
Digital Skills Utilization and Employment Opportunities among Business Education Students in Rivers State-Owned Universities

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Abstract

This study examined digital skills utilization and employment opportunities among business education students in Rivers State-owned universities. 2 objectives, research questions and null hypotheses were stated, formulated and tested to guide this study. Correlational survey design was adopted in this study and the population comprised of 1,220 final year business education students in the study area. Sample size of this study was 300 students drawn from the population with the use of Krejcie and Morgan Sample Size Table. Two (2) self-developed instruments were used to obtain the necessary data for this study with a four (4) point rating scale. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC) was used to analyze and answer the research questions and to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. However, findings of this study revealed that there is a very strong positive and significant relationship between digital problem-solving skill, digital marketing skill utilization respectively and employment opportunities among business education students in the aforementioned institutions in Rivers State. It was therefore recommended among other things that business educators should inculcate various digital skills on their students in order to arouse their interest while using digital devices.

Keywords: Digital Skills, Utilization, Employment Opportunities, Business Education Students, Digital Problem-Solving Skills, Digital Marketing Skill.

Introduction

The advancement in technological offerings around the globe and their subsequent integration into every human activity that were formally done manually has significantly expanded the basic literacy required to function effectively in human society to include digital landscape where individual and corporate organization interact and collaborate in order to achieve personal and/or organizational goal using digital platforms Adedeji (2020). Hence, to function effectively and efficiently in this technological driven world, individuals whether for personal purpose or for career purpose are required to be digitally literate. Digital skills are defined as a range of abilities to use digital devices, communication applications and networks to access and manage information (Newman, 2023).

Digital skills are basic requirements for anyone that wants to fit into today's electronic driven human activities such as office automation,, e-payments, social networking, e-mailing, e-banking, e-commerce, e-learning, e-registration, e-governments,, e-library, to mention but a few that permeates digital oriented societies, Digital literacy according to Nwafor and Kayode (2017) has to do with the combination of technical procedural, cognitive and emotional-social skills which enable one to use technological devices to file, manage, read and communicate information using users' interface. Ifijeh, Iwu-James and Adebayo (2021) define digital skills as the ability to identify, search and utilize required information in multimedia formats from different sources present through information and communication technologies.

Andrea (2020) contended that digital skills can be categorized into three groups of skills namely: ICT skills, technological skills and information skills. Odu and Omosigho (2020) asserted that digital skills encompass information skills, technical ICT skills for using the internet, and critical thinking skills for selecting, accessing and using the information. United Nation Education Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2018) noted that digital skills include competencies that are referred to as computer literacy, ICT literacy, information literacy and media literacy. Matthew (2020) averred that business educators and management personnel also perform functions that are related to information management such as receiving recording, arranging, analyzing and transmitting vital information for the purpose of facilitating decision making. Hence, with the adaption and integration of technologies in the performance of information and communication functions in this 21st century, it is essential that business educators develop digital skills as would enable them efficiently generate, create and communicate reliable information for the purpose of supporting workplace productivity through effective decision making.

Digital skills would assist business educators to be more equipped for resource sharing, social networking, surfing the net, instant messaging and blogging and host of others digital oriented information and management activities that can improve their specific task and team performance as well as the general productivity of their workplace (Ezekiel, 2018). Supporting the relevance of developing digital skills, Razaq and Olaleye (2021) observed that every citizen requires digital skill to fully participate in socio-economic activities that engenders development. Odu and Omosigho (2020) also noted that to fully participate and be active in this era of technology employees need digitally literate skills to meet global competitiveness.

Digital skill enables people to create and share electronic contents, communicate and collaborate, and solve problems for effective and creative self-fulfillment in life, learning, work, and social activities. Technology in business allows business organizations to improve both in the performance and overall effectiveness of products, systems and services, which in turn, enables businesses to expand quickly and effectively. It is difficult to find a business today that is not affected in some way by global technological developments; hence more and more businesses are adopting the internet and other electronic media in conducting their operations (Okiridu & Bupo, 2018).

