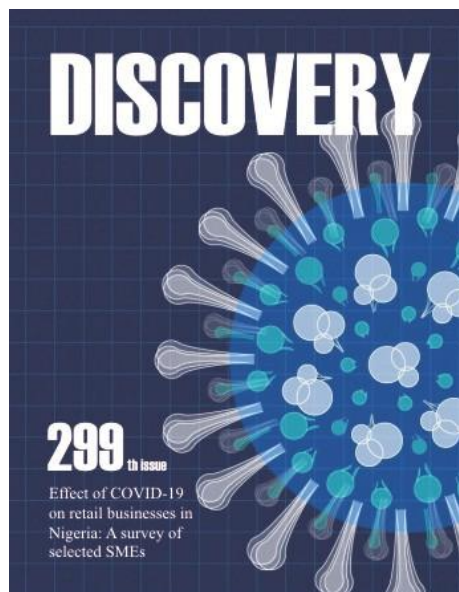


DISCOVERY

About the Cover



This study examines the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown on retail businesses in Nigeria with focus on the small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). It employs survey method of research in which 200 questionnaires were administered by hand and online to respondents across the federation. The study adopts descriptive statistics to analyze the perceptions of small scale business retailers on COVID-19 pandemic lockdown, COVID-19 pandemic financial constraints and survival strategies as well as overall rating of government's palliative measures. Our findings revealed that ownership status of the retailing business showed the preference for sole proprietorship amongst small businesses. Majority of the respondents observed partial compliance to the lockdown. By inference, despite enforcement, full lockdown was not obvious. What is obvious is that people mostly observed partial lockdown. Also, the strain on income and saving as a result of the pandemic was the most agreed upon a statement by the SMEs, thus reflecting a generally negative impact of COVID-19 on sales and revenues. However, the results reflect a general resilience amongst the SMEs as implied by their decision to borrow from friends and families, taking goods and supplies from creditors and bank loans in order to continue in their line of business despite the pandemic. The respondents generally disagreed with the government's palliatives measures in which they rated it very poor. By inference, lack of government's palliative lends support to the findings on non-compliance with full lockdown. In addition, irregular supply of electricity was one of the most agreed upon a statement by the SMEs, thus reflecting a generally negative impact of COVID19 on production activities as businesses had to resort to alternative power supply. Government should, therefore, provide adequate electricity, low-interest loans, relaxation of the loan repayment, and relaxation of taxation payment to enable them to survive the consequence of the pandemic (Ref: Yohanna Gyang Jugu, Abel Inabo OBAKA. Effect of COVID-19 on retail businesses in Nigeria: A survey of selected SMEs. *Discovery*, 2020, 56(299), 748-765).

Determinant of the Financial Performance of the Banking Sector in Nigeria

Ponjul B Gonji, Ibrahim Ali Tela

There is a strong relationship between the financial performance deposit money banks (DMBs) and the macroeconomic environment in which the banks operate. Hence, understanding the extend to which those macroeconomic variables affect the financial performance of the DMBs in Nigeria is very crucial to the survival of Nigerian economic. This study therefore, determined the effect of inflation rate, interest rate, exchange rate, unemployment rate and GDP on the financial performance of deposit money banks in Nigeria from 1990-2019. Using STATA 13, the study revealed that only inflation rate and GDP negative but significantly affect the financial performance of DM banks within the period under investigation. The study therefore recommend that Banks management should make both long and short terms policies that can aid to mitigate the effect of the macroeconomic environment on their financial performance. Government/ regulatory body should make policies that will reduce the rate of inflation in Nigeria in order to boost the financial performance of organizations like banks. They should also make policies that can encourage investments in the country thereby enhance the country's GDP among others). It is a time series study.

