

Psychological Effects of Physical and Emotional Challenges on Academic Achievement of Impaired Business Education Students in the South East Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated the psychological effects of physical and emotional challenges of impaired Business Education students on their Academic Achievement. Specifically, it determined the extent to which mobility impairment psychologically and depression psychologically affect the academic achievement of Business Education Students. The study adopted descriptive survey research design. The area of the study is South-East zone, Nigeria. Questionnaire was used to collect data from 49 impaired Business Education students from all the 11 Colleges of Education that offer Business education in the five states that form the South-East zone, Nigeria. Data collected was analyzed using mean and standard deviation. Findings include among other that mobility impairment and depression have psychological effects on the academic achievement of impaired Business education students in Colleges of Education in South east, Nigeria. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that government and well placed Nigerians should provide physically impaired Business education students with some mobility aids like wheelchair, walking staffs, mobility scooter and crutches among others to aid their movement in and outside the school environment.

Keywords: Psychological effects, Physical challenges, Emotional challenges, Impairment, Business Education, Business Education students, Academic achievement

INTRODUCTION

The 21st century society channels the educational growth of persons through school. It is in schools that people learn and achieve personal growth and development and make adjustments in the complex societies. According to National Policy on Education(1), education is an instrument for national development; to this end, the formulation of ideas, their integration for national development and the interaction of persons and ideas are all aspects of education. Kabuta(2) opined that education is very important for every person regardless of age, gender, race, economic status, as well as physical ability or disability. Education for all has long become a basic principle and national policy on education advocates for provision of equal access to educational opportunities for all citizens of the country both inside and outside the formal school system. The present age is the age of hard work and achievement, thus every individual strives to make certain achievement in life. Academic achievement is the aim of every student who enrolled in any academic institution; therefore each student works very hard to graduate with good grades. Unfortunately, the efforts of some students to achieve success in their academic pursuits have been weakened by nature as a result of impairment. Brekke and Alecu(3) opined that there are many reasons why students with disabilities have poorer educational achievement than their typically developing peers and they include' school absenteeism, reduced cognitive functioning, physical disability and mental health. Yonder and Cantrel in (3) asserted that both physical and mental disabilities have negative impacts on educational achievements. The authors observed that there are large inequalities in educational achievement due to socioeconomic factor. The author further stated that children with disabilities continue to face challenges in school and they experience worse educational achievement than their typically developing peers. According to Ugoma, Iyedoh and Nwikpo(4), various forms and characteristics of individuals come to learn and to grow in school. Meanwhile, individuals go to the school with their own nature and abilities a well as the ability to cope with learning task. The authors added that some learners experience no challenge in learning and making adjustments while others encounter varying degrees of challenges with related attendant behavior output. These ones with varying degrees of difficulties in



learning can be termed challenged or handicapped learners either physically or invisible challenges. Abdulhameed(5) defined students with impairment as those students who have physical, sensory or chronic health impairments which hinder them from their full, active participation in the society on equal basis with the others and hinder them from benefit fully from learning instructions in the regular settings. Students of Business education with any form of physical impairment face some physical and emotional challenges which affect their academic achievement.

Business education is defined by Mfam and Ntino(6) as a vocational education programme that offers life-long learning experiences in book-keeping and accounting, office management and ergonomics, business operations and management, and marketing. Mfam and Ntino(6) opined that business education is vocational education in which a recipient could fit into four major occupational areas such as book-keeping and accounting jobs, marketing and distributive jobs, clerical and general office jobs, and stenographic and secretarial jobs. Business Education is a discipline that has dual purpose of preparing individuals to be qualified business educators who inculcate business knowledge in students as well as preparing individuals for the world of work in the field of accounting, management, marketing and as business owners. Having seen the meaning of business education, it is important to note that a Business education student with any form of impairment will likely be facing some physical and emotional challenges which negatively affect their academic achievement as a result of some psychological effects. Impaired business education students are students with some physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. Racheal(7) observed that impaired students have low academic achievement.