It is pertinent to note that business education programme is also affected by the penetrating wind of modern technology. It is very important and timely to consider the need for Business education graduates to be repositioned and enhanced its comparative advantage to its recipient in this digitalized and global workforce (Olaniyi, 2022). In this new technological era, some of the skills required by businesses (marketing, accounting, banking, commerce and communication) are now internet enablement and they make up the digital skills needs of business organizations. Therefore, it will be an innovation to see business education students learning; electronic commerce, electronic accounting, electronic banking, digital marketing, electronic communication, etc.

Nigeria as a nation views digital skill acquisition as an instrument for economic development. However, a nation's economic development largely depends on the ratio of productive individuals to non-productive. As the employment rate increases, the economic development rate increases, the citizens' standard of living as well as the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) increase and vice versa. A rise in unemployment rate has the potential to cause serious threat to the prevailing peace and stability in a country, generally, unemployment has significant impact on poverty, homelessness, hopelessness, family cohesion and other social evils such as crime, violence, break up of families, alcoholism and prostitution (Allen & Adepoju, 2020).

Tertiary institutions is one of the post-secondary educations in Nigeria designed to equip undergraduates with required knowledge and character, after specific years of study to enable them contribute to the development of the nation's economy. The establishing body of a given university determines the ownership of such institution. For instance, federal tertiary institutions are owned by the Federal Government of Nigeria because it is the establishing body, while the state universities are owned by the State Governments because they are the establishing bodies as well. In the same vein, any private individual or group of individuals who established tertiary institutions automatically becomes the owner of such institutions.

Business education is an aspect of education programme that provides learners with training in special business skills and competencies. It can be referred to as a curriculum structure which remains overwhelmingly vocational or practical, but includes general or academic subjects which form part of the student's training (Umeh, 2021). The National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) Minimum Standard (2020) specifically stated that Business Education should equip graduates with the right skills that will enable business education graduates engage in a lifelong work in the office, as well as for self-employment. The National University Commission (NUC) in their Benchmark Minimum Academic Standards (BMAS) about Business Education Programme stated in their preamble that Business Education programmes provide high

caliber professionals in the teaching, marketing accounting, management, secretarial and other business areas.

Business Education is a programme that plays a vital role in a nation's economic development and sustainability, thus the major challenge facing business education graduates is the poor employability skill acquisition as it denies these graduates job opportunities in the competitive labour market as such they are unable to secure a job. Therefore, business education if well packaged with digital skill will enable business education graduates to make timely and efficient decision and to compete effectively in this out competitive digital society. Given the above, it could be seen that business education helps students to acquire the requisite skills needed to function effectively in any business setting. Meanwhile, Umeh (2021) described digital skill acquisition as the systematic and sequential development of skills that promotes efficiency and effectiveness in the performance of a specific job in a digital environment.

The economic growth to jobs creations has continued to rally on the level of digital innovation opportunities being identified and effectively exploited and managed. Worthy of note is the fact that the digital space has opened up new employment opportunities and expanded the employment capacities of existing industries in the country and specifically for young university graduates. Okebukola (2022) observed that the digital space has provided the average with the skills to create employment for them, as many entrepreneurs have emerged since the advent of online businesses. Ogar, Akpan and Anagbogu (2018) noted that many people have had huge career boost and promotion after updating their skills to meet the digital requirements. As companies are scaling up to gain online market share, employees who are able to scale with them gain significant advantage over their counterparts who could not. yielding enough positive result.

