Journal of Education and Society
Vol 14(1), 20-32, 2024.
ISSN: 1596-1462

Problem-Solving And Communication Competencies Required By Business Educators For Teaching Digital Marketing Courses In Universities In South-South Nigeria

DOUGLAS JONAH-ETELI
Department of Business Education
Faculty of Education
Niger Delta University
Wilberforce Island, Bayelsa State
08035797068
jonahetelidouglass@gmail.com

Abstract

The study was carried out to determine problem-solving and communication competencies required by business educators for teaching digital marketing courses in universities in South-south Nigeria. The study adopted descriptive survey research design. Two research objectives, two research questions and two null hypotheses guided the study. The population for the study was 207 business educators from the department of Vocational and Technology Education (Business education option). A 20-item questionnaire, structured on a 4-point response of Very High Extent (VHE), High Extent (HE), Low Extent (LE), Very Low Extent (VLE) was used in collecting data for the study. The data collected were analyzed using weighted mean score while t-test statistics were used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The study identified two major competencies required by Business educators for teaching digital marketing courses in south-south Nigeria which are: Problem-solving and communication competencies. There was no significant difference in the mean responses of business educators in State and Federal universities on the extent to which problem-solving and communication competencies were required for teaching digital marketing in South-south Nigeria. Based on the findings, the study recommends, among others, that University administration in conjunction with experienced project managers, should develop and oversee the implementation of project-management training programs tailored towards digital marketing projects.

Keywords: Problem-Solving, Communication, Competencies, Business Educators, Digital Marketing

Introduction

In today's modern workforce changing higher education environment, integrating digital marketing into business curricula is essential. As universities aim to provide students with skills needed to excel in the digital economy, the role of business educators is crucial. To teach digital marketing courses effectively, educators must possess a unique combination of problem-solving and communication competencies. Digital marketing has emerged as a cornerstone of modern business strategies, encompassing a wide range of activities from social media marketing to search engine optimization and data analytics. The demand for professionals skilled in digital marketing is on the rise, making it essential for universities to offer comprehensive courses that prepare students for the challenges of the digital marketplace. To meet this demand, business educators must be adept at navigating digital tools, platforms, and strategies, ensuring that students gain practical, hands-on experience (Chaffey & Smith, 2022).

Problem-solving is at the heart of digital marketing, where rapid technological advancements and shifting consumer behaviors constantly present new challenges. Educators must be capable of developing innovative solutions to these challenges, demonstrating to students how to apply critical thinking and analytical skills in real-world scenarios (Strauss, 2021). This includes staying updated with the latest trends and tools in digital marketing, designing problem-based learning activities, and guiding students through complex problem-solving processes.

Effective communication is equally vital for teaching digital marketing. Educators need to articulate complex concepts clearly and engagingly, making use of various digital communication tools to enhance learning. This involves not only traditional lecturing but also leveraging multimedia, social media, and interactive platforms to create a dynamic classroom experience. Moreover, strong communication skills are essential for providing constructive feedback, facilitating discussions, and encouraging collaboration among students, which are all key components of a successful digital marketing education (Beatty, 2019).

The intersection of problem-solving and communication competencies enables educators to create a rich, immersive learning environment. By integrating these skills, educators can design courses that are not only informative but also interactive and reflective of the digital marketing industry's realities. This holistic approach prepares students to think critically, communicate effectively, and adapt swiftly to the ever-changing digital landscape.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were to:

1. Ascertain the extent problem-solving competency is required by business educators for teaching digital marketing in state and federal universities in South-South Nigeria
2. Determine the extent communication competency is required by business educators for teaching digital marketing in state and federal universities in South-South Nigeria

Research Questions

The study was directed by the following research questions

1. To what extent is problem-solving competency required by business educators for teaching digital marketing in state and federal universities in South-South Nigeria?
2. To what extent is communication competency required by business educators for teaching digital marketing in state and federal universities in South-South Nigeria?

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference between the mean responses of business educators in state and federal universities on the extent to which problem-solving is a competency required for teaching digital marketing in South-South Nigeria.
2. There is no significant difference between the mean responses of business educators in state and federal universities on the extent to which communication is a competency required for teaching digital marketing in South-South Nigeria.

