



STAKEHOLDERS' PERCEPTION OF THE OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES OF DIGITALIZATION OF BUSINESS EDUCATION PROGRAMME

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Abstract

The 21st century has witnessed a rapid advancement in technology, leading to a digital revolution that has profoundly impacted various sectors, including education. Business education as a programme cannot afford to be immune to this technological virus. This study examines the stakeholders' perceptions of the opportunities and challenges of digitalization of Business Education programme in universities. The study raised two research questions and formulated two hypotheses. The study adopts a descriptive survey research design. The population of the study comprised 576 respondents made up of 534 students, 37 lecturers and 5 HODs. A sample of 224 was drawn from the student population using The Research Advisor (2006), and all the lecturers and HODs participated in the study. The total sample was 266 respondents. A structured questionnaire tagged Opportunities and Challenges of Digitalization of Business Education Questionnaire (OCDBEQ) designed by the researcher and duly validated by three experts with a Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient of 0.89 was used to gather data for the study. The OCDBEQ consists of 20 items raised after an extensive review of the literature. The items were placed on a four-point rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA) = 4, Agree (A) = 3, Disagree (D) = 2, and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1. A total of 266 copies of OCDBEQ were administered with the help of four research assistants and all were retrieved, representing a 100% return rate. The data collected to answer the research questions were analysed using mean, and standard deviation. The hypotheses were tested using one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) statistics at a 0.05 level of significance. The study reveals that the stakeholders agreed with the significant opportunities that digitalization presents, ranging from enhanced accessibility (mean = 3.56) and flexibility (mean = 2.98) to personalized learning experiences (mean = 3.12). However, they also agreed that this transformative journey is not without challenges such as the problem of ensuring equal access to digital resources and technology for all students (mean = 3.42). The study also reveals that there was no significant difference in the mean perception scores of business education stakeholders on the opportunities of digitalization of business education programme ($F_{2,263} = 1.67$; $P > 0.05$). The study concludes that the integration of digital tools and platforms has the potential to revolutionize traditional teaching methods, making business education better and accommodating diverse learning styles. The study recommends among others that Institutions and educators (business educators) must invest in adequate training, infrastructure, and strategic planning to harness the potential of digitalization of business education programme effectively.

Keywords: Opportunities, challenges, digitalization, Business Education

Introduction

Education, as a subset of the economy and as a system and process of knowledge transfer, is being affected by the changes going on in all facets of human endeavour under the influence of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs). The integration of digital technologies and practices into the process of teaching and learning business education courses in the university has become paramount in the 21st century. This transformation has been greatly accelerated by the widespread use of computers, the internet, and various software applications. It encompasses various aspects of business education, including curriculum design, content delivery, assessment methods, and overall learning experiences. The rise of online learning platforms and Massive Open Online Courses has made education accessible to a global audience. Institutions and educators can create and deliver courses on topics ranging from entrepreneurship to marketing, finance, and management through platforms like Coursera, edX, and Udemy. Digitalization has enabled synchronous learning experiences through virtual classrooms and webinars. Students can interact with teachers and peers in real-time, irrespective of geographical barriers. Tools like Zoom, Microsoft Teams, and Google Meet have become integral to virtual classrooms.



Digitalization is the integration of digital technologies into all aspects of an organization, resulting in fundamental changes to how it operates and delivers value (Davenport & Bain, 2019). Klaus Schwab, founder of the World Economic Forum, states in his book "The Fourth Industrial Revolution" that digitalization encompasses the transformational impact of digital technologies on various industries, leading to the fusion of physical, digital, and biological systems (Schwab, 2016). Helen Margetts et al. define digitalization as the process of converting analogue information into digital form, enabling the manipulation, storage, and transmission of data through digital devices and networks (Margetts et al., 2016). According to Westerman et al. in their book "Designed for Digital: How to Architect Your Business for Sustained Success", digitalization is the systematic integration of digital technologies to create new business models, enhance customer experiences, and improve operational efficiency (Westerman et al., 2019).

Few publications differentiate between digitalization, digitization, and digitation, which are occasionally used interchangeably in the literature (Gebayew, 2019, et al; Eling & Lehmann, 2018), or at least there seems to be some uncertainty about how the terms are used (Clerck, 2017). The terms "digital innovation," "digital disruption," "digital convergence," and "digital transformation" are frequently used to describe the aforementioned concepts because they describe how different organizations can compete when the dynamics of core technologies and core markets change as a result of digitalization (Kesson, Srensen, & Eriksson, 2018). Srai and Lorentz (2019) contend that a significant portion of the literature on digitalization appears to lack a clear definition, perhaps as a result of the idea's ambiguity. Only a few papers that are interested in drawing this difference were found. Clerck (2023) defines digitalization as "the integration of digital technologies into all areas of a business, fundamentally changing how businesses operate and deliver value to customers" and Gobble (2022) describes digitalization as "the use of digital technologies and data to create new business value, enhance operational efficiency, and foster innovation within organizations". Srai and Lorentz (2021) indicate that recent discussions have further differentiated between digitalization and digitization, with digitization being the conversion of analog information into digital formats, while digitalization encompasses the broader transformation of business processes and models. Thus, the term "digitalization" describes the technique used to digitize information. These concepts are supported by Brennen and Kreiss (2022) who find them beneficial for highlighting the distinction between the technological prerequisites for social change connected to digital technology (digitalization) and the actual change (digitalization). Digitalization of business education programme can be conceptualized in the following stages presented in Figure 1:

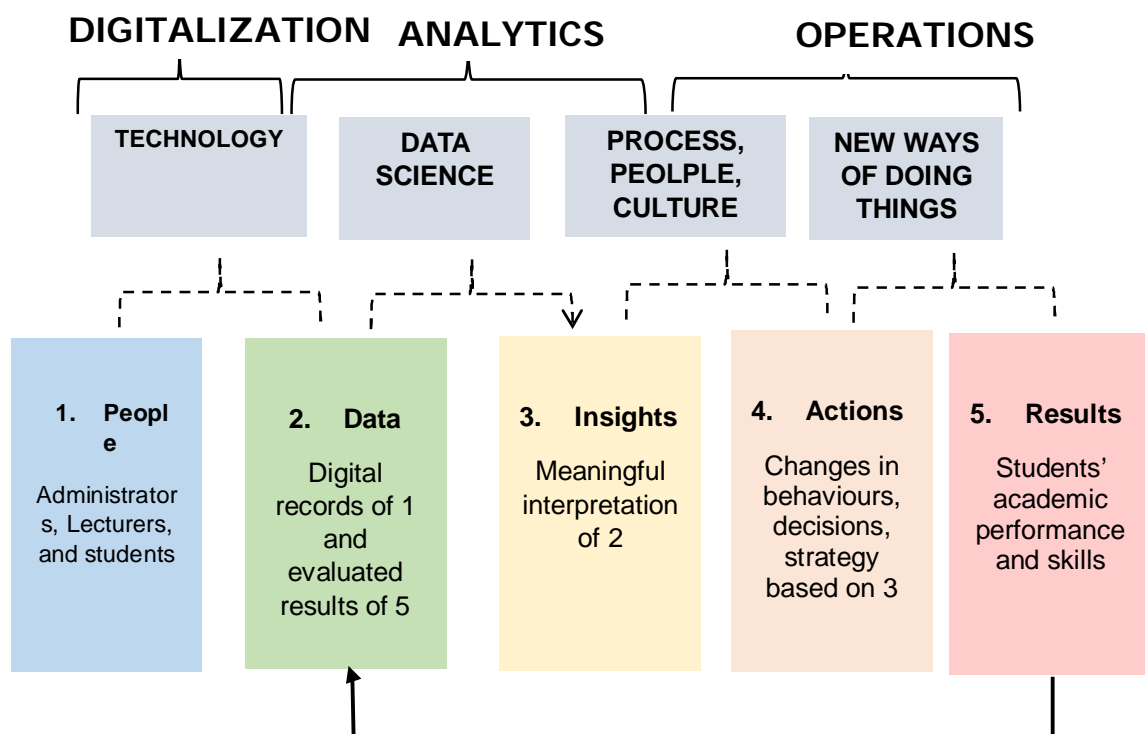




Figure 1

Adapted from Mikre (2011)

The stages are explained thus:

1. People: Digital transformation starts with people, which is a useful reminder that whenever we talk about data — especially valuable data — there are humans at the end of it. For business education, the people aspect of transformation refers to the access to lecturers, students, and administrators. It is the lecturers, students and administrators who will handle the technologies in teaching, learning, and administration. 2. Data: The knowledge gathered about students and teachers, these are widely accessible and retrievable records of interactions with students and teachers. This is where technology can have the biggest impact on the process of teaching and learning. 3. Insights: Although data has been hailed as digital data, just like with oil, the value depends on whether we can clean it, refine it, and use it to influence something impactful. Without a model, a system, a framework, or reliable data science, any data will be useless, just like 0s and 1s. But with the right expertise and tools, data can be turned into insights. This is where technology gives way to analytics — the science that helps us give meaning to the data. 4. Action: Getting to the insights stage is not enough. The most interesting, captivating, and curious insights will go to waste without a solid plan to turn them into actions. As Ajay Agrawal and colleagues argue, even with the best AI, data science, and analytics, it is up to us humans to work out what to do with data. This stage is the action stage needed by business educators to fully transform business education programme technologically. 5. Results: In the final stage of the process of digitalization, results or impact can be evaluated. The results here are students' academic achievement and skills acquired. After the evaluation of results, there may be a need to go back to the data. The results themselves become part of the new, richer, dataset, which will be augmented and improved with the findings of the process. In this iterative process or retroactive feedback loop, you enable your insights to become more predictive, more meaningful, and more valuable, which gives more value to the data.