Unemployment is a state of joblessness and idleness of one with labour requirements, potentials, skills, attitudes and competencies, including education. It arises when members of a country's labour force are unable to obtain their goals of participation in gainful occupation due to a situation in which supply of labour significantly exceeds demands for it (Umeh, 2021). Unemployed graduates of business education are roaming the streets searching for jobs that are very scares. Thus, these business education graduates who have gone through the undergraduate program in Nigeria high institutions are expected to have acquired enough skills for employment opportunities but this is not so due to rapid rise in digital emergence and penetration in today's businesses. This means that the society cannot continue to leverage on existing business skills to improve employment opportunities without digitalization compliment. Therefore, in this study, the research investigate digital skills utilization and employment opportunities of business education students using digital problem-solving skill and digital marketing skill utilization as variables in which employment opportunities of business education students could be fully realized.

Statement of the Problem

The unemployment situation in Nigeria economy today is a worrisome trend, especially for the young people, since they make up the greater population of the country and most especially in tertiary institution of learning. There is no doubt that Nigerian tertiary institutions has continued to produce many graduate yearly, but their contributions to the National economy are quite not impressive in terms of skills, knowledge and competencies. Hence, this has created enough gaps to why there is a constant increase

to unemployment rate in Nigeria. This issue of unemployment has always been on the front burner of academic research in Nigeria. Many of these inquires have implored and investigated the relationship between certain variables in order to search for the gap existing in employment opportunities within Nigeria system.

Against the backdrop of an ever-increasingly volatile and changing world has come a need and a prospective avenue to engage and equip the citizenry in the light of the nation's state of unemployment. This has prompted the necessity of utilizing digital spaces maximally, which has proved useful over the years. There is, however, still a pressing need to equip the youths with the skills necessary to navigate the internet. While this has been continuously emphasized, it is important to not only incorporate the skills but also maintain a safe identify and participate responsibly in order to gain the trust of others.

However, few studies investigated the many factors needed for the development of digital skill among where the abuse of the internet community among students is high in this part of the world. Therefore, this research seeks to establish a link between digital skills utilization and employment opportunities viz., skills, potentials, businesses, and so on.

Armstrong (2018); Anyanwu (2022); Olomu and Irefin (2021) and Ogundele (2022) have been conducted relating to digital skills acquisition with some studies attributing digital skill employees job effectiveness. However, none of these studies adopted dimensions such as digital problem-solving skills and digital marketing skills, as used in this study; hence, this study fills in the gap in the literature. Also, the various studies reviewed relating to digital skills utilization and employability potentials were more focused on digital entrepreneurship as a concept, and the study, in general, has not been centred on business education students in Rivers State-Owned universities; this implies that this study also fills a gap in methodology.

Finally, based on this premise, there is a research-based knowledge gap that needs to be filled empirically through this study on how significant the aforementioned dimensions of digital skills utilization correlates with employment opportunities among business education undergraduates' students in Rivers State-Owned universities.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study was to examine the relationship between digital skills utilization and employment opportunities of business education students in Rivers State-Owned universities. Specifically, the objectives of this study sought to:

1. determine the relationship between digital problem-solving skill utilization and employment opportunities of business education students in Rivers State-Owned universities.
2. ascertain the relationship between digital marketing skill utilization and employment opportunities of business education students in Rivers State-Owned universities.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide this study:

1. What is the relationship between digital problem-solving skill utilization and employment opportunities of business education students in Rivers State-Owned universities?
2. What is the relationship between digital marketing skill utilization and employment opportunities of business education students in Rivers State-Owned universities?

Null Hypotheses

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

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between digital problem-solving skill utilization and employment opportunities of business education students in Rivers State-Owned universities.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between digital marketing skill utilization and employment opportunities of business education students in Rivers State-Owned universities.

Conceptual Clarification

Concept of Digital Skill

As knowledge and skills for utilization of digital tools becomes imperative, it will be realized that digital literacy has to do with the knowledge of digital tools and the appropriate means of utilizing them to create, gather, and share information among users. Chukwu (2021) defined literacy skills as the ability to use technological devices such as computers and other mobile technologies to communicate and process information both online and offline. According to Ogar et al. (2018), digital skill has to do with the combination of technical procedural, cognitive and emotional social skills which enable one to use technological devices to file, manage, read and communicate information using users' interface.

