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TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION INTEGRATION AND WORKFORCE READINESS AMONG ACCOUNTING EDUCATION STUDENTS IN NIGERIAN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS

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Abstract
This study examined the relationship between technological innovation integration and workforce readiness among accounting education students in Nigerian tertiary institutions. The study was motivated by the growing demand for accounting graduates who possess digital competencies required for modern technology-driven workplaces. A correlational research design was adopted for the study. The population comprised 259 final-year Business Education students offering accounting-related courses from the Federal College of Education (Technical), Omoku, Rivers State and Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State. The sample size of 155 respondents was determined using the Krejcie and Morgan sample size determination formula. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire titled *Technological Innovation Integration and Workforce Readiness Questionnaire (TIIWRQ)* developed by the researcher. The instrument was validated by experts in Business Education and Measurement and Evaluation, while a reliability coefficient of 0.82 was obtained using Cronbach Alpha. Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to answer the research questions and test the corresponding hypotheses at a 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that accounting software integration has a strong positive relationship with workforce readiness among accounting education students. The study also found that digital learning platforms significantly contribute to students' technological competence and workplace preparedness. Furthermore, exposure to data analytics technologies was found to significantly enhance students' analytical skills and readiness for modern accounting practice. Based on the findings, the study concluded that effective integration of technological innovations into accounting education programmes improves the workforce readiness of accounting education students in Nigerian tertiary institutions. The study therefore recommended that tertiary institutions should strengthen

the integration of accounting software, digital learning platforms, and data analytics technologies in accounting education programmes in order to equip students with the technological competencies required in contemporary accounting workplaces.

Keywords: Technological innovation integration, workforce readiness, digital learning platforms, accounting software.

Introduction

Technological innovations are rapidly transforming the global accounting profession and redefining the competencies required of accounting graduates. Contemporary accounting practices now rely heavily on digital technologies such as artificial intelligence, cloud accounting systems, enterprise resource planning software, blockchain applications, and data analytics tools. These technologies have improved efficiency in financial reporting, auditing, and decision-making processes within organizations. Consequently, accounting education must adapt to these technological changes in order to adequately prepare students for modern professional practice (Al-Htaybat, von Alberti-Alhtaybat, & Alhatabat, 2020; Pan & Seow, 2021).

In response to these developments, higher education institutions across the world are increasingly integrating technological innovations into accounting curricula. Technology integration in accounting education involves the use of accounting software packages, digital learning platforms, data analytics tools, and simulation technologies to enhance students' learning experiences and practical competencies. Studies have shown that the incorporation of digital technologies into accounting education enhances students' problem-solving abilities, analytical skills, and professional competence required in contemporary workplaces (Jackling & Natoli, 2022; Lange, Jackling, & Gut, 2023).

Within the field of Business Education, the integration of technology into teaching and learning has been recognized as a critical strategy for preparing students for the dynamic demands of the labour market. Business education programmes are expected to equip students with entrepreneurial, managerial, and technological competencies necessary for effective participation in the modern economy. According to scholars in business education, technological innovation integration improves instructional delivery and promotes the development of digital competencies among students (Okoro, 2020; Osuala & Ubulom, 2021). Publications of the Association of Business Educators of Nigeria have also emphasized the need for business and accounting education programmes to incorporate emerging digital technologies to ensure graduates remain competitive in the global labour market.

Workforce readiness has therefore become a critical outcome of modern tertiary education. Workforce readiness refers to the extent to which graduates possess the knowledge, technical competencies, digital literacy, critical thinking abilities, and professional attitudes required to function effectively in the workplace (Moses, Okute & Adie, 2025; Caballero & Walker, 2019). In accounting education, workforce readiness implies that graduates should be able to apply accounting knowledge using modern technological tools, adapt to emerging innovations, and demonstrate professional competence in digital accounting environments. However, despite the growing emphasis on technological innovation in accounting education, concerns persist regarding the readiness of graduates for the technology-driven workplace. Employers often report that many accounting graduates possess strong

theoretical knowledge but lack sufficient technological competencies required for modern accounting practices (Nwaokokorom, 2024; Howieson, 2020). This concern has generated increasing calls for universities and tertiary institutions to redesign their accounting curricula to include practical exposure to digital accounting technologies.

