



Impact of Covid-19 on Nigerian Educational Institutions

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ABSTRACT: The outbreak of COVID-19 has negative impact on the entire educational institutions in the world. Many countries including Nigeria adhered to the rules of curbing the pandemic by shutting down their economy and the educational institutions to curtail the spread of the virus. This decision led to closure of all educational activities globally including Nigeria. This article centers on the impact of COVID-19 on educational institutions in Nigeria. Secondary data was used to support the points raised in the article. The secondary data used for the publication were sourced from online and print materials. The article identified the following: suspension of internal and external examinations, disruption of academic programmes, suspension of admission of new students at all levels of the educational system, suspension of teaching and learning activities, research programme, cancellation of conferences and proceeds, suspension of internal examination, loss of manpower in the educational institutions. To continue with teaching and learning in the mist of the COVID-19 in the Nigerian educational institutions, the article hereby recommends the following: strict adherence to COVID-19 Presidential Tasks Force (PTF) and Nigerian Center for Disease Control (NCDC) stipulated rules by all educational institutions on resumption of academic activities, increase budgetary allocation and prompt response to funding of educational institutions across the country.

KEYWORDS: COVID-19, Education, Institution,

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic since its outbreak in 2019 in China has affected the world economy. Zethembe (2020) observes that the unexpected Covid-19 pandemic outbreak affected various sectors of the economy and every single aspect of human life, not only in developing countries, but across the world (Bacher-Hicks et al., 2020; Johnson et al., 2020; Raaper & Brown, 2020; Wargadinata et al., 2020). Coke-Hamilton (2020) and Ogunode (2020) observes that the COVID-19 pandemic and the measures put in place to curtail its spread are taking a heavy toll on the tourism sector. According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), the COVID-19 pandemic will result into a contraction of the tourism sector by 20 to 30% in 2020.

The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic that swept across the globe about a year now, has not only had a significant impact on public health, society, and the economy as a whole, it has also wreaked havoc to the sporting calendar (Ogunode 2020d, Gough, 2020). In a bid to stem the spread of the virus, many professional and amateur leagues across all continents and sports took the unprecedented step to postpone or suspend their seasons on the advice of the CDC to avoid gatherings of large numbers of people (Ogunode,2020). The United Nations Trade and Development Agency (UNCTAD) put the cost of the outbreak at about \$2 trillion in 2020. Most central banks, finance ministries and independent economic experts around the world have taken solace in the prediction that the impacts might be sharp but short-lived, and economic activities would return to normal thereafter (Guardian, 2020, Ogunode 2020)

Recent economic forecasts show that Africa's economy could experience a loss of between US\$90 billion and US\$200 billion in 2020, with the GDP shrinking by three to eight points. In South Africa, growth is expected to contract by 1.5% in the first two months of the outbreak, due to its effect on key economic sectors, such as mining and tourism. Ethiopia's recent request for assistance, on behalf of the African nations to the G20 forum, for US\$150 billion emergency financing, the freezing of interest rates on loans and the cancellation of debts is an indication of the massive threat to the continent's economies (Maslen, 2020, Ogunode,2020).

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is tracking the impact of the pandemic on education. As at March 30, they estimate that 87 percent of the world's students—that is 1.5 billion learners—have been affected by school closures. The bulk of these students are enrolled in primary and secondary schools, but there are also millions of students affected at the pre-primary and tertiary education levels. More than 180 countries have shut school doors nationwide, while others have implemented localized school closures (Wikipedia, 2020). s

2.0 Concept of COVID-19

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), coronaviruses are a family of viruses that cause illnesses ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) and the Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS). These viruses were originally transmitted from animals to people. SARS, for instance, was transmitted from civet cats to humans while MERS moved to humans from a type of camel. Several known coronaviruses are circulating in animals that have not yet infected humans. The name coronavirus comes from the Latin word corona, meaning crown or halo. Under an electron microscope, it looks like it is surrounded by a solar corona. The novel coronavirus, identified by Chinese authorities on January 7 and since named SARS-CoV-2, is a new strain that had not been previously identified in humans (Wikipedia, 2020). Chinese health authorities are still trying to determine the origin of the virus, which they say likely came from a seafood market in Wuhan, China where wildlife was also traded illegally. On February 7, Chinese researchers said the virus could have spread from an infected animal species to humans through illegally-trafficked pangolins, which are prized in Asia for food and medicine. Scientists have pointed to either bats or snakes as possible sources of the virus. According to the WHO, signs of infection include fever, cough, shortness of breath and breathing difficulties. In more severe cases, it can lead to pneumonia, multiple organ failure and even death. Current estimates of the incubation period - the time between infection and the onset of symptoms - range from one to 14 days. Most infected people

