

**INDUSTRY-ACADEMY PARTNERSHIPS AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF FUTURE-READY
MARKETERS: EVIDENCE FROM RIVERS STATE, NIGERIA.**

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Abstract

The disconnect between academia and industry has led to a mismatch between the skills imparted by institutions and the needs of employers, resulting in a shortage of industry-ready marketers. IAP can bridge this gap by providing students with practical skills, internships, and mentorship opportunities, making them more employable and industry-ready. This study therefore investigates the influence of Industry-Academy Partnerships and the Development of Future-Ready Marketer in Rivers State. The study employed a descriptive survey research design. Three research questions were posed and three hypothesis were tested. The population of the study consist of marketing lecturers and final year marketing students comprising 80 and 172 respectively from the three universities offering marketing education in Rivers State. Respondents from the various institutions were surveyed through questionnaire administration. The reliability of the instrument was tested using Cronbach Alpha and a reliability coefficient of 0.89 was obtained. Data analysis was done using descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation while inferential statistics was done using z-test statistics at 0.05 level of significance. The findings from the analysis result reveal no significant difference in the mean rating of respondents on the influence of industry-academic partnership on the development of future-ready marketer in Rivers State, Nigeria. It was concluded that by strengthening partnership in curriculum development, internship and placement, and resource sharing, institutions can equip marketing graduates with the necessary skills, knowledge, and competencies to meet industry needs. The study therefore recommends that Industry partners should be more involved in curriculum development and review to ensure marketing courses are relevant and aligned with industry needs.

Keywords: Industry-Academy, Partnerships, Development, Future-Ready, Marketers, Joint Curriculum Development, Internship and Placement, Resource Sharing.

Introduction

As the global marketing landscape continues to shift and evolve at an incredible pace, the need for marketers who are skilled, flexible, and able to adapt has become increasingly urgent. Nigeria, with its rapidly growing economy and youthful population, presents a unique context for nurturing future-ready marketers who can navigate the complexities of digital transformation, cultural diversity, and economic growth. Akinwumi and Adekunle, (2024) posit that marketing education in Nigeria, like in many parts of the world, faces challenges related to curriculum relevance, technological integration, and alignment with industry expectations. The changing nature of marketing, driven by digital technologies, changing consumer behaviors, and regulatory environments, necessitates that marketing programmes remain agile and responsive.

Preparing marketers who are agile and future-ready requires academic programmes to be forward-looking, incorporating emerging trends, digital fluencies, and strategic thinking. Industry partners can bring invaluable perspectives on current and future industry needs, thereby enriching the educational experience and better positioning graduates for success in a competitive and evolving

job market in Nigeria and globally. The concept of "future-readiness" in marketing encompasses not only technical skills but also adaptability, creativity, and the ability to navigate uncertainty. Akinwumi and Adekunle (2024) therefore, opined that industry-academia partnership (IAP) in business education refers to the partnership between industries and academic institutions to achieve mutually beneficial goals. This partnership enables the sharing of knowledge, resources, and expertise between academic institutions and industries, to advance research, innovation, and education) ultimately enhancing the quality and relevance of business education (Adeyeye, 2015).

Adeyemi and Ekundayo, (2020) argued that industry academia partnership (IAP) is essential for developing practical skills, enhancing employability, and fostering entrepreneurship among business students. Today, industry-academia partnership is recognized as a critical driver of innovation, economic growth, and societal impact. In recent years, there has been a growing recognition of the importance of IAP in marketing education. Industrial-academia partnership in marketing education is a vital component of economic development, particularly in regions like South-South, Nigeria, where economic growth is pivotal for development (BPP, 2020). Adeosun, (2018) maintained that the gap between academia and industry has caused an imbalance between the skills taught in schools and what employers actually need, hence leading to a shortage of marketers who are ready for task ahead. He therefore propose that industry-academy partnerships (IAP) can bridge this gap by providing students with practical skills, internships, and mentorship opportunities, making them more employable and industry-ready. The benefits of industry involvement in curriculum development extend to both students and industry partners. Students gain from a more relevant and practical education, enhancing their employability and career prospects. Industry partners, on the other hand, get access to a pool of skilled graduates who can contribute to their organizations without extensive additional training, thereby reducing recruitment and training costs.

