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Effect of Fuel Subsidy Removal on Academic Attainment of Business Education Students in Southeast Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

Crude Petroleum is one of the core drivers of economic activities in Nigeria, and the government's subsidy policy from the 1970s has been in place to cushion the effects of global oil pricing on the Nigerian economy. The government of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu removed the oil subsidy on the day of its inauguration, triggering high levels of inflation and an economic crisis in the country, which has persisted until this year, 2024. The purpose of this study is to investigate the effects of the 2023 fuel subsidy removal policy on business education students' academic attainment in Southeast Nigeria, disaggregated into four research question and four hypotheses by correlating fuel subsidy removal on (1) flow of students' enrollment, (2) educational progression, (3) curriculum delivery strategies and (4) students' achievement levels. The study adopted a descriptive survey design to study a sample of 367 students drawn using the Taro Yamani formula from a population of 4,480 business education students in government-owned colleges of education in Southeast Nigeria. A self-administered and structured questionnaire titled "Fuel Subsidy Removal and Education Attainment Questionnaire (FSREAQ)" was developed in a 5-point Likert-type format for data collection. The instrument was validated by experts in Business Education and found to be reliable at 0.80 using Cronbach Alpha. The data were analyzed for baseline information using frequency tables, percentages, pie charts, and histograms/bar charts. The objectives were addressed using Spearman's rank correlation coefficient (rho). Findings showed that fuel subsidy removal and the flow of school enrollment (Coeff 0.178, p 0.453) do not have a significant effect on business education. However, fuel subsidy removal had a significant effect on the educational progression of business education students (Coeff -0.578, p 0.003) and a significant adverse effect on curriculum delivery strategies in business education (Coeff -0.273, p 0.023). Fuel subsidy removal did not have a significant effect on students' achievement levels in business education (Coeff -0.733, p 0.073). The study concluded that fuel subsidy removal has shown a considerable adverse impact on the academic attainment of business education students in Nigeria. The government should intensify its efforts to improve the quality of education through TETFUND funding and increase wages for educators in tertiary institutions.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the veritable instruments of sustainable national development. It has become a known fact that any nation that wants to develop required educated people through a formal and quality education. Education is supposed to equip individual with all needed skills needed to excel after school. Despite the rate of graduates shunned out by the tertiary institutions in Nigeria, there is still high level of unemployment in the country and one wonders whether the quality of education is in

essence capable of training and equipping students with the requisite skills that will make them self-sufficient, self-reliant and standout from others.

Business Education is a comprehensive field of study developed with the instructional programme that will endow learners to acquire the necessary vocation skills, aptitude and knowledge to effectively and efficiently manage personal businesses and function in the economic system as a whole. A remarkable attribute of Business Education programme is that its graduates can perform and function independently as employers of labour and as entrepreneurs (Okoro, 2013). Therefore, there are lots of job prospects for Business Education graduates even from the junior secondary level to the graduate level and these career prospects are: vocational practices, teaching careers, and office environment (Ore, 2022 in Ore and Hassan, 2023). The National Policy on Education (FRN, 2013) created Business Education as a Vocational and Technical Education that is offered in tertiary institutions in Nigeria with the sole aim of imparting necessary skills to individuals to become self-reliant economically.

Academic attainment of business education follows processes that take the learner through school and schooling. The cost and capacity to train a child in tertiary education is one of the factors that determine who goes to school and who does not. Education attainment is the level of education that an individual has acquired in life which ranges from primary, secondary, and tertiary. Tertiary education is not just developed a acquire learner to special skill on certain areas of life, it is graded into first, second and third levels of education. The acquisition of any of these levels can be constrained by time, money and availability of the programme.

According to Innocent, Ogbu and Job (2015), fuel plays a significant role in the production of goods and services in all sectors of the economy, that is why countries find it necessary to subsidize and ensured citizens have access to fuel which is of national importance. Onyishi, Eme and Emeh (2012) stated that government subsidize fuel to address cases of market failure-mainly poverty especially in developing countries where subsidies are given to allow the poor participate in economic activities. Also, fuel subsidy protects fragile economies from shocks in the international market.