In short, the critical part of digital transformation is not “digital” but “transformation.” Our world has changed dramatically in the past two decades, and adapting the business education programme to these changes cannot be achieved overnight, or simply by buying new technologies, or collecting more data. What is needed is a shift in mindset, culture, and talent, including upskilling and reskilling business educators so that they are future ready. That said, there is one thing that hasn't changed — namely the fact that all of this is just the new version of an old task or challenge every leader has always faced throughout human history: to prepare their teams and organizations for the future and create a better future. Nobody is truly a leader if they are in charge and keep things as they are. Leadership is always an argument with the past, with tradition — it is the essential task of leaders to create a bridge between the past and the future, and in that sense, digital transformation is not an exception to the rule, but the name we give to today's bridge.

There are lots of opportunities abound when a programme is digitalized. One of the key opportunities presented by digitalization is the ability to customize learning experiences. Digital platforms allow students to access educational resources and content tailored to their specific needs and interests. For instance, online courses and educational platforms such as Coursera and Udemy offer a wide range of business-related courses that can be chosen based on individual preferences. According to a study by Nistor and Williams (2014), digital learning platforms provide students with the flexibility to learn at their own pace and explore topics of interest beyond the traditional business curriculum. Furthermore, digitalization allows for the integration of interactive and multimedia elements in business education. This enhances student engagement and promotes active learning. For example, simulations and virtual case studies enable students to apply theoretical knowledge to real-life scenarios. In a study conducted by Li and Pitts (2008), it was found that interactive multimedia resources significantly improved student understanding and retention of business concepts. Additionally, digitalization enables global collaboration and networking opportunities. Through online platforms and social media, students can connect with peers and professionals from around the world, fostering cross-cultural exchange and collaborative learning. According to Hower and Mishra (2017), digital platforms facilitate international collaborations and mentorship opportunities, preparing students to thrive in the global business landscape.

1. Enhanced Accessibility and Flexibility: Digitalization allows for the widespread accessibility of business education programs, breaking down geographic barriers and enabling students to learn from any location at any time. This flexibility accommodates the needs of working professionals, facilitating lifelong learning and continual professional development (Carroll et al., 2018).



Personalization: Digitalization empowers students to tailor their learning experiences based on personal preferences and learning styles (Bates, 2019). Online platforms offer interactive tools and modules that adapt to individual progress, allowing students to learn at their own pace, thus improving retention and engagement. 3. Global Collaboration and Networking Opportunities: Digital platforms facilitate global collaboration among students and professionals from various cultural backgrounds, fostering a sense of global citizenship and encouraging diverse perspectives (D'Ambrosio et al., 2019). This connectivity enables virtual team projects, international collaborations, and networking opportunities beyond traditional classroom boundaries. 4. Improved Cost-Effectiveness: Digitalization reduces the costs associated with traditional business education programs, including transportation, accommodation, and printing materials (Carroll et al., 2018). As a result, digital education is more affordable and accessible to a wider range of students, promoting inclusivity and diversity within the business education realm. 5. Real-World Application and Experiential Learning: Through digital platforms, business education programs can integrate real-world case studies, simulations, and business analytics tools, allowing students to develop practical skills that are directly applicable in the business environment (D'Ambrosio et al., 2019). Such experiential learning encourages critical thinking, problem-solving, and decision-making abilities. 6. Continuous Learning and Up-to-date Curriculum: Digitalization enables the seamless integration of industry trends and updates, ensuring that business education programs stay relevant and up-to-date (Bates, 2019). Online platforms offer dynamic content that can be easily modified and updated, fostering a culture of continuous learning and ensuring graduates possess current industry knowledge and skills. 7. Engaging Multimedia Resources: Through digitalization, business education programs can incorporate multimedia resources such as videos, podcasts, and interactive presentations that enhance engagement and information retention (Carroll et al., 2018). These resources cater to different learning preferences, making the learning experience more captivating and dynamic. 8. Analyzing Learning Data for Continuous Improvement: Digital platforms collect vast amounts of data about student engagement, performance, and learning patterns (D'Ambrosio et al., 2019). By analyzing this data, business educators can identify areas of improvement, tailor instruction, and provide personalized feedback, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of their teaching methodologies. 9. Encouraging Lifelong Learning and Professional Development: Digitalization promotes a culture of lifelong learning and continuous professional development, enabling alumni and professionals to access business education resources even after completing formal education (Bates, 2019). This encourages individuals to constantly upgrade and expand their skills to meet the demands of an ever-changing business landscape. 10. Environmental Sustainability and Reduced Carbon Footprint: Digitalization significantly reduces the carbon footprint associated with traditional classroom-based education, as it eliminates paper usage, transportation, and the need for physical infrastructure (Carroll et al., 2018). By embracing digital learning, business education programs can contribute to environmental sustainability and promote eco-conscious practices.

The digitalization of business education programme will generate a wealth of benefits that will revolutionize the student learning experience and equip them with the skills needed in today's business world. Enhanced accessibility, customization, global collaboration, cost-effectiveness, real-world application, and continuous learning are just a few of the advantages that digitalization brings. By embracing digital platforms, the business education landscape can harness these benefits and evolve into a powerful force for innovation and knowledge dissemination.