Discovery, 2020, 56(299), 716-724

Factors influencing the awareness of young job seekers towards online job portals in Nigeria

Lilian Ejiro DARAMOLA, Adedeji Adebola DARAMOLA

The 21st century is evident with significant technological transformations. These transformations have significant influence particularly on the patterns and procedures of the organization recruitment program. It is pertinent to note that the swift transformation is not only evident in the organizations, but also on the job seekers particularly during the activity of job search. Online job portals give room for conducting online recruitment, and this has to turn out to be the essential platform for tracking best, competent, and proficient seeker (talent). Thus, it is of the essence to conduct a study and discover the factors influencing the awareness of young jobseekers towards online job portals among First Bank job applicants in Lagos State. The study employed a survey research design and convenience sampling method to elicit information through a questionnaire instrument from 538 respondents. Factor Analysis was employed for data analysis using SPSS version 21. The study found that Quality of Information, Prospective Career Information, Quality of System, Perceived Usefulness, Perceived Ease of Use, Extended Services, and Perceived Trustworthiness are the factors influencing the awareness of young jobseekers towards online job portals with emphasis on Jobs.delon.ng and Jobberman.com in Nigeria. This implies that young job seekers in the recent time are conscious of the opportunities embedded in the online job portal.

Discovery, 2020, 56(299), 725-734

Assessment of consumer perception and purchase behavior of laptop in Bangladesh

Monira Begum, Md Nahid Hossain, Md Zillur Rahman, Md Jamal Uddin

This study assesses the consumer perception and purchase behavior of laptop in Bangladesh. Data have been collected from 100 consumers of Rangpur and Dinajpur city of Bangladesh. A number of key measurement indicators have been used to assess the consumer perception and purchase decision behavior. The main indicators were brand profile, pre-purchase factors, quality factors, usage facility like as-processor, memory, hard disk, color, weight, type of keyboard, battery life, guarantee warrantee conditions, display quality, speakers, internet facility, ease of usage, DVD-CD player etc. This study reveals that price (32%), quality (60%), brand image (52%), after sale service (64%), and availability of spare parts (44%) are highly important in purchase decision. In contrary, advertisement (40%), availability (44%), discount offers (34%) are less important. It has been also found that, the value of coefficient alpha or cronbach alpha was .849 of all pre-purchase factors and decision making factors. This value indicates that the test is highly reliable and the value of KMO and Bartlett's test was .624 which indicates the scale is appropriate. The findings of this study will be helpful to all related concerned for production, quality improvement, pricing decision, marketing and purchase decision.

Discovery, 2020, 56(299), 735-747

Effect of COVID-19 on retail businesses in Nigeria: A survey of selected SMEs

Yohanna Gyang Jugu, Abel Inabo OBAKA

This study examines the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown on retail businesses in Nigeria with focus on the small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). It employs survey method of research in which 200 questionnaires were administered by hand and online to respondents across the federation. The study adopts descriptive statistics to analyze the perceptions of small scale business retailers on COVID-19 pandemic lockdown, COVID-19 pandemic financial constraints and survival strategies as well as overall rating of government's palliative measures. Our findings revealed that ownership status of the retailing business showed the preference for sole proprietorship amongst small businesses. Majority of the respondents observed partial compliance to the lockdown. By inference, despite enforcement, full lockdown was not obvious. What is obvious is that people mostly observed partial lockdown. Also, the strain on income and saving as a result of the pandemic was the most agreed upon a statement by the SMEs, thus reflecting a generally negative impact of COVID-19 on sales and revenues. However, the results reflect a general resilience amongst the SMEs as implied by their decision to borrow from friends and families, taking goods and supplies from creditors and bank loans in order to continue in their line of business despite the pandemic. The respondents generally disagreed with the

government's palliative measures in which they rated it very poor. By inference, lack of government's palliative lends support to the findings on non-compliance with full lockdown. In addition, irregular supply of electricity was one of the most agreed upon a statement by the SMEs, thus reflecting a generally negative impact of COVID19 on production activities as businesses had to resort to alternative power supply. Government should, therefore, provide adequate electricity, low-interest loans, relaxation of the loan repayment, and relaxation of taxation payment to enable them to survive the consequence of the pandemic.