Subsidies can have both positive and negative effects. Among these studies are the work of Ozili and Obiora (2023) who posited that removal of fuel subsidy has both a positive and negative implications, among which are to free up financial resources for other sectors of the economy, incentivize domestic refineries to produce more petroleum products, reduce Nigeria's dependence on imported fuel, increase employment, channel funds for the development of critical public infrastructure, reduce the budget deficit and generate a budget surplus in the near future, reduce government borrowing, curb corruption associated with fuel subsidy payments, increase competition, reinvigorate domestic refineries and reduce pressure on the exchange rate. The extent to which these expected positive effect has become of Nigeria within mid of 2023 till date has not been substantive. The economy has rather witnessed deterioration in exchange rate, increased public debt and yet not domestic refinery is functioning so far. The exchange rate moved from bounds of #600 per dollar to the current bounds of #1500 in the second month of the year 2024.

The government of President Bola Amed Tinubu, at the inauguration arena, announced a total removal of subsidy from energy in Nigeria. Not so long after the president's address, fuel prices went up astronomically and also reflected on the costs of basic communities including costs of transportation, food, and manufacturing. The total removal of fuel subsidies in Nigeria represents a significant shift in the country's economic policy. While the intention may be to address fiscal challenges and encourage market-driven pricing, the decision's impact on inflation, transportation costs, and individuals' livelihoods cannot be overlooked (Ogunode and Ukozor 2022; Ogunode, Ahmed amd Olugbenga, 2023; Ukozor & Ogunode 2023). The removal of fuel subsidies was also felt in the school fees and students cost of living. The impact in education is resting on cost of hostel accommodation, transposition fares, access to books and online communication among others which are essential to create a good enabling environment for study. This paper is to examine the effect of fuel subsidy removal on academic attainment of business education students with specific reference to school enrolment and convenience in education progression till graduation.

The specific objectives of this study are to:

A. Examine the effect of fuel subsidy removal on the flow of students enrolment in business education in the south east Nigeria.
B. Determine the effect of fuel subsidy removal on the educational progression in business education in the south east Nigeria.
C. Ascertain the effect of fuel subsidy removal on the curriculum delivery strategies in business education in the south east Nigeria.
D. Investigate the effect of fuel subsidy removal on students' achievement levels in business education in the south east Nigeria.

2. Business Education

Business Education is an aspect of Vocational Education and a broad and comprehensive field of study whose instructional programme is endowed with the capacity of providing required vocation skills, aptitude and knowledge to effectively and efficiently manage personal businesses and function in the economic system as a whole (Ore & Hassan, 2023). Business Education is the foundation upon which every solid economy is laid. There are several job opportunities open to Business Education graduates for their survival through its vocational training and knowledge which are inevitable for successful business ventures. Business Education graduates acquires the appropriate practical and applied skills and competence needed to enable them function as independent self-reliant and productive members of the society is imperative (Onasoga, 2022). Therefore, there are lots of job prospects for Business Education graduates even from the junior secondary level to the graduate level and these career prospects are: vocational practices, teaching careers, and office environment (Ore, 2022). According to Ugwunwoti & Okorojiofor (2017) Business Education is a programme of study offered in Nigerian tertiary institutions that basically trains students to acquire business related skills for paid or self-employment. The National Policy on Education (FRN, 2020) defined Business Education to be part of Vocational and Technical Education offered in tertiary institutions in Nigeria with the sole aim of imparting necessary skills to individuals to become self-reliant economically.

Business Education is a multifaceted programme. According to Emeasobo & Mmuo, (2018), Business Education has a tripartite dimension of instruction which include preparing the recipient or the learner with skills, competencies, knowledge, attitudes and values to be a business education teacher, an office worker or to be an entrepreneur. Thus business education is an umbrella for all business programmes such as marketing, business administration, OTME (Secretarial Studies, accounting etc.). As a programme, it is offered an educational instruction that prepares a teacher, acquires skills and equips a business person. Thus, business education programme prepares the recipients to be knowledgeable and to be employable in various fields of human endeavours as well as visionary required skilled to explore, establish and run their business successfully thereby having a positive impact on the national development (Udoh, 2018). This is why business education contributes greatly to the economics development of any nation and has become an indispensable tool for development. Recipients are conditioned to become graduates with the ability to work in business environment or be self-reliant and succeed in them.

