
Effects of COVID19 on the Performance of Small and Medium Scale Enterprise in Anambra State

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Abstract: *The study examined the effects of COVID19 on the performance of small and medium scale enterprise in Anambra state.. The objectives of this study were to, Analyze the effect of lockdown on the performance of small and medium scale enterprise in Anambra state. Evaluate the effect of movement restriction on the performance of small and medium scale enterprise in Anambra state. Determine the effect of market closure on the performance of small and medium scale enterprise in Anambra state. The study was anchored on Social-Ecological Theory (Bookchin, 1960) The research design used for the study was the cross-sectional survey research method. The instrument for data collection was questionnaire constructed for the study and calibrated with the 5 point likert ordinal measurement and rating scale. The population of the study was 1795, while the sample size were 327. 327 copies of questionnaire were distributed and 308 copies of questionnaire were completed and useful for the study which represented 97.5% response rate. Research hypotheses were tested using analysis of variance with the aids of statistical package for social science (SPSS) version 23. Finding from the study revealed that Lockdown has significant effect on the performance of small and medium scale enterprise in Anambra state. Movement restriction has significant effect on the performance of small and medium scale enterprise in Anambra state .In view of the findings, the study therefore recommends that Small and medium enterprises should consider adopting digital marketing to minimize the negative effect of pandemic which was culminated by contact with. The government should provide support for small and medium scale enterprises by providing grants, waive tax as well as a flexible policy that will aid easy operation*

Keywords: *covid-19, small and medium scale enterprise, Lockdown, Movement restriction, entrepreneurs*

Introduction

Development of small and medium scale enterprises has been a focal point of the various governments of the world, because SMEs have flexible configurations and immensely contributed to nation building respectively (Aderemi et al.2019). Generally, the World Bank classified SMEs as businesses with maximum of 300 workers. Meanwhile, in Nigeria's context, small and medium scale enterprises are conceptualized as business entities that have less than 50 employees. Basically, these enterprises possess investment in machinery and equipment that is less or equal to six hundred thousand naira and independently owned and operated with a view to generating job opportunities and meeting sales standard (CBN, 2018). These business entities constituted about 90% of businesses in Nigeria (Gbandi & Amisssah, 2014). National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) estimated numbers of SMEs in Nigeria to be 41.4 million. The unique nature of SMEs lies in the utilization of raw materials from local sources, creation of employment, motivation for rural development, entrepreneurship development, mobilization of local savings and platform for self-employment

Small and medium scale enterprises are undeniably critical to the growth and development of the global economy (Erdem, 2011). The SMEs subsector becomes a good source of job creation, aid in the development of local technology and source of development to indigenous entrepreneurs (Alaye-Ogan, 2012;), and enormously contributed to nation-building (Aderemi, Olu-Young, Taiwo, & Adejumo, 2019). The SMEs sector contributed more than 90% of all economic activities and more than 50% of all employment opportunities globally and also, accounted for more than 40% of GDP in developing nations (Garba, 2020). SMEs sub-sector in Nigeria, as obtains in other parts of the globe, performs a key role in the economic development of the country. They accounted for 90% of all businesses in Nigeria (Gbandi & Amisah, 2014). Although, according to World Bank SMEs are businesses with a maximum of 300 employees. In Nigeria, SMEs are regarded as businesses with less than 50 employees and capital which includes; the cost of machinery and equipment less or equal to ₦600,000 (\$1,600) which is owned independently with the hope of generating profit and meeting sales standard (CBN, 2018). Statistics from the National Bureau of Statistics indicated that the number of SMEs in Nigeria was estimated to be 41.1 million (ILO, 2017).

The distinctive nature of SMEs was a result of the use of local raw-materials, employment generation, promotion of rural development, nurture entrepreneurial activities, mobilization of savings locally, and opportunity for self-employment (Aderemi, Ojo, Ifeanyi, & Efunbajo, 2020). However, Covid-19 Pandemic has a devastating effect on human and material resources and it is one of the greatest events that history will continue to remember. The pandemic spread across the globe without obstacles and the worst that affected the global economy since the great depression (Erdem, 2011; IMF, 2020; WHO, 2020). The case first emerged in Wuhan, China, in 2019 which result in a toll of death that extends to almost all countries of the world (Akanni & Gabriel, 2020). The total number of confirmed cases across the globe was 16, 301,736 as of 28th July 2020, whereas casualties stood at 650,069. In trying to control the spread of the pandemic factories, markets, places of worship were closed, as well as restrictions of movement of people, goods, and service. This always echoed its effect on the activities of SMEs globally. Business organizations were not prepared for the pandemic, despite the call by the Public Health Research Institute to adopt precautionary measures on the emergency of such type of events, except big firms were able to take a bold step plan against the pandemic (Rebmann, Wang, Swick, Reddick, & del Rosario, 2013). It is anticipated that the US GDP will likely decrease to 3.8 percent for 2020 due to the pandemic (Hatzius, Philips, Mericle, & Struyven, 2020).

