

*Nigerian Journal of Business Education (NIGJBED) Volume 11 No. 3, August 2025*

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**NIGERIAN JOURNAL  
OF  
BUSINESS  
EDUCATION**

**(The Official Publication of the Association  
of Business Educators of Nigeria)**

**Volume 11 No 3**

**August, 2025**

**Published by the:  
Association of Business Educators of Nigeria**



*Nigerian Journal of Business Education (NIGJBED) Volume 11 No. 3, August 2025*

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**ISSN: 2408-4816**

**Published by the:  
Association of Business Educators of Nigeria  
Available online at [www.nigjbed.com.ng](http://www.nigjbed.com.ng)**

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## COMPUTER APPLICATION SKILLS REQUIRED FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT AMONG BUSINESS EDUCATION STUDENTS IN UNIVERSITIES FOR FUTURE BUSINESSES

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### Abstract

The study sought to determine the computer application skills required for entrepreneurship development among Business Education students in public universities in Ebonyi State for future businesses. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The study was guided by three research questions and three null hypotheses tested at 0.05 level of significance. Population of the study comprised of 294 respondents (22 Business Education lecturers in public universities in Ebonyi State that offer the programme and 272 registered small and medium enterprises in Abakaliki metropolis). There was no sample because the population was manageable. A 17 item structured questionnaire validated by two experts in the field of Business Education and one expert in measurement and evaluation was used for the study. The reliability of the instrument, using Cronbach alpha yielded an overall reliability co-efficient of 0.74. Data were analyzed using mean, standard deviation and t-test. Findings showed that internet application skills, spreadsheet application skills, and database management application skills were required by Business Education students for entrepreneurship development. The researcher then concluded that Business Education students who want to develop entrepreneurship competencies for future businesses should be equipped with adequate computer application skills such as internet, spreadsheet, and database management since computer application skills have taken over every facet of business. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended among others that government should equip Business Education departments in various universities with computers and internet facilities to enable the lecturers empower the students with the necessary skills required for entrepreneurship development and future businesses

**Keywords:** Computer Application skills, Entrepreneurship Development, Business Education, Data Management, Business.

### Introduction

Advancement in technology globally has revolutionized every human and business activity. Rapid developments in Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in recent years have resulted in significant changes in the way the world operates, communicates and do businesses. Ezinwa (2020) defined computer as an electronic device that manipulates information or data. It has the ability to store, retrieve and process data. Ezinwa further said that most businesses today create



data that can be stored and processed on computers. Computer is an electronic device that is designed to help man perform different types of functions easily, speedily, accurately and effectively. Computer accepts data and instruction as instructed through the processing devices and gives accurate result. It converts raw facts into required information according to a set of instructions that are fed into it through the output devices. Computer is referred to as a system because it comprises of different components none of which can function independently without the others, just like the human body system (Emeasoba, Ekoh & Modebelu, 2015). Similarly, Victoria, Uchechi and Kate (2013), stated that computer is a programmable, multi-use machine that accepts data, raw facts and figures and processes or manipulates it into information. According to them, a computer as a machine or device can perform a variety of operations such as arithmetic calculation, comparison of data, storage of information, analysis and presentation of diagrams and charts which are used to digitally create, collect, store, manipulate and relay office information needed for accomplishment of basic business tasks and goals. In order words, computer helps enhance efficiency, workflow and overall experience within the work place and it streamlines communication because employees can easily connect with clients via some computer applications and share documents and important resources.

Computer application is a software that allows you to perform specific tasks in a skillful way (Ezinwa 2020). Skill is the ability to do something well. It is usually gained through training or experience that is needed. These skills can be obtained through education, training or experience that will inculcate into the individual on how to carry out or discharge his or her responsibilities well with new knowledge. Inalegwe (2016), saw skill as expertness and competence appropriate for a particular job. It has to do with expert knowledge and creative reasoning to a level of mastery. In order to attain these skills, the individual needs to acquire basic training or knowledge levels related to the tasks to perform whether through formal or informal or combination of the two. In a nutshell, computer application skill is seen by the researcher as the abilities and knowledge which allow one to use computers and related technology. Inalegwe noted that some of the computer applications skills required of business Education students are: word processors, spreadsheet, database management application, Microsoft PowerPoint, internet applications among others.

Due to the advancement in Information Technology, some businesses use the internet to share all kinds of information and to sell goods and services outside their geographical location. According to Ohaegbulem, Odah and Oko (2019), internet is a means of connecting a computer to any other computer anywhere in the world via dedicated routers or servers. The internet can be used to send and receive all kinds of information such as text, graphics voice, videos and so on. Ohaegbulam et al noted that the available internet application skills needed for entrepreneurship development and future business are: E- Business, E- commerce, Browsers, Search Engine, E- mail, Social media, World Wide Web, Audio and video conferencing among others. Internet has paved way for e-commerce activities to be successful. Many people are increasingly using the internet on a daily basis thereby providing a platform for the buying and selling of good and services. E-Business simply means Electronic Business. It is widely acknowledged today in the business world because business owners use the internet to modify communication between different businesses in the business world. Ezinwa (2019) defined E – Business as the application of information and communication technology (ICT) in support of all business activities. Some examples of the business activities are procurement of goods, supply activities, buying and selling products, making monetary transfer etc. It is an online business which one can easily use to set up any form of business and manage it from the comfort of their homes. It is also used for online interaction with business partners, customers and vendors which is aimed at improving business processes and efficiency.

E-Commerce is also known as Electronic commerce which means the buying and selling of goods and services over the internet. It also involves conducting transfer of ownership or rights to use goods and services through a computer mediated network. According to Ezinwa (2019) E-commerce is the use of electronic communication and digital information in business transaction to create, transform and redefine relationships for value creation between or among organizations and between organization and individuals. The internet provides a perfect market place where customers access the website of e-commerce vendors and order the product they want to buy online and make their



payment through the gateway. E-commerce website provides a rich experience to their customers by enabling them to: browse through the product catalogue and select the brand, view the photos, texture design and other aspect of the product closely before selection, compare the prices of various brands and read the reviews of current users of product they choose, order the product online and track the status of the delivery, pay online, return the product if the customers are not satisfied or size is not fitting Similarly, Ogbu and Amahi (2022) noted that e-commerce comprise the business web-site, log and other unique features that can easily differentiate one business from another.

E-mail is the abbreviation of Electronic mail. It is a computer based application which allows all internet users to send and receive messages from around the world Ohaegbulem et al (2019) explained that E-mail is information stored on a computer that is exchanged between two users over telecommunications. They further opined that e-mail messages may contain text, files, images, or other attachments sent through a network to a specified individual or group of individuals. E-mail allows employees irrespective of their location, office or organization to exchange correspondence. Your E-mail address gives necessary information about you; the information that will enable the electronic message to get across to you from anywhere the signal is present. Ohaegbulam et al, also stated that all business transactions can be done through E-mail to any part of the world and is a form of information dissemination from one computer to another. That is a system of sending written messages electronically from one computer to another. E- Mail can be used in business to introduce your business to new audience or to send relevant contents to customers on a regular basis. The relevant content can be newsletters, sales promotions. E-mail marketing is a platform used by businesses to communicate directly with existing consumers who indicate interest in the business' products. With the e-mail as a digital name for a business, e-mail marketing is a fast way to reach customers in their different locations. Customers may be added to an e-mail list and contacted where necessary (Ogbu & Amahi, 2022).

Social media is one of the computer application skills that are created through internet for users to communicate with others on the areas of their mutual interest, either from a personal, business or academic perspective. Social media is use for advertisement of goods and services, where a business owner makes the product known to the public. Victoria et al (2013) described social media as a social networking such as face book which can put workers in touch with each other in ways that could not have been if not for digital technology. The social media available on the internet are: face book, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, Tiktok among others. Social media are used to promote product and services in business. You can easily push out contents about your business (i.e. what you sell), and watch your followers to know how they feel about your business. Business owners have a valuable opportunity to build quality relationships with their followers by engaging in meaningful conversation with them. Social media is all about sharing and dialogue.

Audio and Video Conferencing is a set of interactive telecommunication technologies which allow two or more locations to interact via two-way video and audio transmission via internet. Ohaegbulam et al (2019) opined that, it is basically big screens with cameras attached to them, which have transformed the way teams collaborate across long distances by offering high definition face to face or audio meeting. This is used to organize a meeting of people who are geographically separated but connected by an audio or tele communication system, it also permits interaction between two or more people at different location. There are many applications used for this, they include: zoom, Skype, slack, meet etc. This helps in team collaboration in an organization. E-accounting refers to the application of online and internet technologies for accounting functions. It entails performing regular accounting functions, accounting research and accounting training cum education through various internet based accounting tools such as digital tool kits, various internet resources, international web based materials institute and company data bases which are internet based, were links, internet-based accounting software and electronic financial spreadsheet tools to provide efficient decision making (Memia in Adeboye and Akinlabi, 2022).

Another computer application that is used for creating, editing, organizing, reviewing and also used for financial models is spreadsheet. According to Victoria et al (2013), spreadsheet is used for account keeping. Examples of spreadsheet are Ms-Excel, Multiplan Auto calc among others. It is a



vital business tool used for creating financial spreadsheet, scheduling and tracking sales, creating invoices, creating receipts. It can also be used for statistical analysis, drawing of graphs and for calculations. Spreadsheet Excel is important for budget preparation, speedy operation of financial statements, cash flow projections and the determination of what would happen to cash flow if an unanticipated investment opportunity were utilized. It also helps in the inventory management and accounts production by bursary units of business organizations. Another computer application skill is database management skill.

Database management application skill is also an internet application that is required for entrepreneurship development. It is an organized or systematic collection of data or information that is specially organized which can be easily accessible, retrieved, managed and updated. According to Ezinwa, (2019), database helps to create and maintain (add, delete, Update), extract and list all records or only those records that meet the criteria, make an enquiry about a customer or employer, sort records in ascending and descending order, generate formatted report with subtotals and totals among others. Databases are often managed by a central function often called Management Information System (MIS). MIS, is an information system that evaluates, analyzes and processes an organization's data to produce meaningful and useful information based on which the management can take right decisions to ensure future growth of the organization. According to Umoru (2014), database management is a digital skill of information made up of individual items that are organized so that they can be reviewed in a variety of ways. With database management system like MS Access security of information against unauthorized users is highly guaranteed. In addition, database integrity is maintained by ensuring that no two users are able to update the same record at the same time as well as preventing duplicate entries, such as two employees being given the same employee number

Business owners or Entrepreneurs have become interested in the internet as means of advertising their products as well as to offer all kinds of information. For example, when a business web page address is known, potential customers can use a browser to go shopping or perform information browsing (Ohaegbulam et al 2019). The use of Computer application skills has revolutionized training methods in technical, business, health occupation, agricultural, trade and industrial home economics and distributive option of vocational education. Internet applications has been particularly useful in the problem solving aspect of vocational technical training (Effiong and Eunice 2018). The knowledge of these internet application skills will help to increase chances of business success. Business is seen as any legal activities that one does to earn money, make profit and to make a living. For one to embark on the venture whether small or big, one has to acquire the necessary skills needed to advance in business. There is need for Business Education students to acquire these skills in order to prepare themselves for work life upon graduation.

Business Education is a programme which prepares recipient after graduation to be an efficient office worker, a teacher or an entrepreneur. It is a process of instructing recipients of what happens in the business world. Oladunjoye (2016), explained that Business Education is education that prepare its recipients to acquire viable skills that will enable them fit into various business organizations or be self-employed in the absence of paid job. Business Education according to Ezeabii (2017) is an aspect of vocational education which equips individuals with the necessary skills and theoretical knowledge needed for performing in the business world either for job occupation or for self-employment. Business Education is that aspect of educational programme which provides students' the knowledge, skill, understanding and attitude needed to perform in the business world. Emeasoba, et al, (2015), opined that Business Education is a type of education that helps someone to learn the facts, acquire the skills, develop abilities, solve problems and be able to have business like attitudes useful for success in business situations. For this reasons, Business Education students are being taught the attitude, knowledge, skills and understanding which they need to perform in the world of business. The teaching of computer in Business Education programme will go a long way in developing the students' computer application skills required for future business and entrepreneurship development.



Entrepreneurship Development is seen as the acquisition of skills by an individual for business formation. According to Akutson and Ude (2015), it is a pre-planned advancement, increase or growth in skills and capacity which give entrepreneurial ability in a given set of people in tertiary institutions or in agencies. Universities is an institution of higher learning and one of the places where business and entrepreneurship education is offered. The entrepreneurship education is offered in the universities as a vocational course. The aim of Entrepreneurship Development Education in the universities is to allow students to acquire these skills, knowledge and attitude to enable them take the role of entrepreneurs, thereby creating jobs for themselves and for others (Ekpo & Edet, 2011). The Business Education as a vocational course is offered in both public and private universities in Ebonyi State. However, as Business Education programme is run in the universities, both male and female lecturers teach the course and both male and female students enroll for the programme and are exposed to the same skill. There is no gender bias in the teaching and learning of the course in the universities in Ebonyi State. The researcher is limiting the research work to public schools, that is, the universities owned by the government in Ebonyi State. Ebonyi State is one of the 36 States in Nigeria. It is located in the South Eastern region of Nigeria. It is certain that most of the schools in the state do not have the technological devices for imparting skills required for future business and entrepreneurship development. This situation prompted this study which investigates Computer application skills required for Entrepreneurship Development among Business Education students in Universities in Ebonyi State for future businesses.

### **Statement of the Study**

Computer application is a software that allows you to perform a task in a skillful way. The acquisition of adequate computer application skills will enable students after graduation to fit into the society in the world of work and also enable them to be successful business owners or entrepreneurs. Most students are graduating from the universities without necessary skills and competencies. However, if the students have acquired the computer application skills required for entrepreneurship development for future businesses, they are supposed to start or establish and manage their own entrepreneurship business. But instead of establishing their own businesses, they go in search of paid jobs (white collar jobs). Even when they get the work in some offices they still lack the skills and competencies required from them. This lack of skill and competencies is what causes poor work output and lack of efficiency. That is why most organizations usually send their staff to training and retraining programmes. The researchers is wondering if the computer application skills are not taught in schools or the student want to be among the graduates with the burden of surplus unemployable work force because of the wide gap created by absence of skills and competencies. The main focus of the problem of this study is that Business Education students seems to be lacking in computer application skills required for Entrepreneurship Development for future businesses. And due to the current phase of technological changes in the business world, there is need for them to be properly equipped with the necessary computer application skills needed to operate in present day highly automated business world in order for them to be successful in future businesses.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are the internet application skills required for entrepreneurship development among Business Education students in universities in Ebonyi State for future businesses?
2. What are the spreadsheet application skills required for entrepreneurship development among Business Education students in universities in Ebonyi State for future businesses?
3. What are the database management application skills required for entrepreneurship development among Business Education students in universities in Ebonyi State for future businesses?



## **Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

- Ho<sub>1</sub> A significant difference does not exist between the mean ratings of male and female Business Educators and owners of small and medium enterprises (SMES) on the internet application skills required for entrepreneurship development among Business Education students in universities in Ebonyi State for future businesses.
- Ho<sub>2</sub> There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female Business Educators and owners of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) on the spreadsheet application skills required for entrepreneurship development among Business Education students in universities in Ebonyi State for future businesses.
- Ho<sub>3</sub> There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female Business Educators and owners of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) on the data management application skills required for entrepreneurship development among Business Education students in universities in Ebonyi State for future businesses.

## **Method**

The researchers adopted descriptive survey research design for the study. This design was deemed appropriate since the study involved studying a group of people or items as well collecting and analyzing data from few people or entire group (Nworgu, 2015). The area of the study was public universities in Ebonyi State. The Population of the study comprised of 294 respondents (22 Business Education lecturers in public universities in Ebonyi State that offer the programme and 272 registered small and medium enterprises in Abakaliki metropolis). There was no sample because the population was manageable. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled "Computer Application Skills for Entrepreneurship Development and future businesses". The questionnaire was divided into two-parts (A and B). Part A contained the demographic data while part B consists 17 items in three clusters of B1 to B3 structured on a 4-point rating scale of highly required(HR), moderately required (MR), slightly required (SR) and not required (NR) with weighting numerical values of 4,3,2, and 1 respectively. The instrument was validated by three experts in the department of Business Education and one in Measurement and Evaluation in the Faculty of Education all in Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki. It was subjected to a reliability test using Cronbach alpha, which gave a coefficient of 0.74. The researchers administered the instrument to the study population with the help of two research assistants who were properly guided on the procedure. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions and determined the spread of the respondents' means while t-test was used to test the hypotheses at.05 level of significance. The decision for research questions was based on item by item means score of the two groups as well as the grand mean scores using a cut-off mean of 2.50 so that means scores above 2.50 are required and those below are not required. The t-test was used to test the null hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. A null hypothesis was not rejected if the t-calculated is less than the t-critical value and rejected if the t-calculated is equal or higher than the t-critical value

## **Results and Discussions**

**Research Question 1: What are the internet skills required for entrepreneurship development among Business Education students for future businesses?**



**Table 1: Mean ratings of respondents on internet skills required for entrepreneurship development among Business Education students for future businesses.**

N = 294				
S/N	Internet skills required for entrepreneurship development among Business Education students for future businesses.	Mean	SD	Remarks
1	Skills in the use of search engines	3.25	0.74	Required
2	Skills in the use of social media platform to advertise business	3.34	0.81	Required
3	Ability to organize video conferences or discussion forum using Skype, Team speak, Google meet etc.	3.52	0.72	Required
4	Ability to search and buy goods online	3.36	0.69	Required
5	Ability to use E-mail	3.33	0.73	Required
6	Ability to deliver goods on line	3.48	0.82	Required
7	Ability to make payment online	3.23	0.59	Required
Cluster $\bar{X}$ and SD		3.37	0.73	Required

Table 1 shows that the mean scores of the respondents for all the items ranged from 3.23 to 3.52 with the cluster mean scores of 3.37 which is greater than the cut-off mean of 2.50. This indicates that respondents agreed that internet application skills are required for entrepreneurship development among Business Education students in universities for future businesses. The standard deviation scores for all the items are within the same range of 0.59-0.82 showing that the respondents are homogenous in their ratings.

**Research Question 2: What are the spreadsheet application skills required for entrepreneurship development among Business Education students for future businesses?**

**Table 2: Mean ratings of respondents on spreadsheet application skills required for entrepreneurship development among Business Education students for future businesses.**

N = 294				
S/N	Spreadsheet application skills required for entrepreneurship development among Business Education students for future businesses.	Mean	SD	Remarks
1.	Calculate using spreadsheet	3.99	0.88	Required
2.	Enter accurate text and numeric data in specified format	3.07	0.84	Required
3.	Move from cell to cell and read meanings of clear and delete in MS Excel	3.43	0.74	Required
4.	Review spreadsheet structure and spreadsheet	3.38	0.77	Required
5	Design and modify the appearance of charts, graphs save, retrieve and print out	3.35	0.72	Required
Cluster $\bar{X}$ and SD		3.44	0.79	Required

Table 2 shows that the mean scores of the respondents for all the items ranged from 3.07 to 3.99 with the cluster mean scores of 3.44 which is greater than the cut-off mean of 2.50. This indicates that respondents agreed that spreadsheet application skills are required for entrepreneurship development among Business Education students in universities for future businesses. However, the standard deviation scores for all the items are within the same range of 0.72- 0.88 showing that the respondents are homogenous in their ratings.

**Research Question 3: What are the database management application skills required for entrepreneurship development among Business Education students for future businesses?**



**Table 2: Respondents’ mean ratings on database management application skills required for entrepreneurship development among Business Education students for future businesses.**

S/N	Data management application skills required for entrepreneurship development among business education students for future businesses.	Mean	SD	Remarks
N = 294				
1.	Understand the types of files, identify organization methods and demonstrate how to start and quit DBM application	3.46	0.71	Required
2.	Structure query language (SQL) manipulation skills set	3.39	0.70	Required
3.	Constructing and maintain DBM	3.43	0.74	Required
4.	Ability to create files in database	3.28	0.77	Required
5.	Cloud base database management system	3.05	0.82	Required
	Cluster $\bar{X}$ and SD	3.32	0.78	Required

Table 3 shows that the mean scores of the respondents for all the items ranged from 3.05 to 3.46 with the cluster mean scores of 3.32 which is greater than the cut-off mean of 2.50. This indicates that respondents agreed that database management application skills are required for entrepreneurship development among Business Education students in universities for future businesses. The standard deviation scores for all the items are written the same range of 0.70-0.82 showing that the respondents are homogenous in their ratings.

**Test of Hypotheses**

**Ho<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female Business Educators and owners of SMEs on the internet skills required for entrepreneurship development among Business Education students for future businesses.

