

ASSESSMENT OF THE INFLUENCE OF COVID-19 ON THE ACADEMIC AND SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT OF STUDENTS WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENT IN SOUTH-WEST, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The outbreak of COVID-19 in the world has a significant impact on economic, education, social, cultural, political and religious negatively. The academic and social life of students with visual impairment suffers a great set back during this period. Thus, this paper therefore takes a critical look into the influence of COVID-19 on academic and social adjustment of students with visual impairment in south-west, Nigeria. The objectives of the study were to examine the influence of COVID-19 on the academic adjustment of students with visual impairment and to identify the impact of COVID-19 on social adjustment of students with visual impairment. 240 samples who are students with visual impairment were purposively selected from south-west, Nigeria. Questionnaire method was used to collect data for the study. The findings show that, there is low level of academic adjustment among students with visual impairment in relations to COVID-19 pandemic in the study. The study also reveals that, there is a low level of social adjustment among students with visual impairment in relations to COVID-19 pandemic. The study therefore recommends that, government at all levels should have a robust plan that will better the loss of students with visual impairment and their other students with special needs.

Keywords: COVID-19, Academic Adjustment, Social Adjustment Visual Impairment, Students.

Introduction

COVID-19 also known as coronavirus, the pandemic today is not only a health issue. Its impacts cut across all levels of society causing important consequences for social, economic,

education, political and human security (Abodunrin, Oloye & Adesola, 2020). Over the years, each countries of the world are confronted with diverse pandemic but the most recent of all that affect the entire global community is COVID-19 (Abodunrin, Oloye & Adesola, 2020).. This corona virus has brings the entire continent of the world into a state of dilemma thereby making the world power of economic countries to be incapacitated in curbing this virus. Since the outbreak of the corona virus pandemic few months ago, governments all over the world have been confronted with the challenge of finding a lasting solution to this devastating virus. As of March 31, 2020, more than 37,800 people worldwide has died of COVID-19, the highly infectious respiratory disease caused by the coronavirus. More than 787,000 people have been tested positive and over 178 countries/regions have been affected, according to data compiled by Johns Hopkins University (Abodunrin & Abodunrin, 2020).

Since the outbreak of COVID-19, students with visual impairment have been adversely affected academically and socially. Institutions of learning were closed down as means of preventing the further spread of the disease the ability to learn by abstraction by this set of student becomes a difficult thing that cannot be addressed due to their unique nature of disability. Most of the schools management adopted the use of E-learning as a means of reaching out to their students with the visually impaired at stake. This is because most of the concept taught electronically cannot be visualized by these students thereby causing a serious threat to their academic life unless they are presented to them in a real form or adapted form. Their peers who are sighted during this COVID-19 lockdown attends extra moral lessons to bridge the gap that exist between their academics and COVID-19 at the comfort of their various homes and this medium cannot be adequately utilised by students with visual impairment because of the special educational services they need for them to be able to learn effectively..

Visual impairment is a condition of reduced visual performance that cannot be remedied by refractive correction (spectacles or contact lenses), surgery or medical methods (DeCarlo, Woo and Woo, 2006). Consequently, it results in functional limitations of the visual system that may be characterised by irreversible vision loss, restricted visual field and decreased contrast sensitivity, increased sensitivity to glare as well as decreased ability to perform activities of daily living, such as reading or writing (Kavitha, Manumali, Praveen & Heralgi, 2015). Corn and Lusk (2010) affirm that individuals with Visually Impairment have measurable vision, yet experience difficulties accomplishing visual tasks even with the use of refractive correction. Furthermore, these individuals are sometimes capable of enhancing their abilities to accomplish visual tasks with the use of compensatory low vision aids and/or environmental adjustments. Abodunrin & Abodunrin (2020) observed that the visually impaired are the group of people characterized by inefficiency in the organ of sight which hinders individual capability in performing various functions that requires the use of sight.

