

EFFECT OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON BUSINESS EDUCATION PROGRAMMES IN DELTA STATE, NIGERIA

BY

EZIECHINE CHARITY UCHE & IYAMU, E. (PhD).

Department of Vocational and Technical Education, Faculty of Education, University of Delta, Aghor, Delta State
Department of Vocational and Technical Education, Faculty of Education, University of Benin, Benin-City, Edo State

Abstract

The emergence of Covid-19 pandemic and its associated disruptions to all human activities, demand that researches be conducted to investigate the extent of its effect on education generally, and on business education programme in particular. This study therefore examined the effect of Covid-19 pandemic on Business Education programmes in Colleges of Education in Delta State, Nigeria. Descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. Two research questions guided the study and one null hypothesis formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study was conducted in the three Colleges of Education offering business education in Delta State which include, College of Education Warri, the defunct College of Education Aghor, and College of Education Mosogar. The population of the study comprised 102 final year students of 2019/2020 academic session. The entire population was used because of its manageable size. A structured questionnaire with 16 items was used as instrument for data collection. The instrument was on a four point rating scale of Strongly Agreed-4points, Agreed-3points, Disagreed-2points, and Strongly Disagreed-1point. Mean and standard deviation were used to analyze data collected based on the research questions while the hypothesis was tested using t-test statistical tool. Findings revealed that there were school closures and all face-to-face physical interactions disrupted so as to contain the spread of the virus and mitigate its effect on humanity. It was also revealed that online teaching-learning classes were opted for by most institutions of higher learning as a means of continuing learning activities. The study also observed that there were learning losses due to challenges associated with on-line classes. Based on the findings, the study recommends that Ministry of higher education should collaborate with various school management to ensure that the academic calendar disrupted, be extended and extra classes put in place for students, in order to gain back the learning losses and catch up with the expected learning targets. Capacity buildings through ICT trainings should also be regularly organized by school authorities to equip lecturers and students on how to tackle any form of future academic disruption. The study also recommend that school managements should encourage blended learning approach of face-to-face learning interaction and online learning classes in order not to be taken unaware by any eventuality such as lockdown orders and school closures.

Keywords: Covid-19, disruptions, online-classes, learning-losses and Business Education.

Introduction

The global pandemic (covid-19) has remained a topical issue all over the world today. Before the pandemic, the world was already facing formidable challenges in fulfilling the promise of education as a basic human right. The outbreak of the deadly disease added to this formidable challenge in the educational sector as school closures affected almost all the globe. During the era of the pandemic, an extraordinary number of school children including those in higher education were out of school. All face-to-face

interactions and physical activities were disrupted in more than 190 countries as a result of the deadly pandemic, covid-19. Among the world's student population, tertiary level students, including those in Nigeria, experienced educational disruptions on a high scale. Students experienced interferences in their academic functions and activities because of lockdown orders (UNESCO, 2020).

The school closure order caused the largest disruption in the history of education globally as

it had a near universal impact on learners and teachers around the world, from pre-primary to secondary schools, technical and vocational education and training (TVET) institutions, universities, adult learning, and skills development establishments. By mid-April 2020, according to Fong, Qadan, McKinney, Griggs, Shah, Buyske and Altieri (2020), 94 per-cent of learners worldwide were affected by the pandemic, representing 1.58 billion children and youth, from pre-primary to higher education, in 200 countries. The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (2020) affirms that as at mid-May, 2020, more than 12 billion students at all levels of education worldwide stopped having face-to-face class interactions and that over 18 out of 195 countries implemented nationwide school closures and restricted education programmes.

Timely responses were in place in some countries such as Australia, Italy, Germany and Hong Kong with regards to online learning even before the pandemic and as such could not experience much disruption as regards academic activities, (Crawford, Butler-Henderson, Rudolph & Glowatz, 2020). Other countries that did not have online learning platforms prior to the outbreak of the disease, experienced great disruptions as there were dramatic changes due to restrictions and lack of access to schools especially in low and medium-income level countries with low level of human development (Zhong, 2020). During the second quarter of 2020, 86 per cent of children in primary education have been effectively put out of school in countries with low human development, compared to just 20 per cent in countries with very high human development. (Zar, Dawa, Fischer & Castro-Rodriguez, 2020). The era totally affected the

way of doing things as people tried to adjust to the new way of life especially in Nigeria where physical interaction has been the traditional ways of learning and living.