Adeoye and Olaitan (2022) also opined that digital skill is concerned with the ability to understand and use information in multiple formats from wide range of sources using electronic technologies such as computers and smart-phones creatively and safely. Digital literacy encompasses knowledge and skills needed to use technological offerings as well as to critical assess the impact of utilizing digital technology on personal development and society; this is, in addition to ICT competence, it incorporates three pillars known as smart use, nurturing values, and an understanding of the digital age (Ifijeh et al., 2021).

In light of the foregoing definitions, it would be realized that digital skill is vital to bridge the gap in technological application to drive productivity in human society in this technological era. It is for this reason that United Nation Commission on Science and Technology for Development (UN-CSTD, 2018) defined digital literacy as the knowledge and skills required by an individual to be able to use ICT to accomplish goals in his or her personal or professional life. Andrea (2020) opined that digital literacy is significant to the employability of employees who want to contribute significantly to the productivity of their workplace in this 21st century. Supporting this, Ifijeh et al. (2021) noted that in this era where technology drives virtually every aspect of human activities, it is significant that individual develop digital skill in order not to be at disadvantage when it comes to the use of digital technology to access and deliver

quality instruction that can drive their productivity and ensure their contribution to national development agenda. To live and contribute meaningfully to personal and national discourse, digital literacy is most life skill for citizens. Supporting this, Andrea (2020) noted that digital literacy is a life skill because it touches all areas of contemporary human existence. Odu and Omosigho (2020) also noted that digital literacy is an essential life skill for the workforce of a nation within today's digital world since it empowers workers with critical thinking skills and the skills to evaluate; understand and delivery institution from online sources. UN-CSTD (2018) averred that 'digital literacy for all is a basic requirement to enable every citizen to participate fully in today's digital driven society. Olaniyi (2022) opined that digital skills empower people to work from their places of comfort efficiently without wastage of much resources and overcoming many barriers such as: distance and place which would have hindered productivity.

In another development Adeoye and Olaitan (2022) posits this, digital literacy has to do with the combination of technical procedure, cognitive and emotional-social skills which enable one to use technological devices to carry out technology activities in workplace. Alexander et al. (2018) opined that digital literacy is an umbrella term that includes a continuum of meanings that cut across the ability to use digital devices or software, to being capable of consuming and producing digital content, to meaningfully participating in digital communities. Ifijeh et al. (2021) defined digital literacy as the ability to identify, search and utilize required information for effective multimedia formats from different sources presented through information and communication technologies. Adeoye and Olaitan (2022) also opined that digital literacy is concerned with the ability to understand and use information in multiple formats from wide range of sources using electronic technologies such as computers and smartphones creatively and safely. Perrezi and Bruce (2023) offered that digital skill encompasses knowledge and skills needed to use technological offering as well as to critical assess the impact of utilizing digital technology on personal development and society, that is, in addition to ICT competence, it incorporates three pillars known as smart use, nurturing values, and an understanding of the digital age.

Concept of Employment

Employment is not a simple term denoting the mere holding of a job for which a wage is paid, or the operating of one's own business. Rather, according to Ezekiel (2018), it signifies the state of anyone who is doing what, under the circumstances, he most wants to do. Such a person is fully employed. A community or nation has full employment when all of its people are fully employed.

For Razaq and Olaleye (2021), employment is a relationship between two parties, usually based on a contract where work is paid for, where one party, which may be a corporation for profit, not-for-profit organization, co-operative or other entity is the employer and the other is the employee. Employees work in return for payment, which may be in the form of an hourly wage, by piecework or an annual salary, depending on the type of work an employee does or which sector she or he is working in. Employees in some fields or sectors may receive gratuities, bonus payment or stock options. In some types of employment, employees may receive benefits in addition to payment. Benefits can include health insurance, housing, disability insurance or use of a gym. Employment is typically governed by employment laws or regulations or legal contracts (Matthew, 2020).

