



STRATEGIES AND UTILIZATION OF DIGITAL RESOURCES IN TEACHING COMPETENCY SKILLS TO BUSINESS EDUCATION STUDENTS IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN SOUTH-SOUTH, NIGERIA

¹AGWAZIE BRIDGET

Department of Business Education
University of Delta, Agbor

Email: agwaziebridget484@gmail.com

²PROF PAC ORDU

Department of Business Education
Federal University Otuoke
Bayelsa State

Email: pacordu2019@gmail.com

Abstract

This paper focused on the Utilization of Emerging Digital Resources in Teaching Business Education Students for Employability Competency Skills Acquisition in South-South, Nigeria. The paper examined the utilizable emerging digital resources, their adequacies and challenges militating against the Utilization of Emerging Digital Resources in Teaching Business Education Students for Employability Competency Skills Acquisition in South-South, Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The study was conducted in universities in the south-south region of Nigeria. The population of the study constitutes 300 business educators in six federal universities in the six south-south states. A self-structured instrument titled “Emerging digital resources and employability in business education programme questionnaire (EDREBEPQ)” was used for data collection. Cronbach’s alpha was used to measure the internal consistency which yielded an overall reliability co-efficient of 0.80. Data were collected by administration of validated questionnaire on the respondents. Mean and Standard deviation were used to answer research questions. The findings showed that word processors, spreadsheet and data analysis tools, and teleconferencing as the most utilizable emerging digital resource in teach business education for employability skill competence skill. It showed that challenges such as maintenance, resistance to change, lack of fund, lack of exposure, power failure, and lack of adequate trained personnel as factors that militate against the utilization of emerging digital resources in teaching business education for employability skill competence skill acquisition in the tertiary institutions. It concluded that the uses of digital resources in business management help in the acquisition of employability competency skill for business expansion and economic growth. Unfortunately, the adoption of digital resources in teaching in Nigerian universities has remained a mirage due to its slow pace of acceptance and use. The study recommended that Preparation of lecturers to face the challenges of an ICT enriched teaching and learning environment is crucial.



Introduction

The University is said to be an institution of higher learning and a citadel where tertiary education is offered. The National Policy on Education (FRN,2014) explains the goals of education as the development of the individual to be self-reliant and useful member of the society through the acquisition of both physical and intellectual skills. These skills when acquired would make learners employable. Yet, many graduates of Nigerian universities cannot find work leading to an intractable problem of growing joblessness, and raises question as to whether functional education is really the pursuit in universities.

This unusual trend has been attributed to economic changes in countries and global labour market which increasingly resulted in new requirements on the quality of graduates and new approaches to their competitiveness (Aimzhan, Gaukhar, Zhanar, Turar, Laura & Kulzinat, 2015). Ordu (2019) blamed this on the disparity and inconsistency of the curriculum to current economic realities of the 21st century. Simply put, it is the acquisition of skills, knowledge, attitudes and commercial acumen that purports to empower fresh graduates to add productive and informed contributions to the attainment of organizational objectives immediately after employment (Singh & Singh, 2018). Omar, Bakar and Rashid (2012) maintained that these skills are needful not only to secure employment, but also to advance within an entity in a way that one can achieve his potential and contribute meaningfully to an entity's strategic direction. The acquisition of these skills in the words of Mike (2014) brings with it such benefits as being self-employed, ability to create diverse job opportunities, and reduction in crime rate.

On the other hand, failure to acquire these skills or poorly acquiring them has over the years made graduates unemployed, and for those seen as employed, they are at best underemployed and paid pittance in comparison with what they would have deservedly earned. The continuous lack of acquiring these skills made **Ekpenyong (1988)** to tag the universities products as half- baked and unusable unless they are further trained. Probing the causation of this behemoth further, Ordu, (2020), Adebakin, Ajadi&Subair (2015) traced it to a mismatch between the education and training received from the universities and the expectations of the employers. Munishi (2016) attributed the poor competence of universities graduates on the job to poor educational training many at the tertiary level, fueled by many factors including poor strategies and utilization of emerging digital resources.