Furthermore, Igwe (2020), stressed that the global economy will witness the worst economic recession as a result of the pandemic. The global economy is predicted to record economic losses through three outlets: supply chain, demand, and the financial market. These outlets hurt businesses, household consumption, and international trade. In Nigeria, the case of the pandemic was first discovered on 27th February 2020. The Nigerian Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) recorded 41,804 cases as of 28th July 2020, out of this number 18,704 were discharged and 868 deaths. The SMEs sector in Nigeria has been seen as a tool that propelled the economy because of its ability to promote productivity, generate employment as well as improving the welfare of the people (Abosede & Onakoya, 2013). In an attempt to halt the spread of the pandemic, the government take various measures ranging from the closure of borders, restrict the movement of people, goods, and services, as well as the closure of markets and worship places. Therefore, on

29th March 2020, the government declared a total lockdown in three states, thus; Lagos, Ogun, and the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, preventing all activities that are not essential in all those states. Afterward, the remaining states were also lockdown as well as banned on interstate movement except for essential services. This is one of the major reasons why many studies on the effect of COVID-19 on SMEs in Nigeria cannot be overlooked in the time of this global pandemic. However, many analysts have predicted a decrease in aggregate demand and supply, declining in exports, and an increase in government expenditure due to the negative effects of lockdown among various sectors of the Nigerian economy. Furthermore, this lockdown will probably make the situation terrible for SMEs in the country. As rightly indicated SMEs form the larger businesses in Nigeria with 141.1 million SMEs spread across the country, which employed more than 70% of the working population in the country (ILO, 2017). This indicates that large proportions of people in Nigeria are involved either directly or indirectly in SMEs. Then, any adverse economic tremors echoed by the COVID-19 pandemic on these sub-sectors put more than 70% of the working populace exposed to the unique virus.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The global pandemic referred to as COVID-19 (Corona virus) has caused a lot of damages to the world economy. In order to curtail the spread of the virus, lockdown, social distancing, closure of markets, public offices, business organizations, places of worship, and events were imposed as mandatory precautionary measures of curtailing the virus, thus, scaring business transactions and putting investors on the run for safer consumption and investment (Ozili & Arun, 2020). Also, the restriction on the movement of people, goods, and services in many countries caused great loss to businesses and industries. The aggregate loss globally was projected to be more than \$4 trillion (Ozili, 2020). The lockdown measures imposed has affected the purchasing rate of consumers, the percentage change fell from 59.2% to 41.1% from January 2020 to June 2020 this also affected the productivity of the manufacturing sector of SMEs (Central Bank of Nigeria, 2020). Statistics also indicate there is an upward trend in unemployment in Nigeria from 23.1% to 33.5% in 2019 and 2020 respectively due to COVID-19 which put the population of unemployment around 39.5 million people (National Bureau of Statistics, 2020). Also, the poverty rate has increased during the lockdown period by 8.7% i.e. from 43.5% to 52.2% which indicates 17 million more people falling below the poverty line (Andam, Edeh, Oboh, Pauw, & Thurlow, 2020).

Therefore, as a result of this, some SMEs cannot withstand the situation for more than one month due to cash flow problems (Farrell & Wheat, 2016). Furthermore, SMEs face the risk of total closure aftermath of the pandemic, partially due to the inability to settle their accruals during the closure (Schrank, Marshall, Hall-Phillips, Wiatt, & Jones, 2013). Many businesses were forced to lay off some of their staff, whereas others had to reduce their number of working hours (Edgecliffe, 2020). The global pandemic has caused serious socioeconomic damages, the ban on sporting, religious, political, and cultural events, brought about widespread shortages of supplies (Turner & Akinremi, 2020). Many countries around the world are facing unprecedented challenges due to COVID-19 Pandemic (UNDP, 2020). Nigeria is not an exception. There is still a paucity of research on the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on SME performance in developing countries, especially concerning business continuity (Fabeil, Pazim, & Langgat, 2020). Since the SMEs contribute to the job creation and economic growth of the country and the

unavoidable threats and tremors of COVID-19 to all the segments of the economy, particularly SMEs. Therefore, the study of this nature is necessary considering the contributions of this sector and the paucity of research in this area.