Social adjustment is as old as human race on earth. Gill (2014), the term Social adjustment is the process of finding and adapting modes of behaviour suitable to ones social environment or to change ones social environment. Social adjustment can be viewed from two angles. The first view being social adjustment as an achievement means how efficiently an individual can perform his or her duties in different social circumstances or activities. While the second view sees social adjustment as a process, which is of major importance to psychologist, teachers and parents. The process of social adjustment starts from birth of the child and continues till

death. Thus, social adjustment means reactions to the demands and pressures of social environment imposed upon the individual. Socially, they become more frustrated due to the fact that view of the members of the society who associate themselves with this students with visual impairment withdraw due to social distancing measure which is one of the ways suggested by National Centre for Diseases Control (NCDC) to reduce the spread of the pandemic. Sighted guide which is one of the best mobility aids used by the visually impaired can no longer utilised effectively due to fear of body contact that can leads to coronavirus disease infection

Gill (2014) observed that, students with total loss of vision are those whose visual loss indicates that they should be educated basically through the use of Braille, tactile and auditory materials. Students with low vision is seen as one who has some remaining useful vision which can be optimized through the use of assistive visual materials as part of the educational programme. Most students with visual impairment are educated in special schools. Social adjustment is a parts and parcel of life and it's often considered as a continuous process where in every moment the students with visual impairment are subjected where they have to make an adjustment. He identify some factors that affect social adjustment of students with visual impairment in their encounter with their sighted colleagues which includes: students with visual impairment experienced social rejection and social isolation, students with visual impairment often received hostile and inappropriate behaviour from their surroundings, they have fewer social experiences compared to their sighted peer, they experience isolation difference and shame which occur in everyday life, which may be as a lack of acceptance by their sighted colleagues in schools.

Jain (2012) asserts that, social adjustment is a psychological process which is concerned with an effort made by an individual to cope with standards, values and needs of a society in order to be accepted. It involves coping with new standard and value. Mazaheri, Baghiyan and Fatehizadeh (2006), adjustment contains many aspects such as social, emotional, physical and educational dimensions and the best is social adjustment which is the prerequisites to others.

Social adjustment is the adjustment in the social situation. It is the adjustment in all types of status and roles in social institutions. It is characterised with social intelligence. It is influenced by social maturity of the person. Maturity, in this regard, means to establish good relations with family, neighbors, classmates, teachers and members of the society. It is determined by how adequately an individual places the social role that is expected from him or her and personal satisfaction he or she derives from playing this role. A socially mature person behaves in accordance with social norms, traditions, passion such as kindness, respect for others, and honesty among others. Mathil (2016) reported that, social adjustment requires the development of social qualities and virtues of an adolescent as the stage of adolescent is featured with storms and stress. The academic adjustment of students with visual impairment can only be seeing when they are able to bridge the gaps that exist between their impairment and their academic needs.

The relevance of education to human existence cannot be emphasized the visually impaired through academic have the opportunity of advertising their potentialities in the outside world being able to adjust to academic challenges irrespective of their impaired vision sets them on a right track and afford them the opportunity to compete with their sighted colleague in the

classrooms. Academic adjustment of students with visual impairment deals with his or her ability to maintain balancing between his or her academic tasks and the visual incapability as a result the impaired vision. This begin when he or she gain admitted into school and be able to concentrate in the instructional task, interact with his or her academic environment and be able to achieve within the academic context.

During COVID-19, institutions of learning were being close down as a result lockdown put in place as one of the precautionary measure by the government of nations including Nigeria. At this time, both residential and non residential schools were totally closed down and students have no choice than to stay with the parents and relatives while continue with on line learning activities by their school managements. Students with visual impairment have limited access to this E-learning due to inability to learn some concepts by abstractions.

This paper therefore, takes a look into the impact of COVID-19 on Academic and Social Adjustment of Students with Visual Impairment in South-West, Nigeria

Objective of the Study

The objective of the study was to:

1. Examine the influence of COVID-19 on the academic adjustment of students with visual impairment
2. Identify the impact of COVID-19 on social adjustment of students with visual impairment

Research Questions

The following research questions guide the study:

1. What is the influence of COVID-19 on the academic adjustment of students with visual impairment?
2. What is the influence of COVID-19 on social adjustment of students with visual impairment?