Physical interaction disruptions affected almost every aspect of life in Nigeria, with educational sector bearing a major brunt of the cuts. Academic physical interactions became impossible as the pandemic (Covid-19) totally disrupted all contact activities. In the bid to contain the spread of the pandemic and mitigate its effect on Nigerian citizens, the Institute of Epidemiology Disease Control and Research (IEDCR) (2020) introduced lockdown measures, social/physical distancing, school closures among others, thus causing unprecedented disruptions in the educational industry and bringing set-backs in the achievement of educational goals and objectives including aims and objectives of business education.

Business education is practically oriented in nature with aims and objectives of preparing individuals to acquire skills, knowledge and attitude that will enable them to fit into the world of work or become self-reliant, (National Policy on Education (NPE) revised, 2013) The practical nature of Business Education requires uninterrupted attention if its aims and objectives are to be optimally achieved. Business education is a field of study which has to do with education for and about business. It involves training individuals in business knowledge, skills and attitude that will enable them establish their business. Business education programme consists of two parts: (1) Office Education- a vocational programme of office careers and (2) General Business Education: a programme that provides individual with information and competences

needed in managing personal business. Business education is also a branch of vocational education programmes that prepare students for entry into and advancement in jobs within business. The National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) (2016) defines business education as an aspect of vocational education that equips people with necessary skills and theoretical knowledge needed for performance in the business world either for job occupation or self-employment.

Business Education programme as defined by Ugwoke (2011) is that aspect of vocational and technical education which aim is to prepare individual for careers in business and also to be intelligent economic consumer of goods and services. According to Okoro (2016), Business Education is a study of new technologies in business and the acquisition of skills, attitudes, understandings and knowledge leading to occupation in various sections of the peoples' economic and social lives. It is also an aspect of education which an individual receives with the primary motive of enabling him/her acquire right attitudes, concepts, knowledge, understanding and skills in business activities for personal or vocational usage. The programme as an integral part of vocational education, prepare students for entry into advancement in jobs within business, handle their own business affairs and function intelligently as consumers of goods and services in a business economy. In the words of Val-Ossai and Akpomi (2017), Business Education programme prepare students for entry into job or advancement within the business. Business Education encompasses knowledge, attitudes and skills needed by all citizens for effective management of their personal business and economic system. Atakpa (2011) states that

Business Education is an embodiment of vocational knowledge and skills needed for employment and advancement in a brand range of business careers. In other words, Business Education is that educational programme that is required in managing business offices, occupations and business policy analysis. The programme aspires to produce skilled graduates that will meet the demands of a fast growing society.

However, the era of the pandemic -corona virus remained a memorable era that was associated with negative impact in all aspect of human endeavor especially in the educational sector where all academic activities were disrupted. According to Yinka and Adebayo, (2020), Covid-19 pandemic has a negative impact on education in poor and middle income nations like Nigeria. Significantly, restriction orders such as school closures and other forms of lockdown measures were great challenges that affected all sectors. Educational sector in trying to contain some of the academic disruptions made significant shifts from the traditional face-to-face classes, to online learning classes. Many tertiary institutions such as Colleges of Education opted for the online teaching and learning classes as an immediate means of continuing education. Some of the online lecture processes that were adopted included; phone call lecture recording, video conferencing, virtual learning courses, online learning platforms, among others, depending on the internet capacity of the school or individual lecturers.

Despite the adoption of these new measures of teaching as ways of continuing learning, learning losses existed as there were challenges encountered in the use of some of the measures

adopted, (Chandasiri, 2020). The online learning classes as a new measure, did not only inhibit the normal pedagogies in teaching and learning processes but was also associated with learning losses that ranged from internet interruptions to high cost of internet usage. Burgess and Sievertsen (2020) affirmed that, there were major interruptions in students' learning activities which included postponement and cancelling of internal and external assessments thus, learning losses, confusion and stress, boredom and frustration at home were recorded as students joined in the long-term home quarantine. Again educational disparities were observed as opportunities to study became more difficult. Chandasiri (2020) affirmed that, there were hassles encountered in online classes as there were network interruptions, limited access to internet connections, unavailability of electronic devices, difficulties in using online platforms, lack of power supply especially for student living in remote villages, high cost of internet usage, among others. These interruptions generally hindered the smooth running of educational programmes including business education programme. It is against these backdrops that this study examined the effect of covid-19 pandemic on Business Education programme in Colleges of Education in Delta State.