Impairment is a condition of being diminished or damaged in some ways which can affect physical, emotional and cognitive functions. It involves any condition of the body that makes it difficult for an individual to engage in physical, social and academic activities comfortably. Collins English Dictionary(8) defines impairment as a condition in which a part of someone's mind or body is damaged or not working properly. (8) added that a person with impairment is a one who has a physical or mental disability that substantially limits one or more major life activities. International Classification of Functioning (ICF) in Ejeh and Alilah(9) describes disability as an umbrella term covering movement restrictions, participation constraints, intellectual or sensory impairments, and performance complications. There may be a challenge in ascertaining the total number of persons living with physical impairment in Nigeria, but it is observed that a good number of young and midlife adults are with various cognitive and motor challenges. Onah and Ugwu(10) noted that 20 million Nigerians out of these 162 million are living with disabilities today. Bassoumah & Mohammed(11) noted that individuals with varying forms of impairments constitute a significant proportion of the global population and the number continues to increase in all cultures. The authors observed that impaired persons are vulnerable to discrimination and humiliating treatment. (11) defined physical impairment as partial or total loss of physical operational abilities, problems with the use and movement of nerves or muscles and complications with the composition and, or operation of bones and joints including amputation, arthritis and cerebral palsy. Qureshi, Fazil and Bano, (12) observed that Students with physical impairment face several challenges including mobility issues, academic and social problems. (9) viewed that a person's entire well-being may be affected by impairment. The authors further explained that impairment can impact on quality of life as it can lead to isolation, anxiety and depression. Those with physical impairment find it difficult to move around the school environment freely which posses some physical challenges on them.

Physical challenges refer to difficulties in performing tasks or activity that requires physical strength, endurance and skill. A physical impairment is one that affects a person's dexterity or mobility. Some physical challenges faced by impaired individuals may range from speech impairment, hearing impairment, writing impairment to mobility impairment. Kabuta(2) identified three forms of physical impairments as (a) Sensory impairment meaning difficulty with navigation, communication and interpretation of surroundings. (b) Ambulatory impairment which refers to impaired mobility or motor-functions. And (c) Invisible/medical impairment which is the condition of long-term illnesses of a certain nature that are not visible such as diabetes, epilepsy, asthma and chronic pain. This study focuses on mobility impairment as one of the physical challenge that can psychologically affect the academic achievement of impaired business education students. University of Washington(13) submitted that mobility impairment is a disability that affects movement ranging from gross motor skills, such as walking, to fine motor movement like manipulation of objects by hand. (13)



further explained that mobility impairment ranges from limitations of stamina to paralysis. Mobility impairments can include both lower and upper ends as well as hands and arms. Mobility impairment is defined as a category of disability that includes people with varying types of physical disabilities. Edge-Hill(14) explained that mobility impairments can either be a congenital health problem, a condition acquired with age, or caused by a disease or injury. Mobility impairment refers to limitation in a person's ability to move freely due to physical disabilities, injuries or medical conditions affecting their mobility. Mobility impairment limits a person's ability to walk, stand or perform daily activities independently. Ugoma, Iyedoh and Nwikpo(4) are of the notion that those whose disabilities are found on the limbs (dexterity) may not be able to catch up in the classroom during the teaching and learning process in an allotted time for task completion. And as a result, there will be low academic achievement for the physically challenged. An impaired business education student does not only have physical challenges but also faces some emotional challenges that can lead to psychological effects.

Emotional challenges refer to difficulties that involve ones feelings and relationships with others. They include a range of experiences from anxiety, depression, grief, to handling issues of self esteem. Worthy(15) identifies eight types of emotional challenges as depression, phobia, emotional eating, stubbornness, hyper-sensitivity, isolation, aggression and panic attack. One of the emotional challenges this study dwells on is depression which can affect the academic achievement of impaired business education students. (15) defined depression as feeling of sadness, hopelessness and being helpless. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention(16) submitted that depression is a mental health condition that causes a persistent feeling of sadness and changes in how you think, sleep, eat and act. American psychiatric association(17) explained that depression is a mood disorder that causes a persistent feeling of sadness and loss of interest in things and activities one once enjoyed. According to Chand and Arif(18) depression can cause difficulty with thinking, memory, eating and sleeping. The authors asserted that stressful life events, that is, difficult experiences such as the death of a loved one, trauma, divorce, isolation and lack of support, can trigger depression and some of the symptoms of depression include; feeling very sad, hopeless or worried. Again, Sawchuk(19) opined that depression is a mood disorder that causes a persistent feeling of sadness and loss of interest. The author averred that symptoms of depression may include;

- Feelings of sadness, tearfulness, emptiness or hopelessness
- Angry outbursts, irritability or frustration, even over small matters
- Loss of interest or pleasure in most or all normal activities, such as sex, hobbies or sports
- Feeling generally miserable or unhappy without knowing the reason.