show symptoms within five to six days. However, infected patients can also be asymptomatic, meaning they do not display any symptoms despite having the virus in their systems (Wikipedia, 2020).

On 27 February, Nigeria confirmed its first case in Lagos State, an Italian citizen who works in Nigeria had returned on 25 February from Milan, Italy through the Murtala Muhammed International Airport, fell ill on 26 February and was transferred to Lagos State Biosecurity Facilities for isolation and testing. Presently, Nigeria is having 199 covid-19 cases, two death and twenty recovered. In order to contain the spread of the virus in Nigeria, the Federal Ministry of Education has directed all educational institutions in Nigeria to shut down and allow students to go home as cases of reported COVID-19 increased to 13. The Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Education, Sonny Echono, told reporters on 19 March that the directive was part of the country's overall strategy to contain the spread of the virus (Wikipedia, 2020).

The directive affected all the educational institutions in Nigeria including the primary schools. All aspects of the educational system was affected. Jegede (2020) observes that the temporary closure of educational institutions in an attempt to curtail the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic across the World has negative effect on students learning. The Covid-19 pandemic, in no small measure, has adversely affected primary education, especially in the area of literacy ability (Osiesi, 2021, Bao, Qu, Zhang, Hogan & Tiffany, 2020) as well as effective learning among learners.

3.0 Impact of COVID-19 on Nigerian Educational Institutions

The Nigerian educational institutions include: the basic education, secondary school education and higher education. According to Nigeria's latest National Policy on Education (2013), basic education covers nine years of formal (compulsory) schooling consisting of six years of elementary and three years of junior secondary education. Post-basic education includes three years of senior secondary education.

The primary education is the bedrock on which other levels of education are built. The National Policy on Education (2004) refers to it as "Education given in an institution for children" normally aged 6-11. This is the level that prepares pupils for Secondary Education. It is necessary that basic skills are inculcated into learners as specified in the objectives. The National Policy on Education (2004) stated the objectives of primary education as follows: the inculcation of permanent literacy and numeracy and the ability to communicate effectively, the laying of a sound basis for scientific and reflective thinking; Citizenship education as a basis for effective participation in and contribution to the life of the society; Character and moral training and the development of sound attitudes; Developing in the child the ability to adapt to his changing environment; Giving the child opportunity for developing manipulative skills that will enable him function effectively in the society within the limits of his capacity and; Providing basic tools for further educational advancement including preparation for trades and crafts of the locality. The primary school education is one of the most affected educational institution in Nigeria. All the programme of primary school which include teaching and learning programme, examination programme, extra curriculum programme and academic service programme have been disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic has increased the percentage of out of school children because admission processes for new students were suspended. Owusu-Fordjour, Koomson, Hanson (2020) carried out a study aimed at accessing the

impact of Covid-19 on Ghana's teaching and learning processes. The study revealed some of the challenges students encountered during the closure of schools due to the outbreak of the pandemic "Covid-19": Students were unable to study effectively from their homes thus, exposing the ineffectiveness of online system of learning. Also, parents' incapability of assisting their wards on how to access online learning platform as well as supervising the learning of their children at home without any complexity were identified. It came to light that the pandemic really had a negative impact on their learning as many of them were not used to individualistic learning. The e-learning platforms rolled out also posed serious challenge to majority of the students because of the limited access to internet and lack of the technical know-how of technological devices by most Ghanaian students. Ogunode and Jegede (2021) submitted that the impact of COVID-19 on primary school administration in Nigeria including the suspension of teaching programme, suspension of internal examination, suspension of extra-curriculum programme, disruption of academic programme and inability to enrol new students into primary school as at and when due as a result of the impact of COVID-19 on the administration of primary schools in Nigeria. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is tracking the impact of the pandemic on education globally. As of March 30th 2020, they projected that 87 percent of the world's students—that is 1.5 billion learners—have been affected by school closures. The bulk of these students are enrolled in primary and secondary schools, but there are also millions of students affected at the pre-primary and tertiary education levels. More than 180 countries have shut school doors nationwide, while others have implemented localized school closures (Wikipedia, 2020).