Statement of the Problem

The era of covid-19 pandemic, pushed the educational sector into the deepest disruption in history, affecting nearly 1.6 billion learners in more than 190 countries (UNESCO 2020). Covid-19 pandemic induced concern in learners about academic activities with also fears of being infected by the deadly disease. In Nigeria, academic activities in tertiary institutions as Colleges of Education were disrupted due to the

emergency of the pandemic. Considering the deadly nature of the pandemic, order for schools closure were made as measure to contain the spread of the disease and mitigate its effects. Based on the schools closure order, most tertiary institutions opted for online learning classes as a way of continuing class activities. However, hassles were observed to be associated with the online learning classes which resulted to learning losses especially to students whose parents had less education experiences and perhaps live in remote village where internet services were scarcely available. Further observation also revealed that, the additional years in school due to the pandemic, made students who were supposed to graduate out of school during the era to have a long term effect as opportunities may have slip off the hands of the affected students. Consequently, the unprecedented disruption of academic activities seems to have hindered the achievement of some of the educational goals including the goals of business education programme. The significant shifts from the traditional face-to-face classes to online learning classes were said to have had great effect on the teaching and learning of business education programme in most Colleges of Education in Nigeria including the colleges in Delta State. Based on the academic disruptions caused by the pandemic and its significant effect on business education programmes, it becomes imperative that further study be carried out to investigate the extent of effect of the covid-19 pandemic on business education in colleges of education as little or no previous study had investigated the effect of covid-19 on Business Education programme in Colleges of Education in Delta State. Based on this existing gap therefore, this study examined the effect of Covid-19 pandemic

on Business Education programme in Colleges of Education in Delta State.

Purpose of the Study

This study examined the effect of Covid-19 Pandemic on Business Education programme in Colleges of Education in Delta State. Specifically the study investigated:

1. Effect of school closures on Business Education programme in Colleges of Education in Delta State.
2. Effect of online teaching-learning classes on Business Education programme in Colleges of Education in Delta State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study.

1. What is the effect of school closures on Business Education programme in Colleges of Education in Delta State?
2. What is the effect of online teaching and learning classes on Business Education programme in Colleges of Education in Delta State?

Test of Hypothesis

The null hypothesis formulated was tested at 0.05 level of significance

HO: There is no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female respondents on the effect of covid-19 pandemic on Business Education programme in College of Education in Delta State.

Method

The study adopted descriptive survey design. Descriptive survey involves the collection of data for the purpose of describing, interpreting existing condition, prevailing practices, beliefs,

attitude and on-going process (Creswell 2014). This design was considered suitable for the study since it allows the collection of relevant information from respondents through the use of questionnaire without any form of manipulation. The population of the study comprised of one hundred and two (102) final year students of 2019/2020 academic session in the three government owned Colleges of Education in Delta State. The schools are: defunct College of Education Agbor (42), College of Education Warri (39), and College of Physical Education Mosogar (21). The entire population was used as sample due to its manageable size. According to Creswell (2014), if the population size is small, the entire population can be used as sample size. The instrument for data collection was structured questionnaire titled Effect of Covid-19 Pandemic on Business Education Programme Questionnaire (ECPBEPQ), which had two sections – 1 and 2. Section 1 contained demographic variables of each respondent such as, Gender while section 2 consist of 14 items, eight (8) items from research question 1 (1-8) and six (6) items from research question 2, (9-14).

The responses were structured on a 4 point rating scale of; strongly agreed - 4points, agreed-3points, disagreed - 2points, strongly disagreed-1point. The instrument was validated by three research experts from University of Delta, Agbor. The reliability of the instrument was determined through test re-test method. The instrument was administered to a sample of 20 business education students in Delta State University Abraka who were not part of the sample since the entire population was used for the study. The first and second administrations were done within an interval of two weeks. Data obtained were analyzed using Cronbach Alpha

Statistical method to measure the degree of consistency between the first and second administration and a reliability coefficient of 0.84 was obtained hence the instrument was considered reliable. The researcher administered copies of questionnaires to respondents with the help of three research assistants, one each from the schools under review. Completed copies were retrieved at the interval of two weeks and data collected were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Mean (\bar{x}) and standard deviation (SD) were used to analyze data from

the research questions while t-test statistics was used to test the null hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. Where values of 2.50 and above were regarded as agreed, values below 2.50 were regarded as disagreed. The mean scores were reported at two (2) decimal places. The criterion for the null hypothesis was based on t-critical value equal to 0.05 alpha level of significance. Where the t-critical value exceeded the t-calculated value, the null hypothesis was accepted and if otherwise rejected.

Results

Research Question 1: What is the effect of school closures on business education programme?

