



## **DIGITALIZATION AND SKILLS REQUIRED BY BUSINESS EDUCATION GRADUATES FOR EMPLOYABILITY IN COLLEGES OF EDUCATION IN DELTA STATE, NIGERIA.**

**Mordi, Christian Uche**

School of Secondary Education (Business)  
Federal College of Education (Tech) Asaba,  
Delta State.

[Mordi.christian@yahoo.com](mailto:Mordi.christian@yahoo.com)

### **Abstract**

*The study investigated digitalization and skills required by business education graduates for employability in Colleges of Education in Delta State, Nigeria. Two research questions were formulated for the study. The study adopted descriptive survey design. The population of the study was 76 Business Education lecturers in Colleges of Education in Delta State and the entire population was used as the sample size. 43-item four-point Likert scale questionnaire was used as the instrument for the study. The instrument was validated by two experts. The reliability of the instrument was established using Pearson product moment correlation method and the reliability coefficient was 0.72. Research questions were analyzed using mean and standard deviation. The findings revealed that computer operating skill; Microsoft word skill; excel skill; E-payment skill; E-receipt skill; using various accounting software; using the computer to prepare all the books and records in financial accounting, cost accounting and management accounting; using automation tools; automating the recording of business transactions; reporting accounting information electronically for internal and external usage; among others are digital accounting skills and E-Commerce skill; E-Procurement skill; E-Payment skill; POS skill; receiving money electronically; computer operating skill; electronic marketing of goods and services; Microsoft word skill; Corel draw skill; Power point skill; E-Advertising skill, electronic display of goods; social media marketing skill; E-Mail marketing skill; using digital marketing tools among others are digital marketing skills required by business education graduates for employability. It was recommended based on the findings that the authorities of Colleges of Education should ensure that the digital accounting and marketing skills revealed in the findings from the study are included in business education curriculum. The authorities of Colleges of Education should ensure the availability of adequate computer in Colleges of Education for efficient and effective teaching and learning of digital skills among others.*

**Keywords:** *Digitalization, Skills required by business education graduates and employability.*

### **Introduction**

Globally, businesses were operated manually before the advent of machines. The introduction of machines in businesses enhanced its operation from manual to combination of manual and machines. Presently, the advancement in technologies has further made business operations to be digitalized. According to Bloomberg (2018) Digitalization is the use of digital technologies to change a business model and provide new revenue and value-producing opportunities. It is the process of employing digital technologies and information to transform business operations". Also, Spacey (2020) defined digitalization as the process of transforming an organization business model, processes, data processing, marketing, communication etc using new



possibilities offered by digital technologies. Digitalization is therefore, the use of computers and other information technologies to transform processes or roles that make up business operations. Digitalization has brought transformation in business operations. Annacone (2019) noted that the areas of digital transformation in business include business process - technologies offered business organizations new ways of carrying out business processes throughout the organizations like heads-up display glasses to improve the quality of human inspection of airplanes in Airbus company, food ordering process, use of robotic process automation; business model – how value is delivered in business organizations like video distribution; domain – using new technologies to market products and services like Amazon that deals on online retailing; and cultural/ organizational transformation – promoting a culture of innovation in an organization; and shifting company values to focus on customer – centricity.

In addition, Spacey (2020) outlined the following examples of digitalization: business models – transforming your products, services or the way you sell like using digital channels, digital products, digital services and E-commerce; processes – using information technology to improve productivity and process efficiency like process integration, productivity tools, systems and workflow; data – the acquisition, integration and use of data; cost reduction – reducing cost by using digital ways of doing things like self-service, E-procurement ; marketing – digital tools for marketing and sells; knowledge – capturing knowledge and using it efficiently with digital tools; and communication – using digital communication to improve communication such as meetings and external communication such as public relations. It can be concluded that the areas of digital transformation in business organizations include, business model, process, data processing like keyboarding, accounting etc, marketing, knowledge, communication, self-service, E-commerce, E-procurement, cultural/organizational transformation among others. The advantages of digital transformation in business organizations cannot be over-emphasized. Annacone (2019) explained that digital transformation lowers costs, reduces cycle times, increases quality, creates significant value, use of robots to carry out works that are dangerous to humans, creates significant opportunities for growth, reveals new businesses, provide opportunities to create new values, makes business growth cheap and efficient, creates new source of revenue, job-site activity coordination, remote equipment tracking, situational awareness, and supply chain optimization, promotes a culture of innovation. Moreover, Bloomberg (2018) noted that digitalization increases process efficiency, improves data transparency, boost business top line, creates more customer value. In addition, digitalization creates new and more employment opportunities in the technological sector, through supply of production materials, production, marketing of finished products, parts and accessories, installation, maintenance and servicing, software engineers. It promotes wider coverage in marketing through online marketing, increase the number of customer base, promotes effective and efficient communication both internally and externally, promotes quick, accurate and efficient processing of data, storage , retrieval and presentation, allows easy preparation of accounting information, creates good platform for business supervision and management, reduces fraud , increases profit through increased sales among others.