Since business education is a vocational course which prepares people for practical skills required for gainful employment and self reliance, an impaired Business education student may have certain limitations in mobility that may require assistance in going from home to classroom, library, computer laboratory or other places in the institution. In addition to the dependence on others for mobility, they face stigma due to their body posture or disability. In agreement to the above assertion, Abdulhameed(5) stated that impaired students are often stigmatized and often have a tougher time learning to feel good about themselves. Moreover, impaired students feel they are often treated as socially inferior and vocationally undesirable. Hence, many of them end up with a 'can't-do attitude', low confidence and self-esteem, especially when they constantly realize that their body does not work like everyone else's, so it can be difficult for them to build a positive sense of self-worth. Giving credence to the above assertion, Ibrahim in Abdulhameed(5) indicated that disabled students suffer from many psychological effects, the most important of which are: feelings of inferiority, introversion because of its negative effects on adjustment, lack of self-reliance, dependence, inability to lead, and a constant desire to depend on others, weak sense of belonging, difficulty of building a relationship with ordinary students, feeling of internal tension and emotional imbalance; and the need to resort to the sympathy of others and try to attract their attention in different ways. The impaired business education students have some needs that arise from their relationship with the teachers as well as their peer group and that when their social needs are not met; the challenged students become disappointed, unhappy and anti-social. Hence, lack of social support, non acceptance, prejudice and devaluation faced by the impaired business education students compound their problems. According to Racheal (7), physically disable student have mainly the challenge in the area of



admission, access to facilities in the classroom, transportation and hostel accommodation. The author observed that difficulties with social skills can be as debilitating as academic problems to students with disabilities. Frustrated by their learning difficulties, many students with disabilities act disruptively and acquire negative feelings of self-worth. This lack of positive self-regard often results in poor self-concept and self-esteem. A person with a physical disability may need to use some sort of equipment for assistance with mobility. It also includes people who have lost limbs or who, because of the shape of their body, require slight adjustment to be made to enable them to participate fully in society. These physical and emotional struggles of searching for assistance and getting frustrated and depressed when none is willing, free or available to assist have psychological effects on the business education students in colleges of education which may affect their academic achievement.

A college of Education is a tertiary institution that focuses on training students to become teachers, educators and researchers in various fields of education. In Nigeria, Colleges of Education play a crucial role in preparing teachers for the nation's education system. Colleges of education occupy the third cadre in the ladder of tertiary educational provisions in the Nigeria. As important citadel of academic learning, they play a fundamental role in producing highly conscientious, qualitative and proficient classroom teachers for the Nigerian education systems. Nigerian college of education is one of the higher degree awarding institution of the Nigerian Certificate in Education (NCE) and Bachelors in Education (B. Ed) which offers technical, science, business and humanity courses in order to meet the needs and interests of various individuals for sustainability in the society. According to the Federal Republic of Nigeria(11), the aim of establishing the colleges of education was to provide educational institutions where teachers shall be professionally trained, whose programme shall be structured to equip teachers for effective performance of their duties. In this regard, the goals of colleges of education are to produce highly conscientious, qualitative and efficient classroom teachers and enhance teachers' commitment to the teaching profession. Given the above goals, demands that colleges of education are meant to be functional and sustainable. The functionality and sustainability of colleges of education demands that the students of the college of education be physically and emotionally and emotionally sound to avoid any form of psychological effect that can lead to poor academic achievement.