Industry-academy partnerships are increasingly recognized as a vital mechanism for bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical skills required in the workplace. Such collaborations can facilitate curriculum relevance, provide experiential learning opportunities, and ensure that marketing graduates are equipped with the competencies demanded by employers. In the context of Rivers State, Nigeria, exploring these partnerships can offer insights into how academic institutions and industry players can synergize to produce marketers adept at addressing local and global market challenges. Adeyemi and Ekundayo (2017) posit that the concept of industrial-academia partnership in marketing education is complex and multifaceted, encompassing diverse dimensions and metrics. For example, Industry-academia partnerships (IAPs) in curriculum development ensure that academic programs are aligned with industry needs, enhancing the relevance and effectiveness of marketing education. By involving industry professionals in curriculum design and review, academic institutions can incorporate current trends, technologies, and best practices, making the curriculum more dynamic and industry-relevant. This approach allows for the integration of practical skills and theoretical knowledge, ensuring that graduates are well-rounded and job-ready. For instance, industry partners can provide insights into emerging marketing trends, such as digital marketing and data analytics, which can be incorporated into the curriculum.

Gbadamosi (2018) maintained that internships and placements are critical components of industry-academia partnerships, providing students with practical experience and industry exposure. These opportunities allow students to apply theoretical knowledge in real-world settings, develop professional skills, and build networks within their chosen industry. Furthermore, resource sharing between academia and industry can enhance the quality of education and research by providing access to cutting-edge technologies, facilities, and expertise (Adeyemi & Ekundayo, 2017). This partnership can lead to more effective use of resources, reducing duplication and costs. Resources that can be shared include physical facilities, equipment, data, and human expertise. For instance, industry partners can provide access to specialized software, equipment, or facilities that academic

institutions may not afford otherwise. However, despite the growing recognition of the importance of industry-academia partnership (IAP) in enhancing the quality of marketing education (Adeyemi&Ekundayo, 2017; García-Valderrama&Mulero-Mendigorri, 2015), there is a dearth of research on the extent to which IAP influences the future readiness of marketers (FRM) in Nigeria which triggered interest and thus created a need for this study.

Statement of the Problem

The marketing industry in Nigeria is facing a major concern in recruiting graduates who possess the requisite skills, knowledge, and competencies to navigate this complex environment, driven by technological advancements, changing consumer behaviors, and increasing competition. Despite previous effort, such as the integration of entrepreneurship education programs in Nigerian universities, a substantial gap persists between industry requirements and academic offerings. The existing gap between academia and industry has resulted in a mismatch between the skills imparted by institutions and the needs of employers (Ismail et al., 2020; LutfiAriefianto et al., 2024), leading to a shortage of industry-ready marketers who can drive business growth and innovation in the state.

Furthermore, Etzkowitz andLeydesdorff, (1995); Ismail, Omar, and Zainol, (2020) argued that the lack of effective IAP has hindered the development of marketing curricula that are relevant to industry needs, limited the opportunities for students to gain practical experience, and constrained the sharing of resources and expertise between academia and industry.Adeyeye (2015) argued that without effective partnership, business education programs may fail to provide students with the relevant skills and knowledge required by industries, leading to a mismatch between the supply and demand of skilled labor. This mismatch can result in high unemployment rates, reduced economic growth, and decreased competitiveness (World Bank, 2019).

Industry-academia partnership (IAP) has been extolled as a panacea to these challenges, with the potential to enhance the quality and relevance of marketing education. By collaborating with industry partners, institutions can gain access to industry expertise, resources, and best practices, which can help to bridge the gap between academia and industry. This study therefore investigate the influence of industry-academy partnerships on the development of future-ready marketers in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study is to investigate the influence of Industry-Academy Partnerships and the Development of Future-Ready Marketers in Rivers State, Nigeria. Specifically, the objectives are:

1. To investigate the influence of joint curriculum development on the development of agile marketers in Rivers State, Nigeria.
2. To investigate the influence of internship and placement on the development of agile marketers in Rivers State, Nigeria.
3. To investigate the influence of resource sharing on the development of agile marketers in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions are developed to guide this study:

1. To what extent does joint curriculum development between tertiary institutions and industry expert influence the development of agile marketers in Rivers State, Nigeria?
2. To what extent does internship and placement influence the development of agile marketers in Rivers State, Nigeria?
3. To what extent does resource sharing between tertiary institutions and industry expert influence the development of agile marketers in Rivers State, Nigeria?