Again, critics have equally lamented the slow adaptation of business education in Nigeria to research and technological challenges (Ekpenyong & Nwabuisi, (2013), Okoro & Ihimekpen, 2013), increasing changes pose by technology, inadequate teaching resources and teaching methods which negatively affected effective teaching and learning experiences (Coker, 2011). The above scholarly arguments indicate that the business education in Nigeria curriculum lack broad-based learning experiences and is inconsistent with its philosophy of employability. Many graduates unfortunately in Nigeria have retired by age while waiting consciously either for employment in government owned parastatals or in the organized private sector. National Bureau of Statistics (2016) captured the current economic reality of unemployed or underemployed at 24.4 million in first quarter of the year to over 26.06 million with negative consequences on the Gross Domestic Product. The GDP growth plummeted deeper from 0.36 in first quarter to 2.06 percent year-on-year in second quarter with over 16 percent inflation. The curriculum structure of business education varies from one country to another. Business education in Nigeria is at variance with global business education standards. As ours is a mix of business and education. Although envisioned to adequately prepare graduates, its curriculum has been education dominated in Nigeria with well over 30 percent non-business education courses. What we teach can hardly prepare graduates to have global understanding of international economy.

The challenge for educators in tertiary institutions is not just centred on covering the course content or adopting appropriate teaching or pedagogical aids alone, but also embracing



emerging digital resources in teaching and learning. In this regard, Ordu and Abdulkarim (2019) opined that for Business Education students to develop employability competencies there is need to shift from the traditional instructional designs that favour theoretical knowledge competency acquisition to instructional designs that guarantee both theoretical knowledge competence acquisition and skill, and attitude-related competencies development. In the same vein, Ozuruoke and Abdulkarim (2016) has earlier noted that with the advancement of technology and its integration in doing businesses, traditional methods of instruction such as lecturer and demonstration methods alone cannot be utilized to assist Business education students develop e-business competencies. There is therefore the need for the business educators to be up-to-date in their digital skills knowledge and the utilization of these facilities in teaching and learning situations.

The integration of digital skills technology in teaching is a crucial matter in ensuring quality of business education courses. There are two equally important reasons for integrating emerging digital resources into the teaching and learning curriculum of business education. Firstly, students would become familiar with the use of these emerging digital resources, since all jobs in the society today are dependent on emerging digital resources. Secondly, the teaching of business education courses utilizing emerging digital resources will improve the quality of business education graduates thereby making them more effective and efficient (Okolocha & Nwadiani, 2015). Since business education provides students with requisites skills which are needed to increase their productive power of any nation, the work force is accordingly motivated to initiate independent productive ventures and carry out skilled works of divergent nature independently.

It is inevitable for teachers integrating emerging digital resources into subjects to assist in students' learning with teaching materials, teaching methods, and diversified teaching media. It is the common responsibility for educators to make teaching become more efficient and cultivate the new generation with creative and rational communication and critical thinking with technologies and network information in the new era. Digital teaching aims to have students actively participate in learning activity to achieve the set learning outcome (Ordu, 2020), (Pai & Tu, 2011).

Despite the importance of digital resources in the acquisition of employability skill by fresh graduates in Nigerian labour market, it is unfortunate that responses of employers of labour on competencies on the use of modern technology by recent graduates reveal that these skills are lacking. Corroborating this fact, Williams (2013) reported that graduates are deficient in transferable skills required of the workforce in the era of modern technology. Tymon (2011) added that employers view that graduates are not yet ready to enter and face the complexities and challenges of the world of work in the era of modern technology. To help students, universities have come under intense pressure to review their curricula so as to equip students with more than just academic skills.

Research Questions

1. To what extent are the emerging digital resources utilized in Teaching Business Education Students for Employability Competency Skills Acquisition in Tertiary Institutions in South-South, Nigeria?
2. To what extent are the available emerging digital resources adequate in Teaching Business Education Students for Employability Competency Skills Acquisition in Tertiary Institutions in South-South, Nigeria?
3. What are the challenges associated with the utilization of emerging digital resources in Teaching Business Education Students for Employability Competency Skills Acquisition in Tertiary Institutions in South-South, Nigeria?



Method

This study adopted a descriptive survey design. The study was conducted in universities in the south-south region of Nigeria. The population of the study constitutes 300 business educators in six federal universities in the six south-south states. A self-structured instrument titled “Emerging digital resources and employability in business education programme questionnaire (EDREBEPQ)” was used for data collection. The response pattern adopted for the questionnaire was a four- point scale of: Very High Extent (VHE), High Extent (HE), Low Extent (LE) and Very Low Extent (VLE). A pilot test was conducted to establish the reliability of the instrument by administering it to 20 business educators in a state university in Rivers State which were not part of the study and Cronbach’s alpha was used to measure the internal consistency which yielded an overall reliability co-efficient of 0.80. Data were collected by administration of validated questionnaire on the respondents. Frequency count, simple percentage and mean were used to answer research questions.

Result

Research Question one: To what extent are the emerging digital resources utilized in Teaching Business Education Students for Employability Competency Skills Acquisition in Tertiary Institutions in South-South, Nigeria?