Hypothesis

Ho1 There is no significant relationship between COVID-19 pandemic and the social adjustment of students with visual impairment

Ho2 There is no significant relationship between COVID-19 and academic adjustment of students with visual impairment

Methodology

Survey research design was adopted for this study. The data were collected using self structured questionnaire which was divided into two sections, section A deals with the personal bio data of the respondents while section B contains questions of the influence of COVID-19 on the academic and social adjustment of students with visual impairment. Population for the study comprises of all students with visual impairment in south-west, Nigeria. Purposive sampling technique was used to select two hundred and forty (240) respondents including male and female who were totally blind and having low vision. The data was analysed using descriptive statistics of frequency count, percentages, mean and standard deviation, Pearson Product Moment Correlation and Multiple Regression analysis.

Results

Table 1: Frequency distribution of respondents by gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	133	55.4
Female	107	44.6
Total	240	100.0

Table 1 shows that 133(55.4%) of the respondents are male, and their female counterparts are 107(44.6%)

Table 2: Frequency distribution of respondents by age

Age	Frequency	Percentage
8-12 years	45	18.8
13-18 years	77	32.1
19 and above years	118	49.2
Total	240	100.0

Table 2 shows that 45(18.8%) respondents are between 8-12 years of age, 77(32.1%) are between 13-18 years, and 118(49.2%) are 19 years and above.

Table 3: Frequency distribution of respondents by degree of vision loss

Degree of vision loss	Frequency	Percentage
Totally blind	89	37.1
Low vision	151	62.9
Total	240	100.0

Table 3 shows that 89(37.1%) respondents are totally blind and 151(62.9%) had low vision

Table 4: Frequency distribution of respondents by time of onset

Time of onset	Frequency	Percentage
Congenital	108	45.0
Acquired	132	55.0
Total	240	100.0

Table 4 shows that 108(45.0%) of the respondents indicated congenital time of onset, and 132(55.0%) indicated acquired time of onset

Research Hypothesis

Hypothesis one: There is no significant relationship between COVID-19 pandemic and the social adjustment of students with visual impairment

Table 5: Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) showing the relationship between COVID-19 pandemic and the social adjustment of students with visual impairment

Variables	Mean	Std. Dev.	n	r	p-value	Remarks
COVID-19 pandemic	30.5458	4.3653	240	.781*	.001	Sig.
Social adjustment	37.6917	13.4356				

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 5 shows that there is a significant relationship between COVID-19 pandemic and the social adjustment of students with visual impairment ($r = .781$, $n = 240$, $p(.001) < .05$). Hence, COVID-19 pandemic influenced social adjustment of students with visual impairment in the study negatively.

The hypothesis is rejected.

Hypothesis two: There is no significant relationship between COVID-19 and academic adjustment of students with visual impairment

Table 6: Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) showing the relationship between COVID-19 pandemic and the academic adjustment of students with visual impairment

Variables	Mean	Std. Dev.	n	r	p-value	Remarks
COVID-19 pandemic	30.5458	4.3653	240	.758*	.001	Sig.
Academic adjustment	29.0125	12.2465				

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 6 shows that there is a significant relationship between COVID-19 pandemic and the academic adjustment of students with visual impairment ($r = .758$, $n = 240$, $p(.001) < .05$). Hence, COVID-19 pandemic affects academic adjustment of students with visual impairment in the study.

The hypothesis is rejected.

Research question one: What is the level of academic adjustment among students with visual impairment in relations to COVID-19 pandemic?

