



DIGITAL LEARNING INNOVATIONS FOR EQUIPPING BUSINESS EDUCATION STUDENTS IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS FOR JOB CREATION IN DELTA STATE

Charles-Odili Veronica Nnamaka (MABEN)

Department of Office Technology and Management Education

School of Secondary Education (Business)

Federal College of Education (Technical) Asaba, Delta State

Email: veradike2@gmail.com

Phone number: 08034750805

Abstract

The study examined digital learning innovations for equipping business education students in tertiary institutions for job creation in Delta State, one research question guided the study and one hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance. The descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised 109 business educators in tertiary institutions in Delta State. The entire population was studied without sampling. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire which was developed by the researcher and validated by experts in the field of education. The test of reliability of the instrument yielded co-efficient value of 0.85 for internal consistency. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research question and t-test was used to analyze the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The finding of the study revealed that specialized simulations that replicate industries like finance, marketing, or supply chain management give students practical experience in their chosen field; incorporating game elements into the learning process engages students and enhances their problem-solving abilities and digital learning platforms can offer courses on blockchain technology, cryptocurrency, and fintech innovations, equipping students with knowledge about emerging trends were some of the digital learning innovations for equipping business education students in tertiary institutions for job creation in Delta State. The respondents did not differ in their opinion based on the ownership of their tertiary institutions. Based on these findings, the researcher recommended among others, that administrators of business education programme in tertiary institutions should prioritise the seamless integration of digital learning technology into business education courses.

Keywords: *Digital Learning, Innovations, Business Education, Tertiary Institutions, Job Creation*

Introduction

Education in Nigeria is divided into three levels: basic education, post-basic education, and tertiary education. Tertiary education is the highest level of education in the country among these three levels. The tertiary level of education is the focus of this study. Tertiary institutions, often known as higher education institutions, are educational institutions that provide education beyond the secondary level. Individuals who have finished their secondary school can attend these institutions, which provide advanced academic and vocational programmes, research possibilities, and professional training (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013). Tertiary institutions include a variety of educational institutions such as universities, colleges of education, polytechnics, mono-technics, and specialised institutes (World Bank, 2021). They provide variety of degree programmes, diplomas, certifications, and other specialized courses in a variety of fields. Tertiary institutions major goal is to give students advanced information, skills, and certifications required for their chosen disciplines or professions. Tertiary institutions promote in-depth academic study, practical training, and research to prepare students for jobs, professional progress, and higher-level academic pursuits (Adelakun, 2021). This is done through the various academic programmes in the tertiary institutions. The business education programme is one of the academic programmes in tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

Business education according to Ezenwanne (2020) is the aspect of tertiary education programme that involves general knowledge, vocational literacy and entrepreneurship. Ezenwanne averred that business education offers learners the opportunity to be vastly knowledgeable in order to understand the demands of contemporary work environment. Azuka (2015) defined business education as a programme of study which offers students who wish to pursue a career in business an opportunity to develop those skills, abilities and understanding that enable them to enter, perform and progress in a business occupation after graduation from tertiary institutions. Ohaka and Tikun (2021) noted that business education is a subset of



general education that focuses on providing its target audience with specific skills, knowledge, aptitude, and attitudes required for occupational competence in the fields of education and business. Ndubuisi, Ezeani and Ile (2021) stated that business education is seen as education for the acquisition and development of skills and competencies, attitudes and attributes which are necessary for efficiency of the economic system. Aliyu further asserted that business education is academic and vocational preparation of people for earning a living in the contemporary industrial and business environment. In the context of this study, business education is defined as an academic programme that provides its graduates with the skills, competencies, knowledge, and attitude necessary for jobs in business, office work, and teaching. The objectives of business education are; to develop a mature understanding of the general nature of business; to provide the needed background for teaching in business subjects; to provide training in specialized phases of business activity and to lay a cultural and ethical foundation for the development of the foregoing objectives. Sadly, graduates of business education programme in Nigeria and Delta State in particular seem to find it difficult navigating the job market by acquiring jobs or creating jobs. This failure is blamed on the inability of the business education programme to infuse technology in the business education programme. Abdulkadir (2020) noted that, business education programme in tertiary institutions have failed to utilize the arrays of digital technology and innovation for promoting learning and skills acquisition among its graduates.