Table 1: Mean rating of respondents on the effect of school closures on business education programme.

S/N	Item Statements	\bar{X}	SD	Remark
1.	School closures resulted to learning losses	3.52	0.84	Agreed
2.	School closures mitigated the spread of covid-19 pandemic	3.43	0.72	Agreed
3.	School closures interrupted regular flow of academic programmes	3.41	0.74	Agreed
4.	School closures caused boredom and frustration at home	3.26	0.65	Agreed
5.	School closures resulted to negative shift of attitude towards education	3.55	0.64	Agreed
6.	School closures decreased motivation and study hours	3.53	0.83	Agreed
7.	Long-time home quarantine period resulted in the growth of stress and dysfunctional learning behaviour	3.76	0.65	Agreed
8.	School closures affects face-to-face teaching and learning session	3.32	0.68	Agreed
9.	Grand Total	3.47	0.72	Agreed

The analysis of research question one as shown in table 1 indicates that the mean response of the respondents ranged from 3.26 – 3.55. The results showed that school closures, has effect on business education programme in Colleges of

Education in Delta State. With an aggregate mean of 3.47 above the criterion mean of 2.50, it signifies agreed on the effect of school closures on business education programme.

Research Question 2: What is the effect of online teaching-learning class on business education programme?

Table 2: Mean rating of respondents on the effect of online teaching-learning classes on business education programme.

S/N	Item Statements	\bar{X}	SD	Remark
1.	Online learning strategy resulted to distress.	3.52	0.67	Agreed
2.	Unavailability of electronic devices effect online teaching-learning of business education	3.43	0.57	Agreed
3.	Limited access to the internet services effect online teaching- learning classes	3.41	0.54	Agreed
4.	High cost of internet usage effect teaching-learning classes of business education.	3.26	0.61	Agreed
5.	Difficulties in using online platforms effect business education program	3.55	0.61	Agreed
6.	Challenges in switching to online lectures effect business education Programme	3.53	0.72	Agreed
	Grand Total	3.45	0.62	Agreed

The analysis of research question two as shown in table 2 indicates that the mean response of the respondents, ranged from 3.26 – 3.55. The results showed that online teaching-learning classes, has effect on Business Education programme in Colleges of Education in Delta State. With an aggregate mean of 3.45 above the criterion mean of 2.50, it signifies agreed on the effect of online

learning classes on business education programme.

Hypothesis

There is no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female respondents on the effect of covid-19 pandemic on business education programme in Colleges of Education in Delta State.

Table 3: t-test of difference between mean rating of male and female respondents on the effect of covid-19 pandemic on business education programme in Colleges of Education in Delta States.

Variable	N	\bar{X} SD	df	t-calt-crit	Decision
Male	38	3.67	0.64		
			2.46	-25.061.96	NS
Female	64	3.31	0.58		

Source: Field work 2021.

The result in table 3 reveals that the calculated t-value of -25.06 is less than the table value of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance with a degree of freedom at 2.46. With this result, the null hypothesis of no significance is accepted. This indicates that there is no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female respondents on the effect of covid-19 pandemic on business education programme in Colleges of Education in Delta State.

Discussion of Findings

The findings from research question one as shown in Table 1 revealed the effect of school closure on business education programme in Colleges of Education in Delta State. The responses agreed with Burgess and Sievertsen (2020) who stated that interruptions that occurred in students' learning-; the postponement of internal and external assessments, and cancelling of some, resulted to learning losses, confusion and stress, boredom and frustration at home as students joined in the long-term home quarantine. Similarly, the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

(2020) that affirmed that "among the world's student population, tertiary level students, experienced educational disruptions on a high scale", corroborates with the fieldwork of this study. Previous records also revealed that more than 12 billion students at all levels of education worldwide stopped having face-to-face class interactions thus, students experienced interferences in their academic functions and activities.

The findings in research question two as shown in Table 2 indicate that online teaching-learning classes had effect on business education programme in Colleges of Education in Delta State. This was supported by Chandasiri (2020) who affirmed that there were hassles encountered in online classes as there were network interruptions, limited access to internet connections, unavailability of electronic devices, difficulties in using online platforms, lack of power supply especially for student living in remote villages and high cost of internet usage. This shift from face-to-face learning interactions to online classes had its discrepancies and

consequences on business education students in Colleges of Education in Delta State.

The result of the hypothesis indicates that the final year male and female business education students do not differ significantly in their responses on the effect of covid-19 pandemic on business education programme in Colleges of Education in Delta State.