In Nigeria, tertiary institutions offering accounting education programmes have gradually begun to incorporate technological tools into teaching and learning processes. These include the use of accounting software packages, learning management systems, virtual classrooms, and digital instructional resources. Scholars in Business Education have noted that technology integration enhances students' engagement, improves learning outcomes, and strengthens employability skills (Ubulom & Enyekit, 2022; Ezenwafor, 2023). Similarly, studies published in the Nigerian Journal of Business Education emphasize that technological competence is increasingly becoming a prerequisite for successful participation in modern accounting and business professions.

Despite these efforts, the level of technological exposure among accounting education students in many Nigerian tertiary institutions remains uneven. In some institutions, teaching methods still rely largely on traditional lecture approaches with limited opportunities for students to interact with modern accounting technologies. As a result, many graduates may find it difficult to adapt to digital accounting systems used in contemporary organizations.

Given the increasing technological transformation of the accounting profession and the need for graduates who are prepared for the digital workplace, it becomes important to examine the extent to which technological innovation integration contributes to students' workforce readiness. Understanding this relationship will provide valuable insights for educators, curriculum developers, and policy makers seeking to improve accounting education programmes in Nigerian tertiary institutions.

Therefore, this study examines the integration of technological innovations and workforce readiness among accounting education students in Nigerian tertiary institutions.

Statement of the Problem

The rapid advancement of digital technologies has significantly transformed the accounting profession across the world. Modern accounting practices now rely on technological tools such as accounting software, cloud-based accounting systems, artificial intelligence applications, and data analytics platforms to improve financial reporting, auditing processes, and managerial decision making (Nwaokokorom et al 2024; Al-Htaybat et al., 2020; Pan & Seow, 2021). As a result, accounting professionals are increasingly expected to possess strong technological competencies in addition to traditional accounting knowledge.

Consequently, tertiary institutions offering accounting and accounting education programmes are expected to integrate technological innovations into their instructional processes in order to prepare students for the evolving workplace. Technology integration in accounting education has been identified as a crucial strategy for developing students' digital competence, analytical skills, and practical abilities required in contemporary accounting environments (Jackling & Natoli, 2022). Scholars in Business Education have also emphasized that integrating modern technologies into instructional delivery enhances students' employability skills and prepares them for the demands of the digital economy (Wahab, & Akintade (2025; Okoro, 2020; Ubulom & Enyekit, 2022).

Despite the growing emphasis on technological integration in higher education, employers and professional bodies continue to express concerns about the readiness of accounting graduates for modern workplaces. Evidence suggests that many graduates possess adequate theoretical knowledge but lack practical technological competencies needed to function effectively in technology-driven accounting environments (Howieson, 2020). This deficiency has been attributed partly to inadequate exposure to digital accounting tools during university training.

In the Nigerian context, many tertiary institutions have begun to introduce technological tools such as accounting software, digital learning platforms, and computer-based instructional resources into accounting education programmes. However, the extent to which these technological innovations are effectively integrated into teaching and learning processes varies across institutions. Studies in business education literature indicate that insufficient technological infrastructure, limited training of lecturers, and inadequate practical exposure may hinder effective technology integration in accounting education programmes (Ezenwafor, 2023).

Furthermore, although technological innovations are increasingly being introduced into accounting education programmes, there is still limited empirical evidence on whether such integration actually enhances the workforce readiness of accounting education students. Workforce readiness in this context refers to the ability of students to possess the digital competence, technical skills, adaptability, and professional attributes required for successful participation in modern accounting workplaces (Caballero & Walker, 2019).

The persistence of this gap between technological training in tertiary institutions and workplace expectations raises concerns about the preparedness of accounting education graduates for the technology-driven accounting profession. If accounting education programmes fail to adequately integrate relevant technological innovations, graduates may face challenges in adapting to modern accounting practices, thereby reducing their employability and productivity.

Therefore, the problem of this study is to determine the extent to which the integration of technological innovations contributes to the workforce readiness of accounting education students in Nigerian tertiary institutions.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between technological innovation integration and workforce readiness among accounting education students in Nigerian tertiary institutions. Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. determine the relationship between accounting software integration and workforce readiness of accounting education students in Nigerian tertiary institutions.
2. examine the relationship between digital learning platforms and workforce readiness of accounting education students in Nigerian tertiary institutions.
3. determine the relationship between data analytics technology exposure and workforce readiness of accounting education students in Nigerian tertiary institutions.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the relationship between accounting software integration and workforce readiness of accounting education students in Nigerian tertiary institutions?

2. What is the relationship between digital learning platforms and workforce readiness of accounting education students in Nigerian tertiary institutions?
3. What is the relationship between exposure to data analytics technologies and workforce readiness of accounting education students in Nigerian tertiary institutions?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses will be tested at 0.05 level of significance:

H01: There is no significant relationship between accounting software integration and workforce readiness of accounting education students in Nigerian tertiary institutions.