Achievement is defined by Zheng and Mustapha(20) as the result of school work such as test scores. The authors opined that achievement in a college context is defined as the result obtained through study. In the opinion of Ricarda, Anja, Weldinger and Wirthwein(21), academic achievement is a performance outcome that indicates the extent to which a person has accomplished specific goals that were the focus of activities in instructional environment, specifically in school, college and university. Consequently, the authors added that educational achievement indicates procedural and declarative knowledge acquired in an educational system. Similarly, (20) defined academic achievement as the improvement of students' overall quality during their school years. According to the source, academic achievement refers to the measured performance students through examinations at a certain study stage. The authors further explained that academic achievement is considered to be equal to academic performance and the common measure of academic achievement of college students is GPA (grade point average), which can be accurately calculated from the marks of each course. Also, Li and Chai in (20) viewed academic achievement as a learner's performance in teaching and learning assessments, such as final examination results, achieved by the person in school. Academic achievement simply refers to a person's success and performance in an educational setting. It includes grades from test, assignment and examination scores and overall performance in academic pursuit, reflecting the individual's knowledge, skills and understanding of the subjects studied.

Despite the fact that a few studies have shown a link between physical disabilities and mental health such as depression or anxiety yet studies on psychological problems of youths especially Business education students with impairment is scarce. Students of a technical and vocational course like business education in a developing country like Nigeria are prone to develop psychological problems as a result of some physical and emotional challenges which can negatively affect their academic achievement. The study is concerned with the psychological effects of physical and emotional challenges of business education students on their academic achievement in the colleges of education in the south east, Nigeria. Generally, many people feel that students with disabilities are unable to perform efficiently in business education since Business Education is a



vocational course. Additionally, it is more challenging to find impaired students study business education in higher level due to its practical nature. Comparatively the achievement of impaired students may be lower than the normal students as a result of their disabilities. Therefore, there arise different concerns related to business education and impaired students, such as how mobility impairment psychologically affect the academic achievement of impaired Business Education Students and how depression psychologically affect the academic achievement of impaired Business Education Students. It has been observed that the impaired students feel more difficulty such as accessing the classroom and laboratory independently and handling some learning facilities with ease. School infrastructures, class participation, exam writing, teaching method are the areas of challenge faced by impaired business Education students. Therefore, the study intends to seek the answers to the following research questions; to what extent does mobility impairment psychologically affect the academic achievement of impaired Business Education Students in Colleges of Education in South east Nigeria? Secondly, to what extent does depression psychologically affect the academic achievement of impaired Business Education Students in South east, Nigeria?

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted descriptive survey research design to examine the psychological effects of physical and emotional challenges of impaired business education students on their academic achievement in the colleges of education in the South East, Nigeria. Descriptive survey research design is a means of collecting and gathering information on people's opinions or ideas through interviews and questionnaire. According to Bakare, Ifeanyieze and Olaitan(22), descriptive survey research design is the description of data collected from a selected group of individuals in population studied where the information obtained from the data could be generalized on every member of the population from where the selected group studied is drawn. Descriptive survey research design was considered appropriate for this study because it was used to sample the opinions of male and female impaired Business education students on the psychological effects of physical and emotional challenges of impaired business education students on their academic achievement in the colleges of education in the South East, Nigeria through the use of questionnaire.

The study was carried out in South-East zone, Nigeria. The South-East, Nigeria is the one of the six geopolitical zones of Nigeria representing both a geographic and political region of the country's inland southeast. It comprises five states – Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu, and Imo. The zone is bounded by the River Niger on the west, the riverine Niger Delta on the south, the North Central to the north, and the Cross River on the east. It is divided between the Cross–Niger transition forests eco-regions in the south and the Guinean forest–savanna mosaic in the drier north. Although the South East is the smallest geopolitical zone, it contributes greatly to the Nigerian economy due to oil and natural gas reserves along with a growing industrialized economy. The region has a population of about 36 million people, around 18% of the total population of the country. South-East zone was chosen as the area of the study because the members are found to be highly rooted in traditions and religions which contradict their perception of impaired individuals in the society.

The population for the study included 29 male and 20 female impaired Business Education students in all the 11 Colleges of Education that offer Business education in the five states that form the South-East zone, Nigeria (Business Education Departmental presidents of the various Colleges of Education, 2024). Due to the manageable size of the population, no sampling was carried out.