Despite the numerous opportunities, the digitalization of business education also presents challenges. One of the primary concerns is the quality and credibility of online resources. With the proliferation of digital platforms, it becomes crucial to evaluate the credibility of the content provided. Educators must ensure that students are exposed to reliable and academically sound materials. In their research on the credibility of online educational resources, Kim and Hwang (2017) suggest that educators should provide guidelines on evaluating online sources and teach students how to critically assess the credibility of digital content. Furthermore, the digital divide among students poses a significant challenge. While digitalization offers opportunities for wider accessibility, not all students may have access to reliable internet connections or appropriate devices. This can create disparities in access to educational resources, limiting the benefits of digitalization. In a study by Dron and Anderson (2014), it was found that students from disadvantaged backgrounds faced difficulties in accessing digital resources due to unequal access to technology. Another challenge lies in the adaptation of educators to the digital environment. Many faculty members may lack the necessary digital skills and knowledge to effectively integrate technology into their teaching methods. In a study conducted by Arbaugh (2014), it was found that some faculty members were resistant to digitalization and lacked the confidence to use digital tools in their teaching. Institutions must



invest in faculty development programs to ensure that educators are equipped with the necessary skills to embrace digitalization.

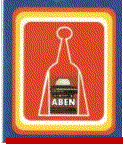
Digital Divide: The digital divide refers to the gap or disparity that exists between business education students in terms of access to and utilization of digital technologies and resources. One of the most significant challenges is the digital divide. Not all business education students have access to computers and reliable internet connections. This creates inequality and results in most of the students being left behind in ICT skill acquisition. Most business education laboratories are ill-equipped. Poor infrastructure remains a major obstacle in many developing nations (Howie, Muller & Paterson, 2005). For example, according to Makewa, Meremo, Role and Role (2013), a survey in the USA by the National Centre for Education Statistics (NCES) in 2000 using the Fast Response Survey System (FRSS) revealed that 99% of full-time regular public school teachers had access to computers or the internet somewhere in their schools. This is still a dream in many developing countries such as Nigeria. Non-availability of software and hardware infrastructures are major factors challenging the utilization and integration of ICT in teaching and learning (Ulf, 2009). According to Becta (2004), the inaccessibility of ICT resources is not always merely due to the non-availability of hardware and software or other ICT materials within the school. It may be the result of one of several factors such as poor resource organization, poor quality hardware, inappropriate software, or lack of personal access for teachers.

Lack of Digital Skills on the part of teachers: Many teachers may not be adequately trained to use ICT effectively in their teaching. They might struggle to adapt to new technologies, leading to resistance or ineffective integration. It is amazing to me how in all the hoopla and debate these days about the decline of education in Nigeria we ignore the most fundamental of its causes. Our students have changed radically. Today's students are no longer the people our educational system was designed to teach. What should we call these "new" students of today? Some refer to them as the N-[for Net]-gen or D-[for digital]-gen. But the most useful designation Prensky (2001) found for them is Digital Natives. Our students today are all "native speakers" of the digital language of computers, video games and the Internet. So what does that make the teachers? Teachers who were not born into the digital world but have, at some later point in their lives, become fascinated by and adopted many or most aspects of the new technology are, and always will be compared to them, Digital Immigrants. Why do we blame students that they are not serious?

Unfortunately, digital Immigrant teachers assume that learners are the same as they have always been and that the same methods that worked for the teachers when they were students will work for their students now. But that assumption is no longer valid. Today's learners are different. Digital immigrants always complain that the students are not serious. Is it that Digital Natives can't pay attention, or that they choose not to? Often from the Natives' point of view their Digital Immigrant instructors make their education not worth paying attention to compared to everything else they experience – and then they blame them for not paying attention!

So, what should happen? Should the Digital Native students learn the old ways, or should the Digital Immigrant educators learn the new? Unfortunately, no matter how much the Immigrants may wish it, it is highly unlikely the Digital Natives will go backwards. In the first place, it may be impossible – their brains may already be different. It also flies in the face of everything we know about cultural migration. Kids born into any new culture learn the new language easily and forcefully resist using the old. Smart adult immigrants accept that they do not know about their new world and take advantage of their kids to help them learn and integrate. Not-so-smart (or not-so-flexible) immigrants spend most of their time grousing about how good things were in the "old country." So, unless we want to just forget about educating Digital Natives until they grow up and do it themselves, we had better confront this issue. In so doing we need to reconsider both the methodology and the content (Prensky, 2001).