Table 7: Measure of academic adjustment among students with visual impairment

s/n	Academic adjustment	SD	D	U	A	SA	$\bar{x}$	S.D
1	Most of the things taught me by my teachers has been forgetting	21 8.8%	49 20.4%	5 2.1%	62 25.8%	103 42.9%	3.74	1.412
2	My academic needs has not been met adequately during covid-19	40 16.7%	28 11.7%	2 0.8%	61 25.4%	109 45.4%	3.71	1.535
3	Learning by abstraction becomes a difficult thing for me during covid-19	40 16.7%	18 7.5%	7 2.9%	120 50.0%	55 22.9%	3.55	1.365
4	Covid-19 shots of doors of instructional benefit to me	38 15.8%	32 13.3%	5 2.1%	97 40.4%	68 28.3%	3.52	1.429
5	During covid-19 pandemic, I have no special person to relate with academically	45 18.8%	35 14.6%	25 10.4%	80 33.3%	55 22.9%	3.27	1.443
6	During covid-19, I have a special person who is a real source of comfort to me	63 26.3%	37 15.4%	10 4.2%	67 27.9%	63 26.3%	3.13	1.590
7	There is a special person with whom I can share my joys and sorrows	75 31.3%	100 41.7%	7 2.9%	43 17.9%	15 6.3%	2.26	1.248
8	I recorded no loss in academics during covid-19	65 27.1%	125 52.1%	10 4.2%	25 10.4%	15 6.3%	2.17	1.127
9	I was able to learn effectively during covid-19	100 41.7%	110 45.8%	3 1.3%	17 7.1%	10 4.2%	1.86	1.036
10	I enjoyed E-learning services rendered by service provider.	140 58.3%	58 24.2%	3 1.3%	27 11.3%	12 5.0%	1.80	1.210

Weighted Mean =2.90

Table 7 shows the measures of academic adjustment among students with visual impairment in relations to COVID-19 pandemic. “Most of the things taught me by my teachers has been forgetting” ($\bar{x}$ =3.74) was rated highest by the mean score rating as the major measure of academic adjustment among students with visual impairment, and was followed by “My academic needs has not been met adequately during covid-19” ($\bar{x}$ =3.71), “Learning by abstraction becomes a difficult thing for me during covid-19” ($\bar{x}$ =3.55), “Covid-19 shots of doors of instructional benefit to me” ($\bar{x}$ =3.52), “During covid-19 pandemic, I have no special person to relate with academically” ($\bar{x}$ =3.27), “During covid-19, I have a special person who is a real source of comfort to me” ($\bar{x}$ =3.13), “There is a special person with whom I can share my joys and sorrows” ($\bar{x}$ =2.26), “I recorded no loss in academics during covid-19” ($\bar{x}$ =2.17), “I was able to learn effectively during covid-19” ($\bar{x}$ =1.86), and lastly by “I enjoyed E-learning services rendered by service provider” ($\bar{x}$ =1.80) respectively

Table 8 Test of norm showing the level of academic adjustment among students with visual impairment in relations to COVID-19 pandemic

Interval	Mean index	Level of academic adjustment	Frequency	Percentage
1-25		Low	75	31.3
26-50	29.01	High	165	68.8

Table 8 shows the level of academic adjustment among students with visual impairment in relations to COVID-19 pandemic. 31.3% (n=75) students had low level of academic adjustment, and 68.8% (n=165) had a high level of academic adjustment. Hence, there is low level of academic adjustment among students with visual impairment in relations to COVID-19 pandemic in the study.

Research question two: What is the level of social adjustment among students with visual impairment in relations to COVID-19 pandemic?

Table 9: Measure of social adjustment among students with visual impairment

s/n	Social adjustment	SD	D	U	A	SA	$\bar{x}$	S.D
1	I was not opportune to attend recreational centers during covid-19	-	18 7.5%	12 5.0%	60 25.0%	150 62.5%	4.43	0.893
2	I was limited in social interactions	25 10.4%	15 6.3%	10 4.2%	35 14.6%	155 64.6%	4.17	1.362
3	I was not allow to spend my leisure skills as expected	28 11.7%	27 11.3%	5 2.1%	82 34.2%	98 40.8%	3.81	1.379
4	I can no long make use of my school recreational/physical exercise facilities especially with friends since the outbreak	38 15.8%	22 9.2%	15 6.3%	45 18.8%	120 50.0%	3.78	1.522
5	My level of dependence increases due to covid-19 outbreak.	17 7.1%	48 20.0%	10 4.2%	68 28.3%	97 40.4%	3.75	1.352
6	I was not opportune to participate in group activities since covid-19 outbreak	32 13.3%	27 11.3%	6 2.5%	97 40.4%	78 32.5%	3.68	1.379
7	I was more isolated from the public due to covid-19	48 20.0%	22 9.2%	-	77 32.1%	93 38.8%	3.60	1.552
8	During this covid-19, I get the emotional support I need from my family	35 14.6%	60 25.0%	1 0.4%	29 12.1%	115 47.9%	3.54	1.610
9	I can no longer hang out with my friends	40 16.7%	45 18.8%	5 2.1%	60 25.0%	90 37.5%	3.48	1.544
10	I finds it difficult to initiate conversation with new person since covid-19 outbreak	28 11.7%	42 17.5%	30 12.5%	71 29.6%	69 28.7%	3.46	1.372

