

**PERCEPTION OF BUSINESS EDUCATION STUDENTS ON ALLEVIATING THE IMPACT
OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON STUDENTS IN COLLEGES OF EDUCATION, SOUTH-WEST
NIGERIA**

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Abstract

The devastating effect of covid-19 pandemic on every sector of our national life, particularly education, cannot be overemphasized. The lockdown, occasioned by the pandemic impacted negatively on teaching and learning, and the academic achievements of students at all levels. To mitigate the impact of the pandemic, all hands must be on deck. This study therefore examined Business Education Students' perception on ways of alleviating the impact of Covid-19 Pandemic on students in Colleges of Education, South-West Nigeria using Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo as a case study. A research question guided the study. Descriptive survey design was adopted. The population of the study was 181 NCE II Business Education students of 2019/2020 academic session, while 60 students were the sample. The sample was selected through simple random sampling technique. Questionnaire was used as instrument for data collection. The data were analyzed using statistical mean. Findings revealed among others that, giving feedback with constructive criticism will help student receive correction that will in turn help them to alleviate the negative impact of the Covid-19 Lockdown and that the behavior of Business Educators to students after the Covid-19 Pandemic Lockdown has impact on the academic achievements of students. It was concluded that teachers have a lot to do to improve the already impaired performance of the students occasioned by the Covid-19 Lockdown. It is therefore recommended that Business Educators should meet individual academic needs of the students to motivate them to learn and to give feedback with constructive criticism, among others.

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Introduction

Business Education is a course that equips its learners with diverse knowledge in the areas of Office Technology and Management (OTM), Marketing and Accounting which makes them fit into the world of business and teaching. It affords students the kind of knowledge that makes them relevant in the world of work and the society at large. According to the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) minimum standard (2020), Business Education has the following objectives:

1. To produce competent NCE graduates who will teach business subjects in secondary schools and other related educational institutions.
2. To produce competent NCE graduates who will epitomize business spirit in the society.
3. To produce competent NCE graduates who will commence the development of the desired revolution in vocational and entrepreneurial skills from the primary through secondary schools.
4. To equip graduates with necessary competencies for a post-NCE degree programme in Business Education.

5. To equip graduates with the right business competencies for a life of work in office as well as for self-employment.

Business Education is a division of education that inculcates in the learners the skills and operations of business industry and teaching. This field of education occurs at multiple levels, including secondary and higher education institutions. It combines the study of rudiments of accountancy, finance, marketing, organizational studies, human resource management, and procedures. Hence, it must be handled by dynamic teachers who are trendy.

The lecturers that take courses in Business Education are regarded as Business Educators. As a Business Educator, there are qualities that should be possessed in order to teach effectively, because of the nature of the courses involved. That is why Fehintola (2014) and Igberadja (2016), noted that educational system at every level depends greatly on teachers for the implementation of its programmes since they stand at interface of transmission of knowledge, values and skills in the learning process. In other words, a teacher

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is a person who gives instruction or information that impacts knowledge into another (learner/student). He leads and fosters growth in other teachers as well as students (Riggs 2013).

The teacher cannot be unglued from his personality. Idiagbe (2008) opined that the work of a teacher involves the totality of the teacher which includes his knowledge, personality, strategies for teaching, time, energy and interest. In actual fact, a person cannot be separated from his composition. This means that in alleviating the impact of Covid-19 Pandemic the totality of the teacher is involved.

Covid-19 also referred to as Coronavirus is an infectious disease which according to World Health Organisation –WHO (2020), was first reported in Wuhan City, China, in December 2019. WHO declared the outbreak a Public Health Emergency of International Concern on 30th January 2020 (World Health Organisation, 2020) and a pandemic on 11th March 2020 (Cucionotta and Venalli, 2020). The virus that causes Covid-19 is mainly transmitted through droplets generated when an infected person coughs,

sneezes or exhales, because these droplets are too heavy to hang in the air and quickly fall on floors or surfaces. People can be infected through breathing in the virus if they are within close proximity of someone who has Covid-19. Cucionotta and Venalli, (2020) noted that “it is a novel disease with an incompletely described clinical course especially for children”. However, the pandemic resulted in lockdown of many sectors, including education. During the period, students could not receive lectures in person, lectures were held online.

In a developing country like Nigeria, the online teaching was not effective owing to many challenges like:

- a. Epileptic power supply – students who stay in urban areas do not enjoy regular power supply let alone those in rural environment who may not have access to electric power supply. When there is no power supply students may not be able to charge the devices with which they will receive lectures.