A self-employed person does not work for a specific employer who pays them a consistent salary or wage. Self-employed individuals, or independent contractors, earn income by contracting with a trade or business directly. In most cases, the payer will not withhold taxes, so this becomes the responsibility of the self-employed individual. Self-employed persons may be involved in a variety of occupations but generally are highly skilled at a particular kind of work. Writers, trades-people, freelancers, traders/investors, lawyers, salespeople, and insurance agents all may be self-employed persons.

A self-employed person refers to any person who earns their living from any independent pursuit of economic activity, as opposed to earning a living working for a company or another individual (an employer). A freelancer or an independent contractor who performs all of their work for a single client may still be a self-employed person. Alternatively, a business owner has an ownership stake but may not be involved in the day- to-day operations of the company. In contrast, a person who is self-employed both owns the business and is also the primary or sole operator. The taxation rules that apply to those who are self-employed differ from the employee or a business owner.

Digital Skill Compliance on Business Education Development for Employment Opportunities in the 21st Century

Business education involves the learning of different types of business related skills such as improved decision-making skills, identification and utilization of business opportunities, setting up and properly running an enterprise and recently, skills to access information and use different digital tools to create better working space (Ifijeh et al., 2021). Digitalization now the major driver in today's global economy has become one of the most sought after skill-sets of the 21st century. The internet is now the new and obviously the biggest market place worldwide, and digital skills are the key to unlocking the potentials in this new market place. The global market system of today needs new sets of skills for marketing, advertising and business promotional activities necessary for setting-up, growing and effective management of businesses. Students need full range of such digital skills in order to meaningfully participate in the 21st century global economy (Allen & Adepoju, 2022).

How well Business Education students will fare in the business world depend greatly on the appropriate skills they have acquired that will enable them fit into the society and the world of work. Twenty-first century skills are not entirely a new concept; but ICT component of the skill sets are very crucial in today's global setting. Digital skill compliant of Business Education offers unique opportunity for participation in the growing digital business world and the changing dynamics of business ecosystems. The usefulness of digital skill or its compliance as important skill-sets for business development lies on the use perception, the productive function and usage frequency.

The innovation and advancement in technology has made some of the courses in the business education curriculum to change, for instance typewriting has changed to word/data processing technology. Also, the teaching of shorthand presently is sliding down into oblivion. Its relevance in the contemporary world of work has been questioned. According to Nwogu (2015), shorthand is one of the trees in the forest of tillers under business education rubric. It has grown steadily over many years and now is dying a slow aimless death caused by rotting pockets of irrelevance. Out-dated

courses, skills and techniques should be doing away with. Business education should be poised to prepare students and educators alike for jobs that do not exist yet, teaching them how to learn, unlearn and relearn.

Acquiring skills has become a lot easier these days because someone has made the processes and uploads it on the internet. This becomes advantageous to digital skill compliant students. Various categories of entrepreneurship skills such as personal characteristics, interpersonal skills, critical and creative thinking and practical skill can be acquired using digital tools.

Digital Problem-Solving Skill Utilization and Employment Opportunity of Business Education Students

Problems are an integral part of the lives of an individual. These take place in terms of number of areas, such as home, family, relationships, education, jobs, career, financial resources, travelling, health and so forth. In some cases, the problems that take place are in a major form, whereas, in other cases, they are in a minor form. In some cases, the individuals put into operation methods and approaches on their own to provide solutions to the problems, whereas, in other cases, they need to obtain support and assistance from others (Chukwu, 2021).

When certain problems are experienced by teachers within the tertiary educational institutions in the course of implementation of their job duties, they obtain support and help from their colleagues and superiors (Razaq & Olaleye, 2021). Therefore, problem-solving skills can be developed on one's own as well as through obtaining support and assistance from others. Problem solving skill is a term normally used in facilitating the understanding of the problems and challenges experience by individuals. Hence, to adequately cope with problems and challenges, one needs to hone their problem solving skills. According to Ogar et al. (2018), individuals who possess the abilities to cope with problems and identify the situations in a calm and composed manner are able to achieve their job objectives in a well-defined manner, and in addition to that these individuals will be regarded as assets by the institutions. Problem-solving skills are acknowledged and valued by the individuals, who are in leadership positions. Therefore, when the individuals are able to solve the problems and difficulties in an appropriate manner and make use of their competencies and abilities to carry out their job duties well and achieve the desired goals, they are able to recognize the meaning and significance of problem solving skills.

