they ranked first. In contrast, the provision of adequate infrastructure, industries, and university partnerships improves entrepreneurship skill development, industries and universities partnership as a key strategy for innovative sustainable economic growth, provides consulting services to small businesses and non-profit making organizations and involves the business industries in planning universities curriculum were the strategies for improving industry–university partnership for business education graduates.

Further analysis of the overall mean scores suggests a generally positive perception of all the listed strategies, indicating broad agreement among respondents on their importance. The relatively high mean values across most items imply that stakeholders recognize the critical role of collaborative initiatives in enhancing graduates' employability and entrepreneurial capacity. Notably, strategies ranked highest also correspond with areas that require substantial institutional commitment, such as funding and experiential learning opportunities, reinforcing their perceived impact. Meanwhile, the slightly lower but still significant mean scores for other strategies indicate that, although they are considered important, they may be viewed as supportive or complementary measures. Overall, the distribution of mean scores underscores the need for a holistic and well-coordinated approach, where both high-ranking and moderate-ranking strategies are implemented together to achieve sustainable and effective industry–university partnerships.

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Table 2. Strategies for improving industry-university partnership

No.	Statement	X	SD
1	Link curricula to real-world business challenges	1.83	0.42
2	Create opportunities for graduates of business education to participate in social entrepreneurship contests	2.92	0.61
3	Provide consulting services to small businesses and non-profit making organizations	2.64	0.51
4	Help business education graduates launch their own business	2.75	0.53
5	Provision of adequate infrastructure	2.82	0.58
6	Involving the business industries in planning universities curriculum	2.41	0.42
7	Adequate funding to university infrastructure	2.92	0.61
8	Effective business communication between industries and universities	2.82	0.58
9	Industries and universities partnership as a key strategy for innovative sustainable economic growth	2.75	0.53
10	Industries and universities partnership improve entrepreneurship skill development	2.80	0.56

4.3 The level of experience students' gain during the industry-university partnership program

The results in Table 3 show that improving their general business/industry understanding was the most prominent experience students gained during the industry–university partnership program, followed by putting theories and concepts into practice. Additionally, students gained insights into career options to support the choice of a specialized field and developed additional skills such as communication, team building, problem-solving, and analytical reasoning.

A closer examination of the mean scores further reinforces these findings. The highest mean score (X = 2.90) for improved business/industry understanding indicates that exposure to real-world industry environments significantly enhances students' awareness of workplace expectations and operations. This is followed by the application of theoretical knowledge (X = 2.75), highlighting the effectiveness of these partnerships in bridging the gap between classroom learning and practical experience. Meanwhile, gaining career insights (X = 2.30) and developing soft and analytical skills (X = 2.25), though slightly lower in mean, still reflect meaningful contributions to students' overall development. The relatively low standard deviation values across all items suggest consistency in respondents' opinions. Overall, the results imply that industry–university partnerships provide a well-rounded learning experience, with stronger emphasis on industry exposure and practical application, while still supporting career guidance and transferable skill development.
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Table 3. Experience gained by students during the industry-university partnership program

No.	Statement	X	SD
1	Gain insights into career options to support the choice of a specialized field area	2.30	0.45
2	Put theories and concepts into practice	2.75	0.53
3	Improve their general business/industry understanding	2.90	0.60
4	Gain additional skills in areas such as communication, team building, problem solving, and analytical reasoning	2.25	0.42

4.4 The differences between the Industrialists and Business Students' Perception on Industry-University Partnership

Ho₁: There is no significant difference in the mean response of industrialists and graduates of Business education in terms of the industry-university partnership of business education graduates in Kwara State, Nigeria.

Table 4 presents the results of an independent-samples *t*-test comparing the mean responses of industrialists and business education graduates on industrial–university partnership in Kwara State, Nigeria. The industrialists (N = 10) had a mean score of 2.00 and a standard deviation of 1.47, while business education graduates (N = 74) had a higher mean score of 2.33 and a standard deviation of 1.30. The calculated *t*-value of 2.586 at 82 degrees of freedom yielded a significance (two-tailed) value of .000, which is less than the 0.05 level of significance. Consequently, the null hypothesis (Ho_1) was rejected. This indicates a statistically significant difference in the mean responses of industrialists and business education graduates regarding industrial–university partnerships.

Table 4. T-test comparing industrialists and graduates of business education on industrial-university partnership

Respondents	N	X	SD	Df	t-cal	Sig (2-tail).	Decision
Industrialists	10	2.00	1.47	82	2.586	.000	Rejected
Graduates of Business Education	74	2.33	1.30				

Ho2: There is no significant difference between the mean responses of graduates of business education and industrialists on the strategies for improving partnerships for promoting employability.