The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled, Physical and Emotional Challenges of Impaired Business Education Students Questionnaire (PECBESQ) which was developed by the researcher based on literature and research objectives. The instrument was face-validated by experts to ensure its sustainability for the study.

Forty nine (49) copies of the questionnaire were administered to 49 impaired Business education students in eleven(11) colleges of education that offer Business Education in the South-east, Nigeria by the researcher with the help of four research assistants. The four research assistants were briefed on the objectives of the study and how to approach the respondents for easy acceptance, completion and return of the instruments. The



instrument was administered to each respondent through personal contact and the percentage rate of return was 100%. The data was analyzed using mean (X) and standard deviation (SD). The opinions of the respondents were interpreted using the real limit of the numbers as follows:

Response Option

Nominal Value

Very Great Extent	3.50 - 4.00
Great Extent	2.50 - 3.49
Small Extent	1.50 - 2.49
Very Small Extent	0.50 - 1.49

In taking decision, any item with mean of 3.5-4.00 was Very Great Extent, 2.50-3.49 was Great Extent, 1.50-2.49 will be Small Extent and 0.50-1.49 will be Very Small Extent.

RESULTS

Research Question One

To what extent does mobility impairment psychologically affect the academic achievement of the impaired business education students in Colleges of education in South east Nigeria?

Table 1:	Mean and standard deviation of the respondents on the extent to which mobility impairment
psycholog	gically affects impaired business education students

S/N	ITEMS	X	SD	DECISION
1	Improper functioning of any part of the body	3.46	0.5	GE
2	Substantial limits to major life activities	3.53	0.5	VGE
3	Movement restriction and participation constraint	3.44	0.5	GE
4	Difficulty with navigation, communication, and interpretation of surroundings	3.48	0.5	GE
5	Certain conditions not visible such as diabetes, epilepsy, asthma, and chronic pain	3.44	0.5	GE
6	Inability to walk, stand, or perform daily activities independently	3.46	0.5	GE
7	Inability to catch up in the classroom during the teaching and learning process	3.4	0.49	GE
	Grand Mean and SD	3.47	0.5	GE

Note: SD=Standard Deviation VGE = Very Great Extent, GE= Great Extent, SE = Small Extent, VSE = Very Small Extent

The data presented in Table 1 showed that the mean value of 6 out of 7 items in the Table ranged from 3.40 to 3.48 which were between the boundary limit of 2.50 to 3.49 on 4-point rating scale. This means that the items were rated "Great Extent". The remaining one item had mean value 3.53 which is within the boundary limit of 3.50 to 4.00 on 4-point rating scale. This is an indication the item was rated by the respondents as "Very Great Extent". Table 1 also showed the values of standard deviations ranging from 0.49 to 0.50 which indicates that the respondents had similar opinions in their responses which were not far from the mean.



Research Question Two

To what extent does depression psychologically affect the academic achievement of the impaired business education students in Colleges of education in South east Nigeria?

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation of the respondents on the extent to which depression psychologically affects impaired business education students

S/N	ITEMS	X	SD	DECISION
8	Feeling of sadness and hopelessness for being helpless sometimes	3.4	0.49	GE
9	Angry outbursts, irritability, or frustration, even over small matters	3.51	0.5	VGE
10	Loss of interest or pleasure in most or all normal activities, such as hobbies or sports	3.36	0.48	GE
11	Stigma which brings tough time learning to feel good about oneself	1.63	0.48	SE
12	Low self-esteem, especially when they remember that their body does not work like everyone else's	3.44	0.5	GE
13	Feelings of inferiority	3.36	0.52	GE
14	Lack of self-reliance and dependence	3.48	0.5	GE
15	Inability to lead and a constant desire to depend on others	3.53	0.5	VGE
16	Difficulty of building a relationship with ordinary students	3.59	0.49	VGE
17	Feeling of internal tension and emotional imbalance	2.28	0.88	SE
18	The need to resort to the sympathy of others and try to attract their attention in different ways	2.32	0.94	SE
	Grand Mean and SD	3.09	0.58	GE

