

Emerging Trends in Part Times Studies in Higher Education in Nigeria

Olatunbosun Odunsayan

Federal University of Oye-Ekiti
Ekiti State, Nigeria

Abstract: *This paper examined emerging trends in part times studies in Higher Education in Nigeria with focus on Federal University of Ekiti, Oye. Descriptive survey research method was adopted for the purpose of this study. The total number of students who participated in this study is one hundred, but only eighty students returned questionnaire were found useful for analysis. Questionnaire was used to collect the data from the respondents and simple percentage was used to analyse the research questions. Findings from this study revealed that top up degree part times programme is taking the lead among part times studies programme offered by FUOYE, that business administration courses are the programmes seek most by majority of part times studies students in FUOYE and that entry requirements and the duration of part times studies programme completion varies among the different part times studies programme offered in FUOYE. The study recommended that the management of FUOYE should sustain and develop the current top up degree part times studies programme in match with global standard practice.*

Keywords: Emerging trends, Distance education, Part-times studies, Information and Communication Technology, Federal University of Oye-Ekiti, Nigeria

1. Introduction

Higher Education refers to post-secondary education offer as full time or part time basis in colleges of education, Polytechnic education and University education. Any programme offered in Higher education that is not fulltime are perceived as part times studies. Essentially, part-time study involves spreading a full-time undergraduate course and or postgraduate course over a longer period of time. It's usually tailored for those who want to continue working while studying, and usually involves committing an afternoon or an evening each week to attend classes or lectures. Higher educational institutions are recognized all over the world as centres of excellence where knowledge is not only acquired but also disseminated to those who require it, through teaching and research. Jane Artess, director of research at HECSU, (2012), said the latest study confirmed the importance of part-time study. "Part-time study is a very efficient way of raising and updating the skills of the existing workforce," she said. "It is essential that we continue to invest in developing employees to benefit the economy.

Part-time students is defined as those who undertake less than 75% of the total course credits in a given year (also known as course intensity), are more likely to be mature students and be juggling their time with work and family commitments compared to those studying full-time (Hubble & Bolton, 2017). School fee of part-time students differs in a number of ways compared to full-time students at the present time (in Nigeria for example), part-time returning students school fee in FUOYE is above N100, 000 while full time returning student school fee is less than N50,000 in FUOYE,

and those trend is similar among Higher Education Institutions offering part times studies programme in Nigeria. Part times studies commence as continuing and adult education, sandwich education and distance education programme.

The trend of education in most developing countries is to create, increase and sustain people access to tertiary education. This can be determined by the carrying capacities of the available tertiary institutions in these countries. In Nigeria, reasonable percentage of prospective students are not able to secure admission into the universities and other tertiary institutions, due to the limited carrying capacities of these institutions. This has equally denied many workers the opportunity to further their education while still on the job. This is why many of the students who seek to further their education in the higher institutions often consider sandwich program a viable option. However, today new trends in part times studies have gained attention in Nigeria. This paper is aimed at investigating emerging trends in part times studies in Higher Education in Nigeria.

Statement of Problem of the Study

Part times studies are on the increase in Higher Education in Nigeria. Nevertheless, challenges and constraint in the management and planning of those programme is a great concern to academicians, scholars and stakeholders in Nigeria education sector. Despite the proliferation of part times studies in Nigeria over the past two decades, appreciable

access and admission placements for eligible candidates have remained a mirage. Therefore, this study is poised at finding emerging trends in part times studies in Higher Education in Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

This study is aimed at investigating emerging trends in part times studies in Higher Education in Nigeria. While, specific objectives are as follows;

- Identify the new trends in Part-time studies in Higher Education in Nigeria.
- Find out the courses accredited to be offered as part times studies programme in Higher Education in Nigeria.
- Discover the admission requirements and duration of year of studies of the part times studies offered in Nigeria.
- Recommend on how to improve part times studies in Higher Education in Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research question were sought so as to provide solutions to the problems of the study.

1. What are the identified new trends in Part studies in Higher Education in Nigeria?
2. Which courses are accredited to be offered as part times studies programme in Higher Education in Nigeria?
3. What are the admission requirements and duration of year of studies of the part times studies offered in Nigeria?

2. Review of Literature

2.1 Context

Of the literature that describes part-time studies, there appears to be little consensus and much ambiguity on what exactly constitutes part-time from those that do attempt to define it. Some of the literature suggests that part-time status is considered half-time in comparison to a full-time course of study (e.g., Rodwell & Neumann, 2008). Others define part-time students by how many hours they are employed full-time (e.g., Barnacle & Usher, 2003; Moro-Egido & Panades, 2010) or by how many courses they can undertake at any given time (Western University, 2011). Still others indicate the value of a part-time student is 30% that of a full-time student (e.g., MTCU, 2009). In many reports, numbers of graduate students are reported in full-time equivalent (FTE) or effective full-time student units (EFTSU), thus aggregating all graduate students into a homogeneous group for the purposes of reporting (Barnacle & Usher, 2003;

Rodwell & Neumann, 2008) and not recognizing the unique issues, benefits, and challenges that may delineate part-time and full-time students. Such reports and studies make it difficult to appreciate the abundance of part-time doctoral students, where in some education and political sciences programs over 60% of doctoral students are enrolled on a part-time basis (Deem & Brehony, 2000; Neumann & Rodwell, 2009). Because part-time students are often not as present on campus and because part-time graduate students numbers get lost in FTE- or EFTSU-aggregated data, part-time graduate students have been called ‘the forgotten cohort’ (Barnacle & Usher, 2003) and ‘invisible research students’ (Neumann & Rodwell, 2009).