Digitalization being the transformation of the processes and roles in an organization through digital technologies, has created a situation where workers have to drop their manual tools and use computer controlled equipment and other digital technologies to carry out their duties. As a result, the acquisition of digital skills is imperative for individuals to operate successfully in a business either as the owner or part owner of the business or as a paid personnel. Moreover, business organizations must hire workers with the right digital skills to be able to meet up with the changing needs created by technological advancement in order to compete favourably with their counterparts globally together with meeting the needs of digital and non-digital customers for profit maximization and sustainability. Digitalization as a global phenomena has resulted to the pursuit of the teaching and acquisition of digital skills in the educational systems of the countries of the world including



Nigeria to produce graduates that are capable of participating effectively and efficiently in the digital organization of the country in particular and the world in general. Among the educational programmes in Nigeria that serves as means for teaching and acquisition of skills, Business education is not left out. Auwal (2020). Noted that business education is a training system that encourages the beneficiary to acquire skills that will enable him fit into the world of work.

Certainly, since inception, business education programme has been producing graduates with skills that enables them to be self – employed or paid employed yet you see many business education graduates cut in the web of unemployment. Oguejiofor (2020) stated that graduates of business education programme are plagued by unemployment due to non acquisition of relevant skills. Moreover, Umoru (2020) noted that business educators possess limited digital skill which may cause them loose their job due to technological advancement. According to him, the solution is up-scaling to intermediate and if possible advanced digital skill. There is no gainsaying that the skills possessed by business education graduates has limited them to participate and engage in certain categories, areas, lines and class of work hence many are unemployed..The rate of unemployment may be on the increase in this era of digitalization if business education graduates do not possess relevant digital skills that will enable them run a digitalized business or work in one. There is need to expand business education curriculum to include the teaching and acquisition of digital skills in relevant areas for effective participation in the digital business. Accounting is one of the areas that business education recipient require digital skills. According to Fisher (2020) Digital accounting refers to the creation, representation, and transfer of financial information in an electronic format. Instead of using papers, all accounting transactions are conducted in an electronic environment. Business education graduates need to possess skills that will enable them prepare. Store, retrieve accounting records and the presentation and communication of information for decision making in business organizations electronically. Thomson (2022) stated that digital accounting skills include accounting software, automation tools, communication platform, social media network and website analytics. Also, Half (2022) noted Microsoft word, Excel, advance excel, management accounting reporting as digital accounting skills among others. Another area that business education recipients require digital skills is marketing. Barrett (2022) stated that digital marketing skills include writing & editing, search engine optimization, design skills, social paid advertising, top-notch personal brand, wordpress, excel proficiency, social media marketing, email marketing and news letters, google adwords & PPC, conversion rate optimization, marketing automation, powerpoint design, influencer marketing, HTML & CSS, creative and analytical abilities.

In addition, Makosiewicz (2022) stated that data literacy, understanding different marketing channels, copywriting, getting around essential digital marketing tools, basic design skills ,assertiveness, social intelligence, critical thinking, curiosity (constant learning), adaptability, strong work ethic, performing, experiments, coping with pressure and understanding code. Also, communication skills, content creation, customer relationship management are digital marketing skills among others. Nevertheless, digital communication skills are required by business education recipients. Spacey (2020) noted audio conferencing, chat, digital twin, messaging, unified communications, video conferencing, virtual presence and virtual workspaces as digital communication skill among others. Also business education recipients needs digital skills in the acquisition, integration and use of data. According to Spacey (2020) data digital skills include analytics, data acquisition, data driven change, data integration, data providers, data quality, data science, process improvement, surveys and transparency. If nothing is done about the limited digital skills possessed by business education graduates .it will result to increase in the rate of unemployment of business education graduates. It is imperative to expand the digital skills taught and learnt in business education programme to enable the recipient to be gainfully employed, establish and run an automated business and compete with their counterparts in other parts of the world.



### **Statement of the Problem**

Unemployment has been a big challenge in Nigeria before the coming of business education. As a result, business education programme was introduced to produce graduates with skills that can enable them create employment for themselves and others, or to secure paid employment. The changing need of the society and technological advancement has rendered many business education graduates unemployed as a result of new skills and digitalization. Expanding the curriculum of business education programme to contain the teaching and learning of current digital skills in accounting, marketing communication, data processing, use of computer, business modeling, business processes, business automation, cost reduction, self-service, E-commerce and E-procurement will help equip business education graduates with relevant digital skills for gainful employment in this digital era.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are the digital accounting skills required by business education graduates for employability in Colleges of Education in Delta State?
2. What are the digital marketing skills required by business education graduates for employability in Colleges of Education in Delta State?