Discovery, 2020, 56(299), 748-765

Influencing factors of oil and gas production and sustainability in Niger delta, Nigeria

Adedeji Adebola DARAMOLA

In Nigeria, oil and gas operations are majorly carried out in the Niger Delta region. Recently, the region was confirmed and declared dangerous due to the high occurrence of insecurity that is evidenced by kidnappings, vandalism, killings, and criminalities, among others. The communities in the Niger Delta region sadistically opposed the operations of oil and gas after an allegation of continuing abandonment of the region despite the level of destruction that is caused as a result of oil and gas operations. The sadistic opposition was achieved with armed militants disrupting the activities of multinational oil companies. As a result of this, the production, exploration, and supply of oil and gas energy had been negatively affected, and it became essential to assess the contributions of Multinational companies to the sustainability development of the Niger Delta region. The study employed a survey and purposive sampling technique to elicit information through a questionnaire instrument from 579 respondents. Descriptive statistics (Table and percentages) and Relative importance analysis were employed. The descriptive analysis found that even though the projects embarked upon by the multinational companies as a result of corporate social responsibilities in the Niger Delta region are operational, they are not durable and functional; hence they are not acceptable by the Niger Deltans. Finally, the availability of capacity development programs, the impact of programs on quality of life, and the fact that projects that are in operations are periodically maintained are the influencing factors of oil and gas production and sustainability in Niger Delta, Nigeria.

Discovery, 2020, 56(299), 766-773

SCIENCE

The rate of corrosion inhibition of mild steel in fresh water using maize husk polar extract

Ologe Solomon Ochuko, Owan Stephenson Timidi, Anaidhuno Peter Ufuoma

The rate of corrosion and inhibition efficiency of Maize husk polar extract was investigated in Fresh water at room temperature of 29°C by weight loss method. The green inhibitor's concentration was achieved through Vacuum rotary evaporator at 79°C. The result gotten from the vacuum rotary evaporator is 24.00% concentration (mg/100g) from 600.50grams of the extract. The extract contains Alkaloids, Flavonoids, Phenolics, Phenolics, Phytates, Saponins, Terpenoids, Anthocyanins, Steroids, and Tannins. The extract shows spontaneous characteristics with the physical adsorptions submits to Langmuir isotherm. The results signal the inhibition efficiency attained 96.5% for 840hours in Fresh water. MHPE is a good inhibitor for the corrosion control in fresh water. FTIR analysis reveals the detectable functional organic inhibitor.

Discovery, 2020, 56(299), 774-790

An exploratory study and elucidation of the nitrogen content of an Estuary

Divya S Rajan

A chain of brackish water systems exists in Kerala. A number of estuaries receive nutrient addition over thousand times than the fertilizer loads added to the agricultural area. The resulting nitrogen and phosphorous inputs leads to elevated phytoplankton productivity, which in turn can lead to eutrophication. United Nations Environment Program has reported that 150 coastal areas worldwide are now starved of oxygen as a result of the decomposition of algal blooms caused by nutrients from agricultural runoff of fertilizers and sewage from cities. Therefore, the assessment of the nutrients inputs is vital for understanding the various biological processes within an estuary. The investigation was planned with the objective of studying the nitrogen content of the upstream and downstream waters of the Thekkumbhagam creek of Ashtamudi estuary's nutrient behavior. The study aimed at identifying the sources, dynamics and sink of nutrient. The amount of nutrients entering this creek is very large and its fate is relevant to water quality management. A comparative increase in the concentration of nutrients is noticed during the monsoon period. The lower concentration of nitrite during the months of April to May might be due to less fresh water input, higher salinity, higher pH and also uptake by phytoplankton. Maximum concentration of nitrate was found in regions where there is the possible input sources of high nutrient due to waste disposed from the sewage and coconut retting. High nitrate concentration may also lead to animal or fish kills, thus reducing system's productivity. Higher nitrate concentrations increase productivity because algae require nitrate for growth. It is inferred that the concentration of nutrients in the estuary has been regulated by the fresh water flow from Kallada River and also by tidal mixing. The present study thus provides an insight into the nitrate-nitrite fluctuations that reminds us the need for sustaining the pristine nature of the estuary.

Discovery, 2020, 56(299), 791-804