HUMAN RESOURCE AND TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURAL CAPACITY GAPS IN IMPLEMENTING CONTEMPORARY BUSINESS EDUCATION PROGRAMME: EVIDENCE FROM SOUTH EAST NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES

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Abstract
This study ascertained the human resource and technology infrastructural capacity gaps affecting the implementation of contemporary business education programme in South East Nigerian universities. Two research questions and two null hypotheses guided the study. It adopted survey research design, and 143 business educators from public universities offering business education programme in South East region were studied without sampling. The researcher made structured questionnaire titled "Human Resource and Technology Infrastructural Capacity Gaps Affecting the Delivery of Contemporary Business Education Programme (HRTICGADCBEP) was used for data collection. The face validity of the instrument was ascertained using opinions of three experts in the field of business education and measurement and evaluation. The reliability of the instrument was established using trial-testing method, and data gathered were calculated using Cronbach alpha formula which yielded the correlation coefficients of 0.89 and 0.87 for clusters B1 to B2 respectively with an overall index value of.0.88 obtained. The researcher administered the questionnaire to the respondents with the help of five researcher assistants. On the spot method was employed with 135 copies correctly filled and returned giving a 0.94 percent return. Mean, standard deviation and t-test were used for data analysis. Findings revealed that business educators indicated that there are many human resource and technology infrastructural capacity gaps affecting the implementation of contemporary business education programme in universities in South East, Nigeria. Ownership of university was not a significant factor on respondents' mean ratings on human resource and technology infrastructural capacity gaps affecting the implementation of contemporary business education programme in universities. Based on the findings of the study, the researcher concluded that human resource and technology infrastructural capacity gaps are significant challenges for business educators in implementing contemporary business education programme in South-East Nigerian universities. It was recommended that administrators of federal and state universities in Nigeria should organize regular workshops, seminars and training sessions to update business educator skills on contemporary trends, pedagogical innovations, and technological tools relevant to business education. This will enhance their competence and confidence in delivering modern business education curriculum

Key Words: *Human Resource, Technology Infrastructure, Gaps, Contemporary Business Education*

Introduction

In the twenty-first century global economy, business education programme is expected to move beyond traditional theories and classroom-based instruction to a more adaptable, technology-driven, and skill-oriented approach. The rapid technology breakthroughs, globalization, and the Fourth Industrial Revolution (Industry 4.0) have all impacted today's business environment, necessitating the development of dynamic, tech-savvy, and adaptive individuals. Similarly, employers are increasingly demanding for graduates who can demonstrate practical skills such as digital literacy, problem-solving, data analysis, entrepreneurial thinking and adaptability, which traditional lecture-based instruction frequently lacks. As a

result, business education must adopt more experiential and competency-based strategies to prepare students for the changing industry realities. Furthermore, the emergence of digital technology such as e-learning platforms, virtual simulations, cloud-based tools, and mobile apps has altered the delivery of education. These devices enable flexible, interactive and personalized learning experiences that allow students to learn at their own pace, collaborate globally, and apply knowledge in real-world simulations. This move promotes engagement, increases access to business education, and connects learning with industry-standard business procedures.

Business education is viewed as an aspect of vocational education that focuses on the teaching of skills, attitudes and knowledge needed for success in any chosen career (Igberaharha & Utoware (2023). It is a skill-based educational programme which is promoted widely for its relevance in the contemporary competitive global labour market. This is because according to Utoware and Igberaharha (2022), business education equips students with requisite competencies for job creation, entrepreneurship and exposed individual students to functional and suitable skills. It also equips youths with knowledge, attitudes and values required to operate in the environment they find themselves for self-reliance and in turn national development. Ore, Hassan and Ogungbo (2022) opined that business education is a broad and comprehensive field of study whose instructional programme is endowed with the capacity to provide knowledge, skills, vocation and aptitude required to effectively manage personal businesses and at the same time function in the economic system. Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University's Vocational Education Handbook (2017) highlighted some major goals of business education in the university to include; developing effective business education instructors for secondary schools in Nigeria, equipping students' analytical skills and laying the groundwork for further education. Others are preparing students for work in business and industrial establishments, educating students about the role that office and business workers play in the country's economy, and preparing students for careers as professional secretaries, accountants, managers and consultants.