1.3 Objective of the Study

The broad objective of the study is to analyze the effects of COVID19 on the performance of small and medium scale enterprise in Anambra state. The specific objectives are to:

1. Analyze the effect of lockdown on the performance of small and medium scale enterprise in Anambra state.
2. Evaluate the effect of movement restriction on the performance of small and medium scale enterprise in Anambra state.
3. Determine the effect of market closure on the performance of small and medium scale enterprise in Anambra state.

1.4 Research Questions

The following questions are raised to address the above objectives:

1. To what extent did lockdown affect the performance of small and medium scale enterprise in Anambra state?
2. What is the effect of movement restriction on the performance of small and medium scale enterprise in Anambra state?
3. To what degree did market closure affect the performance of small and medium scale enterprise in Anambra state?

1.5 Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses are formulated to guide this study:

Ho₁ Lockdown has no significant effect on the performance of small and medium scale enterprise in Anambra state

Ho₂. Movement restriction has no significant effect on the performance of small and medium scale enterprise in Anambra state

Ho₃. Market closure has no significant effect on the performance of small and medium scale enterprise in Anambra state

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Conceptual Issues

2.1.1. Corona virus (COVID-19)

The concept 'Corona virus' is an infectious disease that is popularly referred to as COVID-19 (Moore, 2020; Ohia, Bakarey, & Ahmad, 2020). The virus was first discovered in Wuhan, China which was spread globally. The virus can infect human beings and animals which causes different types of respiratory sickness. The sign of the infection are running nose, sneezing, cough, fever, sore throat, breathing disorder, etc (Harapan et al., 2020; Ohia et al., 2020; Unhale et al., 2020). The disease is highly infectious (Shereen, Khan, Kazmi, Bashir, & Siddique, 2020). Many people that were infected with the virus experience respiratory disorder and do not require any treatment to recover. Mostly, the elderly and those with medical problems such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease, and cancer are developing severe sickness. Therefore, the only way to prevent and reduce the spread of the virus is to be well enlightened about the deadly virus, its sources, and how it spreads (WHO, 2020).

2.1.2. Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (SMEs)

Indeed, there is no generally acceptable definition of SMEs and the definition or explanation depends on the context by which it is given. Hence, there is no perfect wall of defining SMEs in developing countries despite the fact that, it has been playing prime role on the overall economy (Gibson & Van der Vaart, 2018). Notably, small and medium enterprises (SMEs) are the businesses meant for provision of goods and services in the aspect of manufacturing, agriculture, shoe making, computer skill, tailoring and other service sectors (Fatai, 2011; Chile, 2016).

2.2 Theoretical Review

The **Social-Ecological Theory** (Bookchin, 1960) offers an understanding of behavioral reactions from a person, interpersonal, organizational, community, and public policy concerning the formation of behavior within the nearby social environment. The theory assists in the recognition of issues affecting behavior and also offers direction for developing successful programs through social environments. The social-ecological theory emphasizes the numerous levels of influence (such as individual, interpersonal, organizational, community, and public policy) and the idea that behavior is shaped and shaped by the social environment. The philosophies of Social-ecological Theory are connected with Social Cognitive Theory perceptions which propose that providing an enabling environment that results to change is significant in making it easier to implement healthy behavior.

With the emergence of COVID-19 which separates Nigeria from other countries of the world, serious attention should be given to shaping and adopting healthy behavior such as sanitization, social distancing, movement restriction, ban on worship, testing suspects, isolation, quarantining, and business closures. The relationship between the theory and this study is a detailed understanding of the reasons why people behave the way they behave. Therefore, SMEs that can alter the way they do things during and after COVID -19 will survive and prosper.

2.3. Empirical Review

Mogaji (2020) examined the impact of covid-19 on transportation in Lagos, Nigeria. Using a survey through a questionnaire administered to residents of Lagos via email in data collection and used descriptive analysis in his report. The findings revealed that lockdown and restrictions on movement have a significant positive effect on SME's performance. The findings indicate that economic activities, social activities, and religious activities during COVID-19 were affected by the disrupted transport services due to the pandemic. Additionally, the increased cost of transportation, shortage or lack of transportation mode, and traffic congestion were identified as the effect of COVID-19 on transportation in Lagos State, Nigeria, which also led to the increase in the overall cost of living in the city as well as an increase in the cost of food items.

Hamiza (2020) who conducted on the impact of Coronavirus Lockdown on Small and Medium Scale Businesses in Arua Municipality, Uganda, findings of the study revealed that lockdown has a significant positive effect on SMEs performance in Arua Municipal of Uganda. In their contribution,

Ozili and Arun (2020) revealed that the increasing number of lockdown days, monetary policy decisions, and international travel restrictions have a significant positive effect on SME's performance. Furthermore, the findings indicate that restriction on internal movement and higher fiscal policy spending did not have a positive effect on SME's performance.