Research Hypothesis

The following research questions are developed to guide this study:

Ho₁: there is no significant difference in the mean rating of marketing lecturers and students on the influence of Joint curriculum development between tertiary institutions and industry expert on the development of agile marketers in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Ho₂: there is no significant difference in the mean rating of marketing lecturers and students on the influence of internship and placement on the development of agile marketers in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Ho₃: there is no significant difference in the mean rating of marketing lecturers and students on the influence of resource sharing between tertiary institutions and industry expert on the development of agile marketers in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Literature Review

Conceptual Review

Industry-Academia Partnership (IAP)

Industry-Academia Partnership (IAP) refers to the partnership between industries (private sector) and academic institutions (universities, research institutes) to achieve mutually beneficial goals (Akinwumi&Adekunle, 2024). This partnership aims to bridge the gap between theoretical research and practical applications, driving innovation, economic growth, and societal impact. Effective IAP in marketing education requires clear communication, defined roles and responsibilities, flexibility, and mutual respect and trust. It also involves aligning academic and industry cultures, expectations, and timelines (Adeyemi&Ekundayo, 2017). Recent trends in IAP in marketing education include a growing emphasis on digitalization, artificial intelligence, and sustainability. There is also an increasing focus on international collaboration, with partnerships involving industry and academic partners from multiple countries (Ogunleye, 2019). IAP in marketing education has been found to be effective in enhancing the relevance and applicability of academic research. It also provides opportunities for students and researchers to develop practical skills and gain industry experience. IAP involves the sharing of resources, expertise, and knowledge between industry and academia to advance research, innovation, and education. This partnership can take various forms, including research partnerships, joint projects, internships, and resource sharing.

Dimensions of Industrial-Academia Partnership (IAP)

Joint Curriculum Development

Collaborative curriculum development involves joint efforts between academia and industry to design programs that meet both academic standards and industry requirements (Gbadamosi, 2017). This approach allows for the integration of practical skills and theoretical knowledge, ensuring that graduates are well-rounded and job-ready. For instance, industry partners can provide insights into emerging marketing trends, such as digital marketing and data analytics, which can be incorporated into the curriculum. Akinwumi (2020) found that collaborative curriculum development can enhance the quality of business education and improve student learning outcomes. The benefits of industry involvement in curriculum development extend to both students and industry partners. Students gain from a more relevant and practical education, enhancing their employability and career prospects (Adeosun, 2018). Industry partners, on the other hand, get access to a pool of skilled graduates who can contribute to their organizations without extensive additional training, thereby reducing recruitment and training costs.

Internship and Placement

Internships and placements are vital aspects of industry-academia partnerships, providing students with practical experience and industry exposure. These opportunities allow students to apply theoretical knowledge in real-world settings, develop professional skills, and build networks within their chosen industry. Internships and placements benefit both students and employers. Students

gain valuable work experience, enhance their resumes, and improve their job prospects upon graduation (Adeosun, 2018). Employers, on the other hand, get to assess potential future employees, contribute to the development of skilled professionals, and enhance their corporate social responsibility profile. Despite the benefits, there are challenges in organizing and managing internships and placements, such as finding suitable placements, ensuring student supervision, and managing logistics (Gbadamosi, 2017). Solutions include developing strong industry-academia partnerships, creating clear guidelines and expectations, and leveraging technology to facilitate communication and supervision. Internships and placements significantly impact students' employability by providing them with practical experience and industry connections (World Bank, 2019). Employers often view internship experience as a critical factor in hiring decisions, making these opportunities invaluable for students seeking to enter the workforce.

Resource Sharing

Resource sharing between academia and industry can enhance the quality of education and research by providing access to cutting-edge technologies, facilities, and expertise (Adeyemi&Ekundayo, 2017). This partnership can lead to more effective use of resources, reducing duplication and costs. Resources that can be shared include physical facilities, equipment, data, and human expertise. For instance, industry partners can provide access to specialized software, equipment, or facilities that academic institutions may not afford otherwise. The benefits of resource sharing include enhanced research capabilities, improved student experience, and increased industry relevance of academic programmes (Gbadamosi, 2018). However, challenges such as intellectual property rights, confidentiality, and resource management need to be addressed through clear agreements and policies. Resource sharing can facilitate innovation and entrepreneurship by providing access to resources that might not be available otherwise. This can lead to the development of new products, services, and business models, contributing to economic growth and development.