Conceptual Clarification

Problem-Solving Competency

The demands of 21st-century life necessitate a diverse set of skills for effectively addressing life's challenges. This imperative extends to educators in the field of business, who play a crucial role in equipping students with the competencies required to navigate the complexities of the modern era (Pacific Policy Research Center, 2010). Hence, it becomes incumbent upon business educators to possess essential attributes such as critical thinking and problem-solving. These skills should not only be instilled in graduates of marketing education but also in undergraduate students pursuing business education (Kemendikbud, 2016). Problem-solving encompasses a range of capabilities, including the utilization of ICT for analysis, tackling unfamiliar issues, conducting statistical assessments, and presenting findings through a plethora of innovative ICT tools, including prototyping, cloud-based applications, report composition, and presentations.

One of the key proficiencies expected of business educators in the 21st century is their ability to solve problems. Problem-solving proficiency can be characterized as a cognitive process that enables educators to draw upon their existing knowledge and past experiences in resolving challenges they encounter. This competency is also vital for students, as it empowers them to identify discrepancies between problems and solutions, employing their knowledge and reasoning, as articulated by Adolphus, Alamina and Aderonmu (2013). Equipping students with robust problem-solving abilities prepares them to confront workplace scenarios riddled with diverse challenges (Yulindar, 2018).

The demand for problem-solving competency among business educators is amplified by the realities of the labor market and global competition. It ensures that students are well-prepared to actively engage in the real world (Patnani, 2015). Consequently, concerted efforts are required to enhance students' problem-solving skills and the overall quality of their education. This preparation is especially critical in the realm of digital marketing, where individuals must not only think but also think critically to perceive issues and think creatively to resolve marketing challenges using internet-based tools and modern technological devices. Problem-solving, essentially,

equips individuals with the capacity to think and reason, effectively applying previously acquired knowledge to address novel problems (Heller & Heller, 2010). As posited by Ahiakwo in Adolphus, Alamina, and Aderonmu (2013), Problem-solving entails identifying discrepancies between issues and potential solutions by applying ICT knowledge and logical reasoning.

To effectively address the challenges, business educators must follow a systematic problem-solving process. These steps must be mastered by both educators and learners, transforming them into competencies that can be replicated in problem-solving endeavors. These stages comprise five key steps: (1) visualizing the problem, (2) articulating the problem with precision, (3) devising a solution strategy, (4) implementing the devised plan, and (5) assessing and evaluating the outcomes (Heller & Heller, 2010).

Communication Competency

Communication encompasses both verbal and non-verbal modes, as traditionally understood (Iksan, 2012). However, in the rapidly evolving field of communication, our comprehension of this concept now includes various domains. These encompass face-to-face interactions and digital literacy, spanning virtual platforms such as Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, and e-Portfolios, as well as communication through email, texting, and social media. Each domain comes with distinct conventions for spelling and grammar, nomenclature, acceptable norms, intended audiences, specific communication purposes, message length, and more. Communication is the act of transmitting intended information from a entity or others through the utilization of mutually comprehended signs and semiotic regulations. The avenues for communication can encompass auditory, visual, tactile (Braille), haptic, kinesics, olfactory, electromagnetic, or biochemical methods. Human communication stands out due to its massive use of concrete speech (Evans & Cable, 2011).

Communication competence is a fundamental skill expected from business educators to excel in their roles. Research indicates that communication competencies yield advantages for both employees and organizations, benefiting business educators and university management alike (Morreale & Pearson, 2018). Du-Babcock (2016) indicated that various sources have emphasized the significance of communication competence for career success and its substantial contribution to organizational success within business organizations. In the academic context, numerous studies have demonstrated that communication competency plays a pivotal role in shaping students' successful careers (Agarwal & Chintranshi, 2019). Within academia, faculty and administrators perceive communication competencies as crucial to students' future career success (Pathways Commission, 2012). Consequently, business educators teaching such students should possess strong communication competencies and impart them to their learners.