Brock University, Lakehead University, and the University of Windsor offer a Joint PhD in Educational Studies that accepts students on a full- and part-time basis. It is a unique program that combines three distinct university cultures, offers three fields of study, and provides a blended learning environment that incorporates face-to-face and online education with part-time students in mind. Part-time students who work full-time are able to immediately integrate new ideas, concepts, knowledge, and current research into the workplace. These benefits to our institutions and places of employment complement the benefits we identified for part-time students in aligning and scaffolding responsibilities, maintaining flexibility and autonomy in study options, and improving time-management skills.

2.2 Emerging Trends in Part Times Studies in Nigeria

Part times studies for the purpose of this study would cover top up degree, sandwich education, continuing and adult education, distance education and open education.

Top Up Degree

A *Top up degree* is proportionate to the last year of a college degree. These courses are aimed for candidates who have already finished a related foundation level degree (or equal, e.g. an HND) and they give a course to candidates to accomplish a Bachelor’s degree. Top up degrees empower candidates to build up their insight, aptitudes, and comprehension of a specific theme while additionally accepting a globally perceived capability. A Top up degree does not enable you to top up a *Bachelor’s degree* to a Bachelor’s degree with qualification to an Honours degree [a ‘*BA (Hons) degree*’]. Today Top up degree is been offered in Redeemer University, Covenant University, Babcock University, Federal University of Oye-Ekiti and University of Ilorin.

Sandwich Education

Sandwich programme is a part-time programme for teachers and others to study in the Faculty of Education. All the courses in the Faculty of Education are available during the long vacation. It runs during summer period. The minimum entry requirement for admission into the programme is GCE O/L, SSCE, NECO, NABTEB or equivalent credit level pass in 5 subjects, including English Language obtained not more than two sittings. Alternative entrance requirement without UTME is the Direct Entry. Under these category holders of GCE 'A' Levels, IJMB, JUPEB, NCE, OND, University Diploma, or equivalent qualifications may proceed from Part II of the Bachelor's degree programme. Conversion programmes (3years) for Holders of University degrees, HND, ACA, or with equivalent qualifications are also available. No jamb is required.

Continuing and Adult Education

Continuing education (similar to further education in the United Kingdom and Ireland) is an all-encompassing term within a broad list of post-secondary learning activities and programs. The term is used mainly in the United States and Canada. Recognized forms of post-secondary learning activities within the domain include: degree credit courses by non-traditional students, non-degree career training, college remediation, workforce training, and formal personal enrichment courses (both on-campus and online). General continuing education is similar to adult education, at least in being intended for adult learners, especially those beyond traditional undergraduate college or university age.

Distance Education

Distance education is a part time programme in which teachers and learners are separated in space and/or time for some or all of the time of study and in which the learning materials take over some of the traditional role of the teacher". Ololube, Ubogu and Ossai (2004) defined it as the provision of whatever educational opportunities that are needed by anyone, anywhere, at anytime for those who otherwise would have been denied".

Open Education

Open Education is a part-time programme essentially characteristic by the removal of barriers to learning. This means no prior qualifications to study, no discrimination by gender, age or religion, affordability for everyone, and for students with disabilities, a determined effort to provide education in a suitable form that overcomes the disability (for example, audio recordings for students who are visually impaired). Ideally, no-one should be denied access to an open educational program. Thus open learning must be scalable as well as flexible. Examples are Open University London, Common Wealth Open University, Open University

1. Research Questions Analysis:

Australia, National Open University Nigeria, Open University India and Open University United Kingdom.

3. Methodology

Research Design:

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The researcher therefore considered this design appropriate, since the study involves investigating emerging trends in part times studies in Higher Education in Nigeria.

Population of the Study

All part-time student in the Faculty of Education of Federal University of Oye-Ekiti formed the target population.

Sample and Sampling Technique

A simple random sampling technique was used to select one-hundred (100) respondents.

Instrument and Instrumentation

The instrument used for data collection is the questionnaire. It is designed and constructed by the researcher. The instrument is titled *New Trends in Part Times Studies in Nigeria*. The validity of the research instrument was established by giving the instrument to the experts in the field of adult education from faculty of Education at University of Lagos. Their criticisms and corrections led to the modification of the instrument before it was finally distributed to the respondents. Reliability of the instrument was done by administering the questionnaire to 20 part times students in University of Abuja. The co-efficient of internal consistency of the instrument was determined using a Cronbach Alpha method. It gave the following reliability co-efficient: 0.93, 0.72, 0.82 and 0.93 for clusters 1, 2, 3 and 4 respectively. The grand reliability co-efficient is 0.76 which shows that the instrument is very reliable.

