Innovations

Digitalization of Business Education Curriculum for the 21st Century Global Relevance in Nigeria

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Abstract

The study examined the digitalization of business education curriculum for the twenty-first century for global relevance in Nigeria. The survey research design was employed for the investigation. To accomplish the study's two aims, two research questions with corresponding hypotheses were used. The population consisted of 23 participants: fifteen (15) male and eight (8) female business educators from two universities in Ebonyi State, Abakaliki. The entire population was investigated since it was small enough to be studied as a whole. As a result, the census method was used to choose the respondents. The research was conducted at Ebonyi State University and Alex Ekwueme University in Ndufu-Alike, Ebonyi State. To lead the inquiry, a fourteen (16)-item questionnaire was created. The instrument for the study was a four-point scale questionnaire named "The Digitalization of Business Education Curriculum for the Twenty-First Century: Global Relevance in Nigeria (DBECCGR). The instrument was trial tested on 10 non-study participants at the University of Calabar, and the pilot test provided an overall coefficient of 0.81, indicating that the instrument was reliable for the research activity. The survey questionnaire was distributed to the 23 respondents, and all 23 copies were returned and analyzed using SPSS. The mean and standard deviation were utilized to answer the research question, and an independent t-test at the 0.05 level of significance was employed to evaluate the null hypothesis. The results show that business educators have opined that the curriculum should be digitalized to meet the migration of the world. However, the result equally revealed the challenges that could mitigate the digitalization of business education curriculum content for global relevance. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that, to engage in curriculum digitalization, university administration should provide both lecturers and students with the necessary technologies before migrating to an electronic curriculum.

Key Words: *Digitalization, Business Education, Curriculum and global relevance*

Introduction

A digital curriculum is a comprehensive, adaptable collection of instructional materials that adhere to learning requirements and objectives. Written materials, pictures, videos, audio, and interactive content are all examples of digital resources. A digital curriculum is also a configurable collection of resources that are matched with learning criteria and aims. Textual content, clips, images, sounds, and multimedia that are interactive are some of the formats in which digital materials can be found. A fundamental feature of the digital curriculum is that the tools are made available to students', teachers, and external users outside the classroom environment. Individualization and personalization of student learning experiences are achieved through the use of digital tools by teachers. It has been found that developing digital documents, e-books, interactive lessons, and video tutorials help to extend learning and add value to classes. This enhances what Turnbull in Ajuluchukwu and Osakwe (2019) asserted that the user behaviours enabled by ICT architecture have shifted the boundaries between experts/information providers and lay people/information-consumers. That today information is increasingly created and co- created by users in a dynamic, collective manner. A textbook can only get you so far and is a static resource that is outdated before it ever reaches a student's hands. The digital

active curriculum helps students go much deeper into absorbing and transferring knowledge outside of the classroom. The world is transitioning from analog to digital in the twenty-first century, and a digital curriculum could substitute for traditional curriculum, such as textbooks and, in certain situations, the traditional classroom environment. Andrews and Demps (2003) opined that online courses, electronic textbooks, and digital online programmes are topical examples of digital curriculum.

A digital curriculum classroom design enables a blended learning environment in a traditional brick-and-mortar classroom or a fully online learning environment. Teachers distribute assignments and curricular materials via an online learning management system (LMS) in contexts where the digital curriculum is developing. Teachers can now replace the heavy volumes they used to use with electronic textbooks. Electronic textbooks are now web-based and may be accessed easily on an iPad, mobile device, desktop computer, or laptop (Bessong and Atah, 2019). In the opinion of William, Fotinos, Elise, James, Gary, Pamela, Lynn, and Laura (2004), digital and online curriculum packages are now widely employed in schools around the world. Newsela, Khan Academy, and ST Math are a few examples. These programmes use gamification and other engaging elements to teach or reinforce curriculum standards. A digital curriculum, for example, may use video lessons and practice exercises to reinforce arithmetic or reading standards. Furthermore, personalized learning packages with built-in evaluations, such as adaptive computer exams, enable teachers to tailor lessons to each student's specific needs. This will help achieve the purpose of education as noted by Ajuluchukwu and Undie (2021) that the education one receives be relevant irrespective of the environment one finds himself or herself.