The term "digital learning innovation" describes the creation and use of digital tools and technical innovations to improve learning and alter conventional educational methods. It entails using technology into the teaching and learning process, including computers, software programmes, internet platforms, and multimedia resources. Digital learning innovations might include digital courseware, core learning technologies, design-based procedures, or related solutions that faculty and institutions can use to improve student access and/or learning (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), 2016). Recent events of the Covid-19 pandemic posed a challenge to teacher education programmes in tertiary institutions while emphasizing the need for teacher education programmes to leverage on the opportunities provided by digital learning innovations (Olushola, Haruna; Mohammed & Salisu, 2022). Moorhouse and Kohnke (2021) averred that teachers were unprepared and ill-equipped to deal with the intimidating transition to online, blended, and HyFlex learning. Digital learning technology and innovation are tools and resources that enable the digitalization of the learning process and facilitate a shift towards online education. These technologies encompass various communication, information, and technological tools that enhance teaching, development, and assessment practices (Bansilal, 2015). Computer hardware, such as interactive whiteboards and in-classroom tablets, are examples of digital learning technologies. These devices provide interactive and engaging experiences for students, enabling them to actively participate in lessons and explore educational content in a dynamic way. Software applications also play a crucial role in digital learning. They range from streaming platforms that deliver educational videos and lectures to gamification tools that transform learning into interactive games. These software solutions enhance students engagement, promote personalized learning experiences, and provide opportunities for self-paced learning.

The incorporation of digital learning technology and innovation in tertiary business education in Nigeria and Delta State in particular is commendable. However, it is important to recognize that this inclusion, when viewed from a global perspective, is only superficial. The existing courses are inadequate in equipping trainee business educators with the necessary skills to effectively utilize digital learning technology and innovation in business education (OECD, 2016). Abdulkadir (2020) stated that the courses offered in the tertiary business education programme provide only basic knowledge and skills, which are insufficient for business educators to model proficient use of digital learning technology and innovation in the classroom. It is crucial to shift the focus of these courses from mere computer literacy to fluency in integrating digital learning technology and innovation into instructional practices. Ekoh (2016) suggested that business educators should be equipped with comprehensive knowledge and skills that allow them to seamlessly integrate digital tools and resources into their teaching methods. Furthermore, ownership of the tertiary institution could influence the capacity of business education programme to promote the use of digital technology and innovations for equipping students with skills for job creation. The ownership of the tertiary institution demonstrates the resources available to them. This could have a significant impact on how much integration of digital learning innovations can improve business education capacity for preparing students for job creation. Tertiary institutions in Nigeria are owned by the Federal and State governments, as well as private persons and organisations (Ile & Ukabam, 2021). Ile and Ukabam, on the other hand, found no variation in the views of the federal and state governments on the integration of digital learning innovations in the business education programme. However, the study of Ile and Ukabam did not specifically, examine digital learning innovations for equipping business education students in tertiary institutions for job creation in Delta State. This study therefore empirically sought to examine digital learning innovations for equipping business education students in tertiary institutions for job creation in Delta State.



Statement of the Problem

The digital revolution has resulted in significant changes across a wide range of societal areas, including education. As technology advances, educational institutions must adapt their ways to ensure that their students are prepared with the fundamental digital literacy skills required for success in the current digital era. Regrettably, it has been shown that students enrolled in the business education programme, particularly those focusing on accounting, are unable to acquire basic computer literacy abilities. This dilemma is reflected in the growing number of students who are unemployed and unprepared for the 21st-century business world. Over the recent years, tertiary institutions within Delta State have encountered challenges in adequately infusing the business education curriculum with the latest digital technologies, essential for effective teaching and learning. The inability to seamlessly integrate these digital tools into the curriculum has posed an obstruction to students in attaining proficiency in digital literacy, subsequently undermining their preparedness for the digital age. This complex issue is further compounded by an array of contributing factors.

A significant hurdle appears to be lack of understanding and comprehension among university administrators and academic leaders regarding the benefits and potentials linked with business education digitalization. Some educators may be hesitant to embrace digital learning innovations due to lack of training, aversion to change, or misconceptions about the utility and efficacy of digital technology in the education setting. This lack of pedagogical perspective and comprehension impedes the successful implementation of digital learning innovations. Given these limitations, the current study seeks to improve the current situation by conducting this current study.

Research Question

This research question guided the study:

1. What are the digital learning innovations for equipping business education students in tertiary institutions for job creation in Delta State?