Conclusion

The study revealed that there were school closures and as such, all face-to-face physical interactions disrupted. Further findings revealed that there were learning losses as online teaching-learning classes were associated with hassles that interrupted the online classes. This implies that covid-19 pandemic had effect on business education programme in colleges of education in Delta State.

Recommendation

Consequent upon findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Ministry of higher education should collaborate with various school management in ensuring that the academic calendar disrupted, be bridged by extension and extra classes put in place for students, in order to gain back the learning losses and catch up with the expected learning targets.
2. Capacity buildings through ICT trainings should be regularly organized by school authorities to equip lecturers and students on how to tackle any form of future academic disruption.
3. School managements should encourage blended learning approach of face-to-face learning interaction and online learning classes in order not to be taken unaware by any eventuality such as lockdown orders and school closures.

References

- Adnan, M., & Anwar, K. (2020). Online learning amid the covid-19 pandemic: Students' perspectives. *Journal of Pedagogical Research*, 1, 45-51. <https://doi.org/10.33902/JSPSP.2020261309>
- Atakpa, R.A. (2011). Entrepreneurship Education: A sine – qua – non in Business Education in Nigeria: *Business Education Journal*. 1(11), 1-6.
- Ahmed, M.(2020). *Tertiary education during covid-19 and beyond*: The Daily Star. <https://www.thedailystar.net/opinion/new-s/tertiary-education-during-covid-19-and-beyond-1897321https://doi.org/10.1101/2020.05.14.20102343>
- Burgess, S., & Sievertsen, H. H. (2020). *Schools, skills, and learning*: The impact of covid-19 on education. [https:// voxeu.org/article/ impact-covid-19-education](https://voxeu.org/article/impact-covid-19-education)
- Chandasiri, O. (2020). The covid-19: Impact on Education: *Journal of Asian and African Social Science and Humanities*, 6, 37-42. <https://www.aarcentre.com/ojs3/index.php/aarcentre/article/view/207/472>
- Crawford, J., Butler-Henderson, K., Rudolph, J. & Glowatz, M. (2020). Covid 19: 20centuries' higher education intra-period digital pedagogy responses: *Journal of Applied Teaching and Learning*, (3) 9-28.
- Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*: (3rd edition): New York SAGE Publications.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2013). *National policy on education* (6th edition). Lagos NERDC.
- Forg, Z. V., Qadah, M., MicKinney, R., Griggs, C.L., Shah, P. C., Buyske, J., & Altieri, M. S. (2020). Practical implications of

- novel corona virus COVID-19 on hospital operations, board certification and medical education in surgery in the USA. *Journal of Gastrointestinal Surgery*, (24), 1232-1236.
- IEDCR, (2020). *Institute of epidemiology disease control and research: Covid-19 vital statistics*. <https://iedcr.gov.bd>
- NOUN, (2016). National open university of Nigeria: *Fundamentals of Business Education*: Jabi, Abuja
- Okoro, P.E. (2016). Facilities for stimulating the teaching of new technologies in Business Education as perceived by lecturers in universities in south-south Nigeria: *Aben Journal*, vol 2 pp 461-469.
- Ubulom, W.J. (2012). A model for evaluation of Business Education programme: *Developing Countries Studies*, 2(11), 152-158.
- Ugwoke, E.O. (2011). Effective utilization of ICT for repositioning Business Education programme in tertiary institutions in Nigeria for national development: *International Journal of Education Research*. 11(1), 20-24.
- UNESCO, (2020). *Adverse consequences of school closures*: <https://en.unesco.org/covid19/educationresponse/consequences>
- UNESCO, (2020). *Education from disruption to recovery*: <https://en.unesco.org/covid19/educationresponse>
- Val-Ossai, M.U., & Akpomi, M. E. (2017). Entrepreneurship education and empowering 21st century Business Education students for employability: *Rivers Business Education Journal*, 2(1), 12-21
- Yinka, D. L., & Adebayo, A. (2020). COVID-19 is exacerbating the problem of educational inequality in Nigeria: *Teach for Nigeria Fellowship Programme*. Op-Ed Contributor, April, 18
- Zar, H. J., Dawa, J., Fischer, G. B., & Castro-Rodriguez, J. A. (2020). Challenges of COVID-19 in children in low and middle income countries: *Pediatric Respiratory Reviews*, (35) 70-74.
- Zhong, R. (2020). The corona virus exposes education's digital divide: *The New York Times*: Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/17/technology/chinaschoolscoronavirus.html>.