Atah and Ukah (2019) asserted that one of the main benefits that a digital curriculum could provide for business educators is the ease with which resources can be shared. It is much easier for teachers to provide feedback on their assignments, collaborate on and co-teach tasks, and even pool their resources in one spot. This is a change in the way teachers traditionally teach with paper, and it should lead to more collaboration among teachers at your school. However, Agim, Ochui, and Atah (2020) believe that a digital curriculum necessitates schools having adequate facilities and technology to deliver authentic digital content. This necessitates appropriate internet access, mobile communication, and the requisite learner and instructor personal devices. In agreement with Idika, Ochui, and Atah (2023), asserted that transitioning to a digital curriculum necessitates using a textbook as a single unit rather than as the major component. According to Tyre, & Orlikowski, (2004), it takes more than technology; it takes ongoing professional development that allows instructors to learn, interact, and plan outside of the typical textbook box. Involvement in professional learning networks and webinars, as well as ongoing training within the school or district, are examples of this. In other words, development for professionals must include the same characteristics that are wanted in the digital curriculum that is being adopted for learners. (Wentzer, 2000) With the advancements and availability of new educational tools, it is projected that business educators will begin to move toward digitalizing their curriculum. The digital curriculum would enable access to both internal and external users of the curriculum, and it might allow both teachers and students to learn outside of their comfort zones. This will to the application of the three domains of knowledge which Ajuluchukwu (2015) cited in Ajulchukwu and Ushie (2021) stated that the educative process will be incomplete if it fails to cover these three domains of knowledge: cognitive, the affective and the psychomotor domains. As education offered in the school is expected to prepare individuals for lifelong experiences after schooling, since the school was primarily invented for educative purpose and its primary function is to educate.

According to Atsu, Ateb, and Atah (2021), the digital curriculum necessitates consideration of student access not only at school but also in student homes and in general society. There must be purposeful initiatives put in place to overcome the digital divide**.** Otum and Atah (2021) opined that this enables learners to be at the center of their education in this era of electronic content, with the teacher actively facilitating and directing genuine student learning**.** Atah (2019) confirmed that a curriculum like this empowers students to make contributions and establish achievements outside the traditional classroom setting. It equips students with the resources they need to become active participants and take command of their educational experience. Szulanski (2000) It was argued that engaging in digital curriculum development and successful digital migrations are costly; however, a well-planned, implemented, and evaluated transition will allow instructors to accept a new shift when they perceive it offers relevance.

According to Atah, Idike, Rosemary, Kolo, Ititim, Ogbiji, and Ochui (2023), the world is transitioning from an analog to a digital age, so business educational programmes must be created to be more fit for 21st century learning by digitalizing curriculum to be relevant to twenty-first century learners in a digital format. According to Kultawanich (2011), in order to perform effectively in a modern economy, business educators must keep up with rapid changes in tools, use new technologies, and digitalize their curriculum for an effective package of business education programmes for effective marketing in a world of competition. As a result, lecturers must incorporate modern technology into their undergraduate courses. Trainees are then provided with fresh learning opportunities. The researchers therefore assessed the digitalization of business education curriculum for the 21st century for global relevance in Nigeria.

Objectives of the study

The main purpose of the study was to assessed digitalization of business education curriculum for the 21st century for global relevance

1. The perception of business educators on the components of business education curriculum digitalization
2. The challenges involved in the digitalization of business education curriculum

Research questions

The following research questions guided the study.

1. What is the perception of business educators about the components of business education curriculum digitalization?
2. What are the challenges involved in the digitalization of the business education curriculum?