Hypothesis

This null hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of business educator in Federal and state tertiary institutions on the digital learning innovations for equipping business education students in tertiary institutions for job creation in Delta State.

Method

The descriptive survey research design was utilized for the study. The study was conducted in Delta State, Nigeria. The population for the study consists of 109 lecturers of Business Education Programme in five tertiary institutions: Delta State University, Abraka; Federal College of Education (Technical), Asaba; University of Delta, Agbor; College of Physical and Health Education, Morsogar; and College of Education, Warri. The data collection instrument used was a structured questionnaire developed by the researcher. The instrument was titled "Questionnaire on Digital Learning Innovations for Equipping Students in Tertiary Institutions for Job Creation (QDLIESTIJC)". The questionnaire utilized a 4-point rating scale, ranging from Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). It consisted of 10 items focusing on the digital learning innovations for equipping business education students in tertiary institutions for job creation. The instrument underwent validation by three experts from the School of Business Education at the Federal College of Education (Technical), Asaba.

A pilot test was conducted using the instrument with 20 business educators in Anambra State, who were not part of the study population. The obtained data underwent reliability analysis using the Cronbach Alpha method, resulting in coefficient value of 0.85 for internal consistency. The questionnaire was administered to the respondents in their offices, allowing them sufficient time to complete it. The researchers retrieved the questionnaire immediately in cases where respondents were willing to fill it on the spot. However, if a respondent was unavailable, an appointment was scheduled for the retrieval. This process lasted for two weeks. Out of the 109 questionnaires distributed, 92 were retrieved in good condition and used for data analysis. The data collected from the respondents were analyzed using mean and standard deviation. The mean values were employed to address the research questions, while the standard deviation was used to determine the level of homogeneity among the respondents' ratings. Any item with a mean score of 2.50 or higher was considered as agree, while any item with a mean score below 2.50 was regarded disagree. For the hypothesis, t-test was used to test the null hypothesis at .05 level of significance. If the p-value is equal to or greater than the alpha value of 0.05, it means that there is no



significant difference. The hypothesis was accepted. Consequently if the p-value is less than the alpha value of 0.05, it means that there is a significant difference, therefore the hypothesis is not accepted.

Results

Research Question One

What are the digital learning innovations for equipping business education students in tertiary institutions for job creation in Delta State?

Table 1

Respondents' Mean Ratings on the Digital Learning Innovations for Equipping Business Education Students in Tertiary Institutions for Job Creation (N=92)

S/No.	Item Statement	Mean	SD	Remarks
1.	Specialized simulations that replicate industries like finance, marketing, or supply chain management give students practical experience in their chosen field.	3.33	.87	Agree
2.	Incorporating game elements into the learning process engages students and enhances their problem-solving abilities.	3.22	.81	Agree
3.	Online platforms, such as virtual whiteboards and collaborative document editors, enable students to collaborate on projects and develop teamwork skills remotely.	3.04	.90	Agree
4.	Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR) technologies immerse students in realistic business environments, providing a hands-on experience.	3.02	.84	Agree
5.	Digital courses focusing on entrepreneurship, innovation, and business startup processes provide students with the skills needed to create and manage their own ventures.	3.16	.86	Agree
6.	Online professional learning communities which enables business educators to update their instructional strategies	3.12	.76	Agree
7.	Online platforms that offer a variety of courses, workshops, and resources related to business skills and entrepreneurship.	3.11	.79	Agree
8.	Digital learning platforms can offer courses on blockchain technology, cryptocurrency, and fintech innovations, equipping students with knowledge about emerging trends	3.20	.81	Agree
9.	Bite-sized, focused lessons delivered through digital platforms allow students to learn at their own pace and fit their studies into busy schedules.	3.00	1.00	Agree
10.	Digital platforms that connect students with industry professionals, mentors, and potential collaborators enable them to build valuable relationships and gain insights from experienced professionals	3.13	.89	Agree
Cluster Mean		3.13		Agree

Data in Table 1 revealed that the respondents agree on all items, 1-10 as digital learning innovations for equipping business education students in tertiary institutions for job creation with mean ratings ranging between 3.00 to 3.33. The standard deviation scores ranging between .76 to 1.00 indicate that the respondents' opinions were close. The cluster mean of 3.13 indicate that specialized simulations that replicate industries like finance, marketing, or supply chain management give students practical experience in their chosen field; Incorporating game elements into the learning process engages students and enhances their problem-solving abilities; digital learning platforms can offer courses on blockchain technology, cryptocurrency, and fintech innovations, equipping students with knowledge about emerging trends and digital courses focusing on entrepreneurship, innovation, and business startup processes provide students with the skills needed to create and manage their own ventures were some of the digital learning innovations for equipping business education students in tertiary institutions for job creation in Delta State.