**Table 4: Summary of t-test analysis of the difference between the  $\bar{x}$  ratings of male and female Business Educators and owners of SMEs on internet application skills required for entrepreneurship development among business education students for future businesses.**

S/N	Group	No	$\bar{x}$	SD	DF	t-cal	t-tab	Level of significance	Remarks
1.	Males	158	3.37	0.73					
2.	Female	136	3.52	0.69	292	0.849	1.960	0.05	NS

Table 4 shows that the t-calculated (t-cal) value of 0.849 is less than the t-table (t-tab) value of 1.960 at  $p < 0.05$  level of significance and at 292 degree of freedom (df). This shows that, there was no significant difference between the  $\bar{x}$  ratings of male and female Business Educators and owners of SMEs in Ebonyi State on their internet application skills required for entrepreneurship development among Business Education students for future businesses. Therefore, the null hypothesis or no significant difference was not rejected.

**Ho<sub>2</sub>:** There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female business educators and owners of SMEs on the spreadsheet application skills required for entrepreneurship development among Business Education students for future businesses.



**Table 2: Summary of t-test analysis of the difference between the mean ratings of male and female business educators and owners of SMEs on spreadsheet application skills required for entrepreneurship development among Business Education students for future businesses.**

S/ N	Group	No	$\bar{X}$	SD	DF	T-cal	T-tab	Level of significance	Remarks
1	Male	158	3.44	0.79					
2.	Female	136	2.86	0.81	292	0.917	1.960	0.05	NS

Table 5 shows that the t- calculated value of 0.917 is less than the t- table (t-tab) value of 1.960 at  $\leq 0.05$  level of significance and at 292 degree of freedom (df). This shows that, there was no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female Business Educators and owners of SMES on the spreadsheet application skills required for entrepreneurship development among Business Education students of public universities in Ebonyi State for future businesses. Therefore, the null hypothesis of no significant difference was not rejected.

**Ho<sub>3</sub>: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female business educators and owners of SMEs on the database management application skills required for entrepreneurship development among Business Education students for future businesses.**

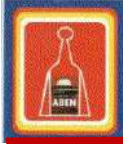
**Table 6: Summary of t-test analysis of the difference between the  $\bar{X}$  rating of male and female Business Educators and owners of SMEs on database management application skills required for entrepreneurship development among Business Education students for future businesses**

S/N	Group	No	$\bar{x}$	SD	DF	t-cal	t-tab	Level of significance	Remarks
1.	Male	158	3.07	0.74					
2.	Female	136	3.05	0.82	292	0.706	1.862	0.05	NS

**Table 6** shows that the t - calculated value of 0.706 is less that the t – table value of 1.862 at  $p \leq 0.5$  level of significance and at 292 degree of freedom (df). This shows that, there was no significant difference between the mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) ratings of male and female Business Educators and owners of SMES on database management application skills required for entrepreneurship development among Business Education students for future businesses. Therefore, the null hypothesis of no significant different was not rejected.

### Discussion of Findings

Findings of research question one revealed the internet application skills required for entrepreneurship development among business education students for future businesses such as: skills in the use of search engines, ability to deploy social media platform (Face book, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram etc.) to advertise products, goods and services, ability to organize video conferencing or discussions forums online using Skype, TeamSpeak, Google meet, ability to search, buy and make payment for goods bought online. The report of Ohaegbulam et al (2019) agreed with this finding that internet skills needed for entrepreneurship development, include e-commerce, e-marketing among others and some businesses use the internet to share all kinds of information and sell goods and services outside their geographical location. This means that Business Educators and Owners of small and medium enterprises are in agreement that internet application skills are required by Business Education students in universities in Ebonyi State. The findings also showed that gender



had no significant influence with regard to items on the internet application skills required for entrepreneurship development among business education students for future businesses.

The findings of research question two showed the spreadsheets application skills required for entrepreneurship development among business education students for future businesses to include: Ability to calculate using spreadsheet, ability to enter accurate text and numeric data in specified format, ability to move from cell to cell and read meanings of clear and delete in MS Excel, ability to review spreadsheet structure and plan spreadsheet and ability to design and modify the appearance of charts, graphs, save, retrieve and print out. This is in agreement with the report of Victoria et al (2013) that spreadsheet is used for creating, editing, organizing, reviewing and financial models. Spreadsheet is used for account keeping. Example Ms Excel, Multiplan, AutoCad among others. Business education graduates requires proficiency in the use of spreadsheet to scheduling and tracking sales, creating invoices, creating receipts, creating financial spreadsheet. It also helps in statistical analysis, drawing of graphs and calculation of sales (Ezinwa, 2019). This means that Business Educators and Owners of small and medium enterprises are in agreement that spreadsheet application skills are required by Business Education students in universities in Ebonyi State. The findings also showed that gender had no significant influence with regard to items on the spreadsheet application skills required for entrepreneurship development among business education students for future businesses.

Findings of research question three revealed the database management skills required for entrepreneurship development among business education students for future business includes: Ability to file document and identify organization methods, ability to demonstrate how to start and quit DBM application, ability to structure query language (SQL), ability to construct and maintain database, ability to create files in database and proficiently in cloud base database management system. This is in line with the report of Ezinwa (2019) that database helps to create and maintain (add, delete, update), extract and list all records or only those records that meet the criteria. Skills in the use of Data base help entrepreneur to e-enquiry about customers or employers, sort records in ascending and descending order, generate formatted report with subtotal among others. Proficiency in data base management enables Business Education students or would be entrepreneurs to evaluate, analyze and process organization's data to produce meaning and useful information. This means that Business Educators and Owners of small and medium enterprises are in agreement that database management application skills are required by Business Education students in universities in Ebonyi State. The findings also showed that gender had no significant influence with regard to items on the database management skills required for entrepreneurship development among business education students for future businesses.

## **Conclusion**

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that computer application skills such as internet skills, spreadsheet skills and database management skills will greatly assist the Business Education students in entrepreneurship development for future businesses since the computer has taken over every facet of business. This will also reduce unemployment among Business Education graduates.

## **Recommendations**

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

1. Government should equip business education departments in various universities with computers and internet facilities to enable the lecturers empower the students with the necessary skills required for entrepreneurship development and future businesses.
2. University management should always organize professional development programme for Business Education lecturers to enable them learn new trends in their careers and impact same to business education students.



3. Business education students should also learn some of these computer application skills on their own so that they will continue to be relevant in their profession and compete favourably with their counterparts globally.
4. Business education students should learn best practices in entrepreneurship development in order to prepare themselves for future businesses.

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## **DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY SKILLS REQUIRED OF GRADUATES FOR JOB PERFORMANCE: IMPLICATIONS ON BUSINESS EDUCATION PROGRAMME IN ONDO STATE TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS.**

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### **Abstract**

*The study examined digital technology skills required of graduates for job performance as it affects business education programme in Ondo State tertiary institutions. The study was guided by one research question and one hypothesis of no significant difference. Descriptive survey design was adopted. The population of the study consisted of 36 lecturers drawn from tertiary institutions offering business education courses in Ondo state. The entire population was adopted as the sample due to its small size. The main instrument for data collection was a four-point Likert rating scale questionnaire, with 20 items which was validated by three experts. The data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation. The null hypothesis stated was tested using t-test at 0.05 level of significance. The finding revealed that business education graduates required to a high extent, digital technology skills for effective job performance. The findings further revealed that there was no significant difference between the mean ratings of University and Polytechnic lecturers on the digital technology skills required for job performance of business education graduates in tertiary institutions. The study concluded that the design of effective learning environments and embedding digital technologies are critical. This can serve as catalysts for teachers to experiment new things, explore creative alternatives and reflect on their own practices. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended among others that the authorities of tertiary institutions should ensure adequate Implementation of policies that will propel the adoption, development and deployment of digital technologies for teaching and learning in the areas of improved infrastructure, adequate funding, re-training programmes and quality assurance.*

**Keywords:** *Business Education, Digital Technology; Digital Skills; Job Performance; Programme, Tertiary Institutions.*

### **Introduction**

The digital world is increasingly penetrating the education and skills domain with technology gradually being used to deliver education, knowledge and skills in new and innovative ways. This penetration is coupled with future changes to the mode and pattern of work, which are themselves affected by the current climate of economic uncertainty, as well as by political shifts. Zakka, Bewaran and Moris (2020) report that the effective application of digital technologies in teaching will facilitate the realization of



the stated objectives of the educational programme by improving innovativeness, curiosity and creativity of the learners. Given the increased use of fast changing digital technologies in the workplace, new skills need have emerged. The rapid evolution of digital technologies and the increasing complexity that comes with its exploding potential, explains why digitalization in business education continues to receive special attention. Digital technologies also drive innovation in many different spheres of life. The innovative capacity of technology is very much conditioned by the level of digital skills of the population (Kyari, Adiuku-Brown, Abechi & Adalakun, 2018). No wonder there is a very strong correlation between education and skills and the uptake and use of digital technologies in various spheres of life.

Broadly, digital technologies include the use of personal computers, digital television, radio, mobile phones, robots etc. The term is used to describe the use of digital resources to effectively find, analyze, create, communicate, and use information in a digital context. This includes the use of web tools, digital media tools, programming tools and software applications. Similarly, Bates (2011) observes that digital technology includes all types of electronic equipment and applications that itee information in the form of numeric code. This information is usually in binary code that is, code that can be represented by strings of only two numeric characters (Os and 1s). Devices that process and use digital information include personal computers, calculators, automobiles, traffic light controllers, compact disc players, cellular telephones, communications satellites, and high-definition television sets.

Digital technology skill involves the ability, confident, critical and responsible use of, and engagement with, digital technologies for learning, at work, and for participation in society. It includes information and data literacy, communication and- collaboration, digital content creation (including programming), safety (including digital well-being and competences related to cyber security), and problem solving (UNESCO, 2020). This definition emphasizes engagement with digital technologies, the growing importance of digital technology use for education purposes and the need to actively promote digital technologies in teaching and learning and seize technological opportunities so that education can keep up with other sectors. Similarly, Heinz (2016) views digital competence as the confident, critical and creative use of digital technologies to achieve goals related to work, employability, learning, leisure, inclusion and/or participation in society. Krumsvik in Ottestad (2014) provides a definition of digital skill specifically for teachers: "Digital skill is the teacher's ability to use ICT with a good pedagogical-didactic ICT understanding and to be aware of how this might impact the learning strategies and educational formation of pupils". This means that "the teacher must make decisions about what kind of digital tools should be used in each teaching situation, how they should be used and why. In order to attain these skills, the individuals need to acquire basic training or knowledge levels related to the task to be performed whether through formal, informal or combination of the two.

Business education as a branch of vocational education equips it recipients with relevant skills needed in the world of work. According to Ezenwafor and Onokpaunu (2017), business education programme is a branch of vocational eduoaion concerned with exposing its recipients to the internal and external foundations and functioning of the workplace. Business education is a work-focused, skill-based, result-oriented and technology-based educational programme (Ugwoke, 2011). With the knowledge of business education, students are better informed and groomed with skills and understanding to cope with the unpredictable challenges of the business environment. However, business education programme which is charged with the responsibility of unveiling the dynamics of the world of work must ensure that its recipients possess relevant skills needed for effective entry and efficient participation in economic development. Oguejiofor (2020) in support of the above stated that the value of any business education programme could be determined by its ability to adequately prepare and equip individuals in such a manner that they could fit into specific jobs, become technologically relevant, internationally competitive and economically prosperous, if properly packaged and adequately delivered. Extensively, business education is that aspect of general education that prepares students for employment and advancement in a broad range of office occupations, accounting profession, marketing occupation, teaching profession and entrepreneurship venture (Onokpaunu, 2016). However, the reliable medium through which the mission and vision of business education programmes can be achieved stems from effective review and implementation of its curriculum (Ezenwafor & Onokpaunu, 2017).

### **Statement of the Problem**

In the current phase of technological changes in the business world, there is need for all the stakeholders in education sector to devise an appropriate means of repackaging all the academic



disciplines/field, particularly business education, in order to be competitive even with the international community. Business education programme is well packaged with a number of courses which have been seen as capable of providing graduates with digital skills to fit into today's ever dynamic workplace and business environment. Currently, change in the nature of work, technological changes and globalization brought about by the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic have increased the pressure on business education programme to equip students with the digital skills to reduce structural unemployment (unemployment due to the fact that graduates do not respond quickly or completely to the new nature of job opportunities due to the lack of skills). However, the employers, parents and government are worried that graduates of tertiary institutions in Nigeria seem not possess adequate and appropriate digital skills to harness huge digital job opportunities that abound. Inadequate digital skills in business education graduates has severe consequences for the individuals, government and firms as it increases recruitment costs of firms, and leads to business education graduates facing unemployment which could result to social vices such as arm robbery, kidnapping, militancy and cybercrimes among others. In Ondo state, there seems to be limited research on digital skills required of business education graduates of tertiary institutions. Therefore, this study is sought to investigate on the digital technology skills required of business education graduates of Ondo state tertiary institutions for job performance.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study is to examine digital technology skills required of graduates for job performance as it affects business education programme in Ondo State tertiary institutions.

### **Research Questions**

To what extent are digital technology skills required of graduates of business education for job performance in Ondo state tertiary institutions?

### **Hypothesis**

There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of respondents in Universities and those in Polytechnics on the digital technology skills required for job performance among business education graduates in tertiary institutions in Ondo State.

### **Methods**

The descriptive survey design was used for the conduct of the study. The population of the study consisted of all departmental lecturers in three tertiary institutions offering Business education in Ondo state. These institutions include Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba- Akoko (8), Rufus Giwa Polytechnic, Owo (11) and Adeyemi Federal University of Education (formerly Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo) (17). There are 36 lecturers in these departments. The entire study population was used for the study since the population was not too large. There was therefore no sampling. The instrument used was the Digital Technology Skills Required of Business Education Graduates for Job Performance Questionnaire (DTSRBEGJPQ). The questionnaire consisted of 20 structured items based on the purpose of the study and the research question. The instrument was validated by two senior lecturers in the Department of Vocational and Technical Education, Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba- Akoko. A pilot study was conducted at the Bamidele Olumilua University of Education, Science and Technology, Ikere- Ekiti (BOUESTI). In order to establish the reliability of the instrument, Cronbach Alpha was used to determine the reliability of the instrument which yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.79. Each of the items was assigned four response options of High Extent (HE-4 points), Moderate Extent (ME-3 points), Low Extent (LE-2 points) and No Extent (NE-1 point). A total of 36 questionnaires were filled and returned consisting of 25 (69.44%) from the university and 11 (30.56%) from the polytechnic. The data collected were analysed using mean and standard deviation. The mean was used to answer the research questions while the standard deviation was used to determine the closeness or otherwise of the responses from the mean. Positive decision rule for this study was established at a mean of 2.50 and above while any mean less than that was regarded as negative. The null hypothesis stated was tested using the t-test at 0.05 level of significance. Hypothesis of no significant difference was accepted when the observed probability value was greater than or equal to 0.05 level of significance. Where the calculated probability value was less than 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was rejected.



**Results**

**Research Question**

To what extent are digital technology skills required of business education graduates for job performance in Ondo state tertiary institutions?

**Table 1: Mean and standard deviation of responses on the extent to which digital technology skills are required of business education graduates for job performance in Ondo state tertiary institutions.**

S/N	ITEM STATEMENTS	X	S.D	REMARKS
-	Ability to use white board or electronic board Extent for learning.		3.72 0.58	High
-	Ability to use digital survey tools ( Survey Monkey, zoomerang, etc.) for online survey and research.	3.11	0.78	Moderate Extent
-	Ability to use the wireless fidelity (Wi-Fi) to gain access to learning resources via internet.	3.64	0.62	High Extent
-	Ability to use multimedia projectors for teaching purposes.	3.71	0.59	High Extent
-	Ability to use different internet connection options to Extent Connect to the web.		4.07 0.36	High
-	Ability to use web components such as plug-ins, applets or add-on for teaching and learning.	3.83	0.45	High Extent
-	Ability to use digital video/audio for teaching and learning purposes.	3.81	0.47	High Extent
-	Ability to use web applications for teaching and Learning purposes	3.26	0.76	Moderate Extent
-	Ability to use interactive e-books for educational purposes.	3.30	0.71	Moderate Extent
-	Ability to use database programming using PHP.	3.20	0.74	Moderate Extent
-	Ability to use accessibility features of mobile devices such as Extent voiceover, speak selection, zoom etc. to view or listen to teaching contents.		2.91 0.77	Moderate
-	Ability to organize online conferences and discussion groups with students on the web.	3.70	0.58	High Extent
-	Ability to use the search engine such as gmail/yahoo, google, MSN to access teaching and learning contents.	3.69	0.68	High Extent
-	Ability to use collaborative services to post teaching contents. Extent		3.28 0.51	Moderate
-	Ability to use cloud computing for storing and sharing files.	3.54	0.47	High Extent
-	Ability to use social networking service to post teaching contents.	3.55	0.45	High Extent
-	Ability to use the e-mail or list server to mail teaching learning contents	3.71.	0.56	High Extent
-	Ability to upload and download teaching and learning Extent contents through file transfer service.		3.86 0.53	High
-	Ability to create hypertext and hypermedia pages for education Extent use.		2.97 0.71	Moderate
-	Knowledge of file systems, data security and cryptography in Extent Data bases.		3.77 0.52	High
<b>Weighted Mean/ S.D</b>		<b>3.53</b>	<b>0.59</b>	

Source: Field Work, 2023.

Data in Table 1 shows that items 1, 3-7, 12-13, 15-18 and 20 are of high extent with a weighted average mean of 3.53 while only items 2, 8-11, 14 and 19 were however required to a moderate extent with



mean scores of between 2.91 to 3.38. The table also shows the computed standard deviation scores ranging from 0.36 to 0.78. This implies that the responses of the respondents are so close from one to the other meaning that the digital technology skills are highly required of business education graduates of Ondo state tertiary institutions for job performance.

**Hypothesis**

There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of respondents from Universities and that of Polytechnics on the digital technology skills required of business education graduates for job performance in Ondo state tertiary institutions.

**Table 2: Summary of t-test of the difference between the mean responses of University and Polytechnic respondents on the digital technology skills required of business education graduates.**

Variable	N	X	SD	Df	t-Cal	P-Value	Decision
University	25	3.51	0.52	34	0.21	1.96	NS
Polytechnic	11	3.43	0.32				

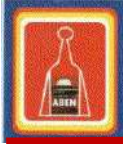
Table 2 above shows that there are 25 business educators in Universities and 11 Business educators in Polytechnic. The responses reveals that the digital technology skills are required to a high extent of the business education graduates of Ondo state tertiary institutions. ( $\bar{x}$ = 3.51; SD= 0.52) and ( $\bar{x}$ = 3.43; SD= 0.32). The table also shows that t-cal of 0.21 at 34 degree of freedom with p-value of 1.96 which is greater than the criterion value of 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference between the mean ratings in the respondents of University and Polytechnic lecturers on the digital technology skills required of business education graduates in Ondo state tertiary institutions for job performance was not rejected.

**Discussion of Findings**

The study was carried out to examine the extent to which digital technology skills are required of business education graduates for job performance of Ondo state tertiary institutions. The null hypothesis stated that there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of University and Polytechnic respondents on the digital technology skills are required of business education graduates for job performance in tertiary institutions in Ondo state. The result showed that ability to use white board or electronic board, wireless fidelity (Wi-Fi), multimedia projectors, internet connection options and web components were required to a high extent. Other digital technology skills required to a high extent are ability to use digital video/audio, organize online conferences, search engine, cloud computing, social networking service, ability to use e-mail or list server, use of file transfer service to upload and download teaching and learning materials and knowledge of file systems, data security and cryptography. Furthermore, the findings of the study also revealed that ability to use digital survey tools, web applications, interactive e-books, use of database programming using PHP, accessibility features of mobile devices, use of collaborative services and ability to create hypertext and hypermedia pages were required to a moderate extent for efficient and effective job performance of business education graduates of Ondo state tertiary institutions. The findings further showed that there was no significant difference between the mean ratings of University and Polytechnic lecturers on the digital technology skills required of business education graduates for job performance in tertiary institutions in Ondo state ( $t$ -cal = 0.21,  $P \geq 0.05$ ). This findings is in tandem with Orji, Ali and Okanazu (2015) who stated that digital skills are highly required in vocational education in tertiary institutions to boost the digital literacy of teachers and students. Also, this study is in consonance with Ndubuisi, Ezeani and Ile (2022) which revealed that digital skills are highly needed in business education curriculum for digital economy development.