Business subjects are called vocational subjects at senior secondary school level which at the junior secondary school level is called business studies. In Nigeria, vocational subjects are usually offered at the senior secondary schools or technical collages and include general education, practical skills and recounted theories required by the chosen occupation vocational subjects at senior secondary schools includes office practice, accounting, economics, data processing, book-keeping, commerce etc which are taught as separate subjects with emphasis on practical training. Vocational subjects are designed to prepare individuals or skilled personnel for one or a group of occupations, trade or jobs. This enables students to acquire skills either in accounting, secretarial or office administration or marketing respectively.

In the college of education the subjects taught are grouped into A and B (National Policy on Education, 2004 cited in Oba 2023). The Group A core (i) English Language (ii) Mathematics (iii) A major Nigerian Language (iv) one of the Biology, Chemistry, Physics or Health Science (v) one of the Literature in English, History, Geography or Religious Studies (vi) A vocational subjects. Group B Vocational Electives (i) Agriculture (ii) Applied Electricity (iii) Auto Mechanics (iv) Bookkeeping and Accounting (v) Building Construction (vi) Commerce (vii) Computer Education (viii) Shorthand etc.

Finally, Federal Republic of Nigeria in its Minimum Standards for Nigeria Certificate in Education (2020) stated the objectives of business education as:

1. To produce well qualified and competent NCE graduates who will teach business subjects in secondary schools and other related institutions;
2. To produce NCE business teachers who will be able to inculcate the vocational aspects of Business Education into the society;
3. To produce NCE business teachers who will be involved in the more desired revolution of vocational development right from the primary through secondary schools;
4. To equip students with necessary competencies so as qualify them for a post NCE degree programme in Business Education;
5. To equip graduates with the right skills that will enable them to engage in a life of work in the office as well for self-employment.

3. Business Educational Attainment

The level of education of a person measures the knowledge set, and the amount and quality of

knowledge and skills acquired by an individual. Educational attainment is the highest level of education that a person has successfully completed (OECD, 2015). Successful completion of a level of education refers to the achievement of the learning objectives of that level, typically validated through the assessment of acquired knowledge, skills and competencies.

Educational attainment refers to an important direct outcome of education (Jenkins & Sabates, 2007), as opposed to the input (e.g. cognitive ability; effort), process (e.g. educational pathway taken, full-time or part-time study) or indirect outcomes of education (e.g. income). There are other direct outcomes of education, most notably skills and competences and levels of performance in a specific exam or qualification.

Educational attainment is a commonly used proxy for the stock of human capital; that is, the skills available in the population and the labour force. As globalization and technology continue to re-shape the needs of labour markets worldwide, the demand for individuals with a broader knowledge base and more specialized skills, e.g. advanced analytical capacities, and complex communication skills, continues to rise. As a result, more individuals are pursuing higher levels of education now than in previous generations, leading to significant shifts in attainment levels over time within countries. Educational attainment is a measure of the stock of education in a population (Duncan 1968 cited in OECD (2015).

It is useful to distinguish educational attainment from various measures of the flow of education through a population. educational attainment can be measured as educational level or qualification. This measure captures the number of years of school and the level of educational qualification obtained. This has been over the years captured a survey information (Jenkins & Sabates, 2007). The most common measures of flow are school enrolment and educational progression. The number of persons that gains admission into Business Education and their ability to meet up with the financial and academic requirements for graduation encompasses the measure of educational attainment in business education in the context of this study.

4. Fuel Subsidy Removal

The need to encourage the masses to have access to essential commodities necessitates the government to impose subsidies on certain goods or services. Subsidy is conceptualized by CPPA, (2012) as deliberate attempt by the government to support a chosen economic agent – a consumer and a producer and it can be applied in any market that involves the buying and selling of products and or services. Haley & Haley (2013) pointed out that subsidies are provided in diverse formats, encompassing direct assistance such as cash grants and interest-free loans, as well as indirect support such as tax exemptions, insurance coverage, low interest loans, accelerated depreciation, and rent rebates. It is any measure that keeps the prices consumers pay for a good or product below market levels for consumers or for producers.