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- b. Unstable network – the unexpected fluctuations in network services during lectures truncate the flow of learning. This may cause students who have network issues to be left behind.
- c. Lack of fund for consistent purchase of data – data is very important to the use of network services. Therefore, for students to constantly be online for lectures, group discussion or assignment he needs to be connected online and this costs money.
- d. Distractions – many of the students cannot manage distractions online. Instead of facing their academics they get involved in social media activities and waste a lot of time on unprofitable issues online.
- e. Online skills requirements - not all students are vast in operating learning activities online, even some lecturers

may have the same challenge and many more.

Therefore, the online teaching and learning could not achieve the desired result, as many students could not participate due to the challenges earlier mentioned. In this part of the world, a combination of these challenges has affected online teaching and learning and to make up for the lost grounds due to the lockdown, the lecturers may want to rush the teaching-learning process in order to finish up the course outline. This approach may not be to the advantage of all the students because of their individual differences. While some students are fast learners, some others are slow learners who have a lot of catching up to do. Hence, for such slow learners not to be negatively affected, all hands must be on deck. This study, therefore, examined Business Education students' perception on ways of alleviating the impact of Covid-19 Pandemic in Colleges of Education, using Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo as a case study.

Statement of the Problem

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Academic achievement of the learner is the ultimate of his/her learning because that is the end result of the teaching-learning process. It is worrisome to teach face to face in the classroom and not see adequate positive effect in the results of the learners. Then, it is unimaginable to describe what students' performance would be like having gone through the teaching-learning process online because of the lockdown. In a developing country like Nigeria, where there could be inequality in education due to some of the challenges highlighted above, many students could not perform up to expectation during and even after the lock down. The study, therefore, examined Business Education students' perception on ways of alleviating the impact of Covid-19 Pandemic on students in Colleges of Education using Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo as a case study.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine Business Education students' perception on ways of alleviating the impact of Covid-19 Pandemic on

students in Colleges of Education, using Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo as a case study.

Research Question

What are the ways of alleviating the impact of Covid-19 Pandemic on students in Colleges of Education South-West Nigeria?

Significance of the Study

The finding of the study would be of benefit to Business Educators, undergraduates and other researchers. Business Educators would be better informed on how to reduce the frustration impacted by the lock down: They would therefore see the need to work on themselves in helping the students to perform better academically through their individual behavior. Students on the other hand would be enlightened on cultivating serious attitude towards good academic performance. Also, other researchers would find this study helpful.

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Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design and questionnaires were used as instrument for data collection. The population of the study constituted one hundred and eighty one (181) 2019/2020 NCE II students. The sample constituted sixty (60) students who were selected using simple random technique. Data were analysed using statistical mean. The rating scale were: Strongly Agree (4), Agree (3), Disagree (2) and Strongly Disagree (1). Therefore, any value of the weighted average between 0.00 and 2.49 is taken to mean rejected while the weighted average value between 2.50 and 4.00 is taken to mean accepted.

Results

Research Question: What are the ways of alleviating the impact of Covid-19 Pandemic on students in Colleges of Education South-West Nigeria?

Table below shows ways in which the impact of Covid-19 Pandemic on students can be alleviated. Item one on the table showed that giving feedback to students with constructive criticism impacts students' performance with a mean of 3.25 which is above the bench mark of 2.50 and therefore it is accepted. The second item stated that giving individual student attention enhances their performance with a mean of 3.25 which is above the bench mark of 2.50 and therefore it is accepted. The third item, creating conducive environment through Business Educators' attitude is accepted with a mean of 3.20. Fourth item revealed that using different techniques in assessing student performance is accepted with a mean of 3.40. The fifth item on the table showed that appreciating students with words when they perform well helps them to perform better is accepted with a mean of 3.50

The sixth item on the table showed that when students cultivate serious attitude towards their academics, the impact of covid-19 would be reduced. This is accepted with a mean of 3.51 which is above

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www.guldaa.org

the benchmark of 2.50. The seventh item on the table stated that giving assignment and test would also help student, this was accepted with a mean of 3.04. Item eight revealed that marking assignment and returning them promptly was accepted with a mean of 3.14. The ninth item revealed that giving students more opportunity to ask questions would reduce the impact of covid-19, and this was accepted with a mean of 3.38. The tenth, which is the last item, showed that listening to students with patience and tolerance and counseling them when necessary would reduce the impact of covid-19 and it was also accepted with a mean of 3.33.

giving assignment and test to students, marking assignment and returning them promptly, giving students more opportunity to ask questions in class and listening to students with patience and tolerance and counseling them when necessary.