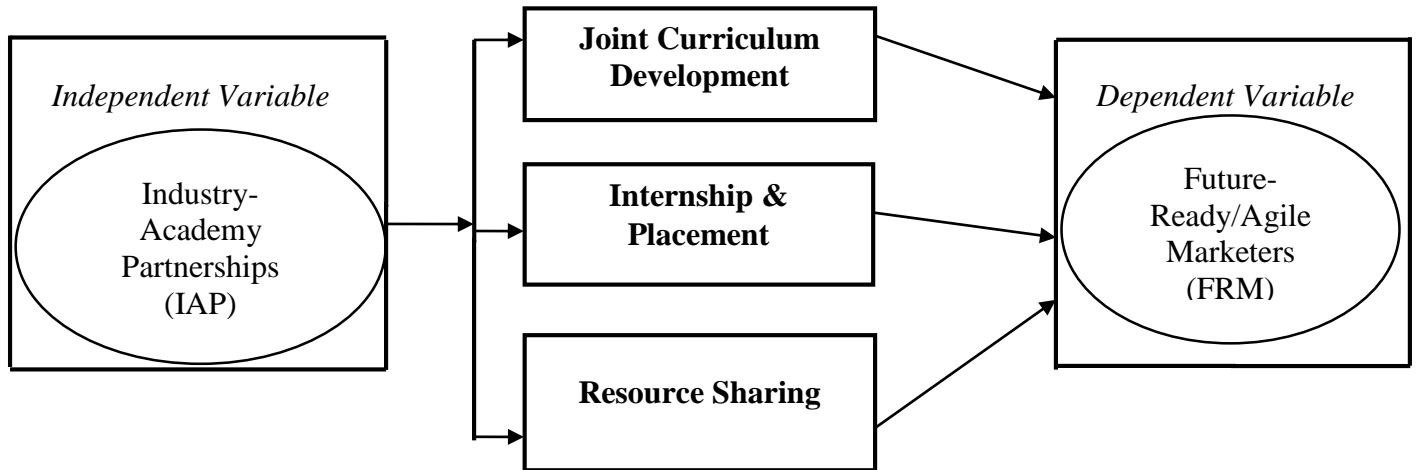
Future Ready Marketer

Future-ready marketers are professionals who possess the skills, knowledge, and competencies required to thrive in a rapidly changing marketing landscape. According to Kotler, Kartajaya, and Setiawan, (2017), future-ready marketers need to be agile, innovative, and customer-centric, with the ability to leverage data-driven insights to inform their marketing strategies. They must also be proficient in digital marketing, social media, and content creation, as well as possess strong analytical and problem-solving skills (Kumar & Reinartz, 2016). Furthermore, future-ready marketers need to be adaptable and open to continuous learning, embracing new technologies and trends to stay ahead of the competition (Rust & Huang, 2019). On the other hand, agile marketers are adept at pivoting strategies, embracing new tools, and leveraging data to make informed decisions. Agile marketers possess a range of skills that enable them to thrive in a dynamic environment. These include the ability to analyze data, think creatively, and make swift decisions. They are also adept at using digital tools and platforms to execute marketing campaigns and measure their effectiveness (Scott, 2015). Furthermore, agile marketers are skilled in collaboration and communication, working effectively with cross-functional teams to achieve business goals. Having agile marketers on board can bring significant benefits to organizations. They can help companies stay ahead of the competition by quickly responding to market changes and capitalizing on new opportunities. Agile marketers can also improve the efficiency and effectiveness of marketing efforts, ensuring that resources are allocated to the most impactful activities (Bughin&Manyika, 2017).

Conceptual Framework

Industry-Academy Partnerships and the Development of Future-Ready Marketers

Dimensions



Source: Researcher's Conceptualization, 2025

Theoretical Framework

The Triple Helix Model of Innovation, propounded by Henry Etzkowitz and Loet Leydesdorff in 1995, is a theoretical framework that describes the interactions and partnership between three key institutional spheres: university, industry, and government. The model suggests that innovation and economic growth are driven by the interactions and partnerships between these three spheres, which are seen as the main drivers of knowledge-based societies. In the Triple Helix Model, universities are seen as the source of new knowledge and ideas, industries are seen as the drivers of innovation and commercialization, and governments are seen as the providers of regulatory frameworks and support for innovation. The model proposes that the interactions between these three spheres create a spiral of innovation, where knowledge is generated, shared, and applied to create new products, services, and processes. The Triple Helix Model is relevant to the present study on industrial academy partnership and future readiness of the marketer because it highlights the importance of collaboration and interaction between universities, industries, and governments in driving innovation and economic growth. In the context of marketing education, the Triple Helix Model suggests that universities should work closely with industries to develop curricula that are relevant to the needs of the industry, and that governments should provide support for these collaborations to drive innovation and economic growth. The model also suggests that marketers need to be equipped with the skills and knowledge to navigate the complex interactions between universities, industries, and governments, and to leverage these interactions to drive innovation and growth.