**Conclusions**

Digital technology skills are required for the development of every individuals who will eventually contribute in nation and economic rejig. Effective skills in using technology, combined with the knowledge



and competencies to innovate, can increase the marching of digital skills to the needs of the digital economy. Moreover, digital technology skills are no longer optional for business education graduates of tertiary institutions in Ondo state, they have become the new normal, and employers are paying increasing attention to hiring graduates that possess them for effective job performance and efficiency. The findings of this study revealed that digital technology skills are highly required of business education graduates of Ondo State tertiary institutions for job performance. The researchers concluded that all hands must be on deck for appropriate and adequate effective teaching/learning to be achieved.

### **Recommendations**

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

1. The implementation of policies that will propel the adoption, development and deployment of digital technologies for teaching and learning is critical. This can be achieved through regular review of the curriculum, improved funding for the provision of adequate teaching and learning equipment and the necessary infrastructure for teaching using digital technologies.
2. There is need for the systematic re-training of business educators in order to update their knowledge with the trend of digital technologies. Individual lecturers should also make frantic efforts towards self-analysis for personal skill development in the use of digital technologies. This can be done through job related re-skilling and up-skilling programmes so as to help them acquire the necessary digital technology skills for teaching their students.
3. Management of institutions and heads of departments should ensure that technicians and technologists are always at hand to assist students and lecturers who may encounter technical difficulties that may hinder and slowdown the teaching and learning process.

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## **INFLUENCE OF INTERNALLY GENERATED REVENUE (IGR) ON PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION IN ADEYEMI FEDERAL UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, ONDO, ONDO STATE**

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### **Abstract**

*The study examined the influence of internally generated revenue on programme implementation at Adeyemi Federal University of Education, Ondo in Ondo state. The study was guided by three research questions and three hypotheses of no significant difference. The descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. The population of the study consisted of 95 members of staff drawn from various directorates and units of Adeyemi Federal University of Education, Ondo in Ondo state. The entire population was adopted as the sample due to its small size. The main instrument for data collection was a four-point Likert rating scale questionnaire, with 20 items validated by three experts. The data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation. The findings further revealed that the respondents rated high the influence of IGR on the development of Adeyemi Federal University of Education, Ondo. The study concluded that IGR sources and mobilization in Adeyemi Federal University of Education, Ondo, Ondo State is weak, deficient and inadequate. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended among others that the management of the college should put in place measures to enforce payment of levies on commercialized traders in the campus to improve upon the mobilization of IGR. It was also recommended that the college should collaborate with other higher institutions both within and abroad to ensure standardization and create more room for Internal Generated Revenue.*

**Keywords:** University of Education; Impact; Implementation; Internally Generated Revenue; Programme.

### **Introduction**

Stakeholders in the education sector, which include governments, individuals, and communities expect schools at all levels to produce educated persons for national and individual development. Such persons are also expected to be good citizens and patriots. Premium is placed on higher institutions to produce high quality manpower for effective growth and development of every sector of a national economy. These expectations demand adequate funding and financing in provision of resources in schools in order to achieve the stated goals. It is also acknowledged that apart from recruiting of competent human resources among several factors which contribute to the achievement of the goals and objectives, adequacy of funding and financing has been identified as possibly the most crucial in maintaining and improving the quality of education (Idialu & Idialu, 2012).

The Federal Republic of Nigeria (2013) in the National Policy on Education clearly stated the goals of tertiary education as:



- Contribute to national development through relevant manpower planning.
- Develop and inculcate proper values for the survival of the individual and society.
- Develop the intellectual capability of individuals to understand and appreciate their local and external environment.
- Acquire both physical and intellectual skills which will enable individuals to be self-reliant and useful members of society.
- Promote and encourage scholarship and community service.
- Forge and cement national unity and
- Promote national and international understanding and interaction.

However, these laudable objectives can only be achieved in Colleges of Education if adequately funded and properly managed.

Despite the identification of funding as the key factor towards positive transformation of education, most African Governments including Nigeria have not given attention to funding the education industry. Undoubtedly the financial challenge facing colleges of education in Nigeria is grossly underfunded which could be linked to undue reliance on Government for funds by University managers (Erhagbe, 2014).

Two decades ago, not so much was known about Internally Generated Revenue (IGR) at *Federal University of Education*, because it was the era of oil boom in the country. Oil revenue was massively available, and the federal government provided all the funding required for operations and capital development needs (Akinsanya, 2007). Then came the recent phenomenal growth in the number of institutions; from 45 in 2000 to 169 in January 2019 (Onamuti, 2019). Again, given the huge economic misfortunes facing the government and made worse by the recent global financial crises, the challenges of inadequate funding of *University has* become critically revealing and Adeyemi *Federal University of Education*, Ondo had its unfair share.

The federal government, through the National University Commission (NUC) and her sister agencies, had continuously directed all institutions to explore ways of generating revenues for financing internally such that the management would not have to look up to the government for solving all their financial problems (Okojie, 2009).

The IGR mobilization concept implies that the federal government does not have to accept responsibility for providing funding for all its tertiary institutions on every expenditure heading. That way, Universities are, therefore, persuaded to seek ways of earning additional revenue locally and to use the same in any areas of the University needs that the government is not able to provide for in a budget period. At the early stage of the introduction of the IGR concept, the federal government had thought of centrally managing the IGR pool from all the federal institutions, such that each institution was required to forward the yearly IGR inflows to the government, and thereafter, apply for release back to it the amount needed for local use. That directive did not stand the test of time because of its obvious dislike by educational managers. In a strange spontaneity, all higher institution managers kicked against it until the government abrogated its directive (Onuoha, 2013).

Ventureline.com (2014) defined Internally Generated Revenue (IGR) as “the creation of either tangible or intangible results within the confines of one entity”. Internally generated funds are those funds that are realized through the efforts or operations of the entity itself, that is, the funds were not borrowed or realized through other external means. This definition agrees in substance with that of Wikinvest.com (2014) which states that internally generated funds shall mean funds not constituting the proceeds of any loan, debt issuance, equity issuance, asset sale, insurance recovery or indebtedness.

The emerging realities have no doubt revealed that government cannot single - handedly bear the cost of education. The federal government is the key player in financing the education sector. The educational institutions are expected to generate internally at least 10% of the funds required to carry out various education programmes in line with NUC and NCCE directives. It has therefore become pertinent that Universities should seek for ways to supplement government subventions such that the management cannot afford to depend on government to finance their key activities. As Nigerian



institutions strive for quality services, it therefore becomes paramount to seek alternative internal sources of revenue to supplement government effort.

Various sources of mobilizing IGR that are maximally tapped by institutions in Nigeria is made up of rent on property, payment of services, interest earnings on bank deposits and shareholding as well as income from various business operation such as large scale commercial farming and animal breeding, agriculture and food processing, bakeries, water packaging, printing press, guest houses, hotels and other catering services, parks and gardens, consultancy services in the areas of research and in other professional disciplines among others. The most common IGR sources disclosed by the interviewees are commercial activities such as supermarkets, bakeries, table water, and local transport. Others are seminars, workshops, consulting services, farming and tree planting. The most frequently rated are consultancy, commercial activities and seminars in that order (Wangenge-Ouma et al, 2008; Adeniyi, 2008). It is important to note that while some colleges of education have embarked on these income-generating programmes, many are yet to tap these opportunities.

The amount of IGR generated by tertiary institutions especially in Nigeria vary depending on the numbers of business opportunities tapped and the way these business avenues are managed by school administrators. Some institutions managers have devised means of generating extra revenue towards meeting the developmental needs of their institutions. Indeed, evidence abound of such revenue drive and the most obvious are the commercial ventures (Ofoegbu & Alonge, 2016). For instance, NUC in 2003 reported that the total amount of IGR generated from twenty (20) Federal Universities in Nigeria ranges between ₦17, 268, 097 to ₦359,502, 258 with the University of Lagos, Lagos State generating the highest IGR fund while Abubakar Tafawa University, Bauchi, Bauchi State generating the lowest amount out of the total IGR of ₦1,815, 176, 627.

One thing is certain, neither the Federal Government nor the NUC can do it alone, hence the effective utilization of IGR becomes very imperative. The utilization of the generated funds should therefore be monitored effectively so as to ensure funds are not mismanaged and embezzled. The management is expected to ensure all IGR funds allocated are accounted for. Effective utilization of IGR could help in upgrading and maintaining the physical facilities in the College system for the delivery of quality education. That is why Onuoha (2013) asserted that IGR if properly executed, it will ensure positive transformative changes with a propensity for more progress.

The major challenges of IGR funds mobilization in tertiary institutions according to researchers include lack of accountability and transparency on the part of management and members of staff handling IGR funds generation and utilization, inability of institutions to tap and maximize returns from the array of assets and investment opportunities available to them and inability to engage the services of professionally competent investment managers to manage their assets and investments (Hjeltnes & Hansson, 2004; Kinyanjui, 2007).

Currently, the over dependence on federal allocation is a great factor affecting Adeyemi *Federal University* of Education, Ondo. Consequently, upon the financial constraint facing the college, the importance of IGR in the development of the Universities cannot be over-emphasized. This is because internally generated revenue is the bed rock for sustainability of education. Adeyemi *Federal University* of Education, Ondo, has its own challenges and constraints in the provision of adequate financing in the maintenance and development of human and materials resources, in order to remain in the league of quality education. Inadequate funding has taken its toll on the students of Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo in terms of overcrowded classrooms, inadequate library and laboratories, buildings and dilapidated infrastructures. The management of the institution is facing a difficult situation in achieving quality education as laid down in the objective of education in the National Policy on Education. More so, pertinent areas of generating revenue internally such as large scale commercial farming and animal breeding, agriculture and food processing, bakery, printing press, bookshop, parks and garden services, consultancy services in the areas of research, among others, appears not to have been tapped in the College.

Finance is a central factor to effective education, and it is very crucial to the adequate supply of education. Funds are required and necessary to maintain both the human and material resources of the system in order to achieve stated goals. Research has shown that virtually all the problems of



the institutions appear to be attributed to inadequate funding. Finance is an important asset to any educational institutions that is needed to cater for day-to-day expenses, subsidize staff and students' welfare, helps in managing staff development, carrying out maintenance work on facilities and infrastructural development. When educational programmes are not funded adequately, it could result in strike actions, low human capital development, dysfunctional behaviour by employers, wastage of resources, low quality education, and inability to meet institutions' demands and goals especially in the face of the present phenomenal increase in students' enrolment. There are literatures indicating that some institutions have done greatly in the drive for substantial IGR contribution whereas a lot of others are yet to catch the vision or face negative environmental constraints (Wangenge-Ouma & Cloete, 2008). It is of significance for this study, therefore, in the midst of political instability, money laundering, bad leadership, misappropriation of public fund by leaders and poor funding of institutions, particularly *Federal Universities*. This study intends to find out the role of IGR in financing Adeyemi *Federal University of Education, Ondo, Ondo State*.

### **Statement of the Problem**

It is common knowledge that Colleges of Education have suffered from inadequate funding in Nigeria and Adeyemi College of Education Ondo, is not an exception. With the high demand for tertiary education in the country, the available resources are now over-stretched and cannot sustain on the development of both human and material resources. Kpolovie and Esezi (2013) affirmed that over the years the Nigerian governments' budgetary allocations for education have left much to be desired. The trend is said to be abysmally retrogressive; a trend that as the tendency to destroy all that is positive in education. Abayomi (2013) also affirmed that the highest budgetary amount appropriated to education and by inference, the tertiary institutions was 10% in 2013. With the government's directives of institutions generating ten percent (10%) of their expected revenue from within and outside their institutions towards solving their finance related problems, many institution managers have devised means of generating extra revenue towards meeting the developmental needs of their institutions. Indeed, evidence bounds of such revenue drive and the most obvious are the commercial ventures. It is apparent that Universities are still confronted with excessive inadequacy of infrastructure and facilities for teaching and research. The situation seems to be putting the management of the colleges under undue stress, and it appears that they are incapacitated in transforming the colleges towards effective teaching, research, and community services. Likewise, the management could hardly embark on capital or other palpable developmental projects. Research has also shown that for the past two decades that is from 1999, there has been some form of cost sharing that ensures that students pay some amount of money to offset the cost incurred for their education. This funding difficulty persists, and a call is being made by stakeholders in education, for the college to shift to the issue of full cost recovery and that this can be actualized through internally generated Revenue (IGR). It has also been alleged that living condition for staff and students, congested classrooms, insufficient instructional materials, and most importantly high number of students over teachers continues to affect quality education in the colleges. Therefore, in the face of the declining financial resources allocation to the education sector Nigeria as against the 24% recommended by UNESCO; the question is could IGR be harnessed in solving these myriad problems? How best can IGR be mobilized and utilized in the implementation of programmes and project in the college? It is against this backdrop that the researcher seeks to find out financing Adeyemi *Federal University of Education* through Internally Generated Revenue (IGR) will change the narratives.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

1. What is the influence of IGR on the development of Adeyemi *Federal University of Education*?
2. What roles do administrators play in IGR management in Adeyemi *Federal University of Education, Ondo*?
3. What are the challenges involved in mobilizing IGR funds in Adeyemi *Federal University of Education*?



### Methods

Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. It is descriptive because it is concerned with gathering data for the purpose of describing how Colleges of Education can be financed through Internally Generated Revenue (IGR). This design is suitable for this study because the opinions and facts that will be elicited from the members of staff on their perception towards financing tertiary education through internally generated revenue. The population of the study consists of ninety-five (95) staff of Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo, Ondo State. This consists of seven (7) Dean of Schools, fourteen (14) Directors of Directorate, thirty (30) Heads of Department, thirty-seven (37) Bursary Staff and seven (7) Directorate of Internal Audit staff. These are staff from various Departments who deal with IGR mobilization and utilization in the University and this was also used for the sample. The instruments for data collection were the Inventory record tagged "Internally Generated Revenue Inventory" (IGRI) and a structured Questionnaire titled "Questionnaire on IGR Sources, Utilization, Impacts, Roles and Challenges" (QIGRSUIRC). The inventory is designed by the researcher to collect data only on Mobilization of IGR. Also, the questionnaire was divided into two sections (i.e. sections A and B). Section A contains information on demographic data of the respondents which includes department of the respondent, designation of the respondents and experience of the respondents while. Response will be on a four point rating scales. Very Major Source – 4 points, Major Source – 3 points, Minor Source – 2 points and Very Minor Source – 1 point. For Utilization of IGR, Very Highly Utilized – 4 points, Highly Utilized – 3 points, Often Utilized – 2 points and Rarely Utilized – 1 point. For Influence of IGR, Very High Influence – 4 points, High Influence – 3 points, Low Influence – 2 points and Very Low Influence – 1 point. For Roles of Administrators, Strongly Agree – 4 points, – 3 points, Disagree – 2 points and Strongly Disagree – 1 point and for Challenges of IGR, Very Major Challenge – 4 points, Major Challenge – 3 points, Minor Challenge – 2 points and Very Minor Challenge – 1 point.

The instruments for data collection were subjected to face and content validity by two experts from the Department of Vocational and Technical Education and one expert from the Test and Measurement unit of the institution. A pilot study involving twenty (20) Heads of Division/Units in the college who will not be part of the sample of the study. The data collected was analyzed and a coefficient value of 0.85 was obtained which suggested that the instrument was highly reliable. The instrument for data collection was administered to the respondents by the researcher with the help of two research assistants who helped retrieve it to avoid loss of the instrument. Appropriate permission was obtained from relevant authorities before the collection of the data. Data collected was analysed using mean and standard deviation to determine the homogeneity or otherwise of the respondents' mean ratings. Decision rule was based on a criterion mean of 2.50, such that any calculated mean equal or greater than 2.50 will be regarded as high or agreed while anyone less than 2.50 will be regarded as low or disagreed.

### Results

#### Research Question 1: What is the influence of IGR on the development of Adeyemi College of Education?

**Table 1: Influence of IGR on the Development of Adeyemi Federal University of Education**

S/N	Items	Mean	Responses	
			Standard Deviation	Remarks
1.	Carry out of maintenance work on college facilities	3.29	0.70	High influence
2.	Management of staff development	3.12	0.67	High influence
3.	Subsidizing of Staff and Student welfare	2.80	0.78	High influence
4.	Support re-current expenditures	2.84	0.73	High influence



5.	Carry out Infrastructural development	2.67	0.88	High influence
6	Sufficient in catering for day to day expenses	2.83	0.88	High influence
7	Support teaching and research functions	2.82	0.97	High influence
<b>Weighted Mean</b>		<b>2.91</b>	<b>0.80</b>	

**Criterion Mean = 2.50**

Data in table 1 showed responses on Impact of IGR on the Development of Adeyemi College of Education. It shows that all the items listed had mean scores above the criterion mean of 2.50 and were accepted on Impact of IGR. In summary, with an aggregate mean score of 2.91, the respondents rated high the impact of IGR on the development of Adeyemi College of Education.

**Research Question 2:** What roles do administrators play in IGR management in Adeyemi College of Education?

**Table 2: Roles of Administrators in IGR Management in Adeyemi Federal University of Education**

S/N	Items	Mean	Standard Deviation	Remarks
1.	Organizing refresher training to staff on IGR funding processes	3.08	0.75	Agree
2.	Development of entrepreneurial practices and training in staff to create new sources	3.03	0.78	Agree
3.	Prompt response to challenges of IGR	2.97	0.68	Agree
4.	Employment of innovative strategies to maximize revenue generation	3.16	0.61	Agree
5.	Following the guidelines and the processes of the budgetary system as stipulated by NCCE	3.27	0.66	Agree
6.	Collaboration with other institutions and organizations on best ways to attract revenue	2.95	0.76	Agree
<b>Weighted Mean</b>		<b>3.08</b>	<b>0.71</b>	

**Criterion Mean = 2.50**

Data in table 2 showed responses on the Roles of Administrators in IGR Management in Adeyemi Federal University of Education. It shows that all the items had mean scores above the criterion mean of 2.50 and were accepted concerning the roles of administrators in IGR management. In summary, with an aggregate mean score of 3.08, the respondents agreed to a large extent on the roles of administrators in IGR management in Adeyemi Federal University of Education.

**Research Question 3:** What are the challenges involved in mobilizing IGR funds in Adeyemi Federal University of Education?



**Table 3: Challenges involved in Mobilizing IGR funds in Adeyemi Federal University of Education**

S/N	Items	Mean	Standard Deviation	Remarks
1.	Poor planning	2.52	0.99	Major Challenge
2.	Embezzlement of funds	1.92	1.10	Minor Challenge
3.	Poor asset maintenance	2.46	0.99	Minor Challenge
4.	Poor attitude of workers	2.06	0.95	Minor Challenge
5.	Poor supervision	2.14	1.03	Minor Challenge
6.	Poor power supply	2.67	1.05	Major Challenge
7.	Stringent governmental policies/control	2.94	0.94	Major Challenge
8.	Low enrolment of students	2.03	0.88	Minor Challenge
9.	Delay in payment of levies imposed on business owners on the campus	2.65	1.03	Major Challenge
10.	Non appreciation of large scale commercialization of some profitable ventures	2.60	0.96	Major Challenge
	<b>Weighted Mean</b>	<b>2.40</b>		

**Criterion Mean = 2.50**

Data in table 3 showed responses on the challenges involved in mobilizing IGR funds in Adeyemi College of Education. It shows that items 1, 6, 7, 9 and 10 had mean scores above the criterion mean of 2.50 and were regarded as major challenges involved in mobilizing IGR funds while items 2, 3, 4, 5 and 8 had mean scores below the criterion mean of 2.50 and were regarded as minor challenges. However, the respondents indicated that the challenges involved in mobilizing IGR funds in Adeyemi College of Education are stringent governmental policies/control, poor power supply, delay in payment of levies imposed on business owners on the campus, non-appreciation of large scale commercialization of some profitable venture and poor planning respectively

**Discussion of Findings**

The study analyzed financing Adeyemi College of Education through Internally Generated Revenue (IGR) in Ondo, Ondo State. The first concern of this study was to ascertain the impact of IGR on the development of Adeyemi College of Education, findings revealed that the respondents rated high the impact of IGR on the development of Adeyemi College of Education (mean score = 2.91). This implies that IGR had high impact on all the listed items in the College. Development is a sine qua non for a sustainable education. For any educational institution to develop there must be provisions of adequate funds. This finding is in accord with Onuoha (2012) who revealed that internally generated revenue has a very significant impact or role to play as a source of critical funding for all institutions of education in Nigeria. He submitted that internally generated revenue makes a great impact on the activities of the institutions. It serves as the major tool for social contract and infrastructural development within an institution. It helps the administrators to be responsible and make required decisions needed to satisfy the basic needs of the institutions. It is important for budgeting and it is a powerful fiscal tool to direct and boost the economy. It goes a long way by providing the educational institutions with continuous growth and development to keep the institutions moving.