To attain these goals, particularly in light of changing societal and labour market demands, business education must modernize its delivery mode by incorporating contemporary approaches that include innovativeness, information technology and entrepreneurship (David & Abiola, 2022) Contemporary business education as defined by Datar, Garvin and Cullen (2018) is a new method of teaching and learning of business education concepts and skills that are in line with the needs of today's dynamic global economy. It focuses on practical, innovative and multidisciplinary approaches to preparing students for real-world difficulties in business settings. The key aspects of contemporary business education programme include a focus on practical skills. Schlegelmilch (2020) stated that unlike the traditional business education delivery mode, which frequently prioritized theoretical knowledge, contemporary business education lays emphasis on hands-on skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, data analysis, and decision-making. It also contains real-world case studies, simulations, and practical learning projects. Additionally, as the World Economic Forum (2023) pointed out, contemporary university education programmes (business education programme inclusive) must embrace emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), blockchain, data analytics, and digital marketing, with a focus on digital literacy, entrepreneurship, innovation, critical thinking, sustainability, and global competitiveness. As a matter of fact, the university business education curriculum should prepare students for a variety of workplaces, promote innovation, and foster entrepreneurial mindsets. By merging business and other fields, the interdisciplinary approach makes business education more accessible and flexible. Furthermore, prioritizing the development of soft skills such as communication, teamwork, adaptability, and emotional intelligence is the hall mark of contemporary business education programme. The purpose here is to produce business education graduates with the practical, technological and managerial abilities required to survive in a knowledge-based, digitally integrated business world.

The universities play a crucial role in **transforming the workforce** by redesigning business education curriculum, embracing e-learning platforms, and fostering industry partnerships. In order words, the effective delivery of such an advanced curriculum depends heavily on the availability and functionality of human and technological infrastructure. This includes qualified and competent business educators, modern ICT tools, digital course content, virtual learning environments, and institutional support strategies.

Edokpolor and Owenvbiugie (2017) however, noted that the implementation of contemporary business education programme in Nigerian universities faces significant challenges due to human resource gaps. These gaps may stem from shortages in qualified business educators, inadequate training of teaching and non-teaching staff, low motivation of business educators, and limited expertise of business educators in modern business practices. In agreement, Usoro (2017) observed that the Nigerian universities produce graduates who lack the necessary skills and competencies required by the labour market due to a shortage of competent educators. Furthermore, Oyebamiji et al. (2020) lamented that the human resource gaps in Nigeria's university system stems from the non-implementation of skills-gap analysis in recruitment as a barrier to addressing academic workforce shortages. Oyebamiji et al. added that this issue is relevant to business education, where similar practices hinder the hiring of qualified, competent and experienced business educators.

Consequently, the implementation of contemporary business education programme in Nigerian universities could also be significantly hindered by technology infrastructural gaps. These gaps may include inadequate access to modern ICT facilities, unreliable power supply, limited internet connectivity, and insufficient funding for technological upgrades. As admitted by Ile et al. (2015), inadequate access to modern ICT infrastructure such as computers, software for data analytics, e-learning platforms, and virtual simulation tools hinder their integration in enhancing the teaching and learning of business education courses. In support, Dosumu (2024) noted that limited power access is a primary obstacle to digital literacy and ICT integration in Nigeria universities. Dosumu's study compared Nigeria to Rwanda, where solar-powered digital hubs have mitigated similar issues. The author posited that unreliable power supply disrupts online learning, virtual simulations, and access to digital resources, limiting the ability to implement technology-driven university curricula. Ayoko et al. (2023) reported that inadequate funding leads to poor planning and maintenance of infrastructure in Nigerian public universities, including ICT facilities critical for business education programme. This affects classrooms, computer labs, and other technological resources. Furthermore, Edokpolor and Owenvbiugie (2017) noted that poor funding is a significant challenge for business education programme, limiting the provision of modern facilities and equipment necessary for teaching contemporary skills such as graphic design and office technology. Without sufficient funding, universities cannot upgrade outdated systems or acquire new technologies, resulting in business education curricula that fail to meet global standards and produce graduates with limited employability in technology-driven markets.

The South East, Nigeria, often known for its entrepreneurial vigor and academic heritage, is well-positioned to benefit from globally competitive business education programme. However, the realization of this potential could be threatened by **persistent human resource and technological infrastructural gaps. The** inadequacy of human resource and technology infrastructural support not only affects the **quality of business education instruction and students' learning experiences**, but also undermines the employability of business education graduates, stifles innovation, and widens the global knowledge divide. The ownership of universities could be a significant determinant on the human resource and technological infrastructural gaps affecting the delivery of contemporary business education programme. The federal universities could differ with the state universities in the availability and adequacy human resource and technological infrastructures probably due to increased funding to federal universities compared to state universities. Similarly, Federal universities could be providing more professional training and development programmes for their business educators to enhance their professional practices when compared to state universities due to differences in funding, policy frameworks and alignment with private industries. However, in contrast, Oluwatayo and Adebayo (2018) reported that business education in Nigerian tertiary institutions regardless of ownership face similar challenges of lack of funding for training and research, and trouble hiring qualified lecturers. It is against this background that this study sought to **investigate the human resource and technology infrastructural capacity gaps** affecting the implementation of contemporary business education programme in South East Nigerian universities.