Research hypotheses

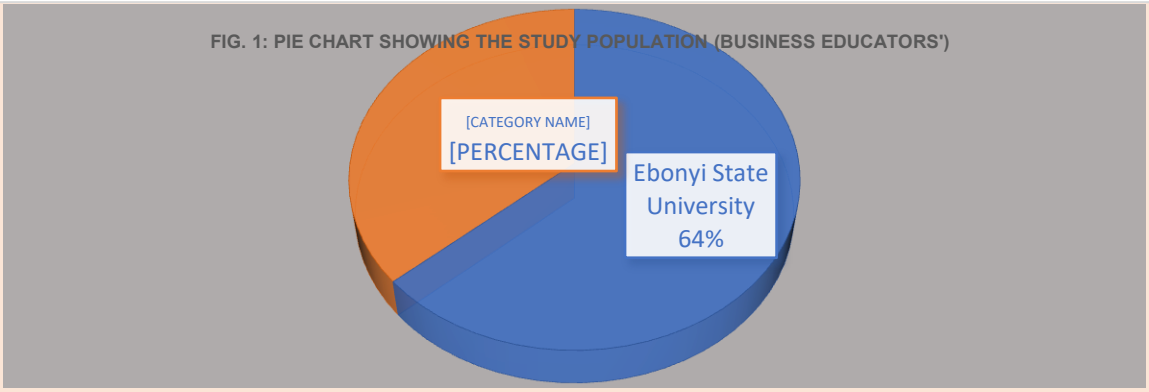
The following research hypothesis was raised and tested at 0.05 level of significant

1. There is no significant difference in the mean rating of the perception of business educators on the component's curriculum digitalization based on gender.
2. There is no significant difference in the mean rating of the challenges involved in the digitalization of business education curriculum based on institutions.

Research Methodology

This study used a survey approach with 23 participants: fifteen (15) male and eight (8) female university instructors from two universities in Ebonyi State, Abakaliki. The entire population was investigated since the population was small enough to be studied as a whole. As a result, the census method was used to choose the respondents. The research was conducted at Ebonyi State University and Alex Ekwueme University in Ndufu-Alike, Ebonyi State. To lead the inquiry, a fourteen (16)-item questionnaire was created. The instrument for the study was a four-point scale questionnaire named "The Digitalization of Business Education Curriculum for the Twenty-First Century: Global Relevance in Nigeria (DBECCGR)." The instrument was trial tested on 10 non-study participants at the University of Calabar, and the pilot test provided an overall coefficient of 0.81, indicating that the instrument was reliable for the research activity. The survey questionnaire was distributed to the 23 respondents, and all 23 copies were returned and analyzed using SPSS. The mean and standard deviation were utilized to answer the research question, and an independent t-test at the 0.05 level of significance was employed to evaluate the null hypothesis. The decision guidelines were based on a benchmark of 2.50, which was considered agreement, while anything less than 2.50 was considered disagreement. If the estimated t-value was greater than the p-value at the 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was accepted; otherwise, it was rejected. At the 0.05 threshold of significance, the hypotheses were tested. Figure 1 depicts the population distribution.

