

RE-INVIGORATING E-MARKETING AND ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS OF BUSINESS EDUCATION UNDERGRADUATES IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

The study explores how e-marketing could be re-invigorated to the teaching of entrepreneurial skills of business education curriculum in Nigerian tertiary institutions. The horrendous nature of unemployability of Nigerian graduates results from the dearth or inadequacy of e-marketing to equip the entrepreneurial skills of teaming graduates from Nigerian tertiary institutions. Instead of business education graduates to create jobs, they continually seek non-existent white collar jobs. These researchers examined the various studies conducted by various scholars and discovered that it appears there are dearth of courses in the curriculum of undergraduates about e-marketing, it is against this background that these researchers are recommending that curriculum planners should imbue into the national curriculum, courses to be taught at undergraduate level, that could equip the learners about how to market their skills and create jobs that could in turn reduce the unemployment rate in Nigeria through digital commerce. This could help reduce the horrendous crime rates that result from unemployment in Nigeria, it could also provide to the Nigerian government, infrastructures that could equip learners and instructors.

Keywords: Re-invigorating, Entrepreneur, E-marketing, Curriculum, Undergraduates

Introduction

E-marketing also known as digital or online marketing involves using electronic communication technologies like the internet, mobile phones and digital television to achieve marketing objectives. They are strategies to enhance promotion of sales of products and services online. The following are the aspects of e-marketing;

Using online platforms and tools like websites, social media, e-mail and so on to promote products or services. It enhances reaching of targeted or specific audiences. It enhances interactive engagement, it has data-driven insights and it is cost effective because it reduces bottlenecks of traditional physical storefront and traditional advertising, it

allows businesses to reach customers worldwide or globally.

Development of entrepreneurial skills involves combination of personal attributes, business acumen and technical abilities that enable individuals to identify opportunities, develop innovative solutions and manage resources to create and grow a successful business. These skills are needed by business owner and are valuable in various professional roles and can enhance innovation and growth in any setting. Development of entrepreneurial and e-marketing skills is crucial or essential for business education undergraduates, because it involves integrating relevant skills into curriculum such as digital literacy, e-commerce marketing and social media marketing to equip students with the

tools to succeed in both traditional and online business ventures. Skills such as curriculum development, practical training, mentorship and guidance, industry collaboration, innovation and experimentation should be focused in the training of business education undergraduates, because they will be skillful and become entrepreneurs and valuable e-marketers.

The horrendous situation of unemployment in Nigeria particularly of undergraduates seems to have accounted for various criminalities ravaging Nigeria. This seems to have accounted for most of the illicit behavior of youths in Nigeria. If the usage of Information Communication Technology, coupled with e-marketing and earlier introduced to the curriculum of Nigeria undergraduates, it could boost employability, encourage entrepreneurship and prepare the teaming graduates of business education for digital age. This can be attained by incorporating e-marketing concepts and tools into existing courses by developing dedicated e-marketing modules and engaging in entrepreneurial development also in digital marketing. This involves incorporating digital strategies into their teaching and learning process focusing on practical skills and real-world applications and fostering a more entrepreneurial mindset. The insufficiency of entrepreneurial skills seems to have been accountable for humongous unemployment bedeviling Nigeria as a nation. This is because if undergraduates are deficient in the acquisition of knowledge of e-marketing in equipping their entrepreneurial skills, it could impact their proficiency both in the school and after graduation.

There are strategies that could enhance incorporating e-marketing into the entrepreneurial skills of undergraduates so that they could become job creators rather than mere job seekers that permeate Nigeria

as a nation. The following are the areas the curriculum of undergraduate should focus:

Courses that involves digital marketing strategies, social media marketing, content creation or influencing should be undertaken to improve the entrepreneurial skills of our teaming business studies undergraduate and this should be introduced early enough so that they get acclimatized to the world of market so that on graduation, their entrepreneurial skills would have been equipped.