Table 1: Extent of digital resource Utilization for Employability Competency Skills Acquisition

s/n	Item Description	Mean	SD	Rating
1	Teleconferencing activities are used to enhance students’ communication competency skills	3.55	0.351	VHE
2	Artificial intelligence is used to improve problem solving	2.48	0.723	VLE
3	Display boards are used to acquire numeracy skills	3.49	0.475	HE
4	Computer Assisted Instruction is used to improve the critical thinking skills of students	3.44	0.333	HE
5	Big data and machine learning allows students to collaborate with peers according to their proficiency levels thereby enhancing their team work skill	2.49	0.789	VLE
6	Advanced robotics and drones help students in decision making	3.00	0.652	HE
7	Virtual university enhance planning and organizing skills of students	3.22	0.411	HE
8	sensors and intelligent manufacturing enhance the self-management skill of students	3.14	0.415	HE
9	Word Processors are used for continuous learning by students	3.86	0.218	VHE
10	Spreadsheet and data analysis tools that allow students to organize and analyze information	3.58	0.312	VHE
	Set Mean	3.47	0.378	HE



The table showed the extent to which emerging digital resources are utilized for employability skill competence. The table revealed that emerging digital resources such as Word Processors (\bar{x} =3.86; SD = 0.218), Spreadsheet and data analysis tools (\bar{x} =3.58; SD = 0.312), and Teleconferencing (\bar{x} =3.55; SD = 0.312) can be utilized for employability skill competence to a very high extent. While artificial intelligence (\bar{x} =2.48; SD = 0.723) and big data and machine learning (\bar{x} =2.49; SD = 0.789) can be utilized for employability skill competence to a very low extent. The set mean (\bar{x} =3.47; SD = 0.378) indicated that emerging digital resources are utilized for employability skill competence to high extent.

Research Question two: To what extent are the available emerging digital resources adequate in Teaching Business Education Students for Employability Competency Skills Acquisition in Tertiary Institutions in South-South, Nigeria?

Table 2: Available emerging digital resources adequate in Teaching Business Education Students for Employability Competency Skills Acquisition

Indicate the extent to which the following digital resources

s/n	are adequate for in Teaching Business Education Students for Employability Competency Skills Acquisition	Mean	SD	Rating
1	Teleconferencing and Video conferencing tools	2.89	0.478	HE
2	Artificial intelligence	2.23	0.784	VLE
3	Display boards	3.89	0.251	VHE
4	Computer Assisted Instruction	3.48	0.322	VHE
5	Big data and machine learning	2.41	0.621	LE
6	Advanced robotics and drones	2.03	0.891	VLE
7	Virtual university	3.56	0.355	VHE
8	sensors and intelligent manufacturing	2.68	0.452	HE
9	Computer software applications such as word processors, desktop publishers, graphics, power- point, spreadsheet.	3.77	0.514	VHE
10	Spreadsheet and data analysis tools	3.65	0.448	VHE
11	Micro-computers with software applications Skillful keyboard	3.47	0.621	HE
12	Broadcast materials, E-book reader and Streaming videos.	2.87	0.354	HE
13	Multi-media projector	3.87	0.257	VHE
14	Smart board and Mimeo boards	2.98	0.547	HE
15	EDUSAT (Educational Satellite)	2.86	0.478	HE
	Set Mean	2.79	0.478	HE



The table above showed the extent to which available emerging digital resources are adequate for Teaching Business Education Students for Employability Competency Skills Acquisition in Tertiary Institutions in South-South, Nigeria. It showed that emerging digital resources such as display boards (\bar{x} =3.89; SD = 0.251); multimedia projector (\bar{x} =3.87; SD = 0.257); computer software application (\bar{x} =3.77; SD = 0.514); spread sheet and data analysis tools (\bar{x} =3.65; SD = 0.448) were adequate to a very high extent while artificial intelligence (\bar{x} =2.23; SD = 0.784); big data and machine learning (\bar{x} =2.41; SD = 0.621) and advance robotics and drones (\bar{x} =2.03; SD = 0.891) were adequate to a very low extent. However, the set mean (\bar{x} =2.79; SD = 0.478) indicate that emerging digital resources are adequate for Employability Competency Skills Acquisition in Tertiary Institutions in South-South, Nigeria to a high extent.

Research Question three: What are the challenges associated with the utilization of emerging digital resources in Teaching Business Education Students for Employability Competency Skills Acquisition in Tertiary Institutions in South-South, Nigeria?