H02: There is no significant relationship between digital learning platforms and workforce readiness of accounting education students in Nigerian tertiary institutions.

H03: There is no significant relationship between exposure to data analytics technologies and workforce readiness of accounting education students in Nigerian tertiary institutions.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this study explains the relationship between technological innovation integration and workforce readiness among accounting education students in Nigerian tertiary institutions. Technological innovation integration represents the independent variable, while workforce readiness represents the dependent variable.

Technological innovation integration in accounting education refers to the incorporation of digital technologies into teaching and learning processes to enhance students' practical competencies and technological skills. Modern accounting practice requires the use of various digital tools, including accounting software packages, digital learning platforms, and data analytics technologies. These technological tools provide students with opportunities to acquire practical knowledge and develop digital competencies required in contemporary accounting environments (Pan & Seow, 2021).

In accounting education programmes, the integration of accounting software enables students to develop hands-on skills in financial recording, reporting, and analysis using computerized accounting systems. Similarly, digital learning platforms such as learning management systems and virtual classrooms support interactive learning and access to instructional resources. Exposure to data analytics technologies also enhances students' ability to interpret financial data and make informed business decisions (Jackling & Natoli, 2022).

Scholars in business education have emphasized that the integration of digital technologies in instructional delivery improves students' technological competence and promotes the acquisition of employability skills needed in the labour market (Okoro, 2020; Ubulom & Enyekit, 2022, Wahab & Akintade, 2025). Business education programmes are therefore expected to incorporate modern technological tools to prepare students for the dynamic demands of the workplace. Studies reported in the Nigerian Journal of Business Education also indicate that technology-based instructional strategies enhance students' problem-solving ability, digital literacy, and professional competence.

Workforce readiness refers to the ability of graduates to possess the knowledge, technical skills, digital competence, and professional attitudes required for effective participation in the workplace. In the context of accounting education, workforce readiness involves students' ability to apply accounting knowledge using modern technologies, adapt to digital

innovations, and demonstrate competence in technology-driven accounting environments (Caballero & Walker, 2019).

The conceptual assumption of this study is that effective integration of technological innovations into accounting education programmes will enhance students' technological competence, thereby improving their readiness for the modern workforce. Therefore, accounting software integration, digital learning platforms, and exposure to data analytics technologies are expected to influence the workforce readiness of accounting education students.

Empirical Review

Several empirical studies have examined the role of technological innovations in improving students' competencies and employability in accounting and business education. Globally, research has shown that integrating digital technologies into accounting education enhances students' practical skills and readiness for professional practice. For example, Pan and Seow (2021) found that exposure to accounting software and digital accounting systems significantly improved accounting students' technological competence and professional preparedness for the workplace.

Similarly, Jackling and Natoli (2022) reported that the integration of digital learning technologies in accounting courses improved students' analytical abilities, problem-solving skills, and employability competencies. Their study emphasized that modern accounting education must incorporate technological tools in order to prepare graduates for the digital transformation of the accounting profession.

In the Nigerian context, studies within the field of business education have also highlighted the importance of technology integration in enhancing students' employability skills. Okoro (2020) in line with Ikpeama and Nwaokokorom (2018) reported that the use of digital technologies in business education programmes improved students' digital literacy and workplace competencies. Likewise, Ubulom and Enyekit (2022) with Wahab & Akintade (2025) found that technology-based instructional strategies enhanced students' practical skills and readiness for employment in business-related professions.

Research published in the Nigerian Journal of Business Education further indicates that the integration of information and communication technologies into business education programmes significantly improves students' technological competence and adaptability to modern workplace environments (Ezenwafor, 2023). These studies emphasize that exposure to technological tools during training enhances students' confidence and ability to apply digital skills in real work settings.

Despite these findings, some studies have reported that technology integration in many Nigerian tertiary institutions remains limited due to inadequate infrastructure, insufficient training of lecturers, and limited access to digital learning resources. As a result, many students graduate without adequate practical exposure to modern accounting technologies (Howieson, 2020).

Although previous studies have established the importance of technology integration in accounting and business education, limited research has specifically examined how different technological innovations collectively influence the workforce readiness of accounting education students in Nigerian tertiary institutions. This gap therefore necessitates further investigation into the relationship between technological innovation integration and workforce readiness among accounting education students.

