

THE INFLUENCE OF LIFELONG LEARNING INITIATIVES ON STUDENTS' PROFESSIONAL GROWTH IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN NIGERIA

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Published: -

Issue: Issue 1

Volume: Volume No 1

Abstract

This study adopted a quantitative correlational research design to examine the extent to which participation in internships, engagement in digital skills training, and participation in professional certification courses predict professional growth among students in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. The population comprised 12,450 undergraduate students from eight federal universities in the South-South geopolitical zone, with a representative sample of 1,245 students selected using multi-stage sampling. Data were collected using the Lifelong Learning Participation and Professional Growth Questionnaire (LLPPGQ) and analyzed using SPSS version 28. Simple and multiple regression analyses were conducted to test four hypotheses. The findings indicated that participation in internships, engagement in digital skills training, and participation in professional certification courses each significantly predict professional growth, with the three variables jointly accounting for 61.5 percent of the variance. Digital skills training contributed the most to the combined effect. The study concludes that structured lifelong learning initiatives are essential for enhancing professional competencies among tertiary students in Nigeria and recommends the integration and strengthening of these programmes to maximize employability outcomes.

Keywords

lifelong learning, digital skills training, professional certification, professional growth