The second concern was to establish the roles administrators play in IGR management in Adeyemi College of Education. Findings further revealed that the administrators play the following



vital roles in IGR management in Adeyemi College of Education: they follow the guidelines and processes of the budgetary system as stipulated by NCCE; employ innovative strategies to maximize revenue generation; organize staff refresher training; develop entrepreneurial practices and training in staffs; respond promptly to IGR challenges and collaborate with other institutions and organizations on best ways to attract revenue. The respondents agreed largely on the roles of administrators in IGR management with an aggregate mean of 3.08. This finding concurs with Aniagboso (2019) who stated that the role of the administrator defines him or her as one who manages the budgets, personnel, and policy, coordinates and ensures the flow of communication, plans and executes developmental programmes, provides infrastructures and facilities for teaching and learning, ensures interaction and relationship with the institution's external and internal environment. He added that the role of administrators in the efficient management of the institutions especially IGR includes policy developments and practices, methods, and complex accountability approaches to effectiveness and systemic educational reforms. He therefore noted that these identified characteristics must be done rightly, quickly, and efficiently.

Lastly, findings revealed that the challenges involved in mobilizing IGR funds in Adeyemi College of Education are stringent governmental policies/control, poor power supply, delay in payment of levies imposed on business owners on the campus, non appreciation of large scale commercialization of some profitable venture and poor planning respectively. This finding implies that the UNIVERSITY needs to wake up to their responsibilities. They need to find ways to collaborate with other institutions that are successful in revenue generation and invest in highly profitable ventures which they have tapped. Onuoha (2013) pointed out that a healthy co-operation between the central administration and the departments will, therefore, consistently underlie successful drive for IGR generation and growth. Therefore, this finding is in agreement with Afutu (2015) whose studies found that the generation of revenue internally was challenged by the actors such as various stringent governmental controls and policies on fees which do not allow the university the free hand to charge full cost recovery fees.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the findings of the study, it can be concluded that the IGR sources and mobilization in Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo, Ondo State is weak, deficient, and inadequate. Though IGR was properly utilized and had high impact on the programmes and on the development of the College; there is need for the administrators to intensify more effort in their roles in order to solve the challenges involved in IGR mobilization to meet the goals and objectives of the College.

### **Recommendations**

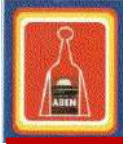
Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

- i.) The management of colleges should as a matter of urgency take back with immediate effect the bakery and the pure water ventures from those managing it at present. They should improve upon and efficiently manage these profitable businesses to ensure long-term sustainability in order to take the internally generated revenue drive beyond the subsistence level.
- ii.) The Federal institutions especially colleges should be encouraged and supported by the government to be autonomous and charge full cost recovery fees. This will help to alleviate the problem of IGR and foster delivery of quality education to students, so that they can contribute meaningfully to the development of the nation.
- iii.) The institutional creativity in revenue generalization should be paramount to all administrators in the various Departments, Directorates, and Units. Each Departments, Directorates and units should be anchored with the responsibility of planning properly the generating of revenue in their area of specialization. By doing so, the management will be able to turn around the institution for better performance and service.



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## **PERCEIVED INFLUENCE OF EFFECTIVE BUSINESS COMMUNICATION ON JOB PERFORMANCE OF SECRETARIES IN BUSINESS ORGANIZATIONS**

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### **Abstract**

This study examined the perceived influence of effective business communication on employee job performance in business organization in Ebonyi State. Three research questions in line with research purpose and hypotheses guided the study. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised of one 47 secretaries from commercial banks in Ebonyi State. The entire population was used as the sample. A structured questionnaire was used for data collection using a four-point rating scale. Data obtained were analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions, while the null hypotheses were tested using t-test statistic. Findings revealed that upward business communication has a significant impact on the level of employee performance in an organization, effective downwards communication in an organization helps employees to share information, ideas or knowledge and skills which enable them to effectively perform to the expectations of the employer and businesses rely on communication as the best mechanism or channel for enhancing interactions between the employees and customers or clients which greatly influences employees' performance and improves the level of business profitability in the long run. Hypotheses test show that there is no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female business education students on the perceived influences of effective communication on employee job performance in business organization. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that Management of tertiary institutions should consider the adoption of university-wide Learning Management Systems for increased acceptance of blended learning approach in the teaching and learning of courses like business education.

**Keywords:** Business communication, Employee performance, Horizontal communication, downward communication and upward communication

### **Introduction**

Communication is an important element in Human society and in every living thing in general. Society's survival and growth demand among other things in a system of communication. In the past several years, communication has been the major condition for survival and social development. It is considered as people's specific activity and necessary when building relationships, sharing ideas, delegating responsibilities, managing a team and much more. Al-Tokhais, (2016) described communication as a process of sending messages through different platforms and it is normally comprised of verbal or nonverbal sentiments. Communication is the process of exchanging information between people in different ways to achieve a certain purpose. According to



Seiler and Beall (2022), communication has also been defined as sharing and giving meaning occurring at the same time through symbolic interactions. Communication is conducted through linguistic communication systems (speech and writing) and non-verbal communication (facial expressions, voice, gestures, postures, etc.).

Stavros (2020) defined communication in business entities as the general process of disseminating or transmitting business information from one employee to another or from one business stakeholders to another. Stavros noted that effective business communication is considered very important in enhancing the general performance of different business entities since it influences proper co-ordination between the employees and the employer or between the entity and its customers. Effective communication also helps to build teamwork in the organization and consequently enhances employee performance. This also helps to reduce the rate of turnover redundancy in the organization. Bernstein, (2017) opine that business communication affects the general confidence of employees which has a negative impact on both the productivity of employees and performance of the business entity. Through proper business communication, business entities are able to enhance their organizational management, improve employee commitment, enhance profitability and consequently boost the overall performance of organizations. Speaking, listening and having the ability to effectively or efficiently understand both verbal and nonverbal meanings are among the most important skills that managers must possess in order to support or maintaining effective communication in organizations which is a prerequisite for both improved performance and business growth. Basic business communication skills are normally learned or developed through observing other competent people and consequently modelling individual behaviors based on what is observed on other professionals. Stavros, (2020) noted that business information has no relevance if it is not effectively communicated across different stakeholders in an organization. Stavros further noted that communication in every business organization flows from upward, downwards and also horizontal levels.

Upward communication according to Wang, (2022) and is the mode of communication that involves transfer of information from subordinates to their managers or superiors in an organization. Studies conducted by Odine, (2021) and Rukmana, et al (2018) revealed that under upward communication, the different essential messages and information are shared from the bottom to top along the defined hierarchy of a particular organization. Upward communication is normally utilized when subordinates request for different opinions or information from their superiors. Research indicates that upward communication helps to trigger different decisions from the top leadership or management of an organization. The different aspects of upward communication improve the levels of cooperation between the employees and the top management or superiors. Tian, Shuja Iqbal, Qalati, Anwar, and Khan, (2020) noted that upward communication in any business entity allows employees to freely express their opinions or feelings concerning the nature of the job and other pressing issues at the workplace. Wang, (2022) opine that upward communication gives employees an opportunity to discuss their grievances or careers and other pressing issues with other superiors which helps to motivate employees towards being committed in the job. This implies that upward communication has great impact on their ability to perform efficiently on their different task or obligations.

Downward communication is associated with messages being transmitted right from superiors to the different subordinates in the organization (Rukmana, MM, & SE, 2018). In this case information flows from the top management to lower level employees. The transmission of messages under downward communication is done from top to bottom along the organization's hierarchy. Under this form of communication, employees are able to share knowledge and information with other different superiors at the different levels of management. Osborne & Hammoud (2018) indicate that interacting and sharing ideas with the most experienced and qualified managers or superiors motivate employees to perform better in an organization.

Horizontal communication is associated with exchange of information or ideas across the same level or departmental unit in an organization. Otoo (2016) noted that with horizontal business communication, the message is effectively transmitted along a specific or defined level in an organization hence may not move beyond that particular level. Horizontal communication helps



employees to directly share essential information, actively participate in problem solving processes and collaborate to ensure successful execution of different assigned duties and responsibilities. Effective horizontal communication normally results in a higher quality of information exchange in an organization. This is based on the fact that it occurs directly between the different employees working in the same departmental or at the same level in the organization. Research indicates that most organizations rely on horizontal communication to ensure proper coordination of the different activities in the various departments of the organization. Osborne, and Hammoud, (2017) noted that importance of horizontal communication is that it helps in the development stronger relationships among the employees. This in the long run will improve the general productivity and performances of the entire employee group in an organization.

Employee performance is commonly defined as the behavior exhibited by an employee while performing a particular task assigned by the employer (Stavros, 2020). It also relates to the outcome produced by a particular employer in an organization. Fuertes, Alfaro, Vargas, Gutierrez, Ternero and Sabattin, (2020), indicates that employee performance is associated with the achievements of every employee in accordance with the different rules, regulations or expectations of the organization or employer. According to Jiang, Du, Zhou, and Cui, (2020), the nature of employee performance reflects the abilities and capabilities of each individual employee in an organization. In this case, most competent and skirled employees tend to exhibit a high level of expertise and commitment on the job which leads to greater employee performance as compared to those with less expertise and skills. However, most scholars assert that there are additional factors that influence the level of employee performance other than skills, competence and expertise or professionalism, effective communication in an organization is among the most essential factors that influence employee performance and productivity levels. Fuertes et al. (2020) assert that excellent employee performance is essential in the creation of high-quality services for customers and higher profitability for the organizations. These benefits of enhanced employee performance tend to lead to sustainable competitive advantage in the long run. The zeal and commitment of employees is normally boosted when the other employees or managers on the organization are undertaking their jobs effectively. The nature in which the organization interacts or communicates with the employees plays a key role in improving employee performances since it acts as a source of motivation and new knowledge, or skills (Jiang, et al, 2020) According to Otoo (2016), most effective leaders or mangers are those that clearly understand the different aspects of communication and its general impact on the organization's setting or structure. Possession of knowledge on the relevance of business communication enables managers to improve the nature of communication in the organization which in the long run yields positive results most especially concerning employees' productivity performance. Odine (2021) indicates that effective communication is a very reliable vehicle that helps employees to fulfill their organizational obligations. To enhance productivity in an organization, managers must be willing to promote free-flowing communication across the different departmental units in the organization. Jiang et al. (2020) also noted that effective communication helps to build trust between employees and the top leadership of the organization which encourages the former to perform efficiently on the job. Maintaining a desirable level of effective communication between managers and employees helps the former to successfully control and monitor progress of the different activities being undertaken by employees in the organization. Otoo (2016) suggests that good flow of information across the entire workforce in the organization helps in achieving the different strategic goals and objectives. Odine (2021) revealed that communication is not necessarily about talking, listening, and writing but rather involves people interacting and understanding each other as well as sharing knowledge or ideas about different issues. Various studies have revealed that effective communication enables managers to share goals with other stakeholders of the organization both internally and externally. However, most of these business searchers have confirmed that the relevance of business communication on employee performance is normally ignored which forms the basis for this current study.



### **Statement of the Problem**

Communication is considered an essential tool for organizational performances and growth. Most business relies on effective communication with both customers and employees to improve sales and enhance business growth. Poor or ineffective communication normally leads to mismanagement of an organization and undesirable business results. Organizations that are so deficient in their means of communication rarely achieve greater performance as compared to those that possess high level of effective business communication. Business scholars such as AlTokhais (2016) indicated that the rationale of business communication is organizations is majorly to maintain a good relationship between the organization and its different stakeholders that cut across employees, shareholders and business partners among others. However, most of these business searchers have confirmed that the relevance of business communication on employee performance is normally ignored which forms the basis for this current study. Business scholars have also confirmed that different components of communication most particularly, horizontal communication, upward communication and downward communication render a great influence on the level of employee commitment on the job. This study seeks to bridge the existing research gap in the business communication research by testing the perceived influence of effective business communication on employee job performance in business organization in Ebonyi State.

### **Research Question**

1. What are the perceived influences of upward communication on employee job performance in business organization?
2. What are the perceived influence of downwards communication on employee job performance in business organization
3. What are the perceived influence of horizontal communication on employee job performance in business organization

### **Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses were formulated and were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

**HO<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female business education students on the perceived influences of effective communication on employee job performance in business organization.

**HO<sub>2</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female business education students on the perceived influence of downwards communication on employee job performance in business organization

**HO<sub>3</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female business education students on the perceived influence of horizontal communication on employee job performance in business organization

### **Method**

The design for this study was descriptive survey design. The study was conducted in commercial banks in Abakaliki Urban, Ebonyi State. The study covered the seven commercial banks in Abakaliki Urban, Ebonyi State. The population of the study was made up of 47 secretaries in the seven commercial banks in Ebonyi State. The entire population was used for the study; therefore, no sample size was drawn. Structured questionnaire titled "Perceived influence of effective business communication on job performance (PIEBCJPQ)" was designed and used for data collection. The questionnaire was structured on 4 – point likert scale as follow: SA = Strongly Agree, A = Agree; D = Disagree and SD = Strongly Disagree. The instrument was validated by two experts from Business Education. The questionnaire was made up of two parts, A and B. Part "A" was designed to elicit information on the background of the respondents while part B has three sections. In order to establish the reliability of the instrument, 20 copies of the questionnaire was distributed to employees outside the studied area. Their responses were correlated using Cronbach Alpha, a reliability coefficient of 0.83 was established. Forty seven (47) copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the respondents with the help of research assistants who were brief on the purpose of the study. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while t-test was used to test the



hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Any item with a mean rating of 2.50 or above was regarded as accepted while mean rating less than 2.50 was regarded as not accepted. For the hypotheses, any item with t-calculated value greater than critical value was rejected, otherwise the hypothesis of no significant difference was accepted.

**Results**

**Research Question One:** What are the perceived influences of upward communication on employee job performance in business organization?

**Table 1: Mean Rating Responses of on the Perceived Influences of Upward Communication on Employee Job Performance in Business Organization**

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Decision
1	Seek essential information from top management make employee to perform efficiently on their different task or obligations	3.12	0.92	Agree
2	Interacting with manager in any business entity allows employees to freely express their opinions concerning the nature of the job	3.10	0.98	Agree
3	Listen to the advice from top management improves job performance	3.06	0.84	Agree
4	Seek essential information from top management in my department improves job performance	3.21	0.83	Agree
5	Sharing knowledge with management on the job requirements boost the overall performance of organizations	3.10	0.98	Agree
6	Discussing with superiors encourage employee to work better	3.30	0.76	Agree
7	Communicating with superiors on what to change in the organization boost the overall performance of organizations	3.03	0.98	Agree
<b>Grand Mean</b>		<b>3.13</b>	<b>0.89</b>	

Table 1 shows the view of students regarding the perceived influences of upward communication on employee job performance in business organization. From the table, it could be observed that shows that all the nine item statements achieved mean score ratings from 3.03 to 3.13 all of which are above the cut-off point of 2.50. This indicates that upward communication improves employee job performance in business organization.

**Research Question Two:** What are the perceived influence of downwards communication on employee job performance in business organization

**Table 2: Mean Rating Responses of on the Perceived Influences of Downwards Communication on Employee Job Performance in Business Organization**

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Decision
8	The flow of information from top management team improves job performance	3.12	0.92	Agree
9	Providing knowledge on the nature of official tasks by manager improves job performance	3.13	0.98	Agree
10	Providing ideas by top management on job requirements improves job performance	3.23	0.76	Agree
11	Communication from manager helps to reduce the rate of turnover redundancy in the organization	2.90	1.00	Agree
12	Providing easy access to essential information on job requirements improves job performance	3.21	0.87	Agree
13	Communication from with the top management team	2.73	1.01	Agree
<b>Grand Mean</b>		<b>3.05</b>	<b>0.92</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Table 2 shows the view of students regarding the perceived influence of downwards communication on employee job performance in business organization. The results in Table 2 showed that all the six items (8-13) obtained the mean scores above 2.50. The grand mean of 3.05 revealed that the respondents agree that influence of downwards communication on employee job performance in



business organization. The standard deviations for all the items are within the same range indicating that respondents are homogenous in their mean ratings.

**Research Question Three:** What are the perceived influences of horizontal communication on employee job performance in business organization?

**Table 3: Mean Rating Responses of on the Perceived Influences of Horizontal Communication on Employee Job Performance in Business Organization**

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Decision
14	Interacting with fellow colleagues improves job performance	3.32	0.99	Agree
15	Share knowledge with my colleagues on essential issues improves job performance	3.16	1.00	Agree
16	Discussing with my colleagues on the job requirements improves job performance	2.97	1.08	Agree
17	Listen to the advice from my fellow employees improves job performance	3.05	1.04	Agree
18	Seek essential information from my colleagues in my department improves job performance	3.08	0.84	Agree
19	Sharing information keeps employees motivated to perform better	2.93	0.97	Agree
<b>Grand Mean</b>		<b>3.21</b>	<b>1.02</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Table 3 shows the view of students regarding the perceived influence of horizontal communication on employee job performance in business organization. The analysis shows that items 14-19 obtained mean scores above 2.50. From the results displayed in Table 3, the grand mean of 3.21 revealed that horizontal communication influence employee job performance in business organization. The standard deviations indicate that respondents are homogenous in their mean ratings.

**Test of Hypotheses**

**Hypothesis one:** There is no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female employee on the perceived influences of effective communication on employee job performance in business organization.

**Table 4 T-test Analysis on the difference between the responses of male and female regarding the effect of techno-stress on the job performance of Secretaries in business organizations**

Gender	N	Mean	SD	DF	Alpha	t.Cal	t.crit	Decision
Male	20	3.25	0.85	45	0.05	1.76	2.687	Not Significant
Female	27	3.54	0.59					

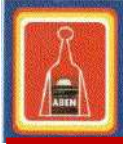
The data in the Table 4 reveals that the calculated t-value of (1.76) is less than the critical t-value of 2.687 at 45 degree of freedom and 0.05 level of significance. This shows that there is no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female employee on the perceived influences of effective communication on employee job performance in business organization.

**Hypothesis Two:** There is no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female employee on the perceived influence of downwards communication on employee job performance in business organization

**Table 5 T-test Analysis on the difference between the responses of male and female employee on the perceived influence of downwards communication on employee job performance in business organization**

Gender	N	Mean	SD	DF	Alpha	t.Cal	t.crit	Decision
Male	20	3.25	0.85	45	0.05	1.62	2.687	Not Significant
Female	27	3.54	0.59					

The data in the Table 5 reveals that the calculated t-value of (1.62) is less than the critical t-value of 2.687 at 45 degree of freedom and 0.05 level of significance. This shows that there is no significance



difference in the mean responses of male and female secretaries regarding the effects of techno-stress on the job performance of secretaries in business organizations.

**Hypothesis Three:** There is no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female employee on the perceived influence of horizontal communication on employee job performance in business organization

**Table 6 T-test Analysis on the difference between the responses of male and female employee on the perceived influence of horizontal communication on employee job performance in business organization**

Gender	N	Mean	SD	DF	Alpha	t.cal	t.crit	Decision
Male	20	3.37	0.70	45	0.05	0.50	1.96	Not
Female	27	3.32	0.70					significant

The data in the Table 6 reveals that the calculated t-value of (0.50) is less than the critical t-value of 2.687 at 45 degree of freedom and 0.05 level of significance. This shows that there is no significance difference in the mean responses of male and female employee regarding the influence of horizontal communication on employee job performance in business organization.

### Discussion

The findings of this study in respect to the first research question identified perceived influence of upward communication on employee performance in business organizations. They include seeking essential information from top management make employee to perform efficiently on their different task or obligations, interacting with manager in any business entity allows employees to freely express their opinions concerning the nature of the job, Listen to the advice from top management improves job performance, seeking essential information from top management in my department improves job performance, sharing knowledge with management on the job requirements boost the overall performance of organizations, discussing with superiors encourage employee to work better and communicating with superiors on what to change in the organization boost the overall performance of organizations. This implies that upward business communication has a significant impact on the level of employee performance in an organization. Sharing of knowledge and information between superiors or managers and employees reduce uncertainties about the top management. This further helps employees to clearly understand the different reasons for the decisions undertaken by the top management. The finding is supported with the study of Wang, (2022) opine that upward communication gives employees an opportunity to discuss their grievances or careers and other pressing issues with other superiors which helps to motivate employees towards being committed in the job. This implies that upward communication has great impact on their ability to perform efficiently on their different task or obligations.

The findings in respect to the second research question identified the perceived influence of downwards communication on employee job performance in business organization. They include the flow of information from top management team improves job performance, providing knowledge on the nature of official tasks by manager improves job performance, providing ideas by top management on job requirements improves job performance, communication from manager helps to reduce the rate of turnover redundancy in the organization, providing easy access to essential information on job requirements improves job performance and communication from with the top management team. The findings of this study on the perceived influence of downwards communication on employee job performance agreed with Wang (2020) confirm that emphasizing effective downwards communication in an organization helps employees to share information, ideas or knowledge and skills which enable them to effectively perform to the expectations of the employer. A positive and significant relationship between downward communication and employee performance was confirmed. The literature also revealed that effective downward communication enhances the level of leadership based communication majorly through routine updates about the operations of an organization. Al-Tokhais



(2016) who indicated those interactions between superiors and their subordinates helps to solve the different problems affecting the commitment of employees on their jobs.

