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ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND BUSINESS EDUCATION STUDENTS' EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS IN A DIGITAL ECONOMY

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ABSTRACT

This study examined Business education employability skills needed in an artificial intelligence system to promote employment in a digital economy. A case study of undergraduates in tertiary institution in Ekiti State, Nigeria. A descriptive survey design was used for the study. This comprises of undergraduates in Bamidele Olumilua University of Education Science and Technology, Ikere Ekiti, and Ekiti State and Ekiti State University. The sample for the study is made up of 30 undergraduates selected from each institution making a total of 60 undergraduates using simple random sampling technique. Questionnaire titled "Artificial Intelligence and Business Education Employability Skills Questionnaire (AIBESQ)" was used as instrument for data collection. Appropriate statistical tool such as mean ($\bar{x}$), standard deviation and One-way ANOVA were used for data analysis at 0.05 level of significance. The result showed that Business education employability skills such as creative skill, innovative skill and technical skills are crucial for securing job in an artificial intelligence system. This means that Business education students who develop creative thought and ability to make use of tools, software in AI system compliance, easily find new job. Therefore, it was recommended that Business education undergraduate should develop creative skill, innovative skill and technical skills for gainful employment. Business education curriculum should be reviewed to encompasses teaching of employability skills in this digital economy.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, Business Education, Employability, Digital, Economy

Introduction

Artificial Intelligence, often abbreviated as AI, is an innovative field of computer science that involves the development of machines and systems capable of carrying out different tasks required to be performed by human intelligence. These tasks encompass a wide range of different activities, including problem-solving, pattern recognition, natural language understanding, and decision-making. AI systems aim to simulate human cognitive functions, enabling machines to learn, reason, and adapt autonomously (Adebayo, 2023).

Artificial intelligence has amplified skill differences and polarize jobs, or it may equalize opportunities for accessing employment in this digital world. Business education students with low-skilled are at the risk of being replaced by technologies as robots and machines are designed to accomplish repetitive tasks such as production and manufacturing efficiently and accurately (Aceleanu, Serban, & Burghelea, 2025). The advent of AI has replaced millions of jobs and it has also led to the creation of new jobs. Innovation does not always equate to the extinction of jobs where workers are eventually replaced by new ones. Technology can be a complementary force in the workplace.

Kolawole (2024) emphasized that artificial intelligence stands to contribute to high productivity. This has made many employers to get involved in the adoption of AI. To ensure relevance and high employability rate among business education students in a digital world, Adepoju (2023) suggested that business education students must acquire professional skills that will match require artificial intelligence knowledge. Hence, business education students need strong employment skills that will mitigate the challenges of the future. Therefore, business education students need to constantly learn and improve themselves to ensure that they are relevance in the competitive job market (Adegboye, 2021).

Studies are needed to evaluate and assess how AI can fit in the current learning and employability frameworks and to evaluate what can creativity, innovation and technical skills bring to promote better education for employment systems and solutions for business education students. Therefore, this study aims to evaluate business

education skills needed in an artificial intelligence system to promote employment among business education undergraduates in tertiary institution in Ekiti State, Nigeria.

Research Questions

1. How does business education students' creativity and innovation skills enhance employability in an Artificial Intelligence system?
2. How does business education students' technical skills promote employability in an artificial intelligence system?

Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses are raised and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

1. There is no significant impact of business education students' creativity and innovation skills on employability in an Artificial Intelligence system.
2. There is no significant impact of business education students' technical skills on employability in an artificial intelligence system.

Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. This design is considered to be suitable for the study since it intends to seek opinions of business education undergraduates in tertiary institutions in Ekiti state. The study targeted undergraduates in Bamidele Olumilua University of Education Science and Technology, Ikere Ekiti, and Ekiti State and Ekiti State University. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 30 undergraduates from each institution making a total of 60 undergraduates.

The instrument used for data collection is questionnaire titled "Artificial Intelligence and Business Education Employability Skills Questionnaire (AIBEESQ)". The questionnaire consisted of two parts; A & B. Part A solicited for demographic data of the respondents which comprise of Age and Sex while Part B comprising ten (10) item statements and they are arranged in two clusters according to the research questions. Each clusters is weighted in a four-point rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA) = 4, Agree (A) = 3, Disagree (D) = 2 and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1.

The data collected were statistically analyzed using descriptive statistics such as mean ($\bar{x}$) and standard deviation. One-way ANOVA was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. A mean value of 2.50 and above is considered as "Agreed" while a mean rating of less than 2.50 is regarded as "Disagreed". Results and Discussion

Question 1: How does business education students' creativity and innovation skills enhance employability in an Artificial Intelligence system?