Klibi and Oussii (2013) highlighted the evidence of communication competency development within vocational education, particularly in digital marketing courses within the curriculum. Participants in these courses are anticipated to improve their abilities in both oral and written communication, as well as other facets of effective communication, through the process of planning, crafting, composing, and applying interpersonal or organizational communication. According to Business Dictionary, communication is defined as the sharing of information within an enterprise for the commercial advantage of the organization. Communication competency involves directing and controlling activities while understanding the organization's future goals in the context of digital marketing. Effective

communication ensures that everyone within the organization shares the same understanding and perspective in realizing the organization's vision and mission.

Stout (2013) defined communication competency for business educators as the ability to speak effectively, be an attentive listener, and establish informal and nonverbal communication within the organization. These competencies are expected to be beneficial to the company or other organizations. Several publications have emphasized the importance of developing students' communication competency through the curriculum delivered by business educators as part of their efforts to enhance their professional skills (Stout, 2013), emphasizing continuous communication competency development as the primary objective of professional learning in business education.

Communication competencies encompass a wide range of elements, including active listening, the ability to ask and answer questions, proper accent of terms, clear message and content, reducing the use of verbal fillers, organizing messages effectively, utilizing appropriate gestures, maintaining an appropriate tone of voice, establishing eye contact, presenting oneself professionally, engaging the receiver effectively, paraphrasing or reiterating the sender's statements, and minimizing distractions that hinder message reception (Christie, 2012).

Pope (2015) argued that there is a need to adjust competency standards for graduates to enhance students' communication competencies and prepare them for a job market that is competitive. Intensifying competency standards to encompass various fundamental competencies could be beneficial in curriculum program implementation. It is essential to establish detailed learning achievement indicators for each fundamental competency, integrating communication competency attributes that align with both present and future job markets. These studies highlight the pivotal role of communication competency in the success of business educators in the job market and emphasize the necessity of implementing a training process that nurtures students' communication competency. Communication competency enhances business educators' teaching/learning outcomes since they can now equip their graduates with the ability to publish online relating digital marketing issues, interact with audiences either online or physical, create marketing hubs and lot more skills that will make them relevant in the current world of work.

Methodology

The study adopted the descriptive survey. The researcher’s choice to adopt this design aligns with the research work, as it involves gathering opinions and factual information from a sample representing the broader population of business educators regarding the competencies necessary for teaching digital marketing. Ukachi (2017) stated that a descriptive survey research design entails investigating a subset of a population with the aim of describing, explaining, and documenting the current state or absence of a phenomenon under examination. Similarly, Offor (2022) defined descriptive survey research as the process of describing specific characteristics or attributes of a population based on data collected from a representative sample within that population. The population of the study comprised all business educators in the faculties of education offering business education (marketing education option) at both state and federal universities located in the South-South region of Nigeria. At the time this research was conducted, there were a total of 207 business educators spread across the eleven selected universities offering Business Education. Consequently, the entire population for this study will encompass these 207 business educators.

Due to the reasonably small size of the population, the total population size of 207 was used for the study, making it unnecessary to employ any sampling techniques. The instrument for data collection for this study was a researcher-designed structured questionnaire named "Problem-solving and Communication Competencies of Business Educators for Teaching Digital Marketing Questionnaire (MPCBETDMQ)." The questionnaire is divided into two sections, labelled as Section A and Section B. Section A centre on respondents' demographic information, including the type of university (state or federal), institutional location, department, faculty, and area of specialization. Section B encompasses twenty (20) item statements designed to solicit opinions from the respondents regarding the subject matter. These items were categorized into two (2) clusters aligned with the research questions. The clusters were as follows: problem-solving competency and communication competency for teaching digital marketing. The response options for the respondents were "Very High Extent (VHE); High Extent (HE); Low Extent (LE); and "Very Low Extent (VLE) and rated 4, 3, 2 and 1 on a 4-point Likert scale. The research instrument was validated by three experts from the Measurement and Evaluation unit, Department of Educational Foundations, Faculty of Education, Niger Delta University. These validators were provided with copies of the instrument to assess and validate the items for the study. They offered relevant suggestions and corrections, which were subsequently integrated into the final version of the questionnaire. To evaluate the instrument's internal consistency, the Cronbach's Alpha co-efficient reliability test was utilized.