The findings in respect to the third research question identified the perceived influence of downwards communication on employee job performance in business organization. The respondents agree that interacting with fellow colleagues improves job performance, sharing knowledge with my colleagues on essential issues improves job performance, discussing with my colleagues on the job requirements improves job performance, listen to the advice from my fellow employees improves job performance, seeking essential information from my colleagues in my department improves job performance and sharing information keeps employees motivated to perform better. This findings agrees with Wang (2022) who confirm that businesses rely on communication as the best mechanism or channel for enhancing interactions between the employees and customers or clients which greatly influences employees' performance and improves the level of business profitability in the long run.

### **Conclusion**

The study confirms the impact of business communication on the general performance of employees in an organization or business entity. The different components of communication most particularly, horizontal communication, upward communication and downward communication render a great influence on the level of employee commitment on the job. This therefore indicates that the different forms communication has a great impact on employee performance and organization growth in the long run. Appropriate business communication is a very essential tool for attaining greater performance and consequently maintaining desirable working relationships in an organization. The general trust among employees can build up in an organization if every person is committed to engage in effective communication. It is important to note that clear or effective business communication helps to enhance the productivity and cooperation between employees thereby encouraging teamwork on which employees base to improve their performance.

### **Recommendations**

1. Business managers should maintain a good flow of information across the organization so as to improve employee performances and business profitability in the long run.
2. The business organization should map out the standard method of communication between superiors and subordinate. In view of this, the management should adopt a system that would help the employees to communicate freely the information they want to transmit.
3. Managers should be willing to listen patiently to subordinates without premature evaluation and judgment.
4. Management should ensure that communication system is in line with organizational structure of the company which will involve different departments.
5. Finally, manager of an organization should also, see a communication feedback as effective tool to an employee's productivity

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## EXTENT OF USAGE OF INNOVATIVE TEACHING STRATEGIES BY FEDERAL POLYTECHNIC BALI LECTURERS

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### Abstract

*Innovative teaching strategy is an effective approach that enables students to be globally competitive. The strategy is used in teaching and learning to acquaint students with digital skills that are required in the modern business offices. Three research questions guided the study and three hypotheses were tested. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The studied innovative teaching strategies were classified into three, namely: blended learning, interactive learning and Artificial Intelligence in education. The population of the study comprised four hundred and nineteen (419) lecturers in Federal Polytechnic Bali, Taraba State. The simple random sampling technique was used to select 95 lecturers out of the population. The sample of the study was therefore, ninety five (95) lecturers. A 45-item self-structured questionnaire titled Extent of Usage of Innovative Teaching Strategies Questionnaire (EUITSQ) was the instrument for data collection. The questionnaire was validated by three experts. Cronbach Alpha reliability procedure was used to establish the internal consistency of the instrument and a reliability coefficient index of 0.82 was obtained. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while t-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 significant level. The study found among others that lecturers combine both traditional in-class training and high-tech online teaching, lecturers are physically present to control over time during blended learning, they are physically present to place, path and pace lessons, AI makes students responsible for learning, lecturers create an environment where students feel encouraged to speak up. The study recommended among others that lecturers should update their knowledge on the different innovative teaching strategies so that they can use it to make recipients relevant after graduation., lecturers should always make use of the interactive learning strategy because it gives students the access to full participation in the lessons.*

*Keywords: AI, innovative, strategies, teaching and usage*

### Introduction

Education is a very reliable instrument for innovation. Education is a process that follows the trend in the society in training learners to enhance their relevance in the society where they will exist after graduation. It is also said that education is the key to success. This can only be true if the teaching and learning are in line with what is obtainable in the society. The world has gone global through technology therefore, the training that is relevant in the present world is the type that gives learners access to the knowledge and skills of technology. The extent to which innovative teaching strategy is utilized in teaching is what equips the learner for global relevance. This is the reason why it is said that education is an instrument par excellence because through education learners are acquainted with the knowledge that is acceptable in the society. Education holds the key to human



progress. It plays an important role in bringing change. Education is one and only instrument that can be used to bring about change towards the social and economic betterment of a nation (Ibrahim, 2017). It is a very reliable instrument for innovation. In Nigeria, it is glaring that education was regarded as the single most important industry for the production of high-level manpower and the capstan of the entire society (Nwosu, Crossdale & Ofulue 2018). According to Esene (2013), the following are the philosophy of education in Nigeria:

1. Education as an instrument for national development: to this end, the formulation of ideas, their integration for national development and the interaction is obtained through education.
2. Education fosters the worth and development of the individual, for each individual's sake, and for general development of the society;
3. Every Nigerian child shall have a right to equal educational opportunities irrespective of any real or imagined disabilities each according to his or her ability.
4. There is need for functional education for the promotion of a progressive and united Nigeria; and to this end, school programmes need to be relevant, practical and comprehensive; while interest and ability should determine the individual's direction in education. If education must produce high level manpower it will be in line with regulated standards, for without standards many things will go wrong. This is so because according to Amesi (2018), education covers a wide spectrum of livelihood activities, it is the pedagogical and desirable business competencies necessary for self-employment or being employed with a view to making the recipient self-reliant with appropriate infrastructure and equipment for learning.

Innovative teaching is the process of proactively introducing new teaching strategies and methods into the classroom. The purpose of introducing new teaching strategies and methods is to improve academic outcomes and address real problems to promote equitable learning. It aims at involving learners in the learning process unlike the traditional teaching method in which the teacher alone teaches what he wants to teach and students are passive learners. The traditional methods allow students to stay in a boring class with the voice of the teacher echoing in the recipient's ears, the student tries to lift his eyelids to pay attention to what the teacher is saying. Simply put, innovative teaching strategies are different methods of technological teaching. Nowadays, many teachers are trying to keep their classes as far as possible from that passive learning and let their students get more involved in learning by finding different approaches to teaching them. Students-centred learning is encouraged because it allows learners to discover and participate in learning.

The innovative trend in education is the use of technology in bringing learners to the level of global competitiveness. With technology learners are given requisite skills to survive unemployment and to work in any sort of technological office whether as self-employed or paid job. The extent to which lecturers use innovative teaching strategies in teaching is the solution to unemployment. Okoye (2017) states that innovation is a re-designed method of application of new ideas, knowledge and processes to the present in order to improve on the prevailing condition. The world has gone technological and digital the innovative strategies must include the digital and technological methods required in teaching and learning to enable students have competence that can induce hard work and productivity in the organizations where they will work after graduation. This is very essential because the modern business office do not tolerate graduates that are not fit to work with the technologies. Innovative teaching methods are not just about using the most cutting-edge technology in class or constantly catching up with the latest education trends, these are the teaching-learning methods. They are all about using new teaching strategies that focus more on students. These innovative ones encourage students to join proactively and interact with their classmates and the teacher during lessons. Students will have to work more, but in a way that meets their needs better and can help them grow faster (Naba, 2022). Unlike traditional teaching, which mainly focuses on how much knowledge the teacher can pass on to the students, innovative ways of teaching dig deep into what students truly take away from what the teacher is teaching during teaching and learning. Innovative learning strategies include blended learning, interactive learning, AI learning and so on.



The world has seen a shift from restricting learning to the four walls of a classroom to online ones and hybrid learning. However, students need to be guided during this hybrid learning if not the students will begin to partake in order activities not related to learning. It is always easy to blame students for not studying hard but it is also the teacher's responsibility not to give dull and dry lessons that make students fed up. Many schools, teachers and trainers have been trying innovative teaching strategies in the new normal to keep students interested and more engaged. Innovative teaching enables teachers to assist students in learning by reaching out to students minds and give students better access to classes. Tran (2023) states that innovative teaching benefits students in various ways such as;

1. **Encourage research:** Innovative approaches to learning encourage students to explore and discover new things and tools to broaden their minds.
2. **Improve problem-solving and critical thinking skills:** Creative teaching methods allow students to learn at their own pace and challenge them to brainstorm new ways to address a problem instead of finding answers already written in textbooks.
3. **Avoid receiving a lot of knowledge at once:** Teachers using new approaches still give students information, but they tend to split it into smaller parts. Digesting information can now be more accessible, and keeping things short helps students get the basics faster.
4. **Adopt more soft skills:** Students have to use more complex tools in class to finish their work, which helps them learn new things and spark their creativity. Also, when doing individual or group projects, students know how to manage their time, prioritise tasks, communicate, work with others better, and much more.
5. **Check students' understanding:** Grades and exams can say something, but not everything about a student's learning capacity and knowledge (especially if the student successfully cheated during tests or examination). Innovative teaching ideas let teachers monitor classes and better know what their students struggle with to find the most suitable solutions.
6. **Improve self-evaluation:** With great methods from teachers, students can understand what they have learnt and what they are missing. By discovering what they still need to know, they can understand how to learn particular things and become more eager to do it.
7. **Enliven classrooms:** Do not let your classrooms be full of your voice or awkward silence. Innovative teaching methods give students something different to get excited about, encouraging them to speak up and interact more. Types of innovative strategies;

### **Blended learning**

Blended learning or hybrid learning, also known as technology-mediated instruction, web-enhanced instruction, or mixed-mode instruction, is an approach to education that combines online educational materials and opportunities for interaction online with physical place-based classroom methods. Blended learning is a method that combines both traditional in-class training and high-tech online teaching. It gives the teacher and the students more flexibility to create effective studying environments and customise learning experiences. In the technology-driven world of today it is hard to neglect powerful tools like the internet or e-learning software. Things like video meetings for teachers and students, learning management system (LMS) to manage courses, online sites to interact and play, and many apps serving studying purposes have taken the world. During the school time when school reopen students join the offline classes, it is still great to have some help from digital tools to make the lessons more engaging. The extent of usage of this interactive digital strategies by lecturers to enable learners achieve the purpose of education in this technological era is a concern to educators. AhaSlides is a great tool for blended learning that engages students in face-to-face and virtual classrooms. The students can join quizzes, games, brainstorming and many class activities on this platform (Kolinski, 2022).

Blended learning requires the physical presence of both teacher and student, with some elements of student control over time, place, path, or pace. While students still attend classes in the four walls of the classroom with a teacher present, face-to-face classroom practices are combined with computer-mediated activities regarding content and delivery. It is also used in professional



development and training settings. Since blended learning is highly context-dependent, a universal conception of it is difficult. Some reports have claimed that a lack of consensus on a hard definition of blended learning has led to difficulties in research on its effectiveness. Naba (2022) broadly defined blended learning as a mixture of online and in-person delivery where the online portion effectively replaces some of the face-to-face contact time rather than supplementing it. Blended instruction is reportedly more effective than purely face-to-face or purely online classes. Blended learning methods can also result in high levels of student achievement more effective than face-to-face learning. By using a combination of digital instruction and one-on-one face time, students can work on their own with new concepts which frees teachers up to circulate and support individual students who may need individualized attention. "Rather than playing to the lowest common denominator as they would in a physical classroom. Teachers can now streamline their instruction to help all students reach their full potential. Proponents of blended learning argue that incorporating the "asynchronous Internet communication technology" into higher education courses serves to "facilitate a simultaneous independent and collaborative learning experience".

According to Tran (2023), blended learning can lower costs by putting classrooms in the online space and it essentially replaces pricey textbooks with electronic devices that students often bring to class. E-textbooks, which can be accessed digitally, may also help to reduce textbook budgets. Blended learning gives the opportunity for data collection and customization of instruction and assessment as two major benefits of this approach. Blended learning often includes software that automatically collects student data and measures academic progress, providing teachers, students and parents detailed students data. Often, tests are automatically scored, providing instantaneous feedback. Student logins and work times are also measured to ensure accountability. Schools with blended learning programs may also choose to reallocate resources to boost student achievement outcomes. Blended learning allows for personalized education, replacing the model where a teacher stands in front of the classroom and everyone is expected to stay at the same pace. Kolinski (2022) upheld that "blended learning allows students to work at their own pace, making sure they fully understand new concepts before moving on."

### **Interactive Lessons**

Interactive teaching methods are teaching methodologies that focus on the maximum engagement of learners. In interactive teaching style, the teacher involve learners and ensure participation. Make the students responsible for learning. Students are the teacher's innovative learners therefore, the one-way lessons are very traditional and sometimes exhausting for both the teacher and the students. Naba (2022) states that teachers should create an environment where students feel encouraged to speak up and express their ideas. The author maintained that students can join in-class activities in many ways, not just by raising their hands or being called out to answer. These days, one can find online platforms that help make interactive classroom activities to save a lot of time and get all students to join instead of just two or three. Interactive teaching can be conducted by playing live quizzes and games with spinner wheels or even through word clouds, polls or brainstorming together. Online interactive games increase student participation, promote social and emotional learning, and develop competitive and team spirit. (Lieberman 2006; & Linderbauer 2020). Teachers can have all students participate in those exciting activities with the help of some online platforms. Not only that, but students can type or choose answers anonymously instead of raising their hands. This makes them more confident to get involved, express their opinions and no longer worry about being 'wrong' or judged. The traditional classrooms were teacher-centered. Teachers transmitted information and students received it. The method has been that students studied what the teacher taught, did homework, gave exams, and passed to the next class. Teachers should adopt a modern and interactive approach to teaching-learning.

### **Artificial Intelligence Learning**

AI assists teachers in doing so much work. The AI method is surprisingly widespread these days. Using AI does not mean that it does everything and replaces the teacher. It is not like in the science-fiction movies where computers and robots move around and teach students (or brainwash



them). It helps the teacher reduce their workload, personalise courses and instruct students more efficiently. The teacher can probably use many familiar things, such as Learning Management System, plagiarism detection, automatic scoring and assessment and all AI products. So far, AI has proved that there are many benefits for teachers, and the scenarios of it invading the educational field or the world are the stuff of movies only. The teacher can use AI in innovative teaching methods for the following purposes; course management, assessment, adaptive learning, parent-teacher communication and audio/visual aids. Artificial intelligence enhances learning, assist teachers and induces effective individualized learning excitement, but it is also a bit discouraging especially through fear. To even have an intelligent conversation about AI in education, one must first push past imaginary, science-fiction scenarios of computers and robots teaching the students, replacing teachers and reducing the human element from what is a fundamentally human activity. Tran (2023) listed the following Potential Benefits of AI in Education:

1. **Personalization:** "It can be overwhelmingly difficult for one teacher to figure out how to meet the needs of every student in his/her classroom. AI systems easily adapt to each student's individual learning needs and can target instruction based on their strengths and weaknesses."
2. **Tutoring:** AI systems can "gauge a student's learning style and pre-existing knowledge to deliver customized support and instruction."
3. **Grading:** AI can help grade exams using an answer key; but it can also "compile data about how students performed and even grade more abstract assessments such as essays."
4. **Feedback on Course Quality:** For example, if many students are answering a question incorrectly, "AI can zero in on the specific information or concepts that students are missing, so that educators can deliver targeted improvements in materials and methods."
5. **Meaningful and Immediate Feedback to Students:** Some students may be shy about taking risks or receiving critical feedback in the classroom, but "with AI, students can feel comfortable to make the mistakes necessary for learning and receive the feedback they need for improvement." Much of the potential envisioned for AI in education centers is on reducing time spent by teachers on tedious tasks to free up time for more meaningful ones. "AI is not a threat to teachers; it is not there to replace teachers," but rather to deliver a better education to students."

According to Tran (2023), AI in education has lesson inclusion and universal access to education by helping to make global classrooms available to all, including those who speak different languages or who might have visual or hearing impairments; creating access for students who might not be able to attend school due to illness and better serving "students who require learning at a different level or on a particular subject that is not available in their own schools. It is hoped that AI will ultimately help educators make continued progress in addressing the broad range of physical, cognitive, academic, social and emotional factors that can affect student learning and ensure that all students have equal opportunity in education, regardless of their social class, race, gender, sexuality, ethnic background or physical and mental disabilities.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The world has undergone a rapid change due to the presence of technology. The extent to which lecturers utilise innovative technology has great impact in the life of the learner. If the innovative teaching strategies are used in the teaching and learning process learners who will become graduates and workers will also be innovative. It is observed that most of the innovative teaching strategies are not utilised by lecturers in the Federal Polytechnic Bali and as result of this most graduates complete the courses without adequate skills. Abdul, Abdukadir and Abdul (2013) confirmed this in a recent study where over 40 million graduates are unemployable into organization because of lack of technical and vocational skills for the available jobs. If this is the case it then means that recipients are not receiving the kind of education that will benefit them after graduation. The graduates cannot properly fit into the technological world and office where everything is done in a technological manner. It is against this backdrop that the researcher investigated the extent of usage of innovative teaching strategies by Federal Polytechnic Bali lecturers.



### Research Questions

1. To what extent is the blended learning strategy utilised by Federal Polytechnic Bali lecturers?
2. To what extent is the interactive learning strategy utilised by Federal Polytechnic Bali lecturers?
3. To what extent is the AI learning strategy utilised by Federal Polytechnic Bali lecturers?

### Research Hypotheses

Ho1: There is no significant difference in the mean opinions of male and female lecturers on the extent to which blended learning strategy is utilised by Federal Polytechnic Bali lecturers.

Ho2: There is no significant difference in the mean opinions of lecturers in the school of business and lecturers in the school of science on the extent to which interactive learning strategy is utilised by Federal Polytechnic Bali lecturers.

Ho3: There is no significant difference in the mean opinions of male and female lecturers on the extent to which AI learning strategy is utilised by Federal Polytechnic Bali lecturers.

### Methods

The study adopted the descriptive survey research design. This is because the study through questionnaire sought individuals opinion on the topic understudy. Idowu (2021) averred that descriptive survey research design is a research design in which the entire population or representative sample is studied by collecting and analysing data from a group of respondents through the use of questionnaire. The population of the study was 419 lecturers in Federal Polytechnic Bali. The simple random sampling technique was used to select 95 lecturers out of the population. The sample of the study was therefore, 95 lecturers. A 45-item self-structured questionnaire titled Extent of Usage of Innovative Teaching Strategies Questionnaire (EUITSQ) was the instrument used for data collection. It was structured on a modified 4-point Likert rating scale of Very High Extent, High Extent, Low Extent and Very Low Extent with corresponding values of 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. In order to ensure that the instrument measured what it was expected to measure three experts validated the instrument 2 from the department of Office Technology and Management and 1 from department of Statistics Federal Polytechnic Bali. The internal consistency of the instrument was determined using Cronbach-Alpha procedure and it yielded a coefficient index of 0.82 which signified that the instrument was reliable for the study. The researcher and two research assistants collected the data. The 95 copies of the questionnaire was administered to 95 lecturers in the institution and 92 copies were collected which represents (97.15) return rate. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while independent t-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significant. The decision rule for the research questions were based on the upper and lower limits of the means scores thus: Very High Extent (VHE) = 3.50-4.00, High Extent (HE) = 2.50-3.49, Low Extent (LE) = 1.50-2.49 and Very Low Extent (VLE) = 1.00-1.49. For the hypotheses if the p-value is less or equal to the significant level the hypothesis was not rejected but if not it was rejected.

### Results

**Research Question 1:** To what extent is blended learning strategy utilised by Federal Polytechnic Bali lecturers?

**Table 1: Mean and standard deviation on the extent to which blended learning strategy is utilised by Federal Polytechnic Bali Lectures.**

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Remarks
1.	Lecturers combine both traditional in-class training and high-tech online teaching	3.11	0.52	Agree
2.	Lecturers employ tools such as internet and e-learning software	2.85	1.00	Agree
3.	Lecturers employ video meetings for teachers and students	2.55	1.03	Agree
4.	Lecturers employ LMS to manage courses	2.32	1.08	Disagree



5. They employ online sites to interact and play	2.74	1.02		Agree
6. Lecturers employ Aha Slides to engage student in face-to-face and virtual classrooms		2.23	1.09	Disagree
7. By doing so students join quizzes, games, brainstorming and many class activities on the platform	2.33	1.08		Disagree
8. Lecturers are physically present to control over time during blended learning	3.33	0.92		Agree
9. They are physically present to place, path and pace lessons	3.09	0.93		Agree
10. Lecturers use blended learning during conferences and seminars	3.52	0.99		Agree
11. Lecturers allow online delivery to replace some of the face-to-face contact	2.73	0.83		Agree
12. Students can work on their own with new concepts	3.28	0.99		Agree
13. Lecturers streamline their instruction to help all students reach their potential		3.04	1.04	Agree
14. It facilitates a simultaneous independent and Collaborative learning experience		3.25	0.75	Agree
15. Tests are automatically scored, and instant feedback is provided	2.50	0.94		Agree
<b>Cluster Mean</b>		<b>2.85</b>	<b>0.88</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Source: Field Survey 2023

The analysis of the data presented in Table 1 shows mean scores of respondents on the extent to which blended learning strategy is utilised by Federal Polytechnic Bali lecturers with the mean ratings ranging from 2.23 to 3.52 indicating agree. This means that the items showed that the blended innovative learning strategy is utilised by lecturers in Federal Polytechnic Bali. The respondents disagreed with items 4, 6 and 7 with mean scores of 2.32, 2.23 and 2.33. 12 items have mean scores that are above the cut-off mark of 2.50 that is regarded as the acceptable limit as indicated in the decision rule. The total cluster mean of 2.85 further indicates that lecturers in Federal Polytechnic Bali agreed to the items. The standard deviation of 0.88 indicates that the respondents have similar opinion to the items on the extent of usage of blended innovative learning strategy.