The secondary Education is the education that children receive after primary education and before the tertiary education. Based on the 6-3-3-4 system of education, secondary education comprises six years duration, but given in two stages: a junior secondary school stage and a senior secondary school stage, each to run for three years respectively. Secondary education is the next level after primary education. The major goals of this level of education are to prepare individuals for useful living within the society and higher education. The broad goals of Secondary Education according to the National Policy on Education (2004) include, the preparation of the individual for: Useful living within the society and Higher education. In specific terms, the objectives are to provide all primary school leavers with the opportunity for education of a higher level, irrespective of sex, social status, religion or ethnic background; Offer diversified curriculum to cater for the differences in talents, opportunities and future roles; Provide trained manpower in the applied science, technology and commerce at sub-professional grades; Develop and promote Nigerian languages, art and culture in the context of world cultural heritage; Inspire its students with a desire for self-improvement and achievement of excellence; Foster national unity with an emphasis on the common ties that unite us in our diversity; Raise a generation of people who can think for themselves, respect the view and feelings of others, respect the dignity of labour, appreciate those values specified under our broad national goals and live as good citizens; and Provide technical knowledge and vocational skills necessary for agricultural, industrial, commercial and economic development. Ogunode Niyi Jacob and Ahaotu G.N etal (2020) undertook research for this study. The research was carried out in Abaji area council of FCT, Abuja, Nigeria. Result collected revealed that 80 (100%) of the respondents strongly agreed that COVID-19 clock down would affect the academic programme of Senior Secondary Schools; 80 (100%) of the

respondents strongly agreed that COVID-19 lock down has led to suspension of internal and external examination, reduction in investment on education; 80 (100%) of the respondents strongly agreed that COVID-19 schools close down has led to suspension of teaching and learning in Schools; 80 (100%) of the respondents strongly agreed that COVID-19 schools close down has affected the academic calendar of senior secondary schools and 80 (100%) of the respondents strongly agreed that COVID-19 lock down has led to the suspension of all extra-curriculum activities in Senior Secondary Schools. It is therefore clear that COVID-19 pandemic has resulted into a major disruption in the educational system, much of which is still being understudied due to the severity of its effects (Zethembe 2020, Bryson & Andres, 2020; Crawford et al., 2020).

The National Policy on Education (2013) defined tertiary education as the education given after secondary education in Universities, Colleges of Education, Polytechnics, Monotechnics, as well as those institutions offering correspondence courses. The goals of tertiary education according to the National Policy on Education (2013) are to: contribute to national development through high level relevant manpower training, develop and inculcate proper values for the survival of the individual and society; develop the intellectual capability of individuals to understand and appreciate their local and external environments; acquire both physical and intellectual skills which will enable individuals to be self-reliant and useful members of the society; promote and encourage scholarship and community service; forge and cement national unity, and to promote national and international understanding and interaction. The outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic affected the higher institutions in Nigeria. The major tasks of higher institutions include teaching, research and community services have been disrupted by the COVID-19. The pandemic also disrupted the academic programmes, examinations, admissions, conferences, workshops and training, graduation programme of higher institutions in Nigeria. Zethembe (2020), Liguori and Winkler, (2020) and Sahu, (2020) observed that higher institutions either postponed or cancelled all campus events such as graduation ceremonies, workshops, conferences, sports (both intra and inter universities), and other activities. Ogunode and Ahaotu G.N (2020) did a study that investigated the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on higher institutions in FCT, Abuja, Nigeria. The result showed that 100% of the respondents agreed that COVID-19 pandemic led to the suspension of academic calendar of higher institutions in FCT, Abuja, larger percentage of the respondents opined that COVID-19 pandemic led to the suspension of research programmes of higher institutions in FCT, A greater percentage of the respondents agreed that COVID-19 pandemic led to the suspension of community service of higher institutions in FCT, Abuja. This result also revealed that 100% of the people sampled agreed that adoption of online education is the measure of reducing the impact of COVID-19 effects on higher institutions in Abuja. Also, Jegede (2020) carried out a study on perception of undergraduate students on the impact of covid-19 pandemic on higher education development in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, Nigeria. Result collected and analyzed showed that;100% of the respondents agreed that Covid-19 pandemic affected the academic calendar of higher institutions; 90.5% of the respondent agreed that Covid-19 pandemic had effect on implementation of higher institutions financial budget for 2020; 94.5% of the respondents agreed that Covid-19 pandemic have relationship with reduction of manpower in higher institutions; 100% of the respondents agreed that Covid-19 pandemic have relationship with the cancelation of academic conferences of higher institutions and 89% of the respondents agreed that