Findings of the study



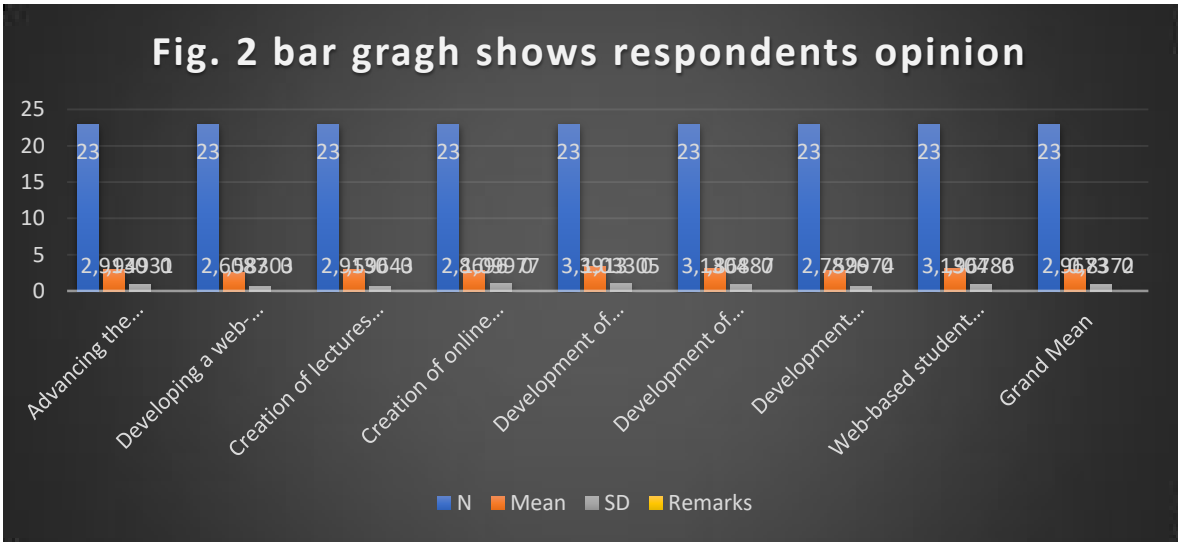
Research question 1

What is the perception of business educators about the components of business education curriculum digitalization?

Table 1: Respondents' mean rating on the perception of business educators about components of business education curriculum digitalization

S/No.	Items on the component business educator's curriculum for digitalization	N	Mean	SD	Remarks
1	Advancing the concept of online course registration	23	2.91	.94	Agree
2	Developing a web-based class discussion approach	23	2.60	.58	Agree
3	Creation of lectures delivered via the internet	23	2.91	.59	Agree
4	Creation of online course content and materials	23	2.86	1.09	Agree
5	Development of online project-based supervision	23	3.39	1.03	Agree
6	Development of inline presentation and simulation	23	3.13	.86	Agree
7	Development school lectures on internet-based environments	23	2.78	.59	Agree
8	Web-based student evaluations such as assignments, tests, and examination	23	3.13	.96	Agree
	Grand Mean	**23**	**2.96**	**0.83**	**Agree**

Table 1 revealed that all eight items listed as components of the digitalization of business education curriculum had mean scores ranging from 2.60 to 3.13, with a grand mean of 2.96, which is above the cut-off point. This indicates that the respondents agree with the opinion that the various components of digitalizing business education curriculum in the 21st century are required. This could be because the world is migrating and there is an urgent need for business educators to work toward migrating their curriculum from analog to digital form. This could help both the teachers, students, and external users to make the resources available in digital form. The standard deviation for the 8 items ranged from 0.58 to 1.09, which shows that the respondents were homogenous in their views. The result is further shown in Figure 2 using a bar graph.