**Research Question 2:** To what extent is the interactive learning strategy utilised by Federal Polytechnic Bali lecturers?

**Table 2: Mean and standard deviation on the extent to which interactive learning strategy is utilised by Federal Polytechnic Bali Lectures.**

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Remark
1.	Lecturers involve learners and ensure engagement of learners	3.60	1.45	Agree
2.	Lecturers allow students full participation	3.04	1.04	Agree
3.	Lecturers make students responsible for learning	3.25	0.75	Agree
4.	Students are the teacher's innovative learners	3.51	0.79	Agree
5.	The one-way lessons are very traditional and sometime exhausting for both teachers and students	3.81	0.66	Agree
6.	Lecturers create an environment where students feel encouraged to speak up	3.77	0.74	Agree
7.	Students can join in-class activities in many ways not just by raising their hands or being called out to answer	3.46	0.87	Agree



8. Lecturers find online platforms that help make interactive classroom activities	2.58	0.53	Agree
9. Lecturers use playing live quizzes for interactive lessons	2.46	0.96	Disagree
10. Lecturers use games, word clouds to brainstorm with students	2.06	0.53	Disagree
11. Lecturers can help all students participate with the help of some online platforms	3.55	0.71	Agree
12. Lecturers put forward questions and pair students to solve it.	3.38	0.78	Agree
<b>Cluster Mean</b>	<b>3.20</b>	<b>0.81</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Source: Field Survey 2023

The analysis of data in Table 2 shows mean scores of respondents on the extent to which interactive learning strategy is utilised by Federal Polytechnic Bali lecturers with the mean scores ranging from 2.06 to 3.77 indicating agree. This means that the items showed that the interactive innovative learning strategy is utilised by lecturers in Federal Polytechnic Bali. The respondents disagreed with items 9 and 10 with mean scores of 2.46 and 2.06 respectively. 10 items have mean scores that are above the cut-off mark of 2.50 that is regarded as the acceptable limit as indicated in the decision rule. The total cluster mean of 3.20 further indicates that lecturers in Federal Polytechnic Bali agreed to the items. The standard deviation of 0.81 indicates that the respondents have similar opinion to the items on the extent of usage of interactive learning strategy.

**Research Question 3:** To what extent is the blended learning strategy utilised by Federal Polytechnic Bali lecturers?

**Table 1: Mean and standard deviation on the extent to which AI learning strategy is utilised by Federal Polytechnic Bali Lectures.**

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Remarks
1.	Lecturers use AI to adapt to individual students learning needs	2.05	0.54	Disagree
2.	They use it to induce effective individualized learning excitement	2.46	0.96	Disagree
3.	Lecturers use AI to deliver customized support and instruction to students	2.33	0.99	Disagree
4.	It helps lecturers reduce their workload	3.32	0.76	Agree
5.	It helps lecturers in course management	3.46	0.70	Agree
6.	It aids lecturers in students assessment	3.15	0.72	Agree
7.	It aids in adaptive learning	2.90	0.82	Agree
8.	It assists lecturers in parent-teacher communication	3.33	0.78	Agree
9.	It also helps lecturers in audio/visual aids	3.31	0.75	Agree
10.	Lecturers use it to target instruction based on students strengths and weaknesses	3.44	0.81	Agree
11.	It helps grade exams using an answer key	2.98	0.73	Agree
12.	It can grade abstract assessment like essay	2.75	0.75	Agree
13.	AI can zero on the specific information the students are missing	3.02	0.74	Agree
14.	Lecturers deliver targeted improvements in material and methods using AI	3.18	0.75	Agree
15.	It helps lecturers free up time for meaningful ones	3.06	0.77	Agree
16.	AI enables lecturers teach basic and advanced skills	3.08	0.71	Agree



by assessing their present skill level

17. Lecturers use AI to analyse and interpret data		2.04	0.55	Disagree
18. AI makes global classroom available to all	3.22	0.73		Agree
<b>Cluster Mean</b>		<b>2.76</b>	<b>0.71</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Source: Field Survey 2023

The analysis of data in Table 3 shows mean scores of respondents on the extent to which AI learning strategy is utilised by Federal Polytechnic Bali lecturers with the mean ratings ranging from 2.04 to 3.46 indicating agree. This means that the items showed that AI innovative learning strategy is utilised by lecturers in Federal Polytechnic Bali. The respondents disagreed with items 1, 2, 3 and 17 with mean scores of 2.05, 2.46, 2.33 and 2.04 respectively. 14 items have mean scores that are above the cut-off mark of 2.50 that was regarded as the acceptable limit as indicated in the decision rule. The total cluster mean of 2.76 further indicates that lecturers in Federal Polytechnic Bali agreed to the items. The standard deviation of 0.71 indicates that the respondents have similar opinion to the items on the extent of usage of AI learning strategy

### Hypotheses Testing

Ho1: There is no significant difference in the mean opinions of male and female lecturers on the extent to which blended learning strategy is utilised by Federal Polytechnic Bali lecturers.

**Table 4: t-test Analysis of Respondents Mean Ratings on the extent to which blended learning strategy is utilised by Federal Polytechnic Bali lecturers**

Variable	N	X	SD	Df	t-cal	t-crit.	Decision
Male	57	3.08	0.71	90	0.42	1.96	NS
Female	35	2.37	0.45				

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Data presented in Table 4 revealed that the calculated t-value of 0.42 at 90 degrees of freedom and at 0.05 level of significance is less than the p-value of 1.96. This indicates that there is no significance difference in the mean opinions of male and female lecturers on the extent to which blended learning strategy is utilised by Federal Polytechnic Bali lecturers. The null hypothesis was therefore, accepted. This implies that blended learning strategy is used by Federal Polytechnic Bali lecturers.

Ho2: There is no significant difference on the mean opinions of lecturers in the school of business and lecturers in the school of science on the extent to which interactive learning strategy is utilised by Federal Polytechnic Bali lecturers.

**Table 5: t-test Analysis of Respondents Mean Ratings on the extent to which interactive learning strategy is utilised by Federal Polytechnic Bali lecturers**

Group	N	Mean	SD	t-cal	Df	t-crit.	Decision
School of Business	50	3.52	0.41				
School of Science	42	2.33	0.53	13.09	90	1.96	S

Source: Field Survey, 2023



Data presented in Table 5 shows that there are 50 lecturers in the school of business and 42 lecturers in the school of science. The calculated t-value of 13.09 at 90 degrees of freedom and at 0.05 level of significance is greater than the p-value of 1.96. This indicates that there is significance difference in the mean opinions of male and female lecturers on the extent to which interactive learning strategy is utilised by Federal Polytechnic Bali lecturers. The null hypothesis was therefore, rejected. This implies that lecturers in the school of business and school of science differ in their opinions on the extent to which interactive strategy is utilised by lecturers in Federal Polytechnic Bali. Ho3: There is no significant difference in the mean opinions of male and female lecturers on the extent to which AI learning strategy is utilised by Federal Polytechnic Bali lecturers.

**Table 6: t-test Analysis of Respondents Mean Ratings on the extent to which AI learning strategy is utilised by Federal Polytechnic Bali lecturers**

Group	N	Mean	SD	t-cal	Df	p-value	Decision
Federal	57	3.60	0.41	0.095	90	1.96	NS
State	35	3.58	0.53				

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Data presented in Table 6 shows that there are 57 male lecturers and 35 female lecturers in Federal Polytechnic Bali. The calculated t-value of 0.095 at 90 degrees of freedom and at 0.05 level of significance is less than the p-value of 1.96. This indicates that there is no significance difference in the mean opinions of male and female lecturers on the extent to which AI learning strategy is utilised by Federal Polytechnic Bali lecturers. The null hypothesis was therefore, accepted. This implies that male and female lecturers did not differ in their opinions on the extent AI learning strategy is utilised by lecturers in Federal Polytechnic Bali.

### Discussion of Findings

The study was on the extent to which innovative teaching strategy is used by lecturers in Federal Polytechnic Bali. The Research Question 1 which is to what extent is blended learning strategy utilised by Federal Polytechnic Bali lecturers found that respondents agreed that lecturers combine both traditional in-class training and high-tech online teaching. The study shows that lecturers employ tools such as internet and e-learning software, lecturers employ video meetings for teachers and students, they employ online sites to interact and play, lecturers are physically present to control over time during blended learning, they are physically present to place, path and pace lessons, lecturers use blended learning during conferences and seminars, lecturers allow online delivery to replace some of the face-to-face contact, students can work on their own with new concepts and lecturers streamline their instructions to help all students reach their potential. “Blended learning strategy facilitates a simultaneous independent and collaborative learning experience and tests are automatically scored, and instant feedback is provided. This finding is line with the study of Kolinski (2022) who states that things like video meetings for teachers and students, learning management system (LMS) to manage courses, online sites to interact and play, and many apps serving studying purposes have taken the world.

The findings of research question 2 on the extent to which interactive learning strategy is utilised by Federal Polytechnic Bali lecturers found that lecturers involve learners and ensure engagement of learners, lecturers allow students full participation, AI makes students responsible for learning, students are the teacher’s innovative learners, the one-way lessons are very traditional and sometime exhausting for both teachers and students, lecturers create an environment where students feel encouraged to speak up, students can join in-class activities in many ways not just by raising their hands or being called out to answer, lecturers find online platforms that help make interactive classroom activities, lecturers use playing live quizzes for interactive lessons, lecturers use games, word clouds to brainstorm with students, lecturers can help all students participate with the help of some online platforms and lecturers put forward questions and pair students to solve it. This finding corroborates with that of Lieberman (2006) and Linderbauer (2020) who states that online



interactive games increase student participation, promote social and emotional learning, and develop competitive and team spirit.

Finding in Research question three on the extent to which AI learning strategy is utilised by Federal Polytechnic Bali lecturers found that it helps lecturers reduce their workload, it helps lecturers in course management, it aids lecturers in students assessment, it aids in adaptive learning, it assists in parent-teacher communication, it also helps in audio/visual aids, it helps to target instruction based on students strengths and weaknesses, it helps grade exams using an answer key, it can grade abstract assessment like essay, AI can zero on the specific information the students are missing, it helps to deliver targeted improvements in material and methods, it helps lecturers free up time for meaningful ones, AI enables lecturers teach basic and advanced skills by assessing their present skill level. The findings affirm the findings of Tran (2023) who found that AI in education has lesson inclusion and universal access to education by helping to make global classrooms available to all, including those who speak different languages or who might have visual or hearing impairments. Hypotheses 1 and 3 were accepted while hypotheses 2 was rejected.

### **Conclusion**

The study concluded that innovative teaching strategies are the technological methods of making students relevant. Technology has come to stay there is no going back therefore, innovative teaching strategies are the only ways of making the learner who will become a graduate relevant to himself and the society. The traditional methods of teaching if not totally done away with should be combined with innovative teaching strategies to enable the graduate fit into the current society.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings and conclusion of the study the following recommendations were proffered:

1. Lecturers should update their knowledge on the various innovative teaching strategies so that they can use it to make recipients relevant after graduation.
2. Lecturers should always make use of the interactive learning strategy because it gives students the access to full participation in lessons.
3. AI should always be used by lecturers to make students feel comfortable to make the mistakes that are necessary for learning as they will receive the feedback they need for improvement.
4. AI should be used by lecturers to improve both their own writing skills and that of students and also for plagiarism detection.

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## COMPUTER APPLICATION SKILLS REQUIRED FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT AMONG BUSINESS EDUCATION STUDENTS IN UNIVERSITIES FOR FUTURE BUSINESSES

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### Abstract

The study sought to determine the computer application skills required for entrepreneurship development among Business Education students in public universities in Ebonyi State for future businesses. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The study was guided by three research questions and three null hypotheses tested at 0.05 level of significance. Population of the study comprised of 294 respondents (22 Business Education lecturers in public universities in Ebonyi State that offer the programme and 272 registered small and medium enterprises in Abakaliki metropolis). There was no sample because the population was manageable. A 17 item structured questionnaire validated by two experts in the field of Business Education and one expert in measurement and evaluation was used for the study. The reliability of the instrument, using Cronbach alpha yielded an overall reliability co-efficient of 0.74. Data were analyzed using mean, standard deviation and t-test. Findings showed that internet application skills, spreadsheet application skills, and database management application skills were required by Business Education students for entrepreneurship development. The researcher then concluded that Business Education students who want to develop entrepreneurship competencies for future businesses should be equipped with adequate computer application skills such as internet, spreadsheet, and database management since computer application skills have taken over every facet of business. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended among others that government should equip Business Education departments in various universities with computers and internet facilities to enable the lecturers empower the students with the necessary skills required for entrepreneurship development and future businesses

**Keywords:** Computer Application skills, Entrepreneurship Development, Business Education, Data Management, Business.

### Introduction

Advancement in technology globally has revolutionized every human and business activity. Rapid developments in Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in recent years have resulted in significant changes in the way the world operates, communicates and do businesses. Ezinwa (2020) defined computer as an electronic device that manipulates information or data. It has the ability to store, retrieve and process data. Ezinwa further said that most businesses today create



data that can be stored and processed on computers. Computer is an electronic device that is designed to help man perform different types of functions easily, speedily, accurately and effectively. Computer accepts data and instruction as instructed through the processing devices and gives accurate result. It converts raw facts into required information according to a set of instructions that are fed into it through the output devices. Computer is referred to as a system because it comprises of different components none of which can function independently without the others, just like the human body system (Emeasoba, Ekoh & Modebelu, 2015). Similarly, Victoria, Uchechi and Kate (2013), stated that computer is a programmable, multi-use machine that accepts data, raw facts and figures and processes or manipulates it into information. According to them, a computer as a machine or device can perform a variety of operations such as arithmetic calculation, comparison of data, storage of information, analysis and presentation of diagrams and charts which are used to digitally create, collect, store, manipulate and relay office information needed for accomplishment of basic business tasks and goals. In other words, computer helps enhance efficiency, workflow and overall experience within the work place and it streamlines communication because employees can easily connect with clients via some computer applications and share documents and important resources.

Computer application is a software that allows you to perform specific tasks in a skillful way (Ezinwa 2020). Skill is the ability to do something well. It is usually gained through training or experience that is needed. These skills can be obtained through education, training or experience that will inculcate into the individual on how to carry out or discharge his or her responsibilities well with new knowledge. Inalegwe (2016), saw skill as expertness and competence appropriate for a particular job. It has to do with expert knowledge and creative reasoning to a level of mastery. In order to attain these skills, the individual needs to acquire basic training or knowledge levels related to the tasks to perform whether through formal or informal or combination of the two. In a nutshell, computer application skill is seen by the researcher as the abilities and knowledge which allow one to use computers and related technology. Inalegwe noted that some of the computer applications skills required of business Education students are: word processors, spreadsheet, database management application, Microsoft PowerPoint, internet applications among others.

Due to the advancement in Information Technology, some businesses use the internet to share all kinds of information and to sell goods and services outside their geographical location. According to Ohaegbulem, Odah and Oko (2019), internet is a means of connecting a computer to any other computer anywhere in the world via dedicated routers or servers. The internet can be used to send and receive all kinds of information such as text, graphics voice, videos and so on. Ohaegbulam et al noted that the available internet application skills needed for entrepreneurship development and future business are: E- Business, E- commerce, Browsers, Search Engine, E- mail, Social media, World Wide Web, Audio and video conferencing among others. Internet has paved way for e-commerce activities to be successful. Many people are increasingly using the internet on a daily basis thereby providing a platform for the buying and selling of good and services. E-Business simply means Electronic Business. It is widely acknowledged today in the business world because business owners use the internet to modify communication between different businesses in the business world. Ezinwa (2019) defined E – Business as the application of information and communication technology (ICT) in support of all business activities. Some examples of the business activities are procurement of goods, supply activities, buying and selling products, making monetary transfer etc. It is an online business which one can easily use to set up any form of business and manage it from the comfort of their homes. It is also used for online interaction with business partners, customers and vendors which is aimed at improving business processes and efficiency.

E-Commerce is also known as Electronic commerce which means the buying and selling of goods and services over the internet. It also involves conducting transfer of ownership or rights to use goods and services through a computer mediated network. According to Ezinwa (2019) E-commerce is the use of electronic communication and digital information in business transaction to create, transform and redefine relationships for value creation between or among organizations and between organization and individuals. The internet provides a perfect market place where customers access the website of e-commerce vendors and order the product they want to buy online and make their



payment through the gateway. E-commerce website provides a rich experience to their customers by enabling them to: browse through the product catalogue and select the brand, view the photos, texture design and other aspect of the product closely before selection, compare the prices of various brands and read the reviews of current users of product they choose, order the product online and track the status of the delivery, pay online, return the product if the customers are not satisfied or size is not fitting Similarly, Ogbu and Amahi (2022) noted that e-commerce comprise the business web-site, log and other unique features that can easily differentiate one business from another.

E-mail is the abbreviation of Electronic mail. It is a computer based application which allows all internet users to send and receive messages from around the world Ohaegbulem et al (2019) explained that E-mail is information stored on a computer that is exchanged between two users over telecommunications. They further opined that e-mail messages may contain text, files, images, or other attachments sent through a network to a specified individual or group of individuals. E-mail allows employees irrespective of their location, office or organization to exchange correspondence. Your E-mail address gives necessary information about you; the information that will enable the electronic message to get across to you from anywhere the signal is present. Ohaegbulam et al, also stated that all business transactions can be done through E-mail to any part of the world and is a form of information dissemination from one computer to another. That is a system of sending written messages electronically from one computer to another. E- Mail can be used in business to introduce your business to new audience or to send relevant contents to customers on a regular basis. The relevant content can be newsletters, sales promotions. E-mail marketing is a platform used by businesses to communicate directly with existing consumers who indicate interest in the business' products. With the e-mail as a digital name for a business, e-mail marketing is a fast way to reach customers in their different locations. Customers may be added to an e-mail list and contacted where necessary (Ogbu & Amahi, 2022).

Social media is one of the computer application skills that are created through internet for users to communicate with others on the areas of their mutual interest, either from a personal, business or academic perspective. Social media is use for advertisement of goods and services, where a business owner makes the product known to the public. Victoria et al (2013) described social media as a social networking such as face book which can put workers in touch with each other in ways that could not have been if not for digital technology. The social media available on the internet are: face book, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, Tiktok among others. Social media are used to promote product and services in business. You can easily push out contents about your business (i.e. what you sell), and watch your followers to know how they feel about your business. Business owners have a valuable opportunity to build quality relationships with their followers by engaging in meaningful conversation with them. Social media is all about sharing and dialogue.

Audio and Video Conferencing is a set of interactive telecommunication technologies which allow two or more locations to interact via two-way video and audio transmission via internet. Ohaegbulam et al (2019) opined that, it is basically big screens with cameras attached to them, which have transformed the way teams collaborate across long distances by offering high definition face to face or audio meeting. This is used to organize a meeting of people who are geographically separated but connected by an audio or tele communication system, it also permits interaction between two or more people at different location. There are many applications used for this, they include: zoom, Skype, slack, meet etc. This helps in team collaboration in an organization. E-accounting refers to the application of online and internet technologies for accounting functions. It entails performing regular accounting functions, accounting research and accounting training cum education through various internet based accounting tools such as digital tool kits, various internet resources, international web based materials institute and company data bases which are internet based, were links, internet-based accounting software and electronic financial spreadsheet tools to provide efficient decision making (Memia in Adeboye and Akinlabi, 2022).

Another computer application that is used for creating, editing, organizing, reviewing and also used for financial models is spreadsheet. According to Victoria et al (2013), spreadsheet is used for account keeping. Examples of spreadsheet are Ms-Excel, Multiplan Auto calc among others. It is a



vital business tool used for creating financial spreadsheet, scheduling and tracking sales, creating invoices, creating receipts. It can also be used for statistical analysis, drawing of graphs and for calculations. Spreadsheet Excel is important for budget preparation, speedy operation of financial statements, cash flow projections and the determination of what would happen to cash flow if an unanticipated investment opportunity were utilized. It also helps in the inventory management and accounts production by bursary units of business organizations. Another computer application skill is database management skill.