In all these, what are the attitudes of vocational Business Education Teachers: Teachers' attitudes represent a way of feeling or thinking that affects their disposition to teaching. Mikre (2011) and Oladosu (2012) asserted that teachers' attitudes play an important role in the teaching-learning process that utilises computers and Internet connections. Unfortunately, whilst some business education teachers have passionately integrated technology (such as computers), others have guardedly welcomed it whilst others have outrightly rejected it (Edokpolor, & Owenbiugie, 2017). The resistance to the acceptance of ICT in the classroom is often said to be primarily based on the risk of teachers losing influence over the values and directions of classroom activity (Buabeng-Andoh, 2012). However, it is very important; to note that resistance to change is not necessarily a barrier but could also be an indication of the presence of a much deeper problem. The attitude of the business education digital immigrants can be summarised as **technophobia**. **Technophobia** is the fear or aversion to technology or the use of technology. It can manifest



as anxiety or discomfort when faced with new or unfamiliar technologies, a reluctance to adopt new digital tools or gadgets, or a general distrust of technology's impact on society and personal life.

Lack of Linkages between Industry and Academia: In Nigeria, there is a lack of linkages between industry and academia, and this is a serious problem hampering the performance of business educators. Business education requires that the students should also learn practical techniques and should build skills related to commerce, trade and industry. For which they have to practically visit the business sites and locations. If there are fewer linkages between industry and academia, then they will not be able to get such practical exposure. Student Work Industrial Experience Scheme (SIWES) is not enough. This disconnect often manifests in various ways, such as a gap in the skills and knowledge students acquire in academia compared to what is needed in the job market, limited collaboration on research and development projects, and a lack of feedback mechanisms from industry to academia. Salazar and Salazar (2019) emphasized the importance of bridging the gap between academia and industry to ensure that graduates are equipped with the skills and knowledge required by the evolving job market. This lack of linkages can have several implications.

- **Limited Knowledge Transfer:** It may result in limited knowledge transfer from academic to practical applications in the industry. Research findings and innovations developed in academic settings may not be effectively translated into commercial products, processes, or services.
- **Missed Innovation Opportunities:** Industries may miss out on opportunities for innovation and technological advancement that can arise from collaboration with academic researchers who are often at the forefront of discoveries and ideas.

Not cutting-edge education and an overemphasis on analytics. Often the education provided is seen as highly academic but with limited value in practice; it is driven by academic agendas rather than real-life issues (Nwabufo & Mamman, 2015). Recruiters and employers want more emphasis on practical issues and skills, such as:

- **Leadership:** Although of primary importance, this has not been taught well in the classroom, partly because leadership is hard to teach. It requires assessment, personalized coaching and customized challenges. As organizations evolve from "command-and-control" to less hierarchical low-authority, high-conflict environments, leadership is less about authority and more about influence.
- **Communication/presentation skills.** Business Education students receive little communication training, particularly in presenting and telling a story.

Lack of specialized teachers' training in business education: There is no specialised teachers' training at university or college levels for the teacher of business education. Therefore, the teachers only rely on their previous academic background and have no updated knowledge of the new business practices. Furthermore, the teaching skills of the teachers are also not updated as a result their teaching quality remains affected.

No standardised performance evaluation system: The lack of a standardised performance evaluation system has demoralizing effects on the academic staff. The public sector universities follow the old annual confidential report technique in which the performance of teachers is evaluated on an annual basis by their immediate boss and this evaluation is one-sided in such a way that no feedback is given to the teachers. Often this evaluation is used for transfer, promotion and firing of teachers and is not used for teaching improvement and quality enhancement purposes. In other words, academic staff members, such as professors, lecturers, and researchers, are not being evaluated using a common set of criteria or procedures. This lack of standardization can lead to inconsistencies, subjectivity, and potential unfairness in the evaluation process, as different departments or institutions may have their ad-hoc methods for assessing academic staff (Rathi, 2015).

Poor Administration of Business Education programme: The housing of business education programme especially in the university system is of concern. In some universities, vocational business education is housed under the Department of Educational Management, Special Education and the like. The Department where a programme is being housed can affect the programme, either negatively or positively. Business education is a technology course and does not share a relationship with educational management. When the business education programme is housed by a department that is not related, this might easily lead to the handling of Business Education courses by unqualified lecturers. In some institutions, business education programmes are headed by someone who is not a business educator. Unqualified leaders in quotes may lack the technical knowledge to ensure results. These leaders will find reasons not to make decisions that favour the growth of the Business Education programme. The consequences of an unqualified head may lead to a lot of detrimental effects on the department. For



instance, this could lead to low staff morale in the Department. When staff complain to each other, carry out their tasks with minimal effort or fail to do their work on time or at all, this may be because they are suffering from a lack of motivation due to bad leadership. The staff could also deliberately work against an unqualified head, having known that they are not competent to be there. This goes further to affect the students and the entire programme negatively (Mamman, 2020).