Digital Marketing Skill and Employment Opportunities of Business Education Students

The Digital Marketing Institute (2018) defines digital marketing as the use of digital technology to create integrated, targeted, and measurable communications that help to gain and keep customers while building deeper relationships with them (Iwu, 2016). Digital marketing includes direct marketing and interactive marketing. Direct marketing treats customers as individuals and defines them as not only the character but also their behavior pattern, and interactive marketing functions to overcome individuals and can collect and remember individual responses. Economic growth in the digital era is inseparable from the influence of technology and marketing through social media. The digital marketing industry is accessible through platforms and the latest technology. The rapid development of information technology gives a significant impact on business activities. Various business activities, from small to large scale, take

advantage of this development to run their business. The right marketing and media strategies are reaching the target market, so their sales volume and profits always increase. Digital marketing, one of the marketing media, is currently in great demand by the community to support its various activities. They gradually abandon the conventional marketing model and switch to modern or digital marketing. The benefit of digital marketing communications and transactions is flexible to be used at any time or in real-time and globally. Most social media users are chat-based media and Macro small and medium (MSMEs) enterprises must be able to capture this opportunity to develop their markets by utilizing digital means (Suharjo, Fahmi, and Hannan, 2020). The development of sophisticated technology, creating a digital era, encourages people to use it and one of the most useful technologies is the internet network. The internet has changed the way humans interact because the network connects them to communicate without barriers to space, distance, and time. The internet is a vast public network that originates from computers, connects many users around the world, and has enormous information storage facilities.

Method

This study adopted correlation research design and the population comprised of 1,220 final year business education students in the two Rivers State-Owned universities running business education programme. The sample size of this study consisted of 215 final year students which was determined using Krejcie and Morgan sample size determination table. However, simple random sampling technique was considered fit for this study. Data were collected through self-developed instruments titled “Digital Skill Utilization of Business Education Students Questionnaire (DiSUBESQu) and Employment Opportunities of Business Education Students Questionnaire (EmOBESQu)”, which were validated by two research experts from Business Education Department. On reliability of the instruments, test re-test method was adopted and reliability index of 0.75 and 0.80 were established respectively using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) and were deemed adequate for this study. Responses on the instruments were rated on four (4) point rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA - 4), Agree (A - 3), Disagree (D - 2) and Strongly Disagree (SD - 1). In addition, Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was used to analyze the research questions and to test the null hypotheses, and any value of the calculated coefficient that is greater than or equal to the critical table value at a given degree of freedom would be regarded as significant and the associated hypothesis rejected but if otherwise, the associated hypothesis would be accepted.

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between digital problem-solving skills utilization and employment opportunities of business education students in Rivers State-Owned universities?

Table 1: Correlation Coefficient between Digital Problem-Solving Skill Utilization and Employment Opportunities of Business Education Students

Variables	N	ΣX ΣY	ΣX^2 ΣY^2	ΣXY	r	Remarks
Digital Problem-Solving Skill Utilization	215	342.5	1128.0	1890.3	0.80	Very Strong/Positive Relationship

Employment Opportunities	215	280.4	1238.0
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Source: Researcher's Fieldwork (2024)

Table 1 reveals that the correlation coefficient between digital problem-solving skill utilization and employment opportunities of business education students in Rivers State-Owned universities is 0.80. This shows a very strong and positive relationship between digital problem-solving skill utilization and employment opportunities of business education students.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between digital marketing skill utilization and employment opportunities of business education students in Rivers State-Owned universities?