Subsidies can take forms, and their purpose can vary widely, such as: Consumers subsidies- food, fuel, and transportation; producer subsidies- agricultural, renewable energy, and export; social subsidies housing, education, and health care; infrastructural subsidies, research, and development; environmental subsidies, trade subsidies and cultural and art subsidies. Subsidies can have both positive and negative effects (Ogunode & Aregbesola, 2023). They can be a useful tool for achieving various economic and social goals, such as reducing poverty, supporting industries during economic downturns, and promoting innovations.

Fuel subsidy is a government programme created to reduce how much Nigerians have to pay for petroleum motor spirit (PMS), automotive Gas Oil (Diesel), and to protect the citizens from crude oil volatility on the international market. Fuel subsidy can also be referred to the effort by the government to pay for the difference between the price of fuel in the pump and the actual cost of the product. So by paying the difference, the government enables fuel to be sold at a lower price so that it will help alleviate the burden on its people especially the lower income group (Emeh, 2012).

The removal of subsidy is the policy of government to withdrawal economic support and payment of certain proportion of the cost of commodities aimed at bringing the product face complete market forces in product and pricing. Studies have posit that subsidies could have both positive and adverse effects on an economy.

5. Theoretical Framework

The study is hinged on the system theory that pertains to the issues surrounding the relationship, structure and interdependence rather than the constituent's characteristics an object and individuals in a system. The system approach deals with whole and on the complex interrelationships among its constituent parts. The system theory emphasizes the relationship between parts and interaction with each other. System theory sees institutions as organization that is unified with one objective and purpose that is composed of interrelated parts. Understanding of the relationships and interdependence of the component parts and how

they function for overall growth of the entire system is what assists institutions in realizing its objectives. The system theory posits that "whole is greater than its component parts". Thus, a change in any component of a part may affect the entire system functionally or adversely. Systems are composed of key major elements such as input, process and output. It is expected that a failure of one essential component of the economy might jeopardize the entire economy. It is in congruence with this that the fuel subsidy was introduced to cushion the cost effect of fuels on the citizens by reducing the cost of fuels to support industrial production and low cost of living in Nigeria. In the context of this study, the system theory will provide a foundation for understanding how the removal of fuel subsidies can relate with the attainment of business education in the south east Nigeria. This is premised on the assumption that sub-systems relate and depend on each other to realize the national goals of the country. This way, removal of subsidy will increase cost of living and affect some other macroeconomic indicators that has implications for running educational programme in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. If the removal (which is on a certain part of the system) is capable of affecting the function of another system (cost of educational programme), then the removal of subsidy on the energy sector will affect every other subsystem like the academic attainment business education.

6. Research Methodology

The study adopted the correlation survey research design through which a primary data framework using a self-developed questionnaire. This source allowed the researcher to distribute questionnaire items to respondents from which answers that address the research objectives can be obtained. The study was restricted to the Southeast Nigeria which consisted of Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo state playing hosts to many reputable colleges of education by the federal or state, or both. These institutions are listed as shown on Table 1.

The population is the 89,600 students of business education in government owned colleges of education in the South East region of Nigeria. Records from the various Registry Department of the colleges show the distribution of the population on Table 1 below:

Table 1: List of students in business education in the government owned colleges of education in south east Nigeria

SN	Name of Institution	Location	Population
1	Federal Government CollegeOkigwe	Abia state	623
2	Federal College of Education (Technical), Umunze	Anambra State	621
3	Federal College of Education Eha-Amufu	Enugu state	577
4	Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education Owerri	Imo state	462
5	Federal College Of Education Nssuka	Enugu State	373
6	Ebonyi State College of Education, Ikwo	Ebonyi State	399
7	Nwafor Orizu College of Education, Nsugbe	Anambra State	423
8	Enugu State Coll. of Education (T), Enugu	Enugu State	562
9	College of Education, Arochukwu,	Abia State	390
	Total		4,480

Sources: Registry Department of the various Universities, 2024.