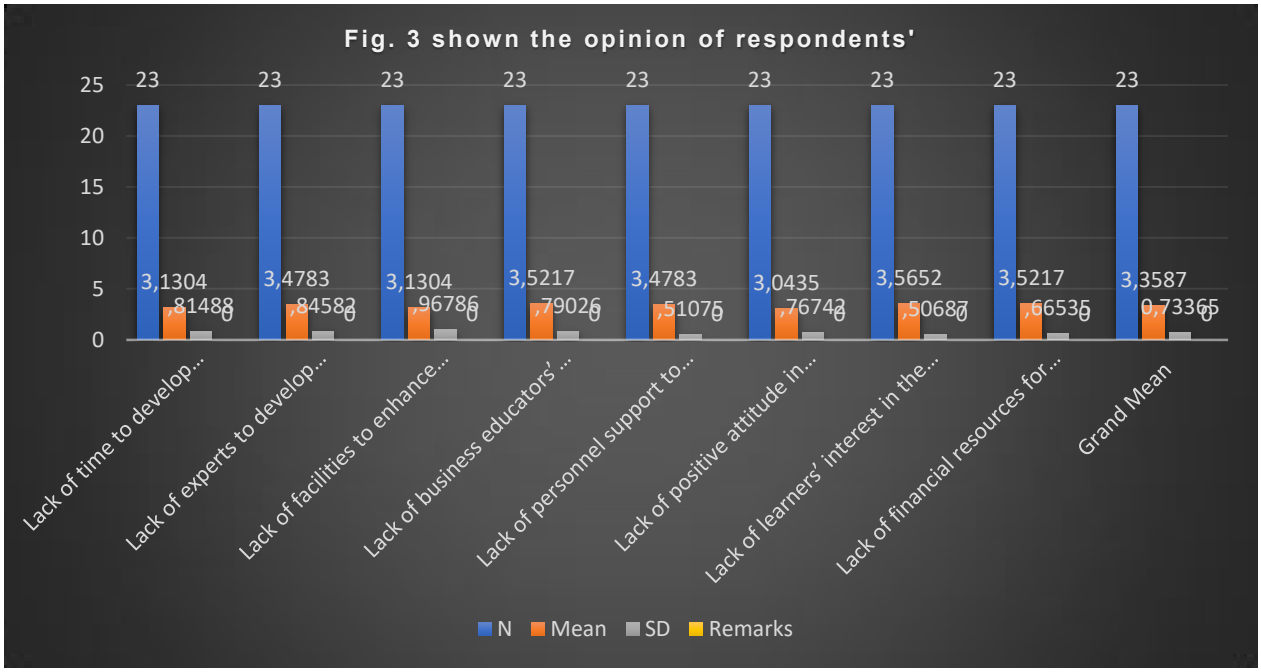
Research question 2

What are the challenges involved in the digitalization of the business education curriculum?

Table 2: Respondents' men rating on the challenges involved in the digitalization of business education curriculum

S/No.	Challenges in the digitization of Business education Curriculum	N	Mean	SD	Remarks
9	Lack of time to develop business education's digital curriculum	23	3.13	.81	Agree
10	Lack of experts to develop business education digital curriculum	23	3.47	.84	Agree
11	Lack of facilities to enhance the development of digital curriculum	23	3.13	.96	Agree
12	Lack of business educators' wiliness to migrate to the utilization of d-curriculum	23	3.52	.79	Agree
13	Lack of personnel support to enhance the development of d-curriculum	23	3.47	.51	Agree
14	Lack of positive attitude in business educators' development of d-curriculum	23	3.04	.76	Agree
15	Lack of learners' interest in the use of d-curriculum because of cost	23	3.56	.50	Agree
16	Lack of financial resources for the development of digital curriculum	23	3.52	.66	Agree
	Grand Mean	**23**	**3.35**	**0.73**	**Agree**

Table 2 shows that all eight items listed as challenges involved in the digitalization of business education curriculum have mean scores ranging from 3.04 to 3.56, with a grand mean of 3.35. This means that the respondents agree that there are challenges in the development of business education digital curriculum. Even though the world is migrating from analog to digital, there are still issues to be handled before taking the decision to involve business education digital curriculum. The standard deviations for the eight items ranged from 0.51 to 0.96, which showed that respondents were homogeneous in their views. Figure 3 shows the outcome in the form of a bar graph.