### **Method**

The design of the study was a descriptive survey design. The descriptive survey design was appropriate because it is a design that enables a group of people to be studied by collecting and analyzing data from such group of people who are representative of the population (Okwor, 2011). The population for the study was a total of 76 Business education lecturers comprising 59 lecturers from Federal College of Education [Technical] Asaba, 12 lecturers from College of Education Warri and 5 lecturers from College of Education Mosogor respectively. There was no sampling because the population was of manageable size. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled "Digitalization and Skills Required by Business Education Graduates for Employability in Colleges Of Education (DSRBEGECE). The instrument contained 43 items and was structured on a four point rating scale of Strongly Required (SR) 4 points, Required (R) 3 points, Weakly Required (WR) 2 points and Not Required (NR) 1 point. The cut off point for decision rule was 2.50. The instrument was validated by two experts in school of education, Federal College of Education [Technical] Asaba. The reliability of the instrument was established using Pearson product moment correlation method. The reliability coefficient achieved was 0.72. Thus, the instrument was regarded reliable for gathering data for the study. A total of 76 questionnaires were administered to business education lecturers by the researcher and research assistants and 70 questionnaires were returned while six lecturers could not return their questionnaire as they were occupied with official assignment. Mean and Standard deviation were used to analyze the data collected to answer the research questions. Any item with mean of 2.50 or above is regarded as required while any item with mean less than 2.50 is regarded as not required.

### **Results**

Research Question One

What are the digital accounting skills required by business education graduates for employability in Colleges of Education in Delta State?



**Table: Mean and Standard Deviation of Responses on The Digital accounting Skills Required by Business Education Graduates for Employability in Colleges of Education**

S/N	Item Statements	$\bar{X}$	SD	Remark
1.	Practical knowledge of operating a computer	3.86	0.33	Required
2.	Practical knowledge of using the computer to prepare Financial, cost and management accounting records	3.43	0.73	Required
3.	Microsoft word .skill	3.86	0.33	Required
4.	Excel .skill	3.71	0.60	Required
5.	Practical knowledge of using the computer to record, store and use source document.	3.57	0.62	Required
6.	Practical knowledge of using the computer to prepare day books,, Cash books, ledger, trial balance, final account, bank reconciliation	3.67	0.55	Required
7.	Practical knowledge of using the computer to prepare control account receipt and payment, income and expenditure, manufacturing account.	3.66	0.54	Required
8.	Practical knowledge of using the computer to prepare deprecation, partnership, joint venture accounts, group account	3.47	0.71	Required
9.	Practical knowledge of using the computer to prepare inventory account.	3.83	0.37	Required
10.	Practical knowledge of using various accounting software	3.46	0.50	Required
11.	Practical knowledge of using automation tools.	3.63	0.37	Required
12.	Practical knowledge of automating the recording of accounting transactions	3.86	0.33	Required
13.	Business automation skill	3.27	0.54	Required
14.	Practical knowledge of using the computer for financial, management and cost accounting reporting.	3.60	0.52	Required
15.	Practical knowledge of using the internet to browse current accounting Information and need.	2.99	0.66	Required
16.	Practical knowledge of using the internet to browse other nations accounting practices and standards.	2.79	0.57	Required
17.	E-payment skill.	3.71	0.60	Required
18.	Practical knowledge of receiving money from customers electronically.	3.24	0.62	Required
19.	Practical knowledge of issuing receipt for payment on-line.	3.44	0.62	Required
20.	Practical knowledge of storing accounting information and records electronically.	3.43	0.73	Required
21.	Practical knowledge of communicating financial accounting information for internal and external use.	3.66	0.54	Required
22.	Practical knowledge of using the computer to prepare accounting records needed for tax purposes.	3.47	0.57	Required
<b>Grand mean and standard deviation</b>		<b>3.52</b>	<b>0.54</b>	<b>Required</b>

The result of data analysis in table 1 reveals that the mean responses of the respondents range from 2.79 – 3.86., with a grand mean of 3.52. The result show that the respondents accepted all the items in the table as required digital accounting skills by business education graduates for employability.





**Research Question Two**

What are the digital marketing skills required by business education graduates for employability in Colleges of Education in Delta State?

**Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of Responses on The Digital Marketing Skills Required by Business Education Graduates for Employability in Colleges of Education**

S/N	Item Statements	$\bar{X}$	SD	Remark
23.	Computer operating skill	3.77	0.42	Required
24.	Practical knowledge of electronic marketing of goods and services.	3.90	0.30	Required
25.	E- commerce skill	3.34	0.51	Required
26.	E- procurement. Skill	3.34	0.61	Required
27.	E-payment .skill.	3.69	0.62	Required
28.	Practical knowledge of receiving money from customers electronically.	3.47	0.51	Required
29.	Practical knowledge of using electronic payment equipment like P.O.S, etc.	3.93	0.26	Required
30.	Microsoft word skill for marketing purposes.	3.21	0.56	Required
31.	Corel draw skill for marketing purposes.	2.83	0.51	Required
32.	Practical knowledge of using power point for marketing purposes.	3.81	0.40	Required
33.	E-advertising skills of goods and services.	3.59	0.55	Required
34.	Practical knowledge of displaying goods electronically	3.31	0.62	Required
35.	Social media marketing skills	3.89	0.32	Required
36.	E-mail marketing skills	3.24	0.69	Required
37.	Practical knowledge of using digital marketing tools.	3.31	0.57	Required
38.	Marketing automation .skill	3.76	0.49	Required
39.	Practical knowledge of using different search engines to get current information on marketing.	3.11	0.73	Required
40.	Basic design skills	3.39	0.57	Required
41.	Data literacy skills	3.19	0.77	Required
42.	Content creation skill	3.11	0.49	Required
43.	Practical knowledge of relating with customers electronically.	3.63	0.66	Required
<b>Grand mean and standard deviation.</b>		<b>3.44</b>	<b>0.45</b>	<b>Required</b>

The result of data analysis in table 2 reveals that the mean responses of the respondents range from 2.83 – 3.93., with a grand mean of 3.44. The result show that the respondents accepted all the items in the table as required digital marketing skills by business education graduates for employability.

**Discussion of Findings**

The findings from research question one revealed that computer operating skill; Microsoft word skill; excel skill; skill of using the computer to prepare all the books and records in financial accounting, cost accounting and management accounting; skill of using various accounting software; skill of using automation tools; skill of automating the recording of business transactions; business automation skill; skill of reporting accounting information electronically for internal and external usage; skill of browsing the internet for current accounting needs; E-payment skill; E-receipt skill; and skill of preparing business profits electronically for tax purposes are digital accounting skills required by



business education graduates for employability. The findings was supported by Fisher (2020) who stated that digital accounting refers to the creation, representation, and transfer of financial information in an electronic format, instead of using papers. Also, Thomson (2022) and Half (2022) noted that digital accounting skills include accounting software, automation tools, communication platform, Microsoft word, Excel, advance Excel, management accounting reporting among others.

The findings from research question two revealed that E-Commerce skill; E-Procurement skill; E-Payment skill; POS skill; receiving money electronically; computer operating skill; electronic marketing of goods and services; Microsoft word skill; Corel draw skill; Power point skill; E-Advertising skill, electronic display of goods; social media marketing skill; E-Mail marketing skill; using digital marketing tools; marketing automation skill; using different search engines to get information on marketing; basic design skill; data literacy skill; content creation skill; and skill of relating with customers electronically are digital marketing skills required by business education graduates for employability. The findings was supposed by Barrett (2022) who stated that digital marketing skills include writing & editing, search engine optimization, design skills, social paid advertising, top-notch personal brand, wordpress, excel proficiency, social media marketing, email marketing and Makosiewicz (2022) who noted that data literacy, understanding different marketing channels, copywriting, getting around essential digital marketing tools, basic design skills, communication skills, content creation, customer relationship management are digital marketing skills among others.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that business education graduates require computer operating skill; Microsoft word skill; excel skill; E-payment skill; E-receipt skill; using various accounting software; using the computer to prepare all the books and records in financial accounting, cost accounting and management accounting; using automation tools; automating the recording of business transactions; reporting accounting information electronically for internal and external usage; among others as digital accounting skills and E-Commerce skill; E-Procurement skill; E-Payment skill; POS skill; receiving money electronically; computer operating skill; electronic marketing of goods and services; Microsoft word skill; Corel draw skill; Power point skill; E-Advertising skill, electronic display of goods; social media marketing skill; E-Mail marketing skill; using digital marketing tools among others as digital marketing skills required by business education graduates for self employment or paid employment in this era of digitalization. It will help to reduce the rate of unemployment of business education graduates in the nation.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

- 1 The authorities of Colleges of Education should ensure that the digital accounting and marketing skills contained in the findings from the study are included in business education curriculum.
- 2 The authorities of Colleges of Education should ensure the availability of adequate computer in Colleges of Education for efficient and effective teaching and learning of digital skills. The students may be asked to purchase personal laptop.
- 3 The authorities of Colleges of Education should ensure that Business education lecturers in charge of teaching the digital skills are trained for effective delivery.
- 4 The Dean in charge of Business education programme in Colleges of Education should ensure that Business education students are allowed practical period of two to three hours a week in the computer room with availability of light to enable the students practice the digital skills for perfection.



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