Database management application skill is also an internet application that is required for entrepreneurship development. It is an organized or systematic collection of data or information that is specially organized which can be easily accessible, retrieved, managed and updated. According to Ezinwa, (2019), database helps to create and maintain (add, delete, Update), extract and list all records or only those records that meet the criteria, make an enquiry about a customer or employer, sort records in ascending and descending order, generate formatted report with subtotals and totals among others. Databases are often managed by a central function often called Management Information System (MIS). MIS, is an information system that evaluates, analyzes and processes an organization's data to produce meaningful and useful information based on which the management can take right decisions to ensure future growth of the organization. According to Umoru (2014), database management is a digital skill of information made up of individual items that are organized so that they can be reviewed in a variety of ways. With database management system like MS Access security of information against unauthorized users is highly guaranteed. In addition, database integrity is maintained by ensuring that no two users are able to update the same record at the same time as well as preventing duplicate entries, such as two employees being given the same employee number

Business owners or Entrepreneurs have become interested in the internet as means of advertising their products as well as to offer all kinds of information. For example, when a business web page address is known, potential customers can use a browser to go shopping or perform information browsing (Ohaegbulam et al 2019). The use of Computer application skills has revolutionized training methods in technical, business, health occupation, agricultural, trade and industrial home economics and distributive option of vocational education. Internet applications has been particularly useful in the problem solving aspect of vocational technical training (Effiong and Eunice 2018). The knowledge of these internet application skills will help to increase chances of business success. Business is seen as any legal activities that one does to earn money, make profit and to make a living. For one to embark on the venture whether small or big, one has to acquire the necessary skills needed to advance in business. There is need for Business Education students to acquire these skills in order to prepare themselves for work life upon graduation.

Business Education is a programme which prepares recipient after graduation to be an efficient office worker, a teacher or an entrepreneur. It is a process of instructing recipients of what happens in the business world. Oladunjoye (2016), explained that Business Education is education that prepare its recipients to acquire viable skills that will enable them fit into various business organizations or be self-employed in the absence of paid job. Business Education according to Ezeabii (2017) is an aspect of vocational education which equips individuals with the necessary skills and theoretical knowledge needed for performing in the business world either for job occupation or for self-employment. Business Education is that aspect of educational programme which provides students' the knowledge, skill, understanding and attitude needed to perform in the business world. Emeasoba, et al, (2015), opined that Business Education is a type of education that helps someone to learn the facts, acquire the skills, develop abilities, solve problems and be able to have business like attitudes useful for success in business situations. For this reasons, Business Education students are being taught the attitude, knowledge, skills and understanding which they need to perform in the world of business. The teaching of computer in Business Education programme will go a long way in developing the students' computer application skills required for future business and entrepreneurship development.



Entrepreneurship Development is seen as the acquisition of skills by an individual for business formation. According to Akutson and Ude (2015), it is a pre-planned advancement, increase or growth in skills and capacity which give entrepreneurial ability in a given set of people in tertiary institutions or in agencies. Universities is an institution of higher learning and one of the places where business and entrepreneurship education is offered. The entrepreneurship education is offered in the universities as a vocational course. The aim of Entrepreneurship Development Education in the universities is to allow students to acquire these skills, knowledge and attitude to enable them take the role of entrepreneurs, thereby creating jobs for themselves and for others (Ekpo & Edet, 2011). The Business Education as a vocational course is offered in both public and private universities in Ebonyi State. However, as Business Education programme is run in the universities, both male and female lecturers teach the course and both male and female students enroll for the programme and are exposed to the same skill. There is no gender bias in the teaching and learning of the course in the universities in Ebonyi State. The researcher is limiting the research work to public schools, that is, the universities owned by the government in Ebonyi State. Ebonyi State is one of the 36 States in Nigeria. It is located in the South Eastern region of Nigeria. It is certain that most of the schools in the state do not have the technological devices for imparting skills required for future business and entrepreneurship development. This situation prompted this study which investigates Computer application skills required for Entrepreneurship Development among Business Education students in Universities in Ebonyi State for future businesses.

### **Statement of the Study**

Computer application is a software that allows you to perform a task in a skillful way. The acquisition of adequate computer application skills will enable students after graduation to fit into the society in the world of work and also enable them to be successful business owners or entrepreneurs. Most students are graduating from the universities without necessary skills and competencies. However, if the students have acquired the computer application skills required for entrepreneurship development for future businesses, they are supposed to start or establish and manage their own entrepreneurship business. But instead of establishing their own businesses, they go in search of paid jobs (white collar jobs). Even when they get the work in some offices they still lack the skills and competencies required from them. This lack of skill and competencies is what causes poor work output and lack of efficiency. That is why most organizations usually send their staff to training and retraining programmes. The researchers is wondering if the computer application skills are not taught in schools or the student want to be among the graduates with the burden of surplus unemployable work force because of the wide gap created by absence of skills and competencies. The main focus of the problem of this study is that Business Education students seems to be lacking in computer application skills required for Entrepreneurship Development for future businesses. And due to the current phase of technological changes in the business world, there is need for them to be properly equipped with the necessary computer application skills needed to operate in present day highly automated business world in order for them to be successful in future businesses.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are the internet application skills required for entrepreneurship development among Business Education students in universities in Ebonyi State for future businesses?
2. What are the spreadsheet application skills required for entrepreneurship development among Business Education students in universities in Ebonyi State for future businesses?
3. What are the database management application skills required for entrepreneurship development among Business Education students in universities in Ebonyi State for future businesses?



## **Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

- Ho<sub>1</sub> A significant difference does not exist between the mean ratings of male and female Business Educators and owners of small and medium enterprises (SMES) on the internet application skills required for entrepreneurship development among Business Education students in universities in Ebonyi State for future businesses.
- Ho<sub>2</sub> There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female Business Educators and owners of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) on the spreadsheet application skills required for entrepreneurship development among Business Education students in universities in Ebonyi State for future businesses.
- Ho<sub>3</sub> There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female Business Educators and owners of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) on the data management application skills required for entrepreneurship development among Business Education students in universities in Ebonyi State for future businesses.

## **Method**

The researchers adopted descriptive survey research design for the study. This design was deemed appropriate since the study involved studying a group of people or items as well collecting and analyzing data from few people or entire group (Nworgu, 2015). The area of the study was public universities in Ebonyi State. The Population of the study comprised of 294 respondents (22 Business Education lecturers in public universities in Ebonyi State that offer the programme and 272 registered small and medium enterprises in Abakaliki metropolis). There was no sample because the population was manageable. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled "Computer Application Skills for Entrepreneurship Development and future businesses". The questionnaire was divided into two-parts (A and B). Part A contained the demographic data while part B consists 17 items in three clusters of B1 to B3 structured on a 4-point rating scale of highly required(HR), moderately required (MR), slightly required (SR) and not required (NR) with weighting numerical values of 4,3,2, and 1 respectively. The instrument was validated by three experts in the department of Business Education and one in Measurement and Evaluation in the Faculty of Education all in Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki. It was subjected to a reliability test using Cronbach alpha, which gave a coefficient of 0.74. The researchers administered the instrument to the study population with the help of two research assistants who were properly guided on the procedure. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions and determined the spread of the respondents' means while t-test was used to test the hypotheses at.05 level of significance. The decision for research questions was based on item by item means score of the two groups as well as the grand mean scores using a cut-off mean of 2.50 so that means scores above 2.50 are required and those below are not required. The t-test was used to test the null hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. A null hypothesis was not rejected if the t-calculated is less than the t-critical value and rejected if the t-calculated is equal or higher than the t-critical value

## **Results and Discussions**

**Research Question 1: What are the internet skills required for entrepreneurship development among Business Education students for future businesses?**



**Table 1: Mean ratings of respondents on internet skills required for entrepreneurship development among Business Education students for future businesses.**

N = 294				
S/N	Internet skills required for entrepreneurship development among Business Education students for future businesses.	Mean	SD	Remarks
1	Skills in the use of search engines	3.25	0.74	Required
2	Skills in the use of social media platform to advertise business	3.34	0.81	Required
3	Ability to organize video conferences or discussion forum using Skype, Team speak, Google meet etc.	3.52	0.72	Required
4	Ability to search and buy goods online	3.36	0.69	Required
5	Ability to use E-mail	3.33	0.73	Required
6	Ability to deliver goods on line	3.48	0.82	Required
7	Ability to make payment online	3.23	0.59	Required
Cluster $\bar{X}$ and SD		3.37	0.73	Required

Table 1 shows that the mean scores of the respondents for all the items ranged from 3.23 to 3.52 with the cluster mean scores of 3.37 which is greater than the cut-off mean of 2.50. This indicates that respondents agreed that internet application skills are required for entrepreneurship development among Business Education students in universities for future businesses. The standard deviation scores for all the items are within the same range of 0.59-0.82 showing that the respondents are homogenous in their ratings.

**Research Question 2: What are the spreadsheet application skills required for entrepreneurship development among Business Education students for future businesses?**

**Table 2: Mean ratings of respondents on spreadsheet application skills required for entrepreneurship development among Business Education students for future businesses.**

N = 294				
S/N	Spreadsheet application skills required for entrepreneurship development among Business Education students for future businesses.	Mean	SD	Remarks
1.	Calculate using spreadsheet	3.99	0.88	Required
2.	Enter accurate text and numeric data in specified format	3.07	0.84	Required
3.	Move from cell to cell and read meanings of clear and delete in MS Excel	3.43	0.74	Required
4.	Review spreadsheet structure and spreadsheet	3.38	0.77	Required
5	Design and modify the appearance of charts, graphs save, retrieve and print out	3.35	0.72	Required
Cluster $\bar{X}$ and SD		3.44	0.79	Required

Table 2 shows that the mean scores of the respondents for all the items ranged from 3.07 to 3.99 with the cluster mean scores of 3.44 which is greater than the cut-off mean of 2.50. This indicates that respondents agreed that spreadsheet application skills are required for entrepreneurship development among Business Education students in universities for future businesses. However, the standard deviation scores for all the items are within the same range of 0.72- 0.88 showing that the respondents are homogenous in their ratings.

**Research Question 3: What are the database management application skills required for entrepreneurship development among Business Education students for future businesses?**



**Table 2: Respondents’ mean ratings on database management application skills required for entrepreneurship development among Business Education students for future businesses.**

N = 294

S/N	Data management application skills required for entrepreneurship development among business education students for future businesses.	Mean	SD	Remarks
1.	Understand the types of files, identify organization methods and demonstrate how to start and quit DBM application	3.46	0.71	Required
2.	Structure query language (SQL) manipulation skills set	3.39	0.70	Required
3.	Constructing and maintain DBM	3.43	0.74	Required
4.	Ability to create files in database	3.28	0.77	Required
5.	Cloud base database management system	3.05	0.82	Required
	Cluster $\bar{X}$ and SD	3.32	0.78	Required

Table 3 shows that the mean scores of the respondents for all the items ranged from 3.05 to 3.46 with the cluster mean scores of 3.32 which is greater than the cut-off mean of 2.50. This indicates that respondents agreed that database management application skills are required for entrepreneurship development among Business Education students in universities for future businesses. The standard deviation scores for all the items are written the same range of 0.70-0.82 showing that the respondents are homogenous in their ratings.

**Test of Hypotheses**

**Ho<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female Business Educators and owners of SMEs on the internet skills required for entrepreneurship development among Business Education students for future businesses.

**Table 4: Summary of t-test analysis of the difference between the  $\bar{x}$  ratings of male and female Business Educators and owners of SMEs on internet application skills required for entrepreneurship development among business education students for future businesses.**

S/N	Group	No	$\bar{x}$	SD	DF	t-cal	t-tab	Level of significance	Remarks
1.	Males	158	3.37	0.73					
2.	Female	136	3.52	0.69	292	0.849	1.960	0.05	NS

Table 4 shows that the t-calculated (t-cal) value of 0.849 is less than the t-table (t-tab) value of 1.960 at  $p < 0.05$  level of significance and at 292 degree of freedom (df). This shows that, there was no significant difference between the  $\bar{x}$  ratings of male and female Business Educators and owners of SMEs in Ebonyi State on their internet application skills required for entrepreneurship development among Business Education students for future businesses. Therefore, the null hypothesis or no significant difference was not rejected.

**Ho<sub>2</sub>:** There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female business educators and owners of SMEs on the spreadsheet application skills required for entrepreneurship development among Business Education students for future businesses.



**Table 2: Summary of t-test analysis of the difference between the mean ratings of male and female business educators and owners of SMEs on spreadsheet application skills required for entrepreneurship development among Business Education students for future businesses.**

S/ N	Group	No	$\bar{X}$	SD	DF	T-cal	T-tab	Level of significance	Remarks
1	Male	158	3.44	0.79					
2.	Female	136	2.86	0.81	292	0.917	1.960	0.05	NS

Table 5 shows that the t- calculated value of 0.917 is less than the t- table (t-tab) value of 1.960 at  $\leq 0.05$  level of significance and at 292 degree of freedom (df). This shows that, there was no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female Business Educators and owners of SMES on the spreadsheet application skills required for entrepreneurship development among Business Education students of public universities in Ebonyi State for future businesses. Therefore, the null hypothesis of no significant difference was not rejected.

**Ho<sub>3</sub>: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female business educators and owners of SMEs on the database management application skills required for entrepreneurship development among Business Education students for future businesses.**

**Table 6: Summary of t-test analysis of the difference between the  $\bar{X}$  rating of male and female Business Educators and owners of SMEs on database management application skills required for entrepreneurship development among Business Education students for future businesses**

S/N	Group	No	$\bar{x}$	SD	DF	t-cal	t-tab	Level of significance	Remarks
1.	Male	158	3.07	0.74					
2.	Female	136	3.05	0.82	292	0.706	1.862	0.05	NS

**Table 6** shows that the t - calculated value of 0.706 is less that the t – table value of 1.862 at  $p \leq 0.5$  level of significance and at 292 degree of freedom (df). This shows that, there was no significant difference between the mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) ratings of male and female Business Educators and owners of SMES on database management application skills required for entrepreneurship development among Business Education students for future businesses. Therefore, the null hypothesis of no significant different was not rejected.

### Discussion of Findings

Findings of research question one revealed the internet application skills required for entrepreneurship development among business education students for future businesses such as: skills in the use of search engines, ability to deploy social media platform (Face book, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram etc.) to advertise products, goods and services, ability to organize video conferencing or discussions forums online using Skype, TeamSpeak, Google meet, ability to search, buy and make payment for goods bought online. The report of Ohaegbulam et al (2019) agreed with this finding that internet skills needed for entrepreneurship development, include e-commerce, e-marketing among others and some businesses use the internet to share all kinds of information and sell goods and services outside their geographical location. This means that Business Educators and Owners of small and medium enterprises are in agreement that internet application skills are required by Business Education students in universities in Ebonyi State. The findings also showed that gender



had no significant influence with regard to items on the internet application skills required for entrepreneurship development among business education students for future businesses.

The findings of research question two showed the spreadsheets application skills required for entrepreneurship development among business education students for future businesses to include: Ability to calculate using spreadsheet, ability to enter accurate text and numeric data in specified format, ability to move from cell to cell and read meanings of clear and delete in MS Excel, ability to review spreadsheet structure and plan spreadsheet and ability to design and modify the appearance of charts, graphs, save, retrieve and print out. This is in agreement with the report of Victoria et al (2013) that spreadsheet is used for creating, editing, organizing, reviewing and financial models. Spreadsheet is used for account keeping. Example Ms Excel, Multiplan, AutoCad among others. Business education graduates requires proficiency in the use of spreadsheet to scheduling and tracking sales, creating invoices, creating receipts, creating financial spreadsheet. It also helps in statistical analysis, drawing of graphs and calculation of sales (Ezinwa, 2019). This means that Business Educators and Owners of small and medium enterprises are in agreement that spreadsheet application skills are required by Business Education students in universities in Ebonyi State. The findings also showed that gender had no significant influence with regard to items on the spreadsheet application skills required for entrepreneurship development among business education students for future businesses.

Findings of research question three revealed the database management skills required for entrepreneurship development among business education students for future business includes: Ability to file document and identify organization methods, ability to demonstrate how to start and quit DBM application, ability to structure query language (SQL), ability to construct and maintain database, ability to create files in database and proficiently in cloud base database management system. This is in line with the report of Ezinwa (2019) that database helps to create and maintain (add, delete, update), extract and list all records or only those records that meet the criteria. Skills in the use of Data base help entrepreneur to e-enquiry about customers or employers, sort records in ascending and descending order, generate formatted report with subtotal among others. Proficiency in data base management enables Business Education students or would be entrepreneurs to evaluate, analyze and process organization's data to produce meaning and useful information. This means that Business Educators and Owners of small and medium enterprises are in agreement that database management application skills are required by Business Education students in universities in Ebonyi State. The findings also showed that gender had no significant influence with regard to items on the database management skills required for entrepreneurship development among business education students for future businesses.

## **Conclusion**

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that computer application skills such as internet skills, spreadsheet skills and database management skills will greatly assist the Business Education students in entrepreneurship development for future businesses since the computer has taken over every facet of business. This will also reduce unemployment among Business Education graduates.

## **Recommendations**

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

1. Government should equip business education departments in various universities with computers and internet facilities to enable the lecturers empower the students with the necessary skills required for entrepreneurship development and future businesses.
2. University management should always organize professional development programme for Business Education lecturers to enable them learn new trends in their careers and impact same to business education students.



3. Business education students should also learn some of these computer application skills on their own so that they will continue to be relevant in their profession and compete favourably with their counterparts globally.
4. Business education students should learn best practices in entrepreneurship development in order to prepare themselves for future businesses.

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## INFLUENCE OF INSTITUTION-INDUSTRY COLLABORATION ON BUSINESS EDUCATION STUDENTS FOR SELF-EMPLOYMENT IN ENUGU STATE

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### Abstract

*The main purpose of the study was to determine the influence of institution-industry collaboration on Business Education students for self-employment in Enugu State. The study was guided by two research questions and two null hypotheses. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population for the study was 89 final year Business Education students from public universities in Enugu state. Since the population was manageable, there was no sampling. Self-structured questionnaire was the instrument for data collection. The instrument was validated by three experts. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha which yielded a coefficient of 0.76. Out of the 89 copies of the instrument distributed, 65 copies were properly filled and retrieved representing 57.85% return rate. Mean, Standard Deviation and t-test statistics were the statistical tools used. From the result of data analysis, it was discovered that Student's Industrial Work Experience Scheme and Field Trip influence Business Education students of public universities in Enugu state for self-employment. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that administrators of Business Education programme should intensify and strengthen the current Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) through proper supervision, enlightenment and Education of the students on the core imperatives and nitty-gritty of the programme.*

**Keywords:** Institution-Industrial Collaboration, Business Education, Self-employment.

### Introduction

Education is the key to national development. This is because it unlocks the economic potentials of the people; empowers and equips individuals in society to participate in, and benefit from their national economy. Ezeabii, Madueke and Ugwunwa (2019) opined that education is a key factor for achieving national integration, economic, technological development and national security. Hence, education facilitates economic development, and provides the basis for transformation. Education is an essential tool for sustainability. The present global economic crises suggest that the entire world is in a war between financial/qualitative education and catastrophe. (Mach, 2019). A form of qualitative education for solving imminent problems is Business Education.

Business Education has been defined by Seyi and Abiola (2022) as a program of study which provides students with information and competencies which are needed in managing personal business



affairs. Its courses such as bookkeeping, accounting, shorthand, transcription, and typewriting relate to the modern occupational scene. Skills and knowledge learned in the above subjects are used for the day-to-day management of business affairs in society. Education is said to be qualitative when the input such as students, teachers, finance, facilities, and equipment are converted through teaching and learning (theory and practical) to produce desirable outputs. The outputs are better equipped to serve themselves and society. The quality of input influences to a large extent the quality of output. In other words, the quality of the input of business education such as teachers, students, and infrastructural facilities will greatly influence the quality of students produced (Olorunmolu, 2011). Thus, the program equips individual students with a functional, appropriate attitude and value to operate in a particular work environment for expected self-employment.

Business Education has been defined by Ezeabii (2017), as an aspect of vocational education that equips individuals with the necessary skills and theoretical knowledge needed for performance in the business world either for job occupations or self-employment. Business Education is a process of instructing a person on what happens during business transactions in offices, banks, markets, and anywhere there is an exchange of funds. It is also a type of education that helps someone to learn the facts, acquire the skills, develop abilities, solve problems, and be able to have a business-like attitude useful for success in business situations. (Emeasoba, Ekoh and Modebelu, 2015) Some contemporary thinkers in education and training conceive of business education as a major contributor to human resource, entrepreneurial and national development. Despite these laudable roles, available indications have shown that Nigeria has been handling business education with levity (Oladunjoye, 2016; Edokpolor and Egbri, 2017). Edokpolor and Egbri (2017) added that this situation has consequently deprived business education of adequate provision of funds, qualified manpower, modern facilities, quality curriculum, and proper attention. Business education is important for everybody. The present economic condition coupled with the high rate of unemployment in the country has greatly justified the existence of Business education in the curriculum of secondary and tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Thus, the primary objective of all undergraduate Business Education programme is to provide students with skills along with knowledge and abilities which will enable them to succeed in particular area of business and world of work as to prepare and develop students' capacity for critical thinking and self-employment through a well-structured curriculum and institution-industry collaboration.