The sample size was 367 students in colleges of education in South East Nigeria. The mathematical model developed by Yamane (1964) for individual sample sizes for each states of the South East using a sampling error of 5%. The formula is given as:

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

Where n = Sample size (?)
N = Population (4,480)
e = Margin of Sampling Errors (0.05)

$$n = \frac{4,480}{1+ 4,480\ (0.05)^2}$$

$$n = 367.213 \approx 367.$$

The proportional sampling technique was adopted to distribute the respondents across the colleges of education involved in the study. The number of students from each of the colleges is shown on Table 2.

Table 2: Proportional distribution of sample for the study

SN	Name of Institution	Sample Size Determination	Sample Size
1	Federal Government CollegeOkigwe	623/4480 X 367	52
2	Federal College of Education (Technical), Umunze	621/4480 X 367	51
3	Federal College of Education Eha-Amufu	577/4480 X 367	47
4	Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education Owerri	462/4480 X 367	38
5	Federal College Of Education Nssuka	373/4480 X 367	32
6	Ebonyi State College of Education, Ikwo	399/4480 X 367	33
7	Nwafor Orizu College of Education, Nsugbe	423/4480 X 367	36
8	Enugu State Coll. of Education (T), Enugu	562/4480 X 367	46
9	College of Education, Arochukwu,	390/4480 X 367	32
	Total		367

A self-administered and structured questionnaire was developed in four sections. Section A comprised the question items that generated data on business education enrolment, while Section B was the question items on progression in business education studies. The questions items that dealt on curriculum delivery and students' achievement level were on sections C and D respectively. The question items were cue on a 5-point rating scale of Very Low (VL), Low (L), Moderate (M), High (H) and Very High (VH). It has total of 20 questionnaire items.

The reliability of the instrument was determined through a test of internal consistency of the questionnaire items in each of the constructs. The internal consistency is usually calculated using an alpha coefficient, which measures the interrelationship between items in the questionnaire (Cortina, 1993). Nunally (1978) argues that a reliability of 0.70 or higher is acceptable. The result of reliability test is shown on Table 3.

Table 3. Reliability of Research Variables

Variables	Chronbach's Alpha	Decision
Subsidy removal variables	0.83	Reliable
Business Education Attainment variables	0.77	Reliable
Grand overall	0.80	Reliable

Source: Extracts from SPSS result of Cronbach Alpha reliability test

Based on the results in Table 3, all indices are acceptable (>0.7) and this justifies the reliability of the questionnaire.

The questionnaires were administered by the researcher and research assistants to students of business education in the selected colleges of education in the south east. The data was analyzed for baseline information using the frequency tables and percentage, pie charts and histograms/bar charts. The objectives were addressed using the Spearman's rank correlation coefficient (*rho*). The SPSS (a computer based statistical tool known as Statistical Package for Social Sciences) was used for the analysis.

Decision Rule

The value of *r* is always between +1 and –1. To interpret its value, Rumsey (2014) suggested the following values for correlation *r* should be interpreted as follows:

1. **Exactly –1.** A perfect negative linear relationship
2. **–0.70.** A strong negative linear relationship
3. **–0.50.** A moderate negative relationship
4. **–0.30.** A weak negative linear relationship
5. **0.** No linear relationship
6. **+0.30.** A weak positive linear relationship
7. **+0.50.** A moderate positive relationship
8. **+0.70.** A strong positive linear relationship
9. **Exactly +1.** A perfect positive) linear relationship

The significance of the relationship was based on the decision rule thus: If the confidence level, P, is less than 0.05, you should reject the null hypothesis in favour of the alternative. Alternatively, if P is greater than 0.05, you should not reject the null.

7. Data Analysis and Result

The analysis of the study was based on the 362 respondents that returned well completed questionnaires for the study. It was only 5 questionnaires that were not properly completed or returned. The study had a very high level of active participation with a return rate of 98.63%.