online education is the alternative measures for conventional teaching and learning process in case of future occurrences of any pandemic. Studies revealed that many higher institutions especially the universities in order to curtail the spread of COVID-19, closed down campuses and suspended teaching and learning activities at the institutions (Zethembe 2020, Huang et al., 2020; Prokopenko & Berezhna, 2020; Ratten, 2020).

1.3 Loss of Manpower in Educational Institutions

The COVID-19 pandemic did not only disrupt the academic activities of the educational institutions in Nigeria alone, it also reduced the manpower in the sector. Many primary schools, secondary school teaches have died due to the COVID-19. The virus have also killed many professors in the Nigerian universities. According to Legit (2020), the deadly virus has not only forced students to stay at home as universities and other educational institutions are shut down, but it has also taken the lives of some of the senior knowledge producers; the professors, thecable (2020), reported the death of professors killed by COVID-19, Premiuntimes (2020) reported the death of a professor that COVID-19 killed and Premiuntimes (2021) revealed that COVID-19 have killed another professor in the Nigerian universities. Longtime University of Washington faculty member Stephen Schwartz died on Tuesday (March 17) from COVID-19, the disease caused by the novel coronavirus, the Seattle Times reports. "We are deeply saddened that faculty member Professor Stephen Schwartz passed away due to a COVID-19 infection," the University of Washington Department of Pathology tweeted yesterday (March 18) afternoon. Tributes were also being paid to world-renowned South African scientist Gita Ramjee, who has died from COVID-19-related complications. MEMPHIS, Tenn. (WMC) - A University of Memphis professor has died from the coronavirus. NBC affiliate WTMJ says criminal justice instructor Lenard Wells died Saturday from complications of COVID-19, according to the Milwaukee County Medical Examiner's Office. Worldometers.info (2020) also reported that COVID-19 is responsible for the death of over 74,431 persons across the world. This people are from different professions including the teaching profession. According to the Department of Education and the South African Zethembe (2020) observed that a number of affected stakeholders, including government authorities, academic staff, students, and parents are concerned if the shift from class-based learning to online learning will produce the desired results. According to Zethembe (2020), Liguori and Winkler (2020), the gradual outbreak of Covid-19 posed a major challenge to education landscape as education institutions, both primary, secondary and tertiary were forced to close down and to look for alternative teaching and learning approaches.

4.0 Ways Forward

COVID-19 like many other virus have come to stay with humanity, COVID-19 should not continue to prevent us from carrying out teaching and learning and other academic activities in the educational institutions. To ensure that teaching and learning continue in the Nigerian educational institutions, the following recommendations are suggested:

- 1) The government should increase the funding of educational institutions to enable the institutions meet up with the challenges caused by COVID-19
- 2) The government should provide all the ICT facilities in educational institution to allow students have access to online education even in rural areas

3) The government should continuously train and retrain all school administrators and teachers on information communication technologies). Government should subsidize the internet services for educational institutions, teachers and students for affordability.

5.0 Conclusion

The article discussed the impact of COVID-19 on the Nigerian public educational institutions. The article identified the suspension of internal and external examinations, disruption of academic programme, suspension of admission of new students, suspension of teaching and learning programmes and activities as the impact of COVID-19 on primary and secondary schools in Nigeria were adversely affected. Regarding higher institutions, the article also identified the impacts of COVID-19 to include; suspension of teaching programme, research programme, cancellation of conferences, workshops and seminars, suspension of internal examination, suspension of admission of new students and loss of manpower in the educational institutions.

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