ICT Policy issues: ICT policy issues refer to the various challenges and concerns related to the development, implementation, and regulation of information and communication technology (ICT) policies. These issues are influenced by the rapid advancements in technology and the increased integration of ICT in various aspects of society. One prominent ICT policy issue is digital privacy and data protection. As technology becomes more pervasive, concerns about the collection, use, and security of personal data have gained attention. This issue is particularly significant in the context of social media platforms, online shopping, and internet banking, where individuals often share sensitive information. In this regard, policies and regulations are needed to ensure the protection of personal data and privacy rights. In the European Union, the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) is a notable example of a policy that addresses digital privacy and data protection. The GDPR provides guidelines on how organizations should handle personal data and imposes fines for non-compliance with these regulations (European Commission, 2018). Nigeria does not have a comprehensive ICT policy, which is a major issue in the use of technology.

Research Questions

1. What is the perception of stakeholders of the opportunities of digitalization of Business Education programme?
2. What is the perception of stakeholders of the challenges of digitalization of Business Education programme?

Hypotheses

H₀₁ There is no significant difference in the mean perception score of students, lecturers and Heads of Department (HODs) on the opportunities of digitalization of business education programme.

H₀₂ There is no significant difference in the mean perception score of students, lecturers and Heads of Department (HODs) on the challenges of digitalization of business education programme.

Methods

The study adopts the descriptive survey design. The study was a survey of the perceptions of students, lecturers, and Head of Departments regarding opportunities and challenges of digitalization of business education programme in universities. The population of the study comprised 400 level students, lecturers, and Heads of Departments in universities offering business education in North Central, Nigeria. There are 534 students 37 lecturers and five HODs. A sample of 224 was drawn from the student population using The Research Advisor (2006), and all the lecturers and HODs participated in the study. The total sample was 266 respondents. The researcher believes that these respondents are in a better position to provide information on the opportunities and challenges of digitalization of business education programme. A structured questionnaire tagged Opportunities and Challenges of Digitalization of Business Education Questionnaire (OCDBEQ) designed by the researcher and duly validated by three experts with a Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient of 0.89 was used to gather data for the study. The OCDBEQ consists of 20 items raised after an extensive review of the literature. The items were placed on a four-point rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA) = 4, Agree (A) = 3, Disagree (D) = 2, and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1. A total of 266 copies of OCDBEQ were administered with the help of four research assistants and all were retrieved, representing a 100% return rate. The data collected to answer the research questions were analysed using mean, and standard deviation. The hypotheses were tested using one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) statistics at a 0.05 level of significance. The following boundary limits were used for item options of research the questionnaire: Strongly Agree (3.25-4.00), Agree (2.50-3.24), Disagree (1.75 - 2.49), and Strongly Disagree (1.00-1.74). The hypothesis was rejected when the observed p-value was less than the fixed p-value of 0.05. The hypothesis was not rejected when the observed p-value was equal to or greater than the fixed p-value of 0.05.

Results

Research Question One: What is the perception of stakeholders of the opportunities of digitalization of Business Education programme?



Table 1: Mean and standard deviation of responses on the opportunities of digitalization of Business Education

S/N	Items	\bar{X}	SD	Remark
1	Digitalization allows for the widespread accessibility of business education programme, breaking down geographic barriers.	3.56	0.81	Strongly Agree
2	In my opinion, digitalization will bring about flexibility in business education programme.	2.98	0.91	Agree
3	Digitalization reduces the costs associated with traditional business education programme.	3.71	0.87	Strongly Agree
4	Through digital platforms, business education programme can integrate real-world case studies into teaching.	3.01	0.91	Agree
5	Digitalization enables the seamless integration of industry trends and updates, ensuring that business education programs stay relevant and up-to-date.	3.09	0.78	Agree
6.	Through digitalization, business education programme can incorporate multimedia resources and interactive presentations that enhance engagement and information retention.	2.89	0.81	Agree
7.	Digital platforms collect vast amounts of data about student engagement, performance, and learning patterns.	3.34	0.62	Strongly Agree
8.	Digitalization promotes a culture of lifelong learning and continuous professional development, enabling alumni and professionals to access business education resources even after completing their programme.	2.91	0.94	Agree
9	Digitalization promotes a culture of lifelong learning and continuous professional development, enabling alumni and professionals to access business education resources even after completing formal education.	3.02	0.87	Agree
10	Digitalization empowers students to tailor their learning experiences based on personal preferences and learning styles.	3.12	0.79	Agree
Average Mean		3.16	0.83	Agree

Source: Field survey, 2023

The data in Table 1 reveal that the respondents indicated strongly agreed that digitalization allows for the widespread accessibility of business education programme, breaking down geographic barriers (mean = 3.56), digitalization reduces the costs associated with traditional business education programme (mean = 3.71), and Digital platforms collect vast amounts of data about student engagement, performance, and learning patterns (mean = 3.34). the respondents agreed that in their opinion, digitalization will bring about flexibility of business education programme (mean = 2.98), through digital platforms, business education programme can integrate real-world case studies in teaching (mean = 3.01), digitalization enables the seamless integration of industry trends and updates, ensuring that business education programs stay relevant and up-to-date (mean = 3.09), through digitalization, business education programs can incorporate multimedia resources and interactive presentations that enhance engagement and information retention (mean = 2.89), digitalization promotes a culture of lifelong learning and continuous professional development, enabling alumni and professionals to access business education resources even after completing their programme (mean = 2.91), digitalization promotes a culture of lifelong learning and continuous professional development, enabling alumni and professionals to access business education resources even after completing formal education (mean = 3.02), and digitalization empowers students to tailor their learning experiences based on personal preferences and learning styles (mean = 3.12). The weighted average of 3.16 indicated that the respondents agreed with all the items in Table 1 which mean that digitalization has a lot of positive opportunities for business education programme. The average standard deviation is low (0.83) which indicates that the stakeholders' responses are clustered around the mean.