Note: SD=Standard Deviation VGE = Very Great Extent, GE= Great Extent, SE = Small Extent, VSE = Very Small Extent

The data presented in Table 2 showed that the mean value of 3 out of 11 items in the Table ranged from 1.63 to 2.32 which were between the boundary limit of 1.50 to 2.49 on 4-point rating scale. This means that the items were rated "Small Extent". 5 items ranged from 3.36 to 3.48 which were between the boundary limit of 2.50 to 3.49 on 4-point rating scale. This means that the items were rated "Great Extent". The remaining 3 items had their mean values ranging from 3.51 to 3.59

which is within the boundary limit of 3.50 to 4.00 on 4-point rating scale. This is an indication that the items were rated by the respondents as "Very Great Extent". Table 1 also showed the values of standard deviations ranging from 0.48 to 0.94 which indicates that the respondents had similar opinions in their responses which were not far from the mean.

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

The result from research question one revealed that mobility impairment psychologically affects the academic achievement of the impaired business education students in Colleges of education

in South east Nigeria through Improper functioning of any part of the body. Substantial limits to major life activities, Movement restriction and participation constraint, Difficulty with navigation, communication and interpretation of surroundings, Certain nature which are not visible such as diabetes, epilepsy, asthma and chronic pain, Inability to walk, stand or perform daily activities Independently and Inability to catch up in the



classroom during the teaching and learning process. These findings are in line with Ibrahim in Abdulhameed(5) who emphasized that disabled students suffer from many psychological effects, the most important of which are: introversion because of its negative effects on adjustment, lack of self-reliance, dependence, inability to lead, and a constant desire to depend on others, weak sense of belonging and The need to resort to the sympathy of others and try to attract their attention in different ways. The findings are similar to the submissions of Smith in Qureshi, Fazil and Bano(12) that Students with physical impairment face several challenges including mobility issues, academic and social problems. Similarly, the findings of this study give credence to the reports of Brekke and Alecu(3) who submitted that both physical and mental disabilities have negative impacts on educational achievements.

The findings on research question two revealed that the ways through which depression psychologically affect the academic achievement of impaired Business education students in Colleges of Education in the South east include: feeling of sadness and hopelessness for being helpless sometimes, angry outbursts, irritability or frustration, even over small matters, loss of interest or pleasure in most or all normal activities, such as hobbies or sports, stigma which brings tough time learning to feel good about oneself, low self-esteem, especially when they remember that their body does not work like everyone else's, feelings of inferiority, lack of self-reliance and dependence, inability to lead and a constant desire to depend on others, difficulty of building a relationship with ordinary students, feeling of internal tension and emotional imbalance and the need to resort to the sympathy of others and try to attract their attention in different ways. The findings are in agreement with those of Racheal(7) who observed that difficulties with social skills can be as debilitating as academic problems to students with disabilities. According to the author, some students with disabilities get frustrated by their learning difficulties and act disruptively and acquire negative feelings of self-worth. The study also corroborated with the findings of Ibrahim in Abdulhameed(5) which observed that disabled students suffer from many psychological effects, the most important of which are: feelings of inferiority, difficulty of building a relationship with ordinary students as well as feeling of internal tension and emotional imbalance. The findings of this study was in conformity with the findings of Brekke and Alecu(3) who found that students with disabilities have poorer educational achievement than their typically developing peers because they have reduced cognitive functioning.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study investigated the Psychological Effects of Physical and Emotional Challenges of Impaired Business Education Students on their Academic Achievement in the Colleges of Education in the South East, Nigeria. It was concluded that to a very great extent, mobility impairment and depression have psychological effects on the academic achievement of impaired Business education students in Colleges of Education in South east, Nigeria. The study therefore recommends that government and well placed Nigerians should provide physically impaired Business education students with some mobility aids like wheelchair, walking staffs, mobility scooter and crutches among others to aid their movement in and outside the school environment. The school counselors should initiate programmes that will help impaired students to develop self esteem, self reliance, dependence and emotional balance so as to work hard academically and achieve academic excellence. The study also recommends that the impaired Business education students should be encouraged by their parents, teachers and fellow students to do away with any form of ill feeling and feel free with their peers.

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