Also, data analytics and business intelligence modules should be well organised and packaged in their curriculum to equip them with those skills to make data-driven decision. This is because the global dictate nowadays is that all human endeavours are reduced and computerized to the extent that undergraduates need to be equipped in the ways that they will be able assemble information and translate them into accurate data to be stored in the data bank. This could be accomplished by transcribing all of these into intelligence modules in the forms of verbal and numeracy researching modules that could enhance them puzzling into structure that could equip their reasoning.

Also, undergraduates need entrepreneurial marketing education by incorporating case studies of successful Nigerian businesses and offering guidance on starting and managing a business using e-marketing. This could improve the data bank and alleviate the dearth of information about the world of successful entrepreneurs and marketing skills of successful business men in Nigeria. In the traditional Nigeria, there used to be repository knowledge where students could read, learn and improve but unfortunately, it seems not so, it could be an eye opener for the curriculum planners and teaming undergraduates in the Nigerian tertiary institutions. All the above could be enhanced through experiential learning through the following means:

- a. Industry Partnership: This could be done with collaboration with businesses by engaging our students in internships with institutions that are into entrepreneurial e-marketing. There is therefore, a dire need to imbue into the national curriculum courses that are practical oriented so that business education undergraduates could be equipped with e-marketing skills that could make them fit appropriately to the world of work.
- b. Incorporating case studies of Nigeria businesses illustrate marketing strategies and decision –making processes, doing this will make undergraduates have practical experiences that could equip them with e-marketing skills.
- c. Simulations are part of the experiences ought to be learnt while in school. This could be done by equipping them with virtual business games so that they could think outside their boxes. This could imbue in them and enable them to properly engage in e-marketing which is one of the global dictates to enhance national development.
- d. Technology Integration: Equipping undergraduates with the knowledge of e-learning utilizing learning platforms provide access to resources and flexible learning options. Student ability to access this technology could make them accessible to resources outside their jurisdiction. It makes learning a student centered issue, thereby, alleviating their ignorance. It could enhance introducing students to popular digital marketing tools and platforms very early.
- e. Online Collaboration: Facilitates online group projects, workshops, conferences and discussions to encourage collaboration and communication skills.

The following are the means and advantages that could accrue to learners:

1. It could be a means of providing training for students effective online teaching methods, digital marketing trends and relevant technologies.
2. Online Resources: Provide access to online resources and research on digital marketing and business education.
3. Networking: encourage faculties to network with industry professionals and participate in online conferences.

Assessment and Evaluation

- It is appropriate to develop online quizzes and assignments to evaluate student learning and engagement
- Create digital portfolios: This will encourage students to create digital portfolios to showcase their work and skills
- Evaluate students’ projects: Based on their ability to apply digital marketing skills to real world scenarios.

Benefits of Reinvigorating e-marketing with the Entrepreneurial Skills of University Undergraduates

- a. Graduates will be better prepared for the digital marketing landscape and the evolving demands of the business world.
- b. It could increase employability, students could be more marketable to employers who are increasingly looking for candidates with digital marketing skills and real-world experience.
- c. It could foster a more entrepreneurial mindset, encouraging students to start their own businesses and create jobs.
- d. It incorporates enhanced learning i.e learning and digital tools can provide a more engaging and effective learning experience.
- e. It enhances greater access, making higher education more accessible to a wider audience, including those in remote areas or with limited resources.

In a study conducted by Olori, Asuquo and Kanu (2020), they investigated the strategies for the re-invigoration of business education curriculum for the promotion of blue collar jobs among graduates of business education in federal universities in South East states of Nigeria. The descriptive research design of the survey type was used. Using 44 business education lecturers from the four federal universities that offer business education program in South East States, using purposive sampling technique, 0.79 reliability coefficient obtained at 0.05 level of significance, after ensuring the reliability of the instrument. The data was analysed using mean standard deviation and analysis of variance (ANOVA) to test the hypothesis. Findings revealed that integration of liberal learning to business practices inclusion of mechanism, for identification of viable business opportunities and inclusion of business plan development were some of the strategies for reinvigorating business education contents. Application of online learning for practical exhibitions and SWOT analysis to business practices were some of the strategies required for reinvigorating business education curriculum delivery.