Statement of the Problem

The global shift towards a knowledge-based and digitally driven economy has necessitated the transformation of business education programme to reflect contemporary trends such as digital entrepreneurship, financial technology, e-commerce, and data analytics. In response, universities are expected to implement curriculum that not only align with these trends, but also equip graduates with relevant 21st-century skills. However, in Nigerian universities, the successful implementation of contemporary business education programmes is being undermined by significant infrastructural challenges. Preliminary observations and emerging research suggest that there are critical human and technological infrastructural capacity gaps that hinder the effective delivery of these modern business education programmes. These may include a shortage of adequately trained business educators with up-to-date industry and technological competencies, limited access to digital teaching tools, insufficient ICT infrastructure, and lack of institutional support for continuous professional development. As a result, business education students graduate with outdated knowledge and limited practical skills, making them less competitive in the global workforce. Despite National Education Policy reforms and efforts to modernize business education programme, it appears that there could be persistent inadequacies in both human and technological resources which call into question the readiness of universities in the region to deliver quality, future-oriented business education programme. Therefore, this study specifically investigate (1) the human resource capacity gaps affecting the implementation of contemporary business education programme in universities in South East, Nigeria, (2) the human resource capacity gaps affecting the implementation of contemporary business education programme in universities in South East, Nigeria

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study;

What are the human resource capacity gaps affecting the implementation of contemporary business education programme in universities in South East, Nigeria?

What are the technology infrastructural gaps affecting the delivery of contemporary business education programme in universities in South East, Nigeria?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance

Business educators do not differ significantly in their mean ratings on human resource capacity gaps affecting the implementation of contemporary business education programme in universities in South East, Nigeria based on ownership of university.

There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of business educators on technology infrastructural gaps affecting the delivery of contemporary business education programme in universities in South East, Nigeria based on ownership of university.

Method

This study adopted survey research design – it was conducted in South East, Nigeria. The population of 143 business educators in public universities offering business education programme in South East were studied without sampling. A Structured questionnaire titled “Human Resource and Technology Infrastructural Capacity Gaps Affecting the Delivery of Contemporary Business Education Programme (HRTICGADCBEP) was used for data collection. The questionnaire was divided into two parts; A and B. Part A contained the demographic information of the respondents such as ownership of university while part B was divided into two clusters B1 and B2 with 20 items covering the two research questions. The instrument was structured on a four point rating scale of The instrument was structured on a four-point rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). The face validity of the instrument waswere ascertained using three experts, two from the field of Business Education and one expert from Measurement and Evaluation. The reliability of the instrument was carried out using trial-testing method, and data collected calculated with Cronbach Alpha formula to determine the internal consistency of the instrument and correlation coefficients of 0.89 and 0.87 was obtained for clusters B1 to B2 respectively with an overall value of.0.88 obtained. The researchers administered copies of the questionnaire to the respondents in their offices with the help of five researcher assistants who were

adequately briefed on the modalities for administering and retrieving the questionnaire. On the spot method was employed but those who did not fill their copies immediately were revisited on an agreed date. Out of 143 copies of the questionnaire distributed, 135 were correctly filled and returned giving the 0.94 percent. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions and determine the homogeneity of the respondents' ratings while t-test was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. A null hypothesis was rejected where the p-value is less than the significant level; otherwise, the null hypothesis was accepted. The analysis was carried out using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25.0.

Results

Table 1: Respondents' Mean Ratings and Standard Deviation on Human Resources Capacity Gaps Affecting the Implementation of Contemporary Business Education Programme

S/N	Items on Human Resource Capacity Gaps	SD	$\bar{x}$	Remarks
1	My department has enough skilled lecturers to carry out a modern business education programme	2.47	0.73	Disagree
2	The current lecturer-to-student ratio in my department is adequate	1.47	0.68	Strongly Disagree
3	My department has specialists in business education fields such as digital marketing, financial technology and entrepreneurship	3.02	0.70	Agree
4	Recruitment of new lecturers in my university meets the growing needs of the business education programme	2.01	0.69	Disagree
5	Business educators in my university regularly participate in professional development programmes	2.56	0.84	Agree
6	Business educators receive adequate training that keeps up with the latest developments in technology and industry	2.43	0.76	Disagree
7	Business educators have enough exposure to contemporary teaching resources and techniques	1.62	0.85	Disagree
8	My university provides adequate funding and support for capacity-building initiatives such as conferences and workshops	1.37	0.79	Strongly Disagree
9	The administration of my university encourages business educators to pursue ongoing professional development courses	2.50	0.70	Agree
10	The hiring and retention of competent business educators are done swiftly without administrative hold-ups.	1.67	0.72	Disagree
	Cluster Mean	**2.11**		**Disagree**