Hypothesis 1

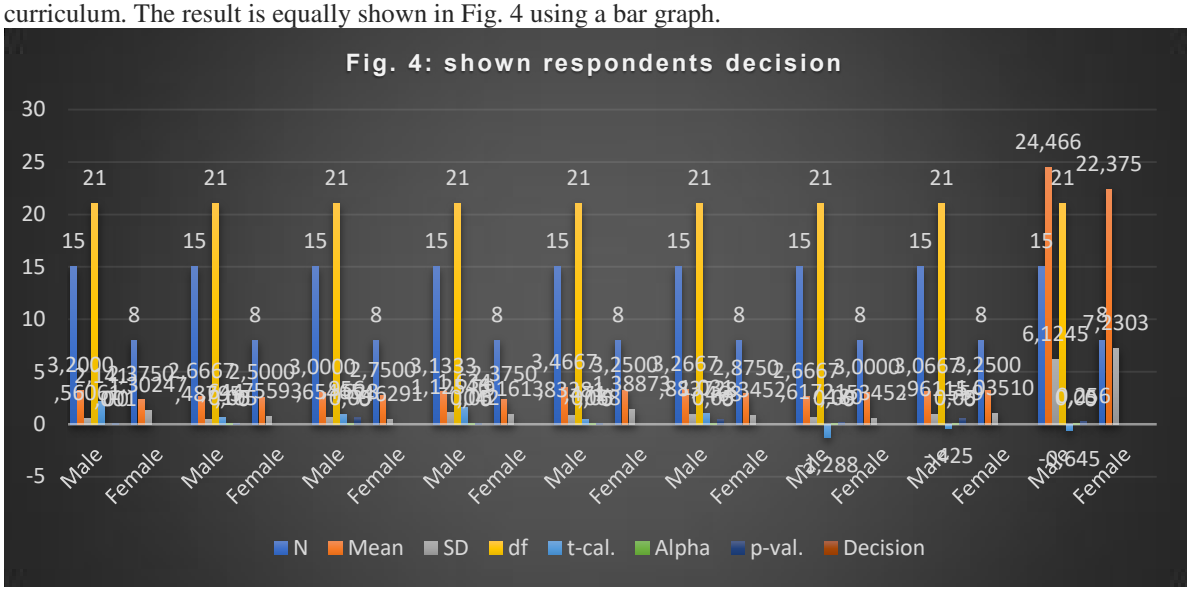
There is no significant difference in the mean rating of the perception of business educators on the component's curriculum digitalization based on gender.

Table 3: independent t-test on the mean rating of the perception of business educators on the components of curriculum digitalization based on gender

Items	Respondents'	N	Mean	SD	Df.	t-cal.	Alpha	p-val.	Decision
1	Male	15	3.2000	.56061	21	2.141	0.05.	.001	NS
	Female	8	2.3750	1.30247					
2	Male	15	2.6667	.48795	21	.644	0.05	.105	NS
	Female	8	2.5000	.75593					
3	Male	15	3.0000	.65465	21	.956	0.05	.628	NS
	Female	8	2.7500	.46291					
4	Male	15	3.1333	1.12546	21	1.634	0.05	.042	NS
	Female	8	2.3750	.91613					
5	Male	15	3.4667	.83381	21	.471	0.05	.068	NS
	Female	8	3.2500	1.38873					
6	Male	15	3.2667	.88372	21	1.031	0.05	.468	NS
	Female	8	2.8750	.83452					
7	Male	15	2.6667	.61721	21	-1.288	0.05	.180	NS
	Female	8	3.0000	.53452					
8	Male	15	3.0667	.96115	21	-.425	0.05	.559	NS
	Female	8	3.2500	1.03510					
	Male	**15**	**24.466**	**6.1245**	**21**	**0.645**	**0.05**	**0.256**	**NS**
	Female	**8**	**22.375**	**7.2303**					

The data in Table 3 revealed a calculated value of 0.645 with a significant (sig.) p-value of 0.256, which is greater than the alpha value of 0.05 (0.256 > 0.05) at degrees 2 and 21. Therefore, the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the mean rating of the perception of business educators on the component's curriculum digitalization based on gender was accepted. This could mean that both male and

female business educators could be influenced by the components of the digitalization of business education curriculum. The result is equally shown in Fig. 4 using a bar graph.