Abideen (2020) who conducted on Corona virus (COVID-19) and the Survival of Small and Medium Enterprises in Abeokuta, Ogun State Nigeria, and the result of the study revealed that the COVID-19 sub-variables such as lockdown, movement restriction, and international travel restriction all have a significant negative relationship with the SMEs performance in Abeokuta, Ogun State Nigeria.

Amuda, (2020). Studied the impact of corona virus on small and medium enterprises (SMES): towards post-covid-19 economic recovery in Nigeria The primary objective of this paper is to explicitly make a shift by building a comprehensive theoretical basis for the impact of COVID-19 on SMEs in order to chat a forward for post-COVID-19 economy recovery to thrive in the country. This study used secondary data to gather vital information by exploring available materials or literatures in this regard. The findings of this paper indicated that, recent study provides health implication of COVID-19 which has overwhelmingly explained by World Health Organization (WHO). Hence, this paper argues that appropriate measures should be provided especially by giving loan support to SMEs in expanding and strengthening the existing and new business opportunities as response to the impact of post-COVID-19 economy recovery in the country. It is therefore suggested that collaboration between SMEs leaders and the government have vital roles to play especially through the activities of Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN) in providing platform for inclusion of digitization into SMEs or business operation in the country.

Ameji, Taiga, & Amade (2020) The spread of Covid-19 pandemic across the world no doubt hit the global economy immensely. Business including Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)

became vulnerability to supply and demand shock. This has also invariably inhibited normal operations or activities of SMEs in Nigeria. Therefore, this study examined how Covid-19 has affected Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (SMEs) in Lokoja, Kogi State of Nigeria. The study used a sample comprising of 100 respondents which include both small and medium scale business owners. Data was collected through a structured questionnaire and was analyzed using descriptive statistics. The findings showed that business owners in Lokoja are aware of Covid-19 and its mode of spread. It is also revealed that income of SMEs reduced, prices of materials inputs increased and some workers in SMEs are laid-off. Equally, the demand for the products of SMEs has declined due to restrictions in movement. Hence, the study recommends that government should provide effective emergency funding programs such as zero interest loans, grants, and tax reduction or tax holidays. SMEs could improve on its performance by participating on online-based platforms to advertise and sell their products.

Rabiu, Kabiru, Ahmad, and Samaila (2020) examined the impact of corona virus outbreak on the Nigerian economy using reports from Nigeria Centre for Disease Control and World Health Organization for the period of 11th March to 19th March 2020 on total cases of the virus in Nigeria. Their findings revealed that the corona virus outbreak greatly impacted the price of oil, as its shock came as a great surprise to the Nigerian government which also had a significant strain on the budget and the currency. As a result, they also revealed that the government may have to adjust its 2020 budget, which was based on a crude price of \$57 a barrel.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

According to (Adams,2010), research design describes a number of decisions which need to be taken regarding the collection of data before ever the data is collected; A schematic guides which directs a researcher in solving research problem. The research design used in this study is survey design, the researcher use it to seek clarifications and convenience on the part of the respondent given schedules. With respect to this research work, the researcher made use of primary and secondary sources of data. The primary sources of data include the questionnaire and the personal interview, while the secondary sources of data include the journals, magazines, textbooks and internet. This describes characteristics of SMEs in, Anambra, which constitute the universe of this study. The population of interest therefore consists of all operational SMEs in the Anambra states (between 2016 and 2021) with not less than 10 employees. Thus the population of this study is 196 SMEs, while the staff population is 1795. This population figure was derived from NBS/SMEDAN MSME collaborative survey for 2021. According to kerlinger (1973) simple random sampling is the method of drawing a portion of population or universe so that each member of the population has an equal chance of being selected.

For the fact that it is practically impossible to conveniently handle all the respondents of the selected institution in Anambra state, the researcher applied the statistical formula devised by Taro Yamane (1964), which states:

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

Where

n= Sample size of the study

N = Population

1 = Constant value

e = Error margin assumed to be (5%)

Applying this formula, we have

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{1795}{1+1795(5\%)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{1795}{1+1795(0.0025)}$$

$$n = \frac{1795}{1+4.4875}$$

$$n = \frac{1795}{144.28}$$

Sample size = 327.11

= 327

Two methods of data collection involving quantitative and qualitative method were adopted for this study. The quantitative method makes use of questionnaire and for the qualitative, a semi structural interview was conducted which serves as a supplementary data for the quantitative method which was subject to data analysis.

