

**CORONA VIRUS (COVID - 19) PANDEMIC AND HALTING OF
EDUCATION ACTIVITIES IN OYO WEST LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF
OYO STATE: DEVELOPMENTAL IMPLICATIONS AND THE WAY
FORWARD**

Isola, Aderonke Fausat

*Department of Curriculum and Instruction
Emmanuel Alayande College of Education, Oyo*

Abstract

This study investigated Corona Virus (COVID-19) pandemic and how it halted education activities in Oyo West Local Government Area of Oyo State with its developmental implications and way forward. The design for the study was a descriptive survey type. The population of the study was all residents in Oyo West Local Government Area (LGA) of Oyo State. Multi-stage Sampling Technique was adopted to sample respondents. The sampling for the study was done in 20 areas within the LGA through simple random sampling technique during which 20 people were selected. A total of four hundred (400) respondents were used for the study. An instrument titled "Corona Virus and Education Activities Questionnaire (CVEAQ)" was used to collect data. To validate the instrument, face, content and construct validity were carried out on the instrument by giving it to experts in the field of Educational Management and Teacher Education for scrutiny. Test and retest method was used and a reliability co-efficient of 0.85 was obtained. Simple percentage was used to analyse the three research questions. The findings revealed that the pandemic affected the educational activities and this had halted the teaching and learning processes in the study area. It was thus suggested that governments at all levels should provide adequate medical treatment nationwide and implement measures that will limit the number of people congregating in public places, there is the need for provision of palliatives for those that are less privileged and need to obey the health directives to save guard the spread of such pandemic in the future.

Keywords: *Corona Virus pandemic, Education activities, Developmental implication, Education system, Oyo State*

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has created the largest disruption of education systems in history, affecting nearly 1.6 billion learners in more than 190 countries and all continents of the world. Closures of schools and other learning spaces have impacted 94 per cent of the world's student population, up to 99 per cent in low and lower-middle income countries. The crisis is exacerbating pre-existing education disparities by reducing the opportunities for many of the most vulnerable children, youth and adults - those living in poor or rural areas, girls, refugees, persons with disabilities and forcibly displaced persons - to continue their learning. Learning losses also threaten to extend beyond this generation and erase decades of progress, not least in support of girls and young men's educational access and retention. Some 23.8 million additional children and youth (from pre-primary to tertiary) may drop out or not have access to school next year (2021) due to the pandemic's economic impact alone (United Nations, 2020).

Similarly, closures of educational institutions hamper the provision of essential services to children and communities, including access to nutritious food, ability of many parents to go to work, and increased risks of violence against women and girls. As the COVID-19 Pandemic runs its course, many governments are implementing measures that limit the number of people congregating in public places. Such measures have disrupted the normal functioning of schools and universities. Because the duration of such measures has been extensive – and is likely to continue in some countries for a certain time, until a vaccine becomes available, while leaders of public and private education institutions have put in place alternative methods for students and teachers to continue with their lessons when attending school is not possible and are working on methods that will make schools fit for working in a safe environment (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2020).

The outbreak of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) was officially announced by the Director General of the World Health Organization (WHO) on 30th January 2020 (Public Health Emergency of International Concern, PHEIC, 2020). Likewise, on 27th February 2020 the Federal Ministry of Health announced the confirmation of the first case of Corona virus disease in Lagos State, Nigeria. In the same communication, the Honourable Minister of Health announced that the

Multi-sectorial Coronavirus Preparedness Group led by the Nigeria Center for Disease control (NCDC) has immediately activated its National Emergency Operations Center. Since then, in less than 2 months, Nigeria has reached more than 50 cases across the country. NCDC keeps and updates figures daily. On March 19th, 2020 a circular from Federal Ministry of Education granted an approval for the closure of all schools for a period of one (1) month which commenced from Monday 23rd March, 2020 to prevent the spread of the Corona virus (COVID-19). Not only will the closure of schools affect close to 46 million students throughout the country, the most vulnerable groups of children targeted by the education partners are likely to be impacted the most. About 400,000 IDP children attending some forms of learning in the camps and host communities will be affected by the stoppage of learning activities. Planned activities for the first and second quarter of 2020 will not be completed as planned before the pandemic started (FMH, 2020).

UNESCO (2020) pointed that at the end of April 2020, educational institutions that were shut down and affected in 186 countries were approximately 74% of total enrolled learners on the planet¹. In many countries, schools have been closed since the beginning of March 2020, while in others (e.g. most of China and South Korea) in-person classes had been already cancelled since January 2020. Several countries (e.g. Malta, Portugal, and Ireland) have announced that (parts of) the formal education system will not re-open in the 2019/2020 academic year. The response should start with school administration, from (FME, UBEC, SUBEB, Head teachers) Federal level to LGA level. Priority of LGAs will be determined on accessibility basis (Education in Emergency Working Group (EIEWG), 2020).