Table 1: Business education students' creativity and innovation skills on employability in AI system

S/N	Item Statements	$\bar{X}$	SD	Remarks
1	Business education students who develop creative thought on the use of AI, easily find new job	3.39	0.57	Agree
2	Business education students who is able to produce and explore potentials on the use of AI are quickly employ	3.53	0.58	Agree
3	The ability of Business education students to make transformation that enable the generation of previous idea with the advent of AI enhance employment	3.49	0.57	Agree
4	Business education students' ability to provide problem-solving-based pedagogies through AI enhance the chance of getting job	3.57	0.50	Agree
5	Business education students who develop their innovative skills on the use of AI are easily employ	3.04	0.76	Agree
	Grand Mean	3.40	0.60	Agree

The result of analysis presented in Table 1 revealed that the mean ratings of the responses of the respondents on five items relating to business education students' creativity and innovation skills on employability in AI system had the mean values that ranged between 3.04 to 3.57 which are higher than criterion value of 2.50 on a 4-point rating scale. The above findings indicated that business education undergraduates who develop creative thought on the use of AI, easily find new job; business education undergraduates who is able to produce and explore potentials on the use of AI are quickly employ; the ability of business education undergraduates to make transformation that enable the generation of previous idea with the advent of AI enhance employment; business education undergraduate ability to provide problem-solving-based pedagogies through AI enhance the chance of getting job and business education undergraduates who develop their innovative skills on the use of AI are easily employ. This means that majority of the respondents agreed that creativity and innovation skills of business education undergraduates are essential for employability in AI system. This finding is in line with Adomi & Anie (2022) that the use of technologies has occupied virtually all work system, for business education graduates to become fit and employable in this advance technology system, he or she must possess creative and innovative skills for effective performance. Also, the finding of this study is similar with Ogbomo and Ogbomo (2024) that students need creative and innovative skills to become viable in the work of 21st century.

Research Question 2: How does business education students' technical skills promote employability in an artificial intelligence system?

Table 2: How business education students' technical skills promote employability in an artificial intelligence system

S/N	Item Statements	$\bar{X}$	SD	Remarks
6	Possessing skill for project design and management by Business education undergraduates with the use of AI enhance access to good job	3.54	0.60	Agree
7	Ability to work autonomously by business education undergraduates in AI system gives opportunity for employment.	3.43	0.75	Agree
8	Capacity for business education undergraduate to synthesize and analyze information enhance employment opportunity	3.30	0.84	Agree
9	Possessing basic computing skills facilitate job opportunity in an AI system.	3.38	0.78	Agree
10	Capacity for generating new ideas by business education undergraduates	3.57	0.50	Agree

The items 6-10 in table 2 on how business education students' technical skills promote employability in an artificial intelligence system had their mean scores between 3.30 to 3.57 which are higher than the criterion value of 2.50 on a 4-point rating scale. The findings revealed that the business education undergraduates indicated that technical skills are needed by business education students to gain employment in an AI system. Business education undergraduates need to possess skills for project design and management that are used in AI to enhance access to good job, ability to work autonomously by business education undergraduates in AI system gives opportunity for employment, capacity for business education undergraduate to synthesize and analyze information enhance employment opportunity, possessing basic computing skills facilitate job opportunity in an AI system and capacity for generating new ideas by business education undergraduates. This finding correlate with the finding of Aladejana (2020) that students who are able to make use of particular tools, software, or equipment and possessed job-specific knowledge find it easy across various sectors to secure employment. Aladejana (2020) stressed that understanding and showcasing the right technical skills is crucial for employment in an AI system.

Test of Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant impact of business education students' creativity and innovation skills on employability in an Artificial Intelligence system.

Table 3: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) for impact of business education students' creativity and innovation skills on employability in an Artificial Intelligence system

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	6.556	1	.556	7.056	.000
Within Groups	10.212	58	.201		
Total	16.768	59			

$P < 0.05$ (Significant)

Table 3 revealed a significant impact of business education students' creativity and innovation skills on employability in an Artificial Intelligence system as F-value (7.056) was high, $df = (1, 58)$ and $P (0.000)$ less than 0.05 level of significance. This led to rejection of null hypothesis one. Hence, there is a significant impact of business education students' creativity and innovation skills on employability in an Artificial Intelligence system.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant impact of business education students' technical skills on employability in an artificial intelligence system.

Table 4: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) for impact of business education students' technical skills on employability in an artificial intelligence system

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	7.555	1	.675	8.009	.000
Within Groups	11.213	58	.320		
Total	17.768	59			

$P < 0.05$ (Significant)

The result of statistical analysis for testing the significant impact of business education students' technical skills on employability in an artificial intelligence system in table 4 revealed that the impact was statistically significant as F-value (8.009) was high, $df = (1, 58)$ and $P (0.000) < 0.05$ level of significance. This led to rejection of null hypothesis two. This means that there is a significant impact of business education students' technical skills on employability in an artificial intelligence system.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The study concluded that Business education employability skills such as creative skill, innovative skill and technical skills are crucial for securing job in an artificial intelligence system. This means that Business education students who develop creative thought and ability to make use of tools, software in AI system compliance, easily find new job. Therefore, business education undergraduate should develop creative skill, innovative skill and technical skills for gainful employment. Business education curriculum should be reviewed to encompasses teaching of employability skills in this digital economy.

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