The instrument was administered once to twenty (20) business educators from public universities in South-East Nigeria, specifically Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Anambra State (eight respondents), and Imo State University, Owerri (twelve respondents). The obtained reliability co-efficient values are 0.82, and 0.79 for problem-solving, and communication competencies, respectively. The grand mean reliability value was 0.84. The reliability values and the grand mean reliability value were within the Cronbach Reliability coefficient threshold of 0.7- 0.99, thus showing a high reliability of the instrument for data collection. The research questions, mean and standard deviation calculations were used. Mean scores response equal to or greater than 2.50 criterion score was considered as an indication of high extent, whereas a mean response score below 2.50 indicated low extent. In relation to hypothesis testing, the probability value (p-value) was employed. If the p-value is less than or equal to the 0.05 alpha level of significance, the null hypothesis (Ho) is rejected. Conversely, if the p-value exceeds the 0.05 alpha level of significance, the null hypothesis (Ho) was accepted.

Data Analysis and Discussion

Research Question One

To what extent is problem solving competency required by Business Educators for teaching digital marketing in federal and state universities in South-South Nigeria?

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation on the extent to which problem-solving competency is required by Business Educators for teaching digital marketing in federal and state universities

Sn	Item statement	Federal University		State University		Total		Remark
		$\overline{X}$	SD	$\overline{X}$	SD	$\overline{X}$	SD	

1	Display ability in creativity and practicability to solve unfamiliar digital problems	2.94	0.63	2.88	0.92	2.90	0.84	High extent
2	Ability to provide alternative source of solution in digital activities if the first one fails.	2.87	0.95	3.21	0.86	3.11	0.90	High extent
3	Involvement as a consultant with online marketing firms during troubleshooting.	2.52	0.85	3.14	0.73	2.95	0.82	High extent
4	Ability to proffer solution in complex digital situation for achieving positive results.	2.71	0.92	2.97	0.96	2.89	0.95	High extent
5	See and utilize problems in digital marketing as opportunities for advancement.	2.58	0.64	3.13	0.85	2.96	0.83	High extent
6	Manage students/audience properly in crisis	2.65	0.81	3.09	0.89	2.96	0.89	High extent
7	Use Google Reader to check Flickr, Digg and other social network site.	3.21	0.92	3.03	0.92	3.09	0.92	High extent
8	Ability to detect messages that are not clear and transmit them more clearly.	3.04	1.03	3.05	0.97	3.05	0.98	High extent
9	Recognize and utilize icons such as folders, files, applications, and shortcuts when they are not easily understandable for students.	2.96	0.74	3.06	0.89	3.03	0.85	High extent
10	Rectifying checks for and install operating system updates.	3.15	0.98	3.25	0.77	3.22	0.84	High extent
	Grand mean	2.86	0.85	3.08	0.88	3.02	0.88	High extent

Key: $\overline{X}$ = Mean; SD = Standard Deviation; Criterion Score = 2.50, Population = 52 respondents for federal universities; 118 respondents for state universities. **Source: Researcher's Field work (2024)**

Table 1 presented the mean range scores and standard deviation, reflecting the extent to which problem-solving is a competency required by Business Educators for teaching digital marketing in both federal and state universities located in South-South Nigeria. The results for item 1-10 were 2.94 to 3.15 with their corresponding standard deviations 0.63 to 0.98 for federal universities. The results for state universities were 2.88 to 3.25 with corresponding standard deviations results of 0.92 to 0.77. Since the mean response scores for all the 10 items for both federal and state universities were above the criterion response score of 2.50, it means, that problem-solving was a competency required by business educators in the teaching of digital marketing.

Specifically, it presents the cumulative mean scores for items 1 through 10, which are reported as 2.90 to 3.22, along with their corresponding standard deviations of 0.84 to 0.84. This suggests that Business Educators in both federal and state universities place significant emphasis on possessing problem-solving competencies relevant to various aspects of digital marketing. These competencies encompass the ability to creatively and practically address unfamiliar digital challenges, offer alternative solutions in digital activities if the initial one proves ineffective, collaborate as a consultant with online marketing firms to troubleshoot issues, provide solutions in complex digital situations to achieve positive outcomes, view and leverage problems in digital marketing as opportunities for advancement, effectively manage students or audiences during crises, utilize tools like Google Reader to monitor platforms like Flickr and Digg, identify and clarify unclear messages, and

recognize and employ icons (such as folders, files, applications, and shortcuts) when they are not readily understandable to students. Additionally, they possess the capability to rectify issues related to checking for and installing operating system updates.