Data in table 1 shows that out of 10 items listed on human resource capacity gaps affecting the implementation of contemporary business education programme, three items have mean scores ranging from 2.50 to 3.02 which means that respondents rated them agree. Five items have mean scores ranging from 1.67 to 2.47 meaning that respondents rated them disagree while the remaining two items with mean score of 1.37 and 1.47 means that the respondents rated them strongly disagree. The cluster mean score of 2.11 means that business educators disagree on majority of the positive statements on human resource capacity gaps. Invariably Invariable, business educators indicated that there are many human resource capacity gaps affecting the implementation of contemporary business education programme in universities in South East, Nigeria. Standard deviations for all the items are within the same range showing that the respondents are not wide apart in their ratings opinions.

Table 2: Respondents' Mean Ratings and Standard Deviation on Human Resource Capacity Gaps Affecting the Implementation of Contemporary Business Education Programme

S/N	Items on Technology Infrastructural Gaps	SD	$\overline{x}$	Remarks
11	My department has adequate computer systems for teaching contemporary business education courses	1.45	0.69	Strongly Disagree
12	Internet access in my institution is reliable and sufficient for academic use	1.38	0.72	Strongly Disagree
13	Smart classrooms and digital teaching aids such as projectors, smart boards are available and functional	1.44	0.74	Strongly Disagree
14	Students have access to adequate modern ICT resources for learning and research purposes	1.67	0.72	Disagree
15	Learning Management Systems (LMS) or virtual learning platforms are mainly used in delivering business education contents	1.39	0.80	Strongly Disagree
16	The available ICT tools and platforms are regularly maintained and updated	1.65	0.77	Disagree
17	There is adequate technical support staff to assist with technology-related challenges in teaching	2.50	0.84	Agree
18	Frequent breakdown of ICT facilities negatively impacts course delivery	2..53	0.86	Agree
19	Lecturers have received adequate training on how to use digital tools for teaching	2.08	0.74	Disagree
20	I effectively integrate technology into my teaching of business education courses	2.41	0.70	Disagree
	Cluster Mean	**1.85**		**Disagree**

Analysis in table 2 shows that out of 10 items listed on technology infrastructural gaps affecting the delivery of contemporary business education programme, two items with mean scores of 2.50 and 2.53 are rated agree by the respondents. Four items with mean scores ranging from 1.65 to 2.41 are rated disagree by the respondents while the remaining four items with mean score of 1.38 to 1.45 are rated strongly disagree. two items with mean score of 1.37 and 1.47 means that the respondents rated them strongly disagree. The cluster mean score of 1.85 means that on the whole business educators disagree with the majority of the positive statements on technology infrastructural gaps. Invariably Invariable, business educators indicated that there are many technology infrastructural gaps affecting the implementation of contemporary business education programme in universities in South East, Nigeria. Standard deviations for all the items are within the same range showing that the respondents are not wide apart in their ratings opinions.

Table 3: T-test Analysis of Significant Differences in Mean Ratings of Business Educators on Human Resources Capacity Gaps Affecting the Implementation of Contemporary Business Education Programme Based on Ownership of University

University Ownership	N	$\overline{X}$	SD	df	t-value	P-value	Decision
Federal	56	2.13	0.78	133	1.34	0.15	Not Significant
State	79	2.0 9	0.82				

Data in table 3 shows that the t - value is 1.34 with 133 degree of freedom and a p-value of 0.15, which is greater than the 0.05 level of significance. Since the p-value is greater than the significance value (P-value = 0.15 > 0.05), the null hypothesis is therefore accepted. This means that business educators do not differ significantly in their mean ratings on human resource capacity gaps affecting the implementation of contemporary business education programme in universities in South East, Nigeria based on ownership of institution.

Table 4: T-test Analysis of Significant Differences in Mean Ratings of Business Educators on Human Resources Capacity Gaps Affecting the Implementation of Contemporary Business Education Programme Based on Ownership of University

University Ownership	N	$\overline{X}$	SD	df	t-value	P-value	Decision
Federal	56	1.86	0.71				
				133	2.01	1.10	Not Significant
State	79	1.85	0.69				

Table 4 shows that the t - value is 2.01 with 133 degree of freedom and a p-value of 1.10, which is greater than the 0.05 level of significance. Since the p-value is greater than the significance value (P-value = 1.10 > 0.05), the null hypothesis is therefore accepted. This means that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of business educators on technology infrastructural gaps affecting the delivery of contemporary business education programme in universities in South East, Nigeria based on ownership of university.