Table 5 presents the results of an independent-samples *t*-test comparing the mean responses of industrialists and business education graduates on strategies for improving industrial–university partnerships. The industrialists (N = 10) had a mean score of 1.66 (SD = 0.98), while business education graduates (N = 74) had a higher mean score of 2.66 (SD = 0.49). The calculated *t*-value of 3.146 at 82 degrees of freedom yielded a significance (two-tailed) value of .000, which is less than the 0.05 level of significance. Consequently, the null hypothesis (Ho_2) was rejected. This indicates a statistically significant difference in the mean responses of industrialists and business education graduates regarding strategies for improving industrial–university partnerships.

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Table 5. T-test comparing industrialists and graduates of business education on the strategies for improving partnership

Respondents	N	X	SD	Df	t-cal	Sig (2-tail).	Decision
Industrialists	10	1.66	.98	82	3.146	.000	Rejected
Graduates of Business Education	74	2.66	.49				

The findings of this study reveal significant differences in perceptions between industrialists and Business Education graduates regarding industry–university partnerships, underscoring the importance of aligning stakeholder priorities to enhance educational quality. Graduates emphasized learning experiences that foster understanding of the educational system, practical skill acquisition, and career development, reflecting a focus on personal growth, employability, and lifelong learning. Industrialists, in contrast, prioritized workforce readiness, organizational contribution, and measurable employability outcomes, consistent with expectancy theory and stakeholder role expectations.

These differences were also evident in strategies for improving partnerships. Graduates highlighted personal development opportunities, such as participation in social entrepreneurship contests, whereas industrialists emphasized institutional support, funding, and infrastructure to strengthen organizational capacity. The findings corroborate Figueiredo and Ferreira (2022), who demonstrated the role of industry–university partnerships in promoting social entrepreneurship, whereas Wokekoro and Wey, 2023, who found that industrial attachments, including SIWES and entrepreneurial practice (Ab Wahid et al, 2023), enhance employability skills.

This study makes several contributions to SDG 4 – Quality Education. It demonstrates that effective industry–university partnerships create inclusive, practical, and relevant learning environments, equipping graduates with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed for the labor market. It highlights the need to reconcile graduates' and industrialists' expectations to achieve sustainable and mutually beneficial outcomes. Moreover, it emphasizes the integration of entrepreneurial, technical, and professional skills into Business Education curricula, directly supporting SDG 4 targets on employability, lifelong learning, and relevant competencies. The study further provides evidence-based guidance for policymakers and educational institutions to design sustainable, stakeholder-inclusive partnership models that enhance experiential learning, improve educational quality, and ensure graduates are both work-ready and socially competent, thereby advancing the objectives of SDG 4.

CONCLUSIONS

This research examined stakeholders' perceptions of industry-university partnerships for business education graduates in Kwara State. The importance of industry-university partnerships cannot be overemphasized for business education graduates in Kwara State. This is because for business education graduates to acquaint themselves with the real world of business, industries, and universities must collaborate by integrating business education graduates into the labor market, involving them in cooperative education experiences, helping business education graduates connect schools with local businesses, and also providing business education graduates with employability skills. Hence, this can only be done by industries partnering with universities, improving university-industry strategies, and allowing graduates to gain experience during their industrial training programs. The findings of this study can inform the development of business education curricula that are more relevant to industry needs. Also, it sheds more light on the importance of collaborations between industry and universities, providing opportunities for students to gain practical experience and develop industry networks. Again, it emphasizes the need for graduates of business education to possess competence and practical skills through experiential learning and industry-based projects. Lastly, the study identifies effective strategies for industry-university partnerships that can be applied in business education.

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made: Firstly, industries and universities should provide a trained workforce to meet the needs of the industry and the professional sector. Again, the industry-university partnership should jointly improve the quality and practical training in business education. Furthermore, university stakeholders must involve business industries in

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planning university curricula for business education programs. Lastly, business education graduates must improve their general business/industry understanding since it is one of the experiences graduates must gain during their industrial workshop training.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors hereby declare that there are no conflicts of interest with respect to the publication of this paper. The research was undertaken with absence of no commercial or financial relationships that could be considered as a potential conflict of interest.

AUTHORS CONTRIBUTION

Ojo Olubukola James**.**: The conceptual design. **Oluwalola Felicia Kikelomo.**: Data collection, organization and analysis. Abdulkareem Rasaq Lanre.: Manuscript drafting. **Ojo Oluwatoyin Omonike.:** Revision.

AVAILABILITY OF DATA AND MATERIALS

Data available within the article or its supplementary materials.

DECLARATION OF GENERATIVE AI

During the preparation of this work, the author(s) used [Grammarly] to enhance the clarity of the writing. After using [Grammarly], the author(s) reviewed and edited the content as needed and take(s) full responsibility for the content of the publication.

ETHIC STATEMENTS

Not applicable.

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