Analyses of Baseline Information of the Study

Table 4: Baseline Information on Extent of Influence of Fuel Subsidy Removal on Education Attainment

SN	Question Items	Mean	Standard Deviation	Remark
A	**Fuel subsidy and business education students' enrolment:** With the present fuel subsidy crises, I will not be able to:			
1	Go for additional qualifications in business education even if a get admission.	2.43	1.21	Moderate
2	I will not encourage anyone to seek for admission into business education since cost of education is going high	1.87	0.88	Low
3	The number of admitted students in the year one decreased due to the subsidy crisis	1.43	0.87	Very low
4	The chances are high the student enrolment in business education will further go down in subsequent sessions	1.67	0.34	Low
	Cumulative Mean Response	**1.85**		**Low extent**
B	**Fuel subsidy and progression in business education:** With the present fuel subsidy crises,			
6	I find it challenging to pay my school fees	3.21	0.65	Moderate
7	I struggle to transport myself to school	4.12	0.45	High
8	I am hardly meeting up with the basic requirements for the graduation in business education programme	3.02	0.67	Moderate
9	If the crisis continued I have high propensity to quit education.	0.32	0.45	Very low
10	My class participation is slowing down by day due to the consequences of fuel subsidy removal	3.43	0.23	Moderate
	Cumulative Mean Response	**2.76**		**Moderate**
C	**Fuel subsidy and curriculum delivery:** The present fuel subsidy crises has reduced quality of			
11	Valuable instructional tools	2.13	0.43	Low
12	Student collaboration	4.32	0.84	High
13	Classroom management	3.32	0.76	Moderate
	Cumulative Mean Response	**3.26**		**Moderate**
D	**Fuel subsidy and students' achievement level:** With the present fuel subsidy crises,			
14	I do not have the motivation to study	3.56	0.42	High
15	I no longer make myself ready in all my business education classes	3.46	0.46	Moderate
16	I no longer pay attention and listen during every class discussion on business education	1.37	0.25	Very low
17	I no longer motivate for good grades in every business education subject but just t pass my exams	3.21	0.15	Moderate
18	I am no longer actively participating in every discussion in business education	4.61	0.49	Very high
19	I no longer enjoy homework and activities because I don't mind whether they would help me improve my skill in business education	3.62	0.68	High
20	I now exert less efforts when I do difficult assignments	3.18	0.73	Moderate
	Cumulative Mean Response	**2.83**		**Moderate**
	Grand Cumulative Mean Response			

Key: Very Low (1), Low (2), Moderate (3), High (4) and Very High (5).

Result on Table 4 has shown 20-question items on the mean response scores for the Fuel Subsidy Removal and Education Attainment Questionnaire (FSREAQ). The questionnaire items grouped into four variables of the study showed the mean values as follows: Fuel subsidy and business education students' enrolment (mean 1.85), Fuel subsidy and progression in business education (mean 2.76), Fuel subsidy and curriculum delivery (mean 3.26), and Fuel subsidy and students' achievement level (mean 2.83). This indicates that the baseline information on the extent of reactions of the respondents on the recent fuel subsidy removal are low for business education students' enrolment, moderate for progression in business education studies, moderate on business education curriculum delivery and moderate for students' achievement level. This largely shows a moderate level of extent of reactions from the students' population on the recent fuel subsidy removal. The mean responses are then used to determine the correlation between fuel subsidy removal and the business education academic attainment variables

Results and Interpretation

The Spearman correlation coefficients are used to answer the research requested while the p.values tested the hypotheses.

Hypothesis One: Fuel subsidy removal does not have a significant effect on the flow of school enrolment into business education

Correlations Coefficients for FSR and FSE				
			FSR	FSE
Spearman's rho	FSR	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.178
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.453
		N	362	362
	FSE	Correlation Coefficient	.178	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.453	.
		N	362	362

Key: Fuel Subsidy Removal (FSR), Flow of students' enrolment (FSE)

The spearman's correlation coefficient for Fuel Subsidy Removal (FSR) and Flow of Students' Enrolment (FSE) is 0.178 which indicates weak and positive association. This implies that a unit increase in Fuel Price is expected to lead to a minimal increase propensity to enroll for business education by 17%. However, the probability value (0.453) which is greater than 0.05 level of significance suggests that there is no significant relationship. Thus we do not reject the null hypothesis and then conclude that Fuel subsidy removal does not have a significant effect on the flow of school enrolment into business education. This showed that the propensity to study business education and the recent fuel subsidy removal leading to hike in fuel prices does not have relationship.