Nigeria's economy is facing technological changes in business, industry and education. Business courses in tertiary institutions are designed to equip students and graduates with necessary skills and knowledge required to meet the dynamic nature of the ever-changing nature of the world of work. Business education students are recipients of knowledge and skills from various higher institutions of learning and equipped with requisite skills needed by the industrial sector as some of these students may end up in such industries or be self-employed on graduation. Hence, the need for institution-industry collaboration as a sustainability tool for self-employment and preparing business education graduates for e-world challenges.

The advent of industrial revolution, discovery and development brought a strong force with regard to the proliferation and exchange of information across the globe (Entonyeaku, Onuoha and Kanu 2016). Today's industries are thinking of how to operate and compete favorably in order to combat the new forces in the economy. For this to happen, there is a need for industries who are the employers of labour to collaborate with institutions that have the mandate of producing graduates that will eventually work in the industries or become self-employed.

According to Wagner and Ramsey (2019), institution - industry collaboration refers to when a school and industry join together to share resources. Collaboration is the process of two or more people or organizations working together to complete a task or achieve a goal (Rubin, 2018). It is viewed as a means by which a gap is bridged between the less experienced and the more experienced. Collaboration relies on openness, knowledge sharing, some level of focus and accountability on the part of the institutions and the industries. Across the nation, businesses and governments are facing the challenge of high levels of youth unemployment and shortage of job seekers with critical skills. Merely having a high school diploma or degree is not enough to be qualified for many white-collar jobs in today's workplace. The job market now requires a higher level of analytical reading, creative thinking, writing, skill and math than the same jobs in some ten or twenty years ago (Odugbesan, 2017).

Institution-industry collaboration is an opportunity to access untold resources which stand to benefit students tremendously. When an institution collaborates with an industry, everybody wins. The industry has a chance to give back to the community and at the same time allow benefiting students to



experience a whole new type of education. Emeasoba (2017) noted that Business-Institution partnership provides activities such as in-service training to employees, use of facilities, student directed projects, software development or mandatory research. They also serve to strengthen institutions in academic skills and to enrich the educational process through the talents and ideas of the personnel of partnership business. Because industries are the ones employing graduates from schools and at the same time offering the goods or services, the institution should be careful of what they are willing (and not willing) to contribute. It should be very clear to both parties what the institution is getting, how they are getting it, and what the time frame is. Scheduling and transparency are extremely important to make sure that the experience is a positive one for everyone involved, especially the graduates. To achieve this objective, institutions should foster close collaboration with employers and industries through student's industrial work experience scheme (SIWES) and field trips so as to ensure schools are producing work-ready graduates who can quickly begin to deliver value without the need for additional on-the-job training.

In order to bridge the varieties of gaps involving practical skills acquisition and classroom learning experiences with industrial skills, the Industrial Training Fund (ITF) was mandated with the Students' Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) to enhance practical skills acquisition of Business Education students and others in allied area of study (Ekpenyong, 2013). ITF has really encouraged skill acquisition in Nigeria by building good collaboration between institutions and industries. Obviously, the nation needs a better collaboration system for self-employment. In the context of this study, collaboration means partnership between Business Education institutions and industries in Nigeria for the purpose of equipping Business Education students with skills needed to be gainfully employed in the industries upon graduation.

A functional Business Education programme requires effective partnership with relevant Industries as to enable students to acquire expected skills. Business Education students are expected to be exposed to Students' Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) and Field Trip which will enhance their acquisition of knowledge and skills. Schools need to partner with industries for research assistance and collaboration, curriculum planning, infrastructural provision, scholarships, seminars and field trips among others. SIWES is a skill training programme designed to expose and prepare students of Business Education, engineering, technology, environmental science, medical science, and education including technical and vocational education (TVE), pure and applied sciences for industrial work situations (Orifa, 2014). Business Education students seem to perform excellently when they undergo industrial training during their course of study. Business Education is a specialized phase of vocational education that prepares students to enter teaching and office occupations as capable and intelligent members of the labour force through student's industrial work experience and field trips.

Accordingly, Jekayinfa (2015) asserts that Field Trips are usually planned to take students not only to places of interest but also to places where relevant materials, information or knowledge are available for better teaching and learning of a particular subject matter. Field Trips have long been used as a context for teaching and learning in Business Education. Field Trips can provide students the opportunity to construct knowledge through interacting with business places, experts and artifacts. Panarina (2015) asserted that universities-industries partnership of which field trips are a part will help integrate young people into the labour market by involving them in cooperative education, connect schools with local businesses and empower students with new learning opportunities and skills development.

Field-trip as a method of learning involves taking the students outside the classroom for the purpose of making relevant observations and obtaining some specific information. It could be in a nearby school farm, national park, institutions, agencies and government parastatal industry, forest or game reserve. It is an important component of teaching basic concepts of Business Education (Bajah, 2013). According to Aliyu (2018), the field trip is taking students out of the classroom to places where they can see concrete illustrations of classroom theories. It also offers direct observation and interpretation of the substance in their natural surroundings. It requires the use of basic skills such as observation, identification, classification and manipulation of substance in the natural surroundings. It provides real life context for the material being learned. It can make more sense and be remembered better if students can actually see where and how they work or take place in reality. This is in line with a Chinese proverb cited by Ukairo in Ahmad (2014) that says; What I hear, I forget; What I see, I remember; and What I do I understand. However, field trip is not the only method/ strategy for effective teaching and learning of concepts in Business Education which can gear towards the training of the individual through learner centred approach for maximum self and societal development. Field trip exposes the student group out of the classroom and school environment to the actual source of information in order to attain instructional objectives. When



integrated into the curriculum, Field Trips can be among the valuable and effective modes of teaching and practical for self-employment.

Self-employment is the state of working for oneself rather than an employer. Self-employment refers to a work arrangement in which an individual operates their own business or works as an independent contractor, freelancer, or sole proprietor, rather than being an employee of a company or organization. Onoh (2013) observed that self-employment can mean the promotion of free enterprise and self-sufficiency by creating and spreading wealth to the grass root level as a contribution to economic growth, employment generation and social progress. Therefore, the ability of an individual to establish a small-scale business, be able to manage it and make profit out of it is a step towards self-employment. In self-employment, individuals are responsible for managing their business activities, including clients or customers, setting prices or rates, delivering services or products, and handling administrative tasks like accounting and taxes. Self-employed individuals have the freedom to choose their work hours, clients, and their work-life balance. They are also responsible for acquiring their own tools, equipment, and resources necessary for their work.

Self-employment is starting and running a successful business or social enterprise and is equally a lifestyle choice achievable by setting up a business, either on a full-time basis or alongside a part-time job; working as a freelancer or contractor and buying into a franchise (Laing, 2015). Self-employment therefore is a situation whereby individual persons engage in any economic activity and manage it on their own. Department of Human Services (2017) viewed self-employment as a situation whereby individual operates a business or profession as a sole proprietor, partner in a partnership or Corporation, independent contractor or consultant and draw income from the trade or business while the person must demonstrate that he or she is in business for the purpose of making a profit. Someone who organizes or sets up, owns, manages, funds and controls a venture or business rather than being engaged by government or private organization could be termed to be in self-employment. Such a person remains economically independent and as such a contributor to national development. A person who has acquired requisite skills in the course of training in educational institutions through institution-industry collaboration is expected to have understanding of managing business and be able to stand on his own in the business world.

The impact of Business Education is felt in curtailing the menace of unemployment, reduction of poverty and the breakthrough in industrial development. This aspect of education, in the view of Egbri and Chukwuedo (2013), should stand closest to the crossroads of the classroom and the real world of work, and hence should be able to combine technical knowledge and business acumen, creativity and innovations for effective job performance. However, there exist gaps between what is obtainable in the classroom and what is needed in the world of work. One of the major factors contributing to this scenario is the mismatch between the Business Education curricula and the needs of the industrial sector of the economy. This makes the Business Education graduates turned out in Nigeria year by year unemployable whereas the ideal situation is that Business education institution outputs are the industrial inputs in terms of technical know-how. Ezeabii (2017) observed that Business Education graduates join other graduates to roam the streets seeking paid employment.

There are many challenges facing Business Education Institution-industry collaboration for self-employment in Nigeria. The challenges have led to decline in required skills and training among Business Education graduates available in the workforce. Also, a skill gap exists between the supply and demand of graduates in the labour market. Many industries have argued that graduates are not well trained for self-employment and were inadequately trained, ill equipped or not properly prepared and trained for industrial jobs (Aloysius, Ismail, Suandi, & Arshad, 2018). The gap which exists in the labour prerequisites of the industries emanate from inadequacies between Business Education institutions and industry collaboration. Regrettably, this situation breeds retardation in both economic and developmental growth among graduates, and a lack of communication between university education and industry. It is important to note that the specific regulations and legal requirements for self-employment can vary between countries, regions and states especially in Enugu state.

Enugu State is a state in southeastern Nigeria. Its capital is Enugu. Enugu State consists of 17 Local Government Areas. There are public universities in the state. These public universities are divided into federal and state universities. The federal universities are funded and controlled by the federal government while the state universities are funded and controlled by the state government. These universities offer Business Education programme which prepare the recipients to be self-employed after graduation through institution-industry collaborations. It is against these backdrops of Business Education



graduates not having the skills needed in industries, high unemployment rate and poverty level and dearth of literatures in Business Education-Industrial collaboration in Nigeria that this study investigated the influence of institution-industrial collaboration on Business Education students of public universities for self-employment.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The objective of Institution-Industry partnership is to relate theory to practice. Thus, before a Business Education student graduates, he or she is expected to marry theory and practice because Business Education is a programme in which a graduate is required to demonstrate thorough practical and mental skills. This can be achieved through institution-industrial partnership. Thus, the training ought to mirror situations in the world of work, especially with compulsory industrial training requirements of the programme and field trips. It was however observed by the researchers that some Business Education graduates perform poorly in terms of Job creation such that they are not able to create employment, but seek employment and roam the streets in search of white-collar jobs which are not readily available. Could it be that the institution-industry partnership the students get involved in has no influence on them? Hence, the study sought to determine the influence of institution-industrial collaboration on Business Education students of public universities in Enugu state.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study was to determine the influence of institution-industry collaboration on Business Education students of public Universities in Enugu State for Self-Employment. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. determine the influence of Students' Industrial Work Experience Scheme on Business Education students of public Universities in Enugu State for Self-Employment.
2. determine the influence of Field Trips on Business Education students of public Universities in Enugu State for Self-Employment.

### **Research Question**

The following research questions guided the study;

1. To what extent does Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme influence Business Education students of public Universities in Enugu State for Self-Employment?
2. To what extent does Field Trip influence Business Education students of public Universities in Enugu State for Self-Employment?

### **Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance;

- Ho1. There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of federal and state Business Education students in Enugu state on the influence of Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme for self-employment.
- Ho2. There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of federal and state universities Business Education students in Enugu state on the influence of Field Trips for self-employment.

### **Method**

Descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. This design, according to Nworgu (2015), is one in which a group of people or items is studied by collecting and analyzing data from only a few people considered to be representative of the entire group. The design is suitable for the study as the information from the respondents will be generalized to the entire population. The population for this study comprised 89 final year Business Education students of public universities in Enugu state (Federal = 66, State = 23). There was no sampling, since the population was Manageable, hence a census.

The instrument was a self-structured questionnaire which was validated by three experts. The instrument was subjected to a reliability test using Cronbach Alpha and a coefficient of 0.76 was realized. Twenty-four copies of the questionnaire were not retrieved; hence 65 copies (Federal = 66, State = 23) were used for data analyses. This represented a 57.85% return rate.

Mean and Standard Deviations were used to answer the research questions while t-test was used to test the null hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance using spss version 23.0. Upper and lower limits of the mean were used for decision making. Hence: 3.50 - 4.00 = Very high extent, 2.50 – 3.49 = High extent, 1.50 – 2.49 = Low extent, 1.00 – 1.49 = Very low extent. For the test of hypothesis, the null hypothesis was



not significant where the calculated p value was greater than 0.05 level of significance otherwise it was significant.

**Results**

**Research Question 1**

To what extent does Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme influence Business Education students of public Universities in Enugu State for Self-Employment?

**Table 1: Mean ratings and standard deviations of Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme influence on Business Education students of public Universities in Enugu State for Self-Employment.**

S/NO	Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme influence on Business Education students include:	Federal n =23		State n = 42		Aggregate Scores n = 65		Decision
		X1	SD1	X2	SD2	$\bar{X}$	SD	
1	The experience of SIWES exposes students to the intricacies in office automations.	3.76	0.43	3.60	0.65	3.70	0.52	High Extent
2	SIWES aid students to reconcile actual practice with what they studied in class.	3.47	0.50	3.52	0.51	3.49	0.50	High Extent
3	SIWES empowers students to be more useful and productive citizens as well as assets to the society.	3.54	0.55	3.65	0.57	3.58	0.55	High Extent
4	SIWES programme aids students develop abilities and skills necessary for proficiency in their profession.	3.16	0.58	3.13	0.34	3.15	0.50	High Extent
5	SIWES develop in students the necessary work ethics and habits needed in any occupation.	3.21	0.47	3.30	0.63	3.24	0.53	High Extent
6	SIWES promote proper acquisition of personal quality skills	3.57	0.50	3.60	0.49	3.58	0.49	High Extent
7	SIWES promotes employers' involvement in the educational process and prepares students for future employment.	3.71	0.45	3.60	0.49	3.67	0.47	High Extent
8	SIWES exposure enables Business Education students to be exposed to job opportunities.	3.45	0.50	3.56	0.50	3.49	0.50	High Extent
9	It enhances and accelerates technology transfer from industrial personnel to students	3.30	0.46	3.21	0.42	3.27	0.45	High Extent
10	Students have more competency on their academic activities after SIWES	3.42	0.50	3.43	0.50	3.43	0.49	High Extent
<b>Grand Mean and Standard Deviation</b>		<b>3.46</b>	<b>0.50</b>	<b>3.46</b>	<b>0.51</b>	<b>3.46</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>High Extent</b>



Result in table 1 indicates that the respondents agreed to a high extent with items 1-10 with aggregate mean ranging from 3.15 to 3.70 as Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme influence on Business Education students of public Universities in Enugu State for Self-Employment. The cluster aggregate mean of 3.46 confirms that. Also, the aggregate standard deviations ranged from 0.45 – 0.55 with a cluster standard deviation of 0.5. This depicts the homogenous opinion of the respondents.

**Null Hypothesis 1**

There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of Federal and State Business Education students in Enugu state on the influence of Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme for self-employment.

**Table 2: t-test analysis on the mean scores of Business Education students in Federal and State universities in Enugu state on the influence of Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme for self-employment**

Group	N	Mean	SD	t	Df	sig	Decision
Federal	42	3.46	0.14	0.024	63	0.528	NS
State	23	3.46	0.14				

From the result in table 2, the P value is greater than the significant level (0.528 >0.05). The null hypothesis is not rejected. Therefore, there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of Federal and State Business Education students in Enugu state on the influence of Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme for self-employment.

**Research Question 2**

To what extent does Field Trip influence Business Education students of public Universities in Enugu State for Self-Employment?

**Table 3: Mean ratings and standard deviations on Field trip influence Business Education students of public Universities in Enugu State for Self-Employment.**

S/NO	Field Trip influence on Business Education students include:	Federal n =23		State n = 42		Aggregate Scores n = 65		Decision
		X1	SD1	X2	SD2	$\bar{X}$	SD	
1	Field trip integrates young people into the labour market by involving them in cooperative education	3.33	0.47	3.43	0.50	3.36	0.48	High Extent
2	Field trip connects students/institution with local businesses	3.64	0.48	3.47	0.51	3.58	0.49	High Extent
3	It empowers students with new learning opportunities and skills development	3.42	0.63	3.56	0.89	3.47	0.73	High Extent
4	Field trips provide experiences that cannot be duplicated in the schools.	3.33	0.61	3.08	0.51	3.24	0.58	High Extent
5	Field trips allow Business Education students to touch and manipulate materials and equipment.	3.38	0.49	3.47	0.51	3.41	0.49	High Extent
6	It helps students appreciate different kinds of jobs related to their course of study	3.47	0.55	3.47	0.51	3.47	0.53	High Extent
7	Field trips create good retention	3.40	0.54	3.52	0.51	3.44	0.53	High Extent



	in the learners recall ability.							
8	Field trips create reinforcement of information that students learn in the classroom.	3.61	0.49	3.73	0.44	3.66	0.47	High Extent
9	Field trips provide opportunity to work together cooperatively with others.	3.28	0.50	3.34	0.57	3.30	0.52	High Extent
10	Field trips help students have wide horizon of working environments.	3.28	0.50	3.43	0.50	3.33	0.50	High Extent
<b>Grand Mean and Standard Deviation</b>		<b>3.41</b>	<b>0.53</b>	<b>3.45</b>	<b>0.55</b>	<b>3.45</b>	<b>0.53</b>	High Extent

Result in table 1 indicates that the respondents agreed to a high extent with items 1-10 with aggregate mean ranging from 3.24 to 3.66 as Field Trip influence on Business Education students of public Universities in Enugu State for Self-Employment. The cluster aggregate mean of 3.45 confirms that. Also, the aggregate standard deviations ranged from 0.47 – 0.73 with a cluster standard deviation of 0.53.

**Null Hypothesis 2**

There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of federal and state Business Education students in Enugu state on the influence of Field Trip for self-employment.

**Table 4: t-test analysis on the mean scores of Business Education students in Federal and State universities in Enugu state on the influence of Field Trip for self-employment**

Group	N	Mean	SD	t	Df	Sig	Decision
Federal	42	3.41	0.16	0.823	63	0.605	NS
State	23	3.45	0.19				

From the data in table 4, the P value is greater than the significant level (0.605 > 0.05). The null hypothesis is not rejected. Therefore, there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of Federal and State Business Education students in Enugu state on the influence of Field Trip for self-employment.

**Discussion of Findings**

The findings of the research question on Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme influence on Business Education students of public Universities in Enugu State for Self-Employment were accepted by the respondents. Some of the Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme influences include exposing students to the intricacies in office automations, empowers students to be more useful and productive citizens as well as assets to the society, aids students to reconcile actual practice with what they studied in class among others. The findings of the study are in agreement with (Orifa, 2014), that SIWES is a skill training programme designed to expose and prepare students of Business Education, engineering, technology, environmental science, medical science, and education including technical and vocational education (TVE), pure and applied sciences for industrial work situation.

The null hypothesis one tested on the Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme influence on Business Education students of Universities revealed that, there was no significant difference between the mean responses of Federal and State Business Education students in Enugu state on the influence of Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme for self-employment. This implies that the status of the institution does not crest bias on influence of students' industrial work experience scheme on Business Education students of universities for self-employment.

The findings i of the research questionon Field trip influence on Business Education students of Universities in Enugu State for Self-Employment were accepted by the respondents. These include field trips that integrate young people into the labour market, connect students/institutions with local markets, empower students with new learning opportunities and skills development, provide experiences that cannot be duplicated in schools among others. This in agreement with panarina (2015) who noted that universities-industries partnership of which field trip is a part will help integrate young people into the labour market by involving them in cooperative education, connect schools with local businesses and empower students with



new learning opportunities and skills development. The null hypothesis with respect to Field trip influence on Business Education students showed that the mean responses of federal and state Business Education students did not differ significantly on Field Trip influence on Business Education students of Universities in Enugu State for Self-Employment.

### Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it can be concluded that Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) and field trips are of paramount importance in the Business Education programme as they influence Business education students' of universities in Enugu state and beyond for self-employment. Also, Business Education students would use the platform to integrate theory with practice, develop skills, knowledge and competencies which are needed in managing personal business affairs as well as become self-employed.

### Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made;

1. The administrators of Business Education programmes should intensify and strengthen the current Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) through proper supervision, enlightenment and Education of the students on the core imperatives and nitty-gritty of the programme. This will obviously help to broaden the students' knowledge about the programme and also accentuate their industrial skills and experiences.
2. Regular field trip exercises or programmes should be organized for students by Business Education course administrators, so as to give the Business Education students the lucrative opportunity to have a real life and practical experience of the theoretical knowledge they have garnered within the university precinct or four-walls of the classroom.

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