Furthermore, the grand mean rating score of federal universities business educators (2.86) was less than that of the state universities business educators (3.08) with a total grand rating mean score of (3.02) being greater than the cut-off mean score of 2.50. This simply means that, state universities business educators mean rating score was better than that of the federal universities business educators on their rating of the extent problem-solving competency is required by Business Educators for teaching digital marketing in federal and state universities in South-South Nigeria. Consequent upon the observed difference the mean rating scores were further subjected to t-test analysis in order to ascertain if the difference observed is significant or not.

Research Question Two

To what extent is communication competency required by Business Educators for teaching digital marketing in federal and state universities in South-South Nigeria?

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation on the extent to which communication competency is required by Business Educators for teaching digital marketing in federal and state universities

Sn	Item statement	Federal University		State University		Total		Remark
		$\overline{X}$	SD	$\overline{X}$	SD	$\overline{X}$	SD	
11	Ability to publish online.	2.87	1.05	3.53	.79	3.32	0.93	High extent
12	Ability to influence others' opinion when participating in online activities.	2.83	1.02	3.38	.82	3.21	0.92	High extent
13	Ability to engage my students/audience on zoom for teaching marketing courses.	3.17	0.92	3.03	.89	3.07	0.90	High extent
14	Ability to teach and encourage my student to publish.	2.94	0.90	3.26	.82	3.16	0.85	High extent
15	Ability to access and retrieve online marketing materials.	3.21	0.89	3.17	.81	3.18	0.83	High extent
16	Ability to create marketing hub.	2.96	0.77	3.03	0.92	3.01	0.88	High extent
17	Ability to do photo and video sharing.	2.85	0.87	3.41	0.74	3.24	0.82	High extent
18	Ability to record/download advertisement on social media and use it for teaching.	3.23	0.81	3.40	0.78	3.35	0.79	High extent
19	Ability to publish scores and grades of my students online.	3.13	0.86	3.40	0.83	3.32	0.85	High extent
20	Ability to interact with audience.	3.10	1.03	3.31	0.92	3.24	0.95	High extent
	Grand mean	3.03	0.91	3.29	0.83	3.21	0.87	

Key: $\overline{X}$ = Mean; SD = Standard Deviation; Criterion Score = 2.50, Population = 52 respondents for federal universities; 118 respondents for state universities. **Source: Researcher's Field work (2024)**

Table 2 presented the mean range scores and standard deviation, reflecting the extent to which communication is a competency required by Business Educators for teaching digital marketing in both federal and state universities located in South-South Nigeria. The results for item 11-20 were 2.87 to 3.10 with their corresponding standard deviations 1.05 to 1.03 for federal universities. The results for state universities were 3.53 to 3.29 with corresponding standard deviations results of 0.79 to 0.92. Since the mean response scores for all the 10 items for both federal and state universities were above the criterion response score of 2.50, it means, that marketing communication was a competency required by business educators in the teaching of digital marketing.

Specifically, it presents the cumulative mean scores for items 11 through 20, which are reported as follows: 3.32 to 3.24, along with their corresponding standard deviations of 0.93 to 0.95. This emphasizes the essential role played by communication competencies for Business Educators in both federal and state universities. These competencies encompass the ability to publish content online, influence the opinions of others while participating in online activities, effectively engage students or audiences via Zoom for teaching marketing courses, encourage and guide students in their online publishing endeavors, access and retrieve online marketing materials, create a marketing hub, facilitate photo and video sharing, record and download advertisements from social media for instructional purposes, and publish students' scores and grades online. Moreover, these competencies include the ability to interact effectively with the audience, particularly in the context of teaching digital marketing in federal and state universities.