Table 2: Correlation Coefficient between Digital Marketing Skill Utilization and Employment Opportunities of Business Education Students

Variables	N	ΣX ΣY	ΣX^2 ΣY^2	ΣXY	r	Remarks
Digital Marketing Skill Utilization	215	338.0	1008.0	1432.2	0.83	Very Strong/Positive Relationship
Employment Opportunities	215	280.4	1150.4			

Source: Researcher's Fieldwork (2024)

Table 2 reveals that the correlation coefficient between digital marketing skill utilization and employment opportunities of business education students in Rivers State-Owned universities is 0.83. This indicates a very strong and positive relationship between digital marketing skill utilization and employment opportunities of business education students.

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between digital problem-solving skill utilization and employment opportunities of business education students in Rivers State-Owned universities.

Table 3: Test of Correlation of Relationship between Digital Problem-Solving Skill Utilization and Employment Opportunities of Business Education Students at 0.05 Level of Significance

Variables	N	Df	r-cal	r-critical	LS	Decision
Digital Problem-Solving Skill Utilization	215	213	0.80	0.196	0.05	Significant /Rejected
Employment Opportunities	215					

Source: Researcher Fieldwork (2024)

Table 3 shows that the calculated r-value of 0.80 is greater than the r-critical value of 0.196. Therefore, since the computed r-value is greater than r-critical value, the hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between digital problem-solving skill and employment opportunities of business education students in Rivers State-Owned universities is hereby rejected.

Ho2: There is no significant relationship between digital marketing skill utilization and employment opportunities of business education students in Rivers State-Owned universities.

Table 4: Test of Correlation of Relationship between Digital Marketing Skill Utilization and Employment Opportunities of Business Education Students at 0.05 Level of Significance

Variables	N	Df	r-cal	r-critical	LS	Decision
Digital Marketing Skill Utilization	215					
Employment Opportunities	215	213	0.83	0.196	0.05	Significant /Rejected

Source: Researcher’s Fieldwork (2024)

Table 4 reveals that the calculated r-value of 0.83 is greater than r-critical value of 0.196. Therefore, since the computed r-value is greater than r-critical value, the hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between digital marketing skill utilization and employment opportunities of business education students in Rivers State-Owned universities is hereby rejected.

Discussion of Findings

Digital Problem-Solving Skill Utilization and Employment Opportunities of Business Education Students

The result analysis in Table 1 shows that there is a very strong and positive relationship between digital problem-solving skill utilization and employment opportunities of business education students in Rivers State-Owned universities. In addition, the associated hypothesis shown in Table 3 reveals that there is a significant relationship between digital problem-solving skills of business education students. This finding is in line with the view of Chukwu (2021) who averred that individuals who possess the abilities to cope with problems and identify the situations in a calm and composed manner are able to achieve their job objectives in a well-defined manner, and in addition to that these individuals will be regarded as assets by the institutions.

Digital Marketing Skill Utilization and Employment Opportunities of Business Education Students

The result analysis in Table 3 indicates that there is a very strong and positive relationship between digital marketing skill utilization and employment opportunities of business education students in Rivers State-Owned universities. In addition, the associated hypothesis shown in Table 4 shows that there is a significant relationship between digital marketing skill utilization and employment opportunities of business education students. This finding is in sync with the assertion of Iwu (2016) who opined that digital marketing includes direct marketing and interactive marketing.

Conclusion

This study examined the relationship between digital skill utilization and employment opportunities of business education students. Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that a significant relationship exist between digital skill utilization and employment opportunities of business education students in Rivers State-Owned

tertiary institutions. Hence, the aforementioned students are expected to acquire these skills for employment opportunities upon graduation.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were proffered:

1. Business educators should endeavor to inculcate the right digital problem-solving skills in students in order to arouse their interest while using digital devices.
2. Management of institutions should engage students in real-life entrepreneurial activities such as participating in a business competition in order to boost their digital marketing skills for a practical setting.

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