Methodology

The study employed a descriptive survey research design to investigate the influence of industry-academy partnership on the development of future-ready marketers in Rivers State. The population of the study will consist of final year students and lecturers in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. The study's population consists of 80 marketing lecturers (Ignatius Ajuru University of Education: 34, Rivers State University: 26, University of Port Harcourt: 20) and 232 final year students (Ignatius Ajuru University of Education: 135, Rivers State University: 45, University of Port Harcourt: 52) Source: Field survey, 2025. Given the small and manageable population size, a

census survey approach is employed, including every member of the population in the study. The questionnaire is the major instrument for the study. The instrument is titled "Industry-Academy Partnership and the Development of Future-Ready Marketers Questionnaire" (IAPATDFRMQ). The(IAPATDFRMQ) is designed to collect data on the three dimensions of industry-academy partnership and its influence on the future readiness of students. The questionnaire was structured on a four-point Likert scale to measure the extent of industry-academic partnership and its influence on the future readiness of marketers. The (IAPATDFRMQ) has a four point Likert scale ranging from (Very High Extent (VHE) = 4, High Extent (HE) = 3, Low Extent (LE) = 2 and Very Low Extent (VLE) = 1 making it a total of 10 points divide by 4 = 2.5) was used as a bench mark for any decision. Responses below 2.5 were considered not significant, while 2.5 and above were deemed significant. The questionnaires was validated by experts in the field of education and industry experts. The reliability of the questionnaires was tested using the Cronbach Alpha coefficient, with an acceptable value of 0.86 was obtained. The questionnaires was administered to the randomly selected students and lecturers through a combination of online and offline methods. Online surveys was used to collect data from students, while lecturers were given the option to complete the questionnaire online or in-person. The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, and inferential statistics (z-test) statistics at 0.05 level of significance.

Analysis and Results

Research Question 1

To what extent does joint curriculum development between tertiary institutions and industry experts influence the development of agile marketers in Rivers State, Nigeria?

Table 1: Computation of lecturers and students' responses on the influence of joint curriculum development between lecturers and industry expert on the development of future ready marketers in Rivers State, Nigeria. L=80; FYS=172. (N=252).

S/ N	Items	Marketing Lecturers			Students		
		x_1	sd_1	Remark	x_2	sd_2	Remark
1	Joint curriculum designs is crucial for training the today agile digital marketer who must be acquitted with modern trends and best practices in marketing.	3.66	0.60	VHE	3.52	0.69	VHE
2	Joint curriculum designs should includedata analysis and interpretation for the development of future-ready marketer.	3.85	0.77	VHE	3.40	0.76	HE
3	Customer experience and journey mapping is important for the future ready marketer	3.53	0.60	VHE	3.37	0.58	HE
4	Joint curriculum designs should also consider global marketing and cultural intelligence	3.85	0.68	VHE	3.74	0.69	VHE
5	Regulatory compliance and industry standard should be taught.	3.60	0.49	VHE	3.77	0.56	VHE

6	Practical skills such as data visualization tools, social media management tools, marketing automation tools, content creation tools, digital marketing platforms.	3.61	0.79	VHE	3.55	0.80	VHE
Grand Mean		3.68	0.66	VHE	3.56	0.44	VHE

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Analysis in Table 1 above reveal the extent to which joint curriculum development between tertiary institutions and industry experts influence the development of agile marketers in Rivers State. From the analysis so far both lecturers and students agreed to a very high extent that joint curriculum development between tertiary institutions and industry experts can influence the development of agile marketers. With grand mean score of 3.68 and 3.56 respectively, the respondents confirmed that Joint curriculum designs is crucial for training the today agile digital marketer.

Research Question 2

To what extent does internship and placement influence the development of agile marketers in Rivers State, Nigeria?