Research Question Two: What is the perception of stakeholders of the challenges of digitalization of Business Education programme?

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation of responses on the challenges of digitalization of Business Education

S/N	Items	\bar{X}	SD	Remark
11	The problem of ensuring equal access to digital resources and technology for all students.	3.42	0.86	Strongly Agree
12	Lack of digital skills on the part of business education lecturers.	3.41	0.89	Strongly Agree
12	Lack of specialized digital training for business education lecturers.	3.5	0.79	Strongly Agree
14	The problem of designing effective assessment methods that prevent cheating and plagiarism while accurately evaluating students' understanding and knowledge acquired through digital platforms.	3.8	0.71	Strongly Agree
15	The problem of aligning technology effectively with the educational goals and teaching methodologies to enhance learning outcomes	3.37	0.9	Strongly Agree
16.	Problem maintaining the quality and rigour of the educational content.	3.71	0.73	Strongly Agree
17.	Problems related to data privacy, security, and potential breaches when utilizing technology.	3.25	0.92	Strongly Agree
18.	Financial barriers associated with purchasing and maintaining advanced technology infrastructure and platforms.	3.12	0.94	Agree
19	The problem of decreased interaction can be a common challenge in online settings	3.45	0.87	Strongly Agree
20	Lack of ICT policy framework for business education programme.	3.61	0.79	Agree
Average Mean		3.46	0.84	Agree

Source: Field survey, 2023

The data in Table 2 reveal that the respondents strongly agreed with all the items except for item eight. They strongly agreed that problem of ensuring equal access to digital resources and technology for all students (mean = 3.42), lack of digital skills on the part of business education lecturers (mean = 3.41), lack of specialized digital training for business education lecturers (mean = 3.5), problem of designing effective assessment methods that prevent cheating and plagiarism while accurately evaluating students' understanding and knowledge acquired through digital platforms (mean = 3.8), problem of aligning technology effectively with the educational goals and teaching methodologies to enhance learning outcomes (mean = 3.37), problem maintaining the quality and rigor of the educational content (mean = 3.71), problems related to data privacy, security, and potential breaches when utilizing technology (mean = 3.25), financial barriers associated with purchasing and maintaining advanced technology infrastructure and platforms (mean = 3.12), Problem of decreased interaction can be common challenges in online settings (mean = 3.45), lack of ICT policy framework for business education programme (mean = 3.61). The weighted average of 3.46 indicated that the respondents strongly agreed with all the items in Table 2 which means that the digitalization of business education programme faces a lot of challenges. The average standard deviation is low (0.84) which indicates that the stakeholders' responses are clustered around the mean.

Hypotheses

H₀₁ There is no significant difference in the mean perception score of students, lecturers and Heads of Departments (HODs) on the opportunities of digitalization of business education programme.



Table 3: Analysis of Variance on the mean ratings of stakeholders on the opportunities of digitalization of Business Education programme

Group	N	Mean	SD	F-cal	Df	Sig	Decision
Students	224	3.01	0.80				
Lecturers	37	2.99	0.91	1.67	2,263	0.167	NS
HODs	5	2.97	0.96				
Total	266						

Source: Field survey, 2023

The data presented in Table 3 reveal that the observed p-value is 0.167 which is greater than the fixed p-value of 0.05 ($P > 0.05$). Therefore, the null hypothesis that stated that there is no significant difference in the mean perception score of students, lecturers and Heads of Departments (HODs) on the opportunities of digitalization of business education programme was not rejected. This implied that there was no significant difference in the mean perception scores of business education stakeholders on the opportunities of digitalization of business education programme ($F_{2,263} = 1.67$; $P > 0.05$).

H₀₂ There is no significant difference in the mean perception score of students, lecturers and Heads of Departments (HODs) on the challenges of digitalization of business education programme.

Table 4: Analysis of Variance on the mean ratings of stakeholders on the challenges of digitalization of business education programme

Group	N	Mean	SD	F-cal	Df	Sig	Decision
Students	224	3.14	0.70				
Lecturers	37	3.12	0.87	0.982	2,263	0.817	NS
HODs	5	3.10	0.91				
Total	266						

Source: Field survey, 2023

The data presented in Table 4 reveal that the observed p-value is 0.617 which is greater than the fixed p-value of 0.05 ($P > 0.05$). Therefore, the null hypothesis stated that there is no significant difference in the mean perception score of students, lecturers, and Heads of Departments (HODs) on the challenges of digitalization of business education programme was not rejected. This implied that there was no significant difference in the mean perception scores of business education stakeholders on the challenges of digitalization of business education programme ($F_{2,263} = 0.98$; $P > 0.05$).