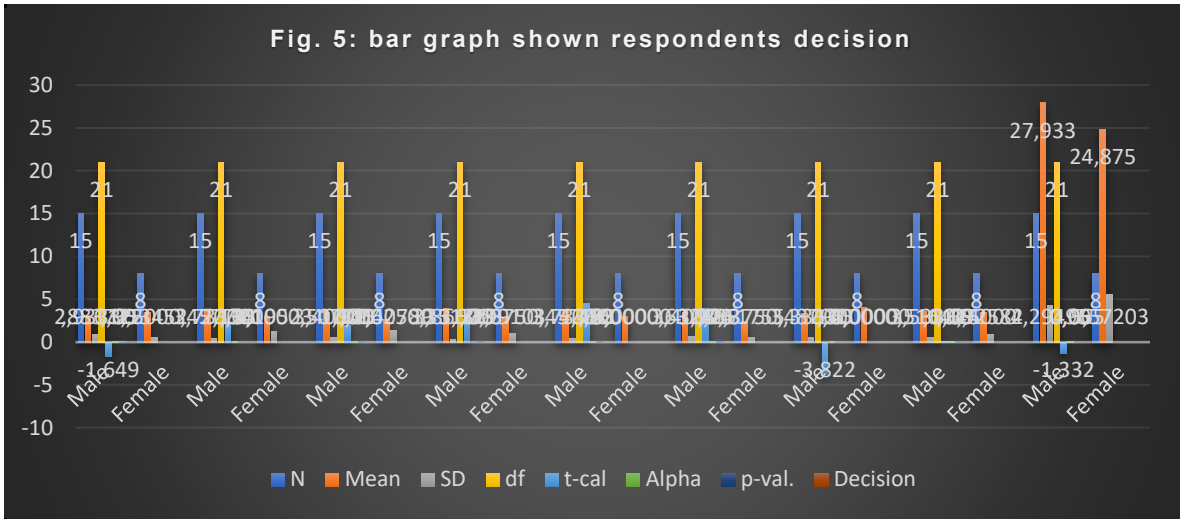
Hypothesis 2

There is no significant difference in the mean rating of the challenges involved in the digitalization of business education curriculum based on institutions.

Table 4: Independent t-test on the mean rating of challenges involved in the digitalization of business education curriculum based on institutions

Items	Respondents	N	Mean	SD	Df.	t-cal.	Alpha	p-val.	Decision
9	State University	14	2.9333	.88372	21	-1.649	0.05	.122	NS
	Federal University	9	3.5000	.53452					
10	State University	14	3.7333	.45774	21	2.134	0.05	.001	NS
	Federal University	9	3.0000	1.19523					
11	State University	14	3.4000	.50709	21	1.941	0.05	.000	NS
	Federal University	9	2.6250	1.40789					
12	State University	14	3.8667	.35187	21	3.538	0,05	.000	NS
	Federal University	9	2.8750	.99103					
13	State University	14	3.7333	.45774	21	4.482	0.05	.000	NS
	Federal University	9	3.0000	0.00000					
14	State University	14	3.4000	.63246	21	3.924	0.05	.353	NS
	Federal University	9	2.3750	.51755					
15	State University	14	3.3333	.48795	21	-3.822	0.05	.000	NS
	Federal University	9	4.0000	0.00000					
16	State University	14	3.5333	.51640	21	.112	0.05	.044	NS
	Federal University	9	3.5000	.92582					
	State University	**14**	**27.933**	**4.29495**	**21**	**-1.332**	**0.05**	**0.065**	**NS**
	Federal University	**9**	**24.875**	**5.57203**					

The result in Table 4 shows a calculated value of -1.332 with a significant (sig.) p-value of 0.065, which is greater than the alpha value of 0.05 (0.065 > 0.05) at degrees 2 and 21. Therefore, the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the mean rating of the challenges involved in the digitalization of business education curriculum based on institutions was accepted. This could be because both male and female business educators' lecturers in federal and state universities could perceive the challenges of migrating the analog curriculum to digital form. The result is equally shown in Fig. 5 using a bar graph.



Discussion of the findings

Table 1 demonstrated that the mean scores for all eight items mentioned as components of the digitalization of the business school curriculum ranged from 2.60 to 3.13, with a grand mean of 2.96, which is higher than the cut-off threshold. This means that respondents agree that various components of the digitalizing business school curriculum in the twenty-first century are essential. This could be due to the fact that the world is changing and there is a pressing requirement for business lecturers to work toward transitioning their curriculum from analog to digital form. This could assist teachers, students, and external users in making use of the digital content available on the internet. The respondents are in the opinion that, the composition of the digitalization under the investigation such as; advancing the concept of online course registration, developing a web-based class discussion approach, creation of lectures delivered via the internet, creation of online course content and materials, Development of online project-based supervision, Development of inline presentation and simulation, Development school lectures on internet-based environments, Web-based student evaluations such as assignments, tests, and exams are necessary for the digitalization of business education curriculum in meeting the 21st century global relevance of business education programme in the world of competitions. The finding is consistent with William, Fotinos, Elise, James, Gary, Pamela, Lynn, and Laura (2004) whose finding revealed that digitalization of curriculum is essential, especially in the 21st century global world of technology. In agreement with Andrews and Demps (2003), whose findings revealed the world is transitioning from analog to digital in the twenty-first century, a digital curriculum substitutes traditional curriculum, such as textbooks and, in certain situations, the traditional classroom environment.