Table 3: Challenges of utilization of emerging digital resources in Teaching Business Education Students for Employability Competency Skills Acquisition

s/n	Item Description	Mean	SD	Rating
1	Majority of the practicing Business Educators in the country still hold on to traditional methods of teaching	3.65	0.448	VHE
2	Most of these equipment are very expensive and many Nigerian institutions do not have financial capability to make them available for use in teaching	3.42	0.487	HE
3	Constant Power Failure	2.87	0.387	HE
4	The maintenance/repair for most of the instructional equipment is not locally available	3.77	0.484	VHE
5	The few Business Educators that are currently available are not well trained on the use of this equipment	2.51	0.621	LE
6	Many of the business educators have not even seen some of this equipment let alone knowing how to make use of them	3.03	0.511	HE

The table above identified challenges in the utilization of emerging digital resources in the teaching of business education for employability competency skills acquisition in Tertiary Institutions in South-South, Nigeria. It showed that challenges such as maintenance (\bar{x} =3.77; SD = 0.484) resistance to change (\bar{x} =3.65; SD = 0.448); lack of fund(\bar{x} =3.42; SD = 0.487); lack of exposure (\bar{x} =3.03; SD = 0.511); power failure (\bar{x} =2.87; SD = 0.621); and lack of adequate trained personnel (\bar{x} =3.51; SD = 0.621).

Discussion of Findings

Table 1 identified Word Processors, Spreadsheet and data analysis tools, and Teleconferencing as the most utilizable emerging digital resources in teach business education for employability skill competence skill. Also, it showed that artificial intelligence and big data and machine learning are least utilizable emerging digital resource in teach business education for



employability skill competence skill. In terms of the adequacy of these available emerging digital resources, table 2 showed display boards, virtual university, computer software application, spread sheets and data analysis tools, multimedia projector were identified as the most adequate emerging digital resources. Other resources such as Teleconferencing and Video conferencing tools, Computer Assisted Instruction, Virtual university, sensors and intelligent manufacturing, Micro-computers with software applications Skillful keyboard, Broadcast materials, E-book reader and Streaming videos, Smart board and Mimeo boards were also adequate to a high extent. However, resources such as artificial intelligence, bigdata and machine learning, advanced robotics and drones were identified to be inadequate in teaching business education for employability skill competence skill acquisition in the tertiary institutions.

The findings of this study was consistent with the study of Ademiluyi (2012) who reported that Nigerian students are not experiencing modern instructional delivery due to inadequate provision of ICT resources in tertiary institutions. The outcome of this study could be attributed to the underfunding of business education programme in colleges of education in Delta State. The finding also supports the study of Onyesom (2013) who reported that paucity of ICT resources for teaching and learning in business education courses in colleges of education in Edo and Delta States. This finding tallies with the empirical study of Yusuf and Pascal (2019), which discovered that available ICT resources are functional for effective utilization by educators in Nigeria. Perhaps, the maintenance efforts of technical support staff in tertiary institutions could be responsible for the functionality of ICT resources. The finding of the study supports Adebule and Ayoola (2015) who reported that to a certain extent, the ICT instructional materials are functioning. The finding of the study tallies with Jiriko, Olorunaiye, Nwafulugo and Omengala (2015) which revealed that modern instructional materials for teaching and learning are not functional in educational institutions. However, contrary to the findings of this study, the functionality of ICT resources such as telephone, fax machine, scanners, video machine, video DC/DVD, digital camera and microfilm were not ascertained because they were not adequate at all in the institutions of study. These findings are in consonance with Apagu and Wakili (2015) report that there are limited functional ICT facilities in tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

It showed that challenges such as maintenance, resistance to change, lack of fund, lack of exposure, power failure, and lack of adequate trained personnel as factors that militate against the utilization of emerging digital resources in teaching business education for employability skill competence skill acquisition in the tertiary institutions.

The result of this study implies that adequacy and effective utilization of instructional resources significantly enhanced the teaching of business education for employability skill competence skill acquisition in the tertiary institutions. Therefore, emerging digital resources enhanced employability competency skill in business education by providing and ensuring the effective utilization of the emerging digital resources and this will enable business education graduates of tertiary institutions to acquire sufficient on-the-job competencies to become self-reliant citizens in society. Bongotons and Onyenwe (2010) reported that instructional resources had a positive impact on successful implementation of curriculum. The finding is also consistent with the study of Ngozi, (2011). The author revealed that successful curriculum implementation depends to a large extent on instructional materials or learning resources. Similarly result were reported in the studies of Sajjad, (2012); Patius (2014). The studies found that adequate utilization learning materials impacted positively on the implementation of curriculum.