Hypothesis Two: Fuel subsidy does not have a significance effect on the educational progression in business education.

Correlations Coefficients for FSR and EP				
			FSR	EP
Spearman's rho	FSR	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.578
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.003
		N	362	362
	EP	Correlation Coefficient	-.578	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	.
		N	362	362

Key: Fuel Subsidy Removal (FSR), Educational progression (EP)

The result of Spearman's correlation analysis showed that FSR and EP have a coefficient of -0.578 which is a moderate association. This implies that a unit rise in fuel prices can lead to about 58% fall in the extent of progression in studies in business education. This suggests adverse effect such that fuel subsidy removal has the tendency to affect speed of graduation from schools. The probability value of the coefficient is 0.003 which is less than 0.05 level of significance. The study thus rejects the null hypothesis. This indicates that fuel subsidy had significance effect on the educational progression in business education. The propensity for graduating on record can be affected by 58% with the removal of fuel subsidy in Nigeria.

Hypothesis Three: Fuel subsidy does not have a significance effect on the curriculum delivery strategies in business education.

Correlations Coefficients for FSR and CDS				
			FSR	CDS
Spearman's rho	FSR	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.273
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.023
		N	362	362
	CDS	Correlation Coefficient	-.273	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.023	.
		N	362	362

Key: Fuel Subsidy Removal (FSR), Curriculum delivery strategies (CDS)

Hypothesis three is tested using the result of Spearman's correlation analysis on the Table above. The coefficient of -0.273 indicates weak association between fuel subsidy removal and curriculum delivery strategies for business education. This implies that a unit rise in fuel prices can lead to about 27% decrease in the delivery of business education curriculum. This implies that fuel subsidy removal slows down curriculum delivery thereby affecting the teaching and learning process in business education classes. The probability value of the coefficient is 0.023 which is less than 0.05 level of significance. The study thus rejects the null hypothesis. This indicates that fuel subsidy has significance adverse effect on the curriculum delivery strategies in business education.

Hypothesis Four: Fuel subsidy does not have a significance effect on students' achievement levels in business education.

Correlations Coefficients for FSR and CDS				
			FSR	SAL
Spearman's rho	FSR	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.733
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.073
		N	362	362
	SAL	Correlation Coefficient	-.733	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.073	.
		N	362	362

Key: Fuel Subsidy Removal (FSR), Students' achievement level (SAL)

The result of Spearman's correlation analysis for hypothesis four has a coefficient of -0.733 which indicates strong correlation between fuel subsidy removal and students achievement level in business education. This implies that a unit rise in fuel prices can lead to about 73% fall in students' achievement level in business education. This implies that fuel subsidy removal exerts adverse influence on the ability to quality study and outcome of student's in their studies. The probability value of the coefficient is 0.073 which is greater than 0.05 level of significance. This means that the study will not reject the null hypothesis. This indicates that fuel subsidy does not have a significance effect on students' achievement levels in business education.

8. Conclusion and Recommendations

The removal of the fuel subsidy, announced by President Ahmed Bola Tinubu during his inauguration, has significantly impacted the academic progress of business education students in Nigeria. This policy change has slowed students' progression in their studies and disrupted teachers' ability to deliver the curriculum effectively, potentially leading to lower academic performance. Although the subsidy removal has not directly affected student enrollment, its indirect consequences remain considerable.

This study recommends that the government strengthen its commitment to quality education by increasing TETFUND allocations for educational institutions. Additionally, it advocates for improved wages for business education instructors and educators more broadly in Nigeria's colleges of education. These measures would support both educators' dedication and students' academic success in a challenging economic environment.

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