A study was conducted by Obiako (2024) on enhancing business education in Nigeria on secondary schools; a comprehensive approach. The current state of business education faces significant challenges including outdated curricula, inadequate teacher training, limited resources and a lack of integration with modern technological advancements. The researcher presented a comprehensive approach to enhancing business education in Nigerian secondary schools, he identified key areas for improvement such as entrepreneurship development, financial literacy, digital business, sustainability and soft skills training. It advocates for the incorporation of global best practices, industry partnerships and innovative

teaching methods to address these challenges. It highlights the importance of STEM interpretation, cultural awareness and leadership training as tools to empower students and foster economic development. By addressing systemic challenges such as resource disparities and the digital divide, it underscores the need for a collaborative effort among educators, policy makers and the private sector to revitalize business education in Nigeria. It proposes actionable strategies like curriculum modernization, teacher empowerment programs and monitoring frameworks to ensure sustained progress. The research envisions a future where business education becomes a transformative force in shaping Nigerian youth driving economic growth and fostering global competitiveness.

A study conducted by Egajivwie and Uge (2024) investigated the digital marketing competencies required of business education students for employability, 181 final year business education students from public tertiary institution in Delta state were used for the study. Census sampling was used for the study, using a Likert rating scale. After ensuring the validity and reliability of the instrument used using Cronbach method. The descriptive and inferential analysis of the data revealed that business education students' current level of competence in digital marketing skills is poor and this results from poor integration of digital marketing resources and tools. It was concluded that proficiency in digital marketing skills is essential for enhanced employability in the business domain, but business education students have poor proficiency in digital marketing. It was recommended that business education practitioners should adequately equip the students with the knowledge and skills in digital marketing such as, engine optimization and content market to enable fit into the current jobs expectancy.

In a research conducted by Nwazor and Godwin-Maduike (2015), they analysed the effects of social media on academic performance of business education students in south east Nigeria. 520 respondents were given the copies of the questionnaire using descriptive statistics to analyse the data. Findings showed that the students of business education in South east Nigeria use Facebook more than any other social networking sites. The students use it mostly to keep touch with themselves.

Hollenbeck, Mason and Song (2011) conducted a study on how to enhance student learning by identifying fundamental principles to be used when designing website platforms. Using in-depth interviews with the graduates and undergraduates, it was revealed that five fundamental pedagogical principles for enhancing student learning through the use of technology;

- i. Student-to-student connectivity
- ii. Instruction-to-student interactivity
- iii. Goal efficiency
- iv. Quality content and;
- v. Student appeal

It reveals the importance of the presence of the five pedagogical principles and offer useful implications for marketing faculty.

Student-to-student interaction refers to tools such as online discussion forums, blogs, email or chats that facilitate communication between students about concepts being addressed. Quality content is the extent to which the information on a website is perceived as valid and dependable. The relationship between the accuracy and completeness with which students achieve certain goals and the resources expended to achieve those goals is defined as goal efficiency. Students appeal has to do with presentation, attractiveness, display of consistency, categorization of the information in a user-

friendly format, customization and flexibility.

In an experimental study conducted by Abanyam, Edeh, Abanyam, Obimgbo and Nwokike (2023), investigated the zeal to determine an interactive/digital learning environment that supports students' academic engagement and improve learning outcome. Using quasi experimental design and non-equipment control group design, using purposive sampling technique, 422 undergraduate marketing students from the south-south Nigeria were randomly selected involving students from university of Calabar (UNICAL), Ambrose Alli, Ekpoma (AAU) university of Uyo (UNIUYO) and Delta State University Abraka, (DSUA). UNICAL and AAU were the treatment groups, UNIUYO and DSUA were the control groups. Three sets of instruments were used for the study. Results revealed that students expressed satisfaction and willingness to engage in academic activities via E-MVC while academic engagement had a full mediation effect on students learning performance. It was recommended that university administrators and the ministry of education should create enabling virtual environment that promotes the usage of E-MVC for effective teaching practice.