Conclusion

The uses of digital resources in business management help in the acquisition of employability competency skill for business expansion and economic growth. Unfortunately, the adoption of digital resources in teaching in Nigerian universities has remained a mirage due to its



slow pace of acceptance and use. Little knowledge of digital resource usage is observed among business teachers, as their students prove naive of e-learning practices in their trainings. This has been attributed to such factors as inadequate fund available to schools for training of their teachers in digital skill acquisition, high cost of digital equipment and electronic devices and constant electric power failure. Inadequate equipment and infrastructure, poor knowledge of curriculum developers, inadequate personnel, inadequate textbooks and other teaching materials and the impediments in the power sector are found to be some impeding factors.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion, the following recommendations were made:

1. Business Education students should be encouraged to look beyond the classroom for hands-on-training to enable acquire emerging digital knowledge competencies that will help them become employable.
2. State government and management of tertiary institutions should encourage and sponsor business educators and laboratory technologists for re-training programmes to update their digital skill competencies to effectively utilize the available ICT resources in business education programmes for employability competency skill acquisition.
3. Business Educators need to be equipped with the fundamentals of office automation and sufficient understanding on the integration of these tools in teaching and learning.

References

- Adebakin, A. B., Ajadi, O. T. &Subair, S. T. (2015). Required and possessed universities graduate employability skills: perceptions of the Nigerian employers. *World Journal of Education*, 5 (2) 115 - 121.
- Adebule, S.O., &Ayoola, O.O. (2015). "Evaluation Of Instructional Materials Commonly Used in the Teaching of Mathematics in Junior Secondary Schools in Ekiti State." *Journal of Educational Policy and Entrepreneurial Research*, 2(10), 12 - 19
- Ademiluyi, L. F. (2012). "Wedlock of the gods: Using Vocational Education and ICT for the Promotion of Entrepreneurship and Accelerated National Development." *Gateway Journal of Business Education*, 3(1), 77 - 82.
- Akpan, A.A. (2010). *Theories and Administration of Vocational - Technical Education*. Ibadan: African Feb Publishers.
- Apagu, V.V., &Wakili B.A. (2015). "Availability and Utilization of ICT Facilities for Teaching and Learning of Vocational and Technical Education in Yobe State Technical Colleges." *American Journal of Engineering Research*, 4(2), 113-118
- Aquah, P. A. (2014). Enriching the business education curriculum for relevance in the global workplace. *Global Journal of Human Social Science: G. Linguistic & Education*, 14(7), 31-35.
- Bongotons, O.Y. &Onyenwe, B.O. (2010). "Availability and Adequacy of ICT Resources in Business Education Programmes in Nigeria." *Business education Journal*, 7(2), 201 – 215
- Ekpenyong, L. E. (1988). Vocational content in the national curriculum for Nigerian secondary schools: How industry can help? *The vocational aspect of education*, 40(106), 57-62
- Federal Republic of Nigeria (2014). *National Policy on Education* (4th ed.) Lagos: NERDC
- Jiriko, R.K., Olorunaiye, E.S., Nwafulugo, F., &Omengala, A. (2015). "Availability and Utilization of Instructional Materials for the Teaching of Agricultural Science in Secondary Schools in Kaduna South and Chikun Local Government Areas of Kaduna State." *Journal of Educational Research and Reviews*, 3(1), 6-11



- Mike, U. (2014). Importance of skill acquisition: Dynamics of skill acquisition: A constraints-led approach.
- Munishi, E. J. (2016). Factors contributing to lack of employability skills among technical and vocational education graduates in Tanzania. *Business Education Journal*, 1 (2),1-19
- Omar, M. K., Bakar, A. R. & Mat-Rashid, A. (2012). Employability skills acquisition among Malaysian Community College Students. *Journal of Social Sciences*, 8(3), 472-478.
- Onyesom, M. (2013). Assessment of the adequacy of instructional resources in business education programmes relative to NCCE Standards for colleges of education in Nigeria. Unpublished Master's Thesis, Department of Vocational Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State.
- Ordu, P. &Abdulkarim, M. A. (2019). Empirical evidence on the influence of experiential instructional design learning activities on business education students' e-business competency development. *European Journal of Education Studies*, 6(5), 73-86.
- Ozuruoke, A. A. &Abdulkarim, M. (2016). *Business education practicum*. Basjos print.
- Singh, G. K. G. & Singh, S. K. G. (2018). Malaysian graduate's employability skills. *UNITAR - Journal*, 4(1), 14-44.
- Yusuf, M.A., & Pascal, M.D. (2019). Assessment of ICT facilities for teaching and learning of electrical installation and maintenance works in government technical colleges of Yobe State, Nigeria. *Multidisciplinary Journal of Science, Technology and Vocational Education*, 7(1), 111 - 122