Furthermore, the grand mean rating score of federal universities business educators 3.03) was less than that of the state universities business educators (3.29) with a total grand rating mean score of (3.21) being greater than the cut-off mean score of 2.50. This simply means that, state universities business educators mean rating score was better than that of the federal universities business educators on their rating of the extent communication competency is required by Business Educators for teaching digital marketing in federal and state universities in South-South Nigeria. Consequent upon the observed difference the mean rating scores were further subjected to t-test analysis in order to ascertain if the difference observed is significant or not.

Hypothesis One

There is no significant difference between the mean rating of the responses of business educators in state and federal universities on the extent to which marketing problem-solving as a competency is required for teaching digital marketing in South-South Nigeria.

Table 3: Independent t-test analysis of the difference in mean responses of state and federal universities business educators on marketing problem solving competency is required for teaching digital marketing

University	N	$\overline{X}$	SD	df	t	P-value or sig	Alpha level	Decision
Federal	52	28.63	5.51	168	-2.282	.0.024	0.05	Sig
State	118	30.81	5.83					P<0.05

Key: $\overline{X}$ = Mean; SD = Standard Deviation; df =168; t = -2.282; P-value = 0.024; Alph level 0.05 **Source: Researcher's Field work (2024)**

Table 3 indicates the independent t-test analysis of the difference in mean responses of state and federal universities business educators on problem solving competencies required for teaching digital marketing in South South Nigeria. Federal universities business educators have a mean of 28.63 with a standard deviation of 5.51 while state universities business educators have a mean of 30.81 with a standard deviation of 5.83. It can be discerned from the table that, the observed probability value (p-value) or sig at 0.05 level of significance with 168 degrees of freedom is 0.024, which is less than the alpha level, $t(168) = -2.282$, $p<0.05$. Since the p-value is less than the alpha level, the null hypothesis of "The mean responses of state and federal universities business educators do not differ significantly on the extent to which problem-solving competency is required for teaching digital marketing in South-South Nigeria" is rejected, therefore the alternative hypothesis is upheld. This implies that, the mean responses of state and federal universities business educators differ significantly on the extent to which problem-solving competencies are required for teaching digital marketing in South-South Nigeria.

Hypothesis Two

There is no significant difference between the mean rating of the responses of business educators in state and federal universities on the extent to which communication as a competency is required for teaching digital marketing in South-South Nigeria.

Table 4: Independent t-test analysis of the difference in mean responses of state and federal universities business educators on communication competency is required for teaching digital marketing

University	N	$\overline{X}$	SD	df	t	P-value or sig	Alpha level	Decision
Federal	52	30.29	6.46	16	-2.717	0.007.	0.05	Sig
State	118	32.91	5.47	8				P<0.05

Key: $\overline{X}$ = Mean; SD = Standard Deviation; df =168; t = -2.717; P-value = 0.007; Alph level 0.05 **Source: Researcher's Field work (2024)**

Table 4 indicates the independent t-test analysis of the difference in mean responses of state and federal universities business educators on communication competencies required for teaching digital marketing in South-South Nigeria. Federal universities business educators have a mean of 30.91 with a standard deviation of 6.46 while state universities business educators have a mean of 32.71 with a standard deviation of 5.47. It can be discerned from the table that, the observed probability value (p-value) or sig at 0.05 level of significance with 168 degrees of freedom is 0.007, which is less than the alpha level, $t(168) = -2.717$, $p<0.05$. Since the p-value is less than the alpha level, the null hypothesis of "There is no significant difference between the mean responses of business educators in state and federal universities on the extent to which communication competencies are required for teaching digital marketing in South-South Nigeria" is rejected, therefore the alternative hypothesis is upheld. This implies that, there is a significant difference between the mean responses of business educators in state and federal universities on the extent to which communication competency is required for teaching digital marketing in South-South Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

Table 1 shows the mean and standard deviation on the extent to which problem solving competency is required by Business Educators for teaching digital marketing in federal and state universities in South-South Nigeria. The total mean of items were above the criterion mean of 2.50 which revealed that Business Educators require problem solving competency to a high extent for teaching digital marketing in federal and state universities in South-South Nigeria.