Table 2: Computation of marketing educators and students' responses on influence of internship and placement on the development of agile marketers in Rivers State, Nigeria. ME=80; FYS=172. (N=252)

S	Items	Lecturers			Students		
		x_1	sd_1	Remark	x_2	sd_2	Remark
1	Partnership should make provision for digital marketing internship and placement to enhance the development of agile marketers.	3.70	0.79	HE	3.67	0.80	HE
2	Partnership should make provision for data analytics internship.	3.36	0.89	HE	2.92	0.69	HE
3	Partnership should make provision for marketing analytics internship to teach students marketing metric, ROI measurement etc	3.76	0.82	VHE	3.51	0.69	VHE
4	Partnership should make provision for brand management internship.	3.75	0.66	HE	3.83	0.76	HE
5	Partnership should make provision for content creation internship.	3.65	0.86	HE	3.52	0.84	HE
6	Industry should host case study competitions where students can work on real-world marketing challenges and present solutions.	3.70	0.78	HE	3.56	0.83	HE
Grand Mean		3.65	0.80	HE	3.50	0.77	HE

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Analysis in Table 2 above reveal the extent to which internship and placement influence the development of agile marketers in Rivers State. From the analysis so far both lecturers and

students agreed to a very high extent that the influence of internship and placement on the development of agile marketers. With grand mean score of 3.65 and 3.50 respectively, the respondents confirmed that internship and placement influence the development of agile marketers in Rivers State to a very high extent.

Research Question 3

To what extent does resource sharing between tertiary institutions and industry expert influence the development of agile marketers in Rivers State, Nigeria?

Table 3: Computation of lecturers and students' responses on the influence of resource sharing between tertiary institutions and industry expert on the development of agile marketers in Rivers State, Nigeria. ME=80; FYS=172. (N=252).

S	Items	Lecturers			Students		
		x_1	sd_1	Remark	x_2	sd_2	Remark
1	Marketing lab and workshops should be readily available where students can practice marketing skills and be equipped for the future.	3.74	0.83	VHE	3.70	0.83	VHE
2	Industries should provide Marketing software and tools for universities to use in training of students	3.85	0.81	VHE	3.61	0.80	VHE
3	Industries can share real-world project brief and case study for students to work on, providing hands-on experience and practical skills	3.88	0.79	VHE	3.67	0.76	VHE
4	Industry experts can deliver guest lectures and workshops on topics such as digital marketing, content creation, and data analysis.	3.56	0.69	VHE	3.51	0.73	VHE
5	Industries can establish mentorship programmes, pairing students with experienced marketers for guidance and advise	3.62	0.75	VHE	3.68	0.74	VHE
6	Industries can provide access to industry events, conferences, and trade shows, offering students insights into the latest trends and best practices.	3.87	0.67	VHE	3.82	0.56	VHE
Grand Mean		3.75	0.76	VHE	3.67	0.74	VHE

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Analysis in Table 3 above reveal the extent to which resource sharing between tertiary institutions and industry expert influence the development of agile marketers in Rivers State, with grand mean for both lecturers 3.76 and students 3.67 respectively which are greater than the criterion mean score of 2.50, the respondents confirmed that resource sharing between tertiary institutions and industry expert influence the development of agile marketers in Rivers State to a very high extent. Thus, IAP model will positively impact students by granting them access to industry events, conferences, and trade shows, offering students insights into the latest trends and best practices in the world of marketing.

Hypothesis 1

There is no significant difference in the mean rating of marketing lecturers and students on the influence of joint curriculum development between tertiary institutions and industry expert on the development of agile marketers in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Table 4: Computation of no significant difference in the mean score lecturers and students on the influence of Joint curriculum development on the development of agile marketers in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Responses	n	Mean	SD	z-cal	α	Df	z ^{-crit}	Dec.
\bar{x} (0.05)								
Marketing Educators	80	3.68	0.66	1.50	0.05	250	1.96	Accept
Students	172	3.56	0.44	1.50	0.05	250	1.96	H ₀₁

Source: Field survey, 2025

As shown in table 4, the z-calculated value of 1.50 is less than the z-critical value of 1.96 at 250 degree of freedom and 0.05 level of significance. The researcher accepts the null hypothesis. Based on the hypothesis testing, the researcher concludes that there is no significant difference in the mean rating of marketing lecturers and students on the influence of joint curriculum development between tertiary institutions and industry expert on the development of agile marketers in Rivers State.