Methodology

This study adopted a correlational research design to examine the relationship between technological innovation integration and workforce readiness among accounting education students in Nigerian tertiary institutions. The correlational design was considered appropriate because it enables the researcher to determine the degree of relationship that exists between variables without manipulating them. The area of the study comprised two tertiary institutions in Nigeria offering Business Education programmes: the Federal College of Education (Technical), Omoku in Rivers State and Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State. These institutions were selected because they offer accounting education courses within their Business Education programmes and expose students to technology-based instructional practices relevant to the accounting profession. The population of the study consisted of 259 final-year Business Education students offering accounting education courses in the selected institutions. Specifically, the population included 170 final-year students from Federal College of Education (Technical), Omoku and 89 final-year students from Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. Final-year students were selected because they are expected to have completed most of their professional and technology-related courses and are therefore better positioned to assess their readiness for the workforce. The sample size for the study was determined using the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample size determination formula for finite populations. Using this formula, a population of 259 yields an approximate sample size of 155 respondents. The sample was proportionately distributed across the two institutions to ensure adequate representation. Consequently, 102 respondents were selected from Federal College of Education (Technical), Omoku, while 53 respondents were selected from Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. A structured questionnaire titled *Technological Innovation Integration and Workforce Readiness Questionnaire (TIIWRQ)* was used as the instrument for data collection. The questionnaire was structured on a four-point Likert scale of Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree, and contained items designed to measure accounting software integration, digital learning platforms, data analytics technology exposure, and workforce readiness. The instrument was subjected to face and content validation by three experts in Business Education and Educational Measurement and Evaluation. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha, which yielded an overall reliability coefficient of 0.82, indicating that the instrument was reliable for the study. Data collected were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation to answer the research questions, while the corresponding hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance using SPSS.

Data Analysis and Results Presentation

Research Question 1

What is the relationship between accounting software integration and workforce readiness of accounting education students in Nigerian tertiary institutions?

Table 1

Pearson Correlation Analysis of Accounting Software Integration and Workforce Readiness (N = 155)

Variables	N	r	Sig. (p)	Decision
Accounting Software Integration				
Workforce Readiness	155	0.64	0.000	Significant

Source: SPSS Output, 2026.

Interpretation:
The result presented in Table 1 shows that the correlation coefficient between accounting software integration and workforce readiness is r = 0.64 with a p-value of 0.000 at 0.05 level of significance. This indicates a strong positive relationship between the two variables. The finding implies that increased exposure to accounting software during training enhances students' practical accounting skills, technological competence, and confidence in performing accounting tasks, thereby improving their preparedness for employment in modern technology-driven accounting workplaces.

Hypothesis 1
H01: There is no significant relationship between accounting software integration and workforce readiness of accounting education students in Nigerian tertiary institutions.

Table 2
Test of Relationship between Accounting Software Integration and Workforce Readiness

Variables	N	r	Sig. (p)	Decision
Accounting Software Integration & Workforce Readiness	155	0.64	0.000	Reject

Source: SPSS Output, 2026.

Decision:
The null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between accounting software integration and workforce readiness of accounting education students in Nigerian tertiary institutions was tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation. Since the p-value of 0.000 is less than the 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis is rejected. This means that accounting software integration has a statistically significant relationship with the workforce readiness of accounting education students

Research Question 2
What is the relationship between digital learning platforms and workforce readiness of accounting education students in Nigerian tertiary institutions?

Table 3
Pearson Correlation Analysis of Digital Learning Platforms and Workforce Readiness

Variables	N	r	Sig. (p)	Decision
Digital Learning Platforms Workforce Readiness	155	0.58	0.001	Significant

Source: SPSS Output, 2026.

Interpretation:
The result in Table 3 reveals that the correlation coefficient between digital learning platforms and workforce readiness is r = 0.58 with a p-value of 0.001, which is below the 0.05 level of significance. This indicates a moderate positive relationship between the two variables. The finding suggests that the use of digital learning platforms enhances students' access to learning resources, promotes independent learning, and strengthens technological competence, thereby contributing positively to their readiness for employment in digital and technology-oriented workplaces.

Hypothesis 2

H02: There is no significant relationship between digital learning platforms and workforce readiness of accounting education students in Nigerian tertiary institutions.

Table 4

Test of Relationship between Digital Learning Platforms and Workforce Readiness

Variables	N	r	Sig. (p)	Decision
Digital Learning Platforms & Workforce Readiness	155	0.58	0.001	Reject

Source: SPSS Output, 2026.