Discussion of Findings

The study examined stakeholders' perception of the opportunities and challenges of the Digitalization of Business Education Programme. Digitalization has opened up numerous positive opportunities for business education programs. With the widespread use of technology in various aspects of business, incorporating digital tools and platforms into education has become essential. This integration enables students to develop the necessary digital skills that are highly valued in today's job market. One of the key findings supporting this notion is presented in a study conducted by Martí-Puig, Moliner-Velázquez, and Ramírez-Caro (2020). The researchers investigated the impact of incorporating digital tools into business education programs. Their study found that students who engaged with digital resources showed higher levels of critical thinking, problem-solving abilities, and creativity. Additionally, these students demonstrated greater adaptability to technological advancements in the business world. Furthermore, a research article authored by Shah and Shah (2019) further supports the positive impact of digitalization on business education programs. The authors found that digital platforms and tools facilitate immersive and interactive learning experiences. This hands-on approach enhances student engagement and motivation,



leading to more effective learning outcomes. Additionally, digitalization enables business education programs to transcend geographical boundaries, allowing students from diverse backgrounds to access quality education.

The study found that there was no significant difference in the mean perception scores of business education stakeholders on the opportunities of digitalization of business education programme ($F_{2,263} = 1.67$; $P > 0.05$). The lack of difference in perception suggests that stakeholders understand and recognize the numerous opportunities that digitalization can bring to business education. This finding aligns with previous research that has highlighted the advantages of incorporating technology in educational settings (Dutta et al., 2017). One possible explanation for this similarity in perception could be the growing presence of digital technologies in various aspects of our daily lives. As individuals become more accustomed to using technology for communication, information retrieval, and problem-solving, they may naturally recognize the advantages of integrating digital tools into education. This familiarity and positive perception of technology could influence stakeholders' perceptions of digitalization opportunities. However, it is important to note that the absence of a significant difference does not imply unanimous agreement among stakeholders. There may still be variations in the extent to which stakeholders perceive the benefits of digitalization or their understanding of how it can improve business education. Further analysis is needed to identify any potential patterns or subgroups within the stakeholder population that may have different perceptions. This finding highlights the consensus among stakeholders in business education on the opportunities of digitalization. It suggests that there is a common understanding of the benefits and potential for improvement through the integration of digital technologies. This shared perception can serve as a foundation for further discussions and collaborations to effectively implement digitalization in business education.

The study revealed that digitalization of business education programme has faced and will face a lot of challenges among which include the problem of ensuring equal access to digital resources and technology for all students, lack of digital skills on the part of business education lecturers, lack of specialized digital training for business education lecturers, and the problem of designing effective assessment methods that prevent cheating and plagiarism while accurately evaluating students' understanding and knowledge acquired through digital platforms among others. Digitalizing business education faces a major from digital immigrants because of their lack of ICT literacy. This finding supports the earlier findings of Mikre (2011) and Oladosu (2012) who asserted that teachers' attitudes play an important role in the teaching-learning process that utilises computers and Internet connections. It also supports the finding of Buabeng-Andoh (2012) who found that the resistance to the acceptance of ICT in the classroom is often said to be primarily based on the risk of teachers losing influence over the values and directions of classroom activity. The study also found that there was no significant difference in the mean perception scores of business education stakeholders on the challenges of digitalization of business education programme ($F_{2,263} = 0.98$; $P > 0.05$). This finding also corroborates the finding of Mamman (2020) who observed that business educators are all aware of the issues affecting business education in the 21st century including the students.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study which sheds light on the multifaceted landscape of digitalization within the realm of business education programme. The findings underscore the significant opportunities that digitalization presents, ranging from enhanced accessibility and flexibility to personalized learning experiences and improved student engagement. However, it is evident that this transformative journey is not without challenges. The study identifies key obstacles such as ensuring equitable access to digital resources, addressing the digital divide, and effectively navigating the rapid pace of technological advancements. Additionally, concerns about maintaining quality standards, data privacy, and cybersecurity must be carefully addressed to maximize the benefits of digitalization. The study concludes that the integration of digital tools and platforms has the potential to revolutionize traditional teaching methods, making business education better and accommodating diverse learning styles. Therefore, striking a balance between leveraging digital technologies for educational advancement and preserving the core values of traditional business education is crucial.

Recommendations

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

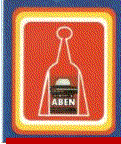
1. Institutions and educators (business educators) must invest in adequate training, infrastructure, and strategic planning to harness the potential of digitalization of business education programme effectively.



2. Collaborative efforts among stakeholders, including educational institutions, industry partners, policymakers, and technology providers, will play a pivotal role in overcoming challenges and shaping a future where digitalization optimally enhances business education programme for all.

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