Hypothesis One

There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of business educator in federal and state tertiary institutions on the digital learning innovations for equipping business education students in tertiary institutions for job creation in Delta State.

Table 2

Summary of t-test Analysis of Mean Ratings of Business Educators in Federal and State Tertiary Institutions on the Digital Learning Innovations for Equipping Business Education Students in Tertiary Institutions for Job Creation

Variable	N	\bar{X}	SD	df	α	p-value	Decision	
Federal Business Edu.	32	3.08	.86		90	.05	.27	Not Significant
State Business Edu.	60	3.19	.88					

Data in Table 2 showed that the p-value of .27 is greater than .05 alpha level of significance. This means that there is no statistically significant difference in the mean ratings of business educator in federal and state tertiary institutions on the digital learning innovations for equipping business education students in tertiary institutions for job creation in Delta State. The hypothesis was therefore accepted.

Discussion

The findings of the study revealed that specialized simulations that replicate industries like finance, marketing, or supply chain management give students practical experience in their chosen field; Incorporating game elements into the learning process engages students and enhances their problem-solving abilities; digital learning platforms can offer courses on blockchain technology, cryptocurrency, and fintech innovations, equipping students with knowledge about emerging trends and digital courses focusing on entrepreneurship, innovation, and business startup processes provide students with the skills needed to create and manage their own ventures were some of the digital learning innovations for equipping business education students in tertiary institutions for job creation in Delta State. The findings of the study highlight the critical significance of these digital learning innovations in moving business education students into the sphere of job creation. This is in agreement with Ekoh (2016) suggested that business educators should be equipped with comprehensive knowledge and skills that allow them to seamlessly integrate digital tools and resources into their teaching methods. According to Bansilal (2015), incorporating computer hardware such as interactive whiteboards and in-classroom tablets will create interactive and engaging experiences for students, allowing them to actively participate in lessons and study educational information in a dynamic manner. Bansilal further held that instructional video and lecture streaming services to gamification systems can turn learning into participatory games. The incorporation of specialised simulations, gamification, digital course offerings, and entrepreneurship-focused modules open the way for students to gain practical skills, engage with current trends, and foster entrepreneurial attitudes. By embracing these technologies, Delta State tertiary institutions may successfully prepare their students for the dynamic problems and possibilities that characterise today's business sector.

Furthermore, the study revealed no statistically significant difference in the mean ratings of business educator in federal and state tertiary institutions on the digital learning innovations for equipping business education students in tertiary institutions for job creation in Delta State. The data analysis revealed that there was no significant difference in the perceptions of educators from these two types of institutions about the effectiveness of digital learning innovations in equipping students with the skills required for job creation in the business education domain. This finding is consistent with earlier research of Ile and Ukabam (2021) which revealed a convergence of opinions among educators from various institutional backgrounds about the adoption and impact of digital learning innovations. In this specific context, it appears that business educators in federal and state tertiary institutions have a similar understanding of the potential benefits of incorporating digital learning tools into business education programmes, particularly in terms of promoting job creation abilities.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the researchers conclude that digital learning innovations are critical tools for equipping business education students for job creation in Delta state. This is because of the wide range of benefits be accrued from the integration of digital learning innovations in the business



education programme in tertiary institutions. It is therefore imperative that measures are put in place to facilitate the smooth integration of these digital innovations in the business education programme.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of the study:

1. Administrators of business education programmes in tertiary institutions should prioritise the seamless integration of digital learning technology into business education courses. This integration should occur across multiple areas and courses, allowing for a thorough exposure to digital tools and approaches. This comprehensive approach will provide students with a diverse skill set, increasing their employment and entrepreneurship potential.
2. Management of tertiary institutions in conjunction with Heads of Business Education Programmes should invest in comprehensive faculty training programmes to improve their ability to use digital tools for educational purposes. This programme will help business educators overcome any hesitations or misconceptions they may have, allowing them to fully utilise digital learning technology and efficiently teach these abilities to their students.

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