Discussion of Findings

Findings of the study showed that business educators indicated that there are many human resource capacity gaps affecting the implementation of contemporary business education programme in universities in South East, Nigeria. The findings of this study aligned with that of Akeem and Idowu (2024) which revealed that human resource challenges such as academic staff shortages, lack of workforce diversity, poorly trained lecturers, and lecturers' mental health concern negatively affect effective implementation of educational programme in higher institutions. Similarly, Nmadu and Khalil (2017) earlier reported that low training motivation, none-alignment of institutions and lecturers' training needs, brain drain, poor funding among others hinder effective implementation of higher education programmes in Nigeria. Similarly, Nweke et al. (2023) regretted that lecturers' poor working conditions, problems of academic staffing, lack of training on ICT and poor recruitment process; no induction of human resources; poor supervision/appraisal of staff; poor personnel commitment to work and incessant transfer of teachers. In addition, Nwakpa (2019) disclosed that revealed that inadequate funding, lack of lecturers' development programmes, and insufficient motivation hinder effective teaching performance of lecturers in Nigerian schools. Additionally, the study by Obasi and Asogwa (2021) highlighted the human resource gaps facing South-East Nigerian higher institutions to include poor working conditions, inadequate staffing, lack of ICT integration, and insufficient funding. The findings also revealed that business educators do not differ significantly in their mean ratings on human resource capacity gaps affecting the implementation of contemporary business education programme in universities in South East, Nigeria based on ownership of institution. In support of this finding, Oluwatayo and Adebayo (2018) reported that business education in Nigerian tertiary institutions regardless of ownership face challenges of lack of funding for training and research, and trouble hiring qualified academic staff.

Findings of the study revealed that business educators indicated that there are many technology infrastructural gaps affecting the implementation of contemporary business education programme in universities in South East, Nigeria. This finding aligns with that of Ezeabii, I. C. & Ekoh-Nweke (2020) which highlighted issues such as poor funding of ICT facilities and inadequate knowledge of new technologies among business educators as significant barriers to effective technology integration in business education programmes. In agreement, Anike (2024) found that inadequate infrastructure, funding issues, and inconsistent power supply as major challenges hindering the effective use of ICT in business education programme. Furthermore, Okoye, Nwannah and Udegbunam (2020) reported that insufficient ICT facilities, lack of technical support, and inadequate training for educators, which impede the integration of ICT in business education. Ogonu (2019) disclosed that epileptic power supply, poor funding, and lack of modern technological tools as impediments to the effective use of new technologies in teaching business education courses. The findings also revealed that there was no significant difference in the mean ratings of business educators on technology infrastructural gaps affecting the delivery of contemporary business

education programme in universities in South East, Nigeria based on ownership of university. It could be that both public and private universities face similar funding constraints, leading to comparable deficiencies in technological infrastructure. Whether from government allocations for public universities and private funding for private institutions, restrict investments in modern technology, resulting in similar infrastructural gaps across both types of institutions.

Conclusion

This study investigated the human resource and technology infrastructural gaps affecting the delivery of contemporary business education programme in universities in South-East, Nigeria. Based on the findings of the study, the researcher concluded that human resource and technology infrastructural gaps are significant challenges for business educators in implementing contemporary business education programme in South-East Nigerian universities, It was also concluded that the type of university ownership did not significantly influence their perceptions of these gaps. This means that the challenges are pervasive and require a holistic approach to address them.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher makes the following recommendations;

1. Administrators of federal and state universities in Nigeria should organize regular workshops, seminars and training sessions to update business educators on contemporary trends, pedagogical innovations, and technological tools relevant to business education. This will enhance their competence and confidence in delivering modern business education curriculum.
2. Federal and State Universities in Nigeria should revise their recruitment policies to prioritize candidates with both academic qualifications and industry experience in contemporary business practices.
3. The federal and state governments in Nigeria as well as university administrators should allocate enough funds for staff development programmes focused on contemporary business education skills and technologies. Scholarships and grants for further studies or certifications should be encouraged.
4. University administrations should collaborate with the private sector and international organizations to source for alternative funding and technical support for technological upgrades.
5. Training and retraining programmes should be intensified for business educators to effectively utilize available technology and adapt to emerging technological trends.

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