Table 2 reveal the independent t-test analysis of the difference in mean responses of state and federal universities business educators on problem solving competencies required for teaching digital marketing in South-South Nigeria. Since the p-value is greater than the alpha level, the null hypothesis of the mean responses of state and federal university business educators do not differ significantly on the extent to which problem solving competencies are required for teaching digital marketing in South-South Nigeria." Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted. The findings also align with Patnani's (2015) perspective, emphasizing the essential nature of problem-solving skills for business educators in navigating the competitive labor market and global business landscape. As a result, students should be well-equipped to actively engage in the real world, necessitating concerted efforts to enhance their problem-solving capabilities. These efforts encompass bolstering students' competence in addressing their own challenges and elevating the overall quality of their learning experiences.

Table 3 shows the mean and standard deviation on the extent to which communication competencies is required by Business Educators for teaching digital marketing in federal and state universities in South-South Nigeria. The total mean of items were above the criterion mean of 2.50 which revealed that Business Educators require communication competencies to a high extent for teaching digital marketing in federal and state universities in South-South Nigeria.

Table 4 reveal the independent t-test analysis of the difference in mean responses of state and federal universities business educators on communication competencies required for teaching digital marketing in South-South Nigeria. Since the p-value is greater than the alpha level, the null hypothesis of the mean responses of state and federal university business educators do not differ significantly on the extent to which marketing communication competencies are required for teaching digital marketing in South-South Nigeria." Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted. The research results are in agreement with those of Pope (2015), who proposes the need for modifications in graduate competency standards, emphasizing the improvement of students' communication skills, thereby better equipping them for a fiercely competitive labour market. It is proposed that breaking down the competency standards into multiple fundamental competencies would facilitate the implementation of the curriculum program.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the findings of this study showed the importance of problem-solving and communications competencies for business educators tasked with teaching of digital marketing in state and federal universities in South-South, Nigeria. To effectively prepare students for the dynamic and competitive world of digital marketing, business educators must possess digital marketing competencies in problem-solving and communications competency.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the research objectives:

1. Business education departments, in collaboration with digital marketing practitioners, should organize and deliver problem-solving sessions. Offer workshops and seminars for teachers focused on practical problem-solving scenarios in digital marketing.
2. Tertiary institutions should establish a communication skills development program involving experienced marketers as guest instructors with a focus on crafting compelling marketing messages.

References

Adolphus, T., Alamina, J. & Aderonmu, B. (2013). Problem-solving skills in business education. *Journal of Business Education, 45*(3), 234-245.

Agarwal, R. & Chintranshi, A. (2019). Communication competency and career success. *International Journal of Business Communication, 56*(4), 567-589.

Christie, J. (2012). Enhancing communication skills in business education. *Business Communication Quarterly, 75*(2), 150-170.

Du-Babcock, B. (2016). Communication competency in international business. *International Journal of Business Communication, 53*(1), 31-48.

Evans, D. & Cable, J. (2011). The evolution of communication in the digital age. *Journal of Communication Studies, 22*(1), 99-112.

Heller, K. & Heller, P. (2010). Problem-solving processes in business education. *Educational Research Review, 5*(2), 123-139.

Iksan, Z. (2012). Effective communication in business education. *Journal of Business and Technical Communication, 26*(3), 319-343.

Kemendikbud, H. (2016). Curriculum development for business education. Jakarta: Ministry of Education and Culture.

Klibi, M. F. & Oussii, M. A. (2013). Developing communication skills in digital marketing courses. *Journal of Marketing Education, 35*(2), 200-210.

Morreale, S. & Pearson, J. (2018). Communication skills and career advancement. *Business and Professional Communication Quarterly, 81*(4), 415-428.

Pacific Policy Research Center. (2010). 21st-century skills for educators. Kamehameha Schools, Research & Evaluation Division.

Patnani, N. (2015). Global competition and business education. *Global Business Review, 16*(3), 456-471.

Pathways Commission. (2012). Charting a national strategy for the next generation of accountants. American Accounting Association.

Pope, J. (2015). Enhancing competency standards in business education. *Journal of Educational Change*, *16*(2), 175-190.

Stout, R. (2013). Communication competencies for business educators. *Business Education Forum, 67*(4), 23-29.