PRESENTAION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the data obtained from the respondents through the administered questionnaire. Three hundred and twenty-seven (327) questionnaires were administered, However, Three hundred and eight (308) questionnaire were retrieved to which resulted to (97.2%) percentage rate of returned. Therefore the analysis and interpretation of data were based on the returned questionnaires.. The method used for data presentation was frequency count and percentage tables. And ANOVA regressions were used for the hypothesis testing.

4.1 Hypotheses Testing

Hypotheses One

Ho₁ Lockdown has no significant effect on the performance of small and medium scale enterprise in Anambra state

Table 4.1.1 Lockdown and performance of small and medium scale enterprise in Anambra state

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	7.374	3	2.458	1.027	.000
Within Groups	16.473	305	.175		
Total	23.847	308			

Source: SPSS Version 20, 2022

The test table reveal that small significance value (F. sig<.05) indicate group differences. Since the F- value of 1.027 which has a significance of .000 is less than .05 (i.e .001<.05), there exist significant difference among the variables. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and accept alternative hypotheses which states that. Lockdown has significant effect on the performance of small and medium scale enterprise in Nigeria

Hypotheses Two

Ho₂. Movement restriction has no significant effect on the performance of small and medium scale enterprise in Anambra state

Table 4.1.2 Movement restriction and performance of small and medium scale enterprise in Anambra state

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	36.189	4	12.063	33.048	.000

Within Groups	34.311	304	.365	
Total	70.500	308		

Source: SPSS, Version, 20 2022

The small significance value (F.sig<.05) indicates that there is a group difference. Since the F-value of 33.048 which has a significance value of .000 is less greater .05 (i.e 000<.05). Alternative hypotheses is accepted which states that Movement restriction has significant effect on the performance of small and medium scale enterprise in Anambra state.

Hypothesis Three

Ho₃. Market closure has no significant effect on the performance of small and medium scale enterprise in Anambra state

Table 4.17: Market closure and performance of small and medium scale enterprise in Anambra state

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	56.102	3	18.701	9.418	.000
Within Groups	186.643	305	1.986		
Total	242.745	308			

Source: SPSS, Version, 20 2022

The test conducted revealed that the large significance value (F.sig<.002) indicate no group differences. Since the F-value of 9.418 with a significance of .000 is less than .05 (i.e .002<.05), from the test conducted above it was discovered that alternative hypotheses is accepted which state that, Market closure has significant effect on the performance of small and medium scale enterprise in Anambra state

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONs AND RECOMMENDATIONS;

5.1 Summary of Findings;

The purpose of the study is to critically investigate the covid-19 and its effect on small and medium scale enterprises,.

This research work discovered as its main finding that covid-19 to a great extent affect small and medium scale enterprises,.

However, the research study also made the following specific findings;

1. Lockdown has significant effect on the performance of small and medium scale enterprise in Anambra state
2. Movement restriction has significant effect on the performance of small and medium scale enterprise in Anambra state
3. Market closure has significant effect on the performance of small and medium scale enterprise in Anambra state

5.2 Conclusions

The prospects of SMEs to Nigeria growth, development and industrialization, wealth creation, poverty reduction and employment creation is staggering. The realization of its significance requires drastic measures for survival of SMEs especially in the wake of COVID-19 pandemic. The emergence of COVID-19 and its widespread has had an adverse effect on activities of small and medium businesses and the economy of the nation. Consequently an emergency response is needed to save Nigeria's economy which is dependent on the activities of SMEs from though already inimical situation but necessary as it is almost sliding towards economic recession. The study investigated the effect of COVID-19 pandemic on small and medium businesses. It was found that although the pandemic has adversely affected the activities and the income level of SMEs, to stay alive they had to increase the price of goods and services and operate skeletal. It was requested that government should allow everybody to go about their businesses. This is because they lack confidence in government's measures in the fight of the pandemic. In conclusion, despite the negative effect of COVID-19 on SMEs, some entrepreneurs are leveraging the opportunity to exploit. Some businesses are even going digital and including goods and services that the pandemic has necessitated.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following were recommended .

1. Small and medium enterprises should consider adopting digital marketing to minimize the negative effect of pandemic which was culminated by contact with
2. The government should provide support for small and medium scale enterprises by providing grants, waive tax as well as a flexible policy that will aid easy operation.
3. The small and medium scale workers should not see COVID-19 as a scam rather they should assist in the fight against COVID-19 pandemic by adhering strictly to all the measures to contain the virus.

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