Hypothesis 2

There is no significant difference in the mean rating of marketing lecturers and students on the influence of internship and placement on the development of agile marketers in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Table 5: Computation of no significance difference in the mean score of marketing educators and students on the influence of internship and placement on the development of agile marketers in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Responses	n	Mean	SD	z-cal	α	Df	z ^{-crit}	Dec.
\bar{x} (0.05)								
Marketing Educators	80	3.65	0.80	1.36	0.05	250	1.96	Accept
Students	172	3.50	0.77	1.36	0.05	250	1.96	H ₀₂

Source: Field survey, 2025

As shown in Table 5, the z-calculated value of 1.36 is less than the z-critical value of 1.96 at 250 degree of freedom and 0.05 level of significance. The researcher accepts the null hypothesis and reject the alternative hypothesis. Based on the hypothesis testing, the researcher concludes that

there is no significant difference in the mean rating of marketing lecturers and students on the influence of internship and placement on the development of agile marketers in Rivers State.

Hypothesis 3

There is no significant difference in the mean rating of marketing lecturers and students on the influence of resource sharing between tertiary institutions and industry expert on the development of agile marketers in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Table 6: Computation of no significant difference in the mean rating of marketing educators and students on the influence of resource sharing between tertiary institutions and industry expert on the development of agile marketers in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Responses critDec.	n	Mean	SD	Z-cal	α	Df	z'
\bar{x} (0.05)							
Marketing Educators	80	3.75	0.76				Accept
Students	172	3.67	0.74	0.05	250	1.96	H₀₃

Source: Field survey, 2025

As shown in Table 6, the z-calculated value of 0.80 is less than the z-critical value of 1.96 at 250 degree of freedom and 0.05 level of significance. The researcher accept the null hypothesis. Based on the hypothesis testing, the researcher concludes that there is no significant difference in the mean rating of marketing lecturers and students on the influence of resource sharing between tertiary institutions and industry expert on the development of agile marketers in Rivers State.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study highlight the significance of industry-academic partnership in enhancing the future readiness of marketers. The discussion focused on each of the dimensions, citing relevant authors and experts' opinions to support or contrast the findings. The study reveals that industry-academic partnership plays a pivotal role in shaping the future readiness of marketers. Effective partnership in curriculum development, internship and placement, and resource sharing is crucial for equipping marketing graduates with the necessary skills, knowledge, and competencies to meet industry needs. By strengthening these partnerships, institutions can produce agile marketers who are better prepared to navigate the rapidly changing marketing landscape and drive business success.

The study reveals that industry participation in curriculum development is crucial for ensuring marketing courses are relevant and aligned with industry needs. This finding is supported by García-Valderrama and Mulero-Mendigorry (2015), who emphasize the importance of industry-academia collaboration in curriculum development to produce graduates with industry-relevant skills. However, Ismail et al. (2014) argue that industry involvement in curriculum development can be challenging due to differing priorities and expectations.

The study highlights the importance of internship programs and job placement opportunities in providing students with practical experience and increasing employability. This finding is consistent with Adeyemi and Ekundayo's (2017) study, which found that industry-academia collaboration in internship programs enhances graduate employability. However, LutfiAriefianto et al. (2024) note that internship programs can be challenging to implement due to logistical and resource constraints. The study also revealed that industry resource sharing, such as funding, market data, and technology, is essential for enhancing marketing education and research. This finding is supported by Ogunleye (2019), who emphasize the importance of industry funding for research

and development. However, Ismail et al. (2020) argue that industry resource sharing can be limited due to concerns about intellectual property and confidentiality. According to Etzkowitz and Leydesdorff (1995), industry-academia collaboration in research is crucial for driving innovation and economic growth. Industry experts can provide valuable insights and expertise, ensuring research projects are relevant and impactful.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the study highlights the importance of industry-academic partnership in producing future-ready marketers. By strengthening collaboration in curriculum development, internship and placement, and resource sharing, institutions can equip marketing graduates with the necessary skills, knowledge, and competencies to meet industry needs.

Recommendations

1. Industry partners should be more involved in curriculum development and review to ensure marketing courses are relevant and aligned with industry needs.
2. Institutions should strengthen internship programmes and job placement opportunities with industry partners to provide students with practical experience and increase employability.
3. Industry should share more resources, such as industry experts, funding, market data, and technology, with institutions to enhance marketing education and research.

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