Therefore, ways of alleviating the impact of Covid-19 on students in Colleges of Education are; giving feedback to students with constructive criticism, giving individual student attention, creating conducive environment through Business Educators' attitude, using different techniques in assessing student performance, appreciating students with good words when they perform well, students should cultivate serious attitude towards their academics,

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Ways of alleviating the impact of covid-19 pandemic on students in Colleges of Education, South-West, Nigeria

Items	Mean	Remark
Giving feedback with constructive criticism.	3.25	Accepted
Giving individual students attention will enhance their performance.	3.25	Accepted
Creating conducive environment through business educator's attitude.	3.20	Accepted
Using different assessment techniques in assessing students.	3.40	Accepted
Students perform well when teachers appreciate them with good words when they perform better.	3.50	Accepted
Cultivating serious attitude towards good academic performance.	3.51	Accepted
Giving assignment and test		
Marking assignment and returning them promptly.	3.04	Accepted
	3.14	Accepted
Giving students more opportunity to ask questions in class.		
	3.38	Accepted
Listening to students with patience and tolerance; and counsel them when necessary.		
	3.33	Accepted

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Discussion of Findings

Findings showed giving feedback to students with constructive criticism could help to reduce the impact of Covid-19 Pandemic. Criticism is an expression of disapproval of someone or something, this in itself is enough to make a child withdrawn into his/her shell if not handled properly. Already, the performances of students have been impaired due to the lockdown. However a constructive criticism will not destroy the personality of a student, but it is meant to correct an anomaly. Hence, when students are criticized constructively, students' performances will not be negatively impacted. This is in line with Eze (2014) who found out that failure of lecturers to mark assignments and give students feedback is part of the reasons students have poor performance. It is not enough to mark assignment and give feedback, but must be done constructively. Flynn (2021) stated that constructive criticism is meant to be positive and productive, rather than negative or hostile and that when delivered and received correctly, it helps to provide feedback that suggests specific, actionable

recommendation. Also, Rigby (2022) noted that constructive criticism help make the delivery of feedback painless.

This study also revealed that giving individual student attention enhances their performance. This means that, when students are attended to individually, it goes a long way in enhancing their performance, because there are individual differences in learning. This is to say that the rate and manner students learn differ. Therefore, when these differences are taken into consideration, the weakened performance caused by the lockdown is gradually improved. Findings also revealed that creating conducive environment through Business Educators' attitude would impact the performance of the students. This corroborates Bolarinwa (2014) who revealed that a positive relationship exists between teachers' characteristics and performance level of the students in financial accounting. Akinkuolie and Orifa (2019) also revealed in their findings that teachers' characteristics determine students' academic performance in financial accounting. This is to say

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NIGERIA

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www.guldaa.org

that whatever the teacher is goes into his teaching. It was also revealed that using different techniques in assessing student performance would also help to reduce the impact of Covid-19. This means that students who do not perform well in class test may do better in assignment/homework or other skills test. This might help student to get prepared in every way. Okafor (2014) stated that the teacher is expected to apply learner-centered instructional techniques during planning, delivery and assessment of lesson so that students could perform noteworthy roles in judging their own progress.

This study also revealed that when students cultivate serious attitude towards their academics the impact of Covid-19 would be reduced. It means that learning may not take place if students are not serious with their studies, no matter the efforts of the teachers. This finding corroborates Ibe and Nwosu (2014) who noted that the attitude of the learner is very germane to learning since no negative attitude will produce positive learning but a positive attitude will lead a student to the pinnacle of his career. However,

Thomas (2013) stated that students' attitude or vices such as indiscipline, laziness, and passiveness in the class, attitude to work, listening ability or concentration, lateness, level of intelligence, among others could be function of their interest, background, experience. So, if students are not interested in their academic activities, such students may not achieve anything. This study also revealed that giving assignment and test to students will enhance student performance and help to reduce the impact of Covid-19, as students are not subjected to only one means of assessment. This is in line with Almunais, Alfraih and Alharbi (2014) who found that the frequency of doing homework is significantly and positively related to students' performance in account.

Conclusion

In conclusion, teachers have a lot to do to improve the already impaired performance of the students occasioned by the Covid-19 lockdown; the students also are not exempted as all hands must be on deck. There is no gain saying the fact that the

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OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON STUDENTS IN COLLEGES OF EDUCATION, SOUTH-WEST
NIGERIA

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pandemic disrupted many sectors, but nonetheless,

everyone must work towards alleviating its impacts.

Recommendations

1. Business Educators should give feedback with constructive criticism and be more patient with students so as to be able to cope with their inadequacies.
2. Students should cultivate serious attitude towards their academics.
3. Business Educators should meet individual academic needs of the students to motivate them to learn.

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www.guldaa.org

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