Statement of the Problem

The rationale behind this study is the horrendous challenges bedeviling graduates of business education in Nigeria tertiary institutions. It appears as if majority of the undergraduates are not adequately equipped with the knowledge and requisite skills of e-marketing particularly in the entrepreneurial development. This is because they seem to lack requisite skills in e-marketing needed by contemporary Nigeria entrepreneurs. This seems to be accountable for humongous unemployment in the Nigeria society. Nigeria successive government seems to face this ugly trends

without imminent solution as indicated by Nigerians and sophisticated media. All these seem to have accounted for the exodus of Nigerians in their bid to seek greener pastures even looking for jobs that appears seemingly insufficient and non-available. The ugly occurrence seems to have accounted for criminality ravaging Nigeria and that has defiled all weapons of sanitation.

Significance of the Study

This study could be of benefit to students, lecturers, parents, prospective researchers, curriculum planners and government. Students could benefit because they would have been equipped technologically about how not to be mere job seekers but job creators after graduation, they will be able to think outside their boxes; it could reduce the rate of unemployment permeating Nigeria, parents could benefit because if the unemployment rate is reduced, it could reduce the burden and challenges presently being faced by Nigerian parents and caregivers. It could be an eye-opener to the lecturers about the inadequacy of the curriculum and enrich them about what students should learn from them. Prospective researchers could benefit by having repository knowledge where they could draw inferences in their researches. They could learn about the challenges bedeviling the entrepreneurial acquisition and development of undergraduates. Curriculum planners could integrate or incorporate into the national curriculum, what could equip learners and lecturers about the teaching and learning of e-marketing in the Nigeria tertiary institutions. The Nigeria government could be intimated and could be well informed about infrastructural development by acquiring facilities that could engender teaching and learning e-marketing for entrepreneurial development.

Conclusion

Based on the above discovery, it can be concluded that majority of the business education undergraduate are deficient in the requisite entrepreneurial skills in e-marketing that could enhance their coping with challenges that befalls them on graduation. Lecturers also seemingly lacks definite curriculum that could enhance the teaching of e-marketing and entrepreneurial skills in the Nigeria tertiary institutions. There is also lack of facilities/infrastructure to be used in the teaching of undergraduates the modules of e-marketing in the Nigeria tertiary institution. A lot of business education graduates rather than being job providers are job seekers permeating the huge unemployment status bedeviling the Nigeria labour market.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made;

- The curriculum planners should incorporate courses in the forms of modules to the national curriculum to engender the teaching of e-marketing and building of entrepreneurial skills to the business education undergraduates in Nigeria.
- Lecturers should be trained and re-trained regularly in the skills that could enable them to meet up and engender teaching of undergraduates e-marketing and entrepreneurial skills.
- There should be workshops /seminars for business studies lecturers/students to update and upgrade their knowledge in courses that could be taught to undergraduates.
- Since e-marketing is a global issue, virtually all tertiary institutions in Nigeria should be made to undergo courses that are related to e-marketing and entrepreneurial skills empowerment.
- Parents and significant others should be sensitive about the significance of

development of entrepreneurial skills and e-marketing and the necessities for their wards to key in to it. Parents should be made to provide facilities for e-marketing /entrepreneurial facilities for their children.

- The state and federal government should be aware and made to make provision for teaching aids, resources and facilities that will enhance proper teaching of e-marketing and entrepreneurial skills in the Nigeria tertiary institutions.
- Since unemployment is one of the challenges bedeviling Nigeria, all undergraduates in Nigeria tertiary institution should be made to undertake general studies courses in e-marketing and development of entrepreneurial skill as one of the requisite courses to alleviate the issues of unemployment in Nigeria.
- Undergraduates should be made to engage in internship schemes by partnering with industries in order to develop their marketing skills.
- There should also be regular and periodic conferences for learners and lecturers to update their knowledge about e-marketing and development of entrepreneurial skills.

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