Method of Data Analysis

The study employed both the descriptive and the inferential statistical methods. In this, the simple percentages and frequency table were used for descriptive inferences.

4. Result and Data Analysis

The total number of students who participated on this study was one hundred students. But only eighty students returned questionnaire were found useful for analysis. Results of the statistical analysis of the data are presented in the following tables:

What are the identified new trends in Part studies in Higher Education in Nigeria?

Table 4.1 Frequency Distribution of New Trends in Part Times Studies

Response	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Top Up Degree	65	81.25
Open Education	10	12.50
Sandwich Education	5	6.25
TOTAL	80	

Source: (Field Survey, 2019)

Table 4.1 reveals that majority of the respondents identified top up degree as the new trends in part times studies in higher education in Nigeria. The distribution table show that 81.25% of the respondents indicate that top up degree is the new trend in part times studies in Higher education in Nigeria. While 12.50% respondents indicate distance and open education as part times studies in Higher education in Nigeria. On the other hand, 6.25% of the respondents indicate sandwich education programme as other part times studies in Higher education in Nigeria. Findings above is consistent with Obasi & Nwakaire (2014) assertion that Part times studies program has becomes the viable option for

2. Research Questions Analysis:

many of those who seek to further their education in higher institutions. The rise in the demand for top up degree, distance or open education, sandwich education and the unique characteristics of this population (adults) has some managerial implications for Institutes of Education of Universities that administer this program. The emphasis on quality education depends on the teachers who are the pivot on which the education wheels revolve. More importantly, knowing that the quality of a nation’s education system cannot rise above its teachers, it is imperative that the issue of teacher preparation both at regular and sandwich programs are managed very properly.

Which courses are accredited to be offered as part times studies programme in Higher Education in Nigeria?

Table 4.2 Frequency Distribution of Accredited Part times Studies Programme in HE

Accredited Courses	Frequency(N)	Percentage (%)
Business Administration	58	72.50
Education	17	21.25
Public Administration	5	6.25
TOTAL	80	

Source: (Field Survey, 2019)

Table 4.2 above reveals that majority of the respondent choose business administration as the major accredited courses offered as part times studies programme in Higher Education in Nigeria. Finding revealed that 72.5% of the respondents choose business administration as the major accredited courses offered as part times studies programme in Higher Education in Nigeria. While 21.25% and 6.25% respondents choose education and public administration as other accredited courses offered as part times studies

programme in Higher Education in Nigeria respectively. Therefore, we hold the view that business administration courses are taking lead in part times studies programme in FUYOYE. Findings from this study is in agreement with (NUC, 2018) report on Guardian Newspaper that engineering and science courses are exempted from part times studies accreditation in higher education in Nigeria. However, the regulatory body approved and accredited business administration courses, education courses and

public administration courses as part times studies programme in Higher Education in Nigeria.

3. Research Questions Analysis:

What are the admission requirements and duration of year of studies of the part times studies offered in Nigeria?

Table 4.3 Frequency Distribution of admission requirements and duration of Year of Studies

Part Times Studies	Admission Requirements	Duration of Studies
Top Up Degree	HND	1 year
Distance or Open Education	O, Level	5 years
Sandwich Education	O, level & NCE	5 years & 4 Years

Source: (Field Survey, 2019)

The frequency distribution in table 4.3 above reveals that top up degree admission requirements is HND and the duration of studies completion is 1 year only. Distance or Open education entry admission requirements is five O, level credit including mathematics and English and the duration of studies completion is five years. On the other hand, sandwich education entry admission requirements is O, level and NCE/ND and the duration of completion of studies is 5

years and 4 years respectively. Our data revealed that admission requirement varies among the different part times studies programme offered in FUYOYE. Findings above corroborate with FUYOYE (2018) advertisement guideline for admission into top up degree programme, sandwich programme and distance learning programme for 2018/2019 academic session sighted in the university website.

5. Conclusion and Recommendation

This study examined emerging trends in part times studies in Higher Education in Nigeria with focus on Federal University of Ekiti, Oye. Findings revealed that top up degree part times programme is taking the lead among part times studies programme offered by FUYOYE, that business administration courses are the programmes seek most by majority of part times studies students in FUYOYE and that entry requirements and the duration of part times studies programme completion varies among the different part times studies programme offered in FUYOYE. This paper has given rise to the following conclusions and recommendation.

1. The management of FUYOYE should sustain and develop the current top up degree part times studies programme in match with global standard.
2. The different part times studies programme curriculum should be tailored to match contemporary job skill requirement for today employment.
3. The entry admission requirements should be sustain and strengthen in line with the regulatory authority provision.

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