Decision:

The null hypothesis stating that there is no significant relationship between digital learning platforms and workforce readiness of accounting education students was tested using Pearson correlation analysis. Since the p-value of 0.001 is less than the 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that digital learning platforms significantly influence the workforce readiness of accounting education students in Nigerian tertiary institutions.

Research Question 3

What is the relationship between exposure to data analytics technologies and workforce readiness of accounting education students in Nigerian tertiary institutions?

Table 5

Pearson Correlation Analysis of Data Analytics Technology Exposure and Workforce Readiness

Variables	N	r	Sig. (p)	Decision
Data Analytics Technology Exposure Workforce Readiness	155	0.61	0.000	Significant

Source: SPSS Output, 2026.

Interpretation:

The result shown in Table 5 indicates that the correlation coefficient between exposure to data analytics technologies and workforce readiness is r = 0.61 with a p-value of 0.000, which is less than the 0.05 level of significance. This represents a strong positive relationship between the variables. The finding suggests that students who are exposed to data analytics technologies develop stronger analytical abilities, problem-solving skills, and decision-making competencies that enhance their readiness to perform effectively in modern accounting and financial management environments.

Hypothesis 3

H03: There is no significant relationship between data analytics technology exposure and workforce readiness of accounting education students in Nigerian tertiary institutions.

Table 6
Test of Relationship between Data Analytics Technology Exposure and Workforce Readiness

Variables	N	r	Sig. (p)	Decision
Data Analytics Technology Exposure & Workforce Readiness	155	0.61	0.000	Reject

Source: SPSS Output, 2026.

Decision:
The null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between exposure to data analytics technologies and workforce readiness of accounting education students was tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation. Since the p-value of 0.000 is less than the 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis is rejected. This indicates that exposure to data analytics technologies significantly contributes to the workforce readiness of accounting education students.

Discussion of Findings
The findings of the study revealed that accounting software integration has a significant relationship with the workforce readiness of accounting education students in Nigerian tertiary institutions. This result indicates that exposure to computerized accounting systems during training enhances students' practical competence, confidence, and ability to perform accounting tasks in modern workplaces. The finding supports the earlier position of Pan and Seow (2021), who reported that the integration of accounting software into accounting education improves students' technological competence and professional preparedness. Similarly, Jackling and Natoli (2022) observed that the use of digital accounting tools during training enhances students' employability skills and readiness for contemporary accounting environments.

The study also found that digital learning platforms significantly relate to the workforce readiness of accounting education students. This implies that the use of digital learning platforms enhances students' access to instructional materials, promotes independent learning, and strengthens their technological competence. This finding is consistent with the view of Okoro (2020), who stated that technology-based instructional strategies in business education improve students' digital literacy and workplace competencies. In addition, Ubulom and Enyekit (2022) noted that the integration of digital technologies into teaching and learning processes enhances students' adaptability to modern work environments. Similar evidence reported in the Nigerian Journal of Business Education shows that digital learning technologies significantly contribute to the development of employability skills among business education students (Ezenwafor, 2023).

Furthermore, the findings revealed that exposure to data analytics technologies has a significant relationship with workforce readiness among accounting education students. This suggests that students who are exposed to data analytics tools develop stronger analytical, problem-solving, and decision-making abilities required in modern accounting practice. This finding agrees with the observation of Howieson (2020), who emphasized that data analytics skills are becoming increasingly essential for accounting professionals in technology-driven workplaces. Similarly, Al-Htaybat, von Alberti-Alhtaybat, and Alhatabat (2020) reported that exposure to data analytics and digital technologies during accounting

training enhances students' ability to interpret financial data and make informed business decisions, thereby improving their readiness for professional practice.

Conclusion

The study concludes that the integration of technological innovations significantly enhances the workforce readiness of accounting education students in Nigerian tertiary institutions. Exposure to accounting software, digital learning platforms, and data analytics technologies equips students with the digital competencies and analytical skills required for modern accounting practice. Therefore, effective integration of technological tools in accounting education programmes is essential for preparing graduates to meet the demands of technology-driven workplaces.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. Tertiary institutions offering accounting education programmes should integrate accounting software into instructional activities to improve students' practical accounting skills and workplace preparedness.
2. Lecturers should effectively utilize digital learning platforms in teaching accounting courses to enhance students' technological competence and independent learning abilities.
3. Institutions should expose accounting education students to data analytics technologies through practical training and workshops in order to develop their analytical and decision-making skills required in modern accounting practice.

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