Weighted Mean =3.77

Table 9 shows the measures of social adjustment among students with visual impairment in relations to COVID-19 pandemic. "I was not opportune to attend recreational centers during covid-19" ($\bar{x}$ =4.43) was rated highest by the mean score rating as the major measure of social adjustment among students with visual impairment, and was followed by "I was limited in social interactions" ($\bar{x}$ =4.17), "I was not allow to spend my leisure skills as expected" ($\bar{x}$ =3.81), "I can no long make use of my school recreational/physical exercise facilities especially with friends since the outbreak" ($\bar{x}$ =3.78), "My level of dependence increases due to covid-19 outbreak" ($\bar{x}$ =3.75), "I was not opportune to participate in group activities since covid-19 outbreak" ($\bar{x}$ =3.68), "I was more isolated from the public due to covid-19" ($\bar{x}$ =3.60), "During this covid-19, I get the emotional support I need from my family" ($\bar{x}$ =3.54), "I can no longer hang out with my friends" ($\bar{x}$ =3.48), and lastly by "I finds it difficult to initiate conversation with new person since covid-19 outbreak" ($\bar{x}$ =3.46) respectively

Table 10: Test of norm showing the level of social adjustment among students with visual impairment in relations to COVID-19 pandemic

Interval	Mean index	Level of social adjustment	Frequency	Percentage
1-25		Low	59	24.6
26-50	29.01	High	181	75.4

Table 10 shows the level of social adjustment among students with visual impairment in relations to COVID-19 pandemic. 24.6% (n=59) students had low level of social adjustment, and 75.4% (n=181) had a high level of social adjustment. Hence, there is a low level of social adjustment among students with visual impairment in relations to COVID-19 pandemic in the study.

Discussion of findings

The findings show that there is low level of academic adjustment among students with visual impairment in relations to COVID-19 pandemic in the study. This finding was in line with the view of Abodunrin and Abodunrin (2020) who reported that, COVID-19 pandemic increases the challenges faced by persons with visual impairment in all spheres of life.

The study also reveals that, there is a low level of social adjustment among students with visual impairment in relations to COVID-19 pandemic. This findings could have being as a result of lockdown and social distancing measures put in place as part of the measures aimed at reducing the spread of the disease which are mainly through body contact. This was corroborated with the findings of Abodunrin and Abodunrin (2020) which reported that, social distancing measure affect the social life of persons with visual impairment due to the fact that, inability to make use of the sighted guide which is one of their mobility aids becomes a difficult thing to utilised and ability to go into unfamiliar environment independently becomes impossible.

Conclusion

COVID-19 pandemic has a negative effect on the academic and social adjustment of students with visual impairment at all levels. This pandemic reduces their access to social life due to lockdown and other preventive measures by the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) to curtail the spread of the disease. All schools were closed and this affect the education of

students with visual impairments they were unable to learn effectively via on line which is alternative being adopted for teaching/learning process during this period.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

- Government at all levels should have a robust plan that will better the loss of students with visual impairment and their other students with special needs
- The school management should have a long term framework that will take into considerations the needs of students irrespective of their impairment
- There should be home service programmes for students with series of impairment. Through this, their needs could be met as well as providing them with enough service delivery that will bring learning and other social activities to their domain

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