The results of the hypotheses state that there is no significant difference in the mean rating of the perception of business educators on the component's curriculum digitalization based on gender. This implies that the hypothesis was accepted. This revealed that both male and female business educators had no differences in the components of the digitalization of business education curriculum. The findings are in consonance with Atah, Idike, Rosemary, Kolo, Ititim, Ogbiji, and Ochui (2023), who opined that the world is transitioning from an analog to a digital age, so business educational programmes must be created to be more fit for 21st century learning by digitalizing curriculum to be relevant to twenty-first century learners in a digital format.

Table 2 shows that the mean scores for all eight items described as obstacles in the digitalization of business education curriculum range from 3.04 to 3.56, with a grand mean of 3.35. This indicates that respondents believe that problems exist in the establishment of a digital business education curriculum. Even if the world is transitioning from analog to digital, there are still challenges to be addressed before deciding to incorporate business education into a digital curriculum. The study revealed that the challenges of a lack of time to develop business education's curriculum, Lack of experts to develop business education curriculum, lack of facilities to enhance the development of the curriculum, lack of business educators' wiliness to migrate to the utilization of d-curriculum, lack of personnel support to enhance the development of the curriculum, Lack of positive attitude in business educators' development of d-curriculum; lack of learners' interest in the use of d-curriculum because of cost; and lack of financial resources for the development of the curriculum The findings are in consonance with Szulanski (2000), who found that engaging in digital curriculum development and successful digital migrations are costly. This could be due to the fact that, because of fuel subsidy removal, the funding of education could not be pertinent to the government, and the sponsorship of the educational sector has

been difficult. However, another study by Wentzer (2000) disputed this finding with the fact that if the federal government and the university management plan toward the digitalization of university curriculum, it would not be achieved but would be implemented to meet the transition into the new shift in the world of education.

The null hypothesis result shows that there is no significant difference in the mean rating of the challenges associated with digitalizing business education curriculum based on institution. This could be due to the fact that both male and female business educators' lecturers at federal and state institutions may recognize the obstacles of converting analog curriculum to digital form. This finding is in consonance with Akeke, Atah, Undie, Ajuluchukwu, Okio, Kolo, Eleng, and Ben (2023), who asserted that the electronic infrastructure-based approach remained the sustainable development of business education programmes in the 21st century. In another world, the digital curriculum will come into place, and then it must be the provision of electronic infrastructure based to enhance the development and implementation of the digital curriculum in business education and Nigerian universities at large.

Conclusion

According to the findings, business educators agree that digitalizing business education curriculum is crucial especially in the technologically advanced environment of the twenty-first century. The world is shifting away from old methods for doing things, and it is pertinent for the educational sector to capitalize by digitizing its curriculum in order to satisfy global standards and survive in the education market. Universities and institutions must use online platforms to stay on top of the curriculum for the benefit of lecturers, pupils, and society as a whole. However, the study highlighted several restrictions in curriculum digitalization and presented recommendations for tackling these obstacles in order to assure university curriculum digitalization. nevertheless, the attitudes and readiness of both business educators and students must be considered.

Recommendations

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

1. To improve curriculum digitalization, university administration should provide both lecturers and students with the necessary technologies before migrating to an electronic curriculum.
2. The university's administration should work with the corporate sector to improve the digitization of the business education curriculum.
3. In partnership with the federal government, university administration should train and retrain business educators to be ready for the development and use of digital curriculum.
4. The university management should ensure that before migrating to a digital curriculum, students are trained and acquire the required knowledge before replacing analog with a digital curriculum.

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