Humanitarian, development and government partners in Nigeria are already experiencing some challenges in the implementation of response to COVID-19. Such challenges range from funding requirements, protection of staff and capacity to deliver 100% while working from home. Despite these significant challenges, humanitarian and development organizations and governments implement a range of interventions. Although, students with access to digital devices and internet may not be the majority in most countries, supporting governments in establishing effective forms of online education will free up institutional capacities and resources in order to

redirect their focus on delivering alternative learning methods for those students who do not have similar opportunities (OECD, 2020).

The changes during the pandemic gives insight on what will happen in the post pandemic. This includes lower earnings for the student cohorts directly affected by the lockdown. Such consideration and these numbers should be kept in mind by policymakers when deciding about the budget to be invested in an attempt to mitigate the detrimental effects of COVID-19 on education. However, we can neither underestimate nor overestimate the situations to happen in the post Covid-19 era. It can be noted that there would be less social gatherings, strict inter-state transportation

Problem of the Study

The news of Corona Virus, also known as Covid-19 was disseminated on social media from Wuhan, Republic of China in the late 2019. The pandemic affected teaching and learning and a long interruption in the educational system at all levels. Nigeria is not technological equipped for virtual teaching and learning like other developed nations, while few private universities in the country engaged in virtual learning. This is not as effective as classroom teaching which enhances proper assimilation of subject matter. This pandemic had also affected the promising future of learning, and delivery of quality education.

More so, school children and youth in upper classes were affected by a lack of educational resources and enabling environment to access learning. Previous studies focussed on effects of poor virtual learning without existence of pandemic such as Covid -19. This study therefore investigated Corona Virus (COVID-19) and halting of education activities in Oyo West Local Government Area of Oyo State, with its developmental implications and way forward.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to investigate pandemic Corona Virus (COVID-19) and halting of education activities in Oyo State, with the developmental implications and charting the way forward.

1. To examine the implications of Corona Virus COVID-19 on education activities in Oyo West LGA of Oyo State.

2. Proffer way forward against future likely factors that can halt education activities such as Corona Virus COVID-19 pandemic in Oyo West LGA of Oyo State.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised and answered:

1. Are there any implications of Corona Virus (COVID-19) pandemic on education activities in Oyo West LGA of Oyo State?
2. In what ways can (COVID-19) pandemic be curbed in Oyo West LGA Oyo State?

Methodology

The design for the study was a descriptive survey type. The population of the study was all residents in Oyo West LGA of Oyo State. Multi-stage Sampling Technique was adopted. The sample for the population were done as follows: 20 areas within the LGA were randomly selected through simple random sampling technique. In each area, 20 adults who were residents were selected through simple random sampling Technique. A total of 400 respondents were selected. An instrument labelled "Corona Virus and Education Activities Questionnaire" (VCEAQ) was used to collect data. The questionnaire was divided into three sections. Section A contained respondents personal data, while sections B and C consisted of ten question items. The format adopted for section B was Likert scale format in which respondents were required to respond to it. Face, content and construct validity were used to validate the instrument by given it to experts in the field of Educational Management and Teacher Education for scrutiny. Corrections were made before administration of the questionnaire. Test and retest method was used and a reliability co-efficient of 0.85 was obtained. Simple percentage was used to analyse the two research questions.

Findings and Discussion

Answering of Research Questions

Research Question 1: Are there any implications of Corona Virus (COVID-19) on education activities in Oyo West LGA of Oyo State?

Table 1: Implications of Corona Virus (COVID 19) on the Education Activities

S/N	Items	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)
1.	All educational institutions both private and public were closed based on government directives	340.0 (85.00)	40.0 (10.00)	20.0 (5.00)	0.0 (0.00)
2.	All programmed examinations such as WAEC and NECO were cancelled and later re-scheduled	300 (75.00)	0.0 (0.00)	60 (15.00)	40.0 (10.00)
3.	It might take longer time to complete syllabuses, because pupils/ students could not go to schools	380.0 (95.00)	20.0 (5.00)	0.0 (0.00)	0.0 (0.00)
4.	Due to Covid-19, teaching and learning ceased in all educational institutions	260.0 (65.00)	140 (35.00)	0.0 (0.00)	0.0 (0.00)
5.	Teachers in private education institutions suffered as their salaries was not regular	200.0 (50.00)	180.0 (45.00)	0.0 (0.00)	20.0 (5.00)
6	Pupils and students might have to use more extra time for academic programme (s)	280.0 (70.00)	120.0 (30.00)	0.0 (0.00)	0.0 (0.00)
7	Teachers and lecturers stayed at home, thus they could not be in academic exercise.	200.0 (50.00)	150.0 (37.5)	0.0 (0.00)	50.0 (12.50)
8	There have been changes that involve cancellation and re-scheduling of educational programmes.	240.0 (60.00)	160.0 (40.00)	0.0 (0.00)	0.0 (0.00)
9	Reduction in physical contacts: no enrolment of students and	300.0 (75.00)	100.0 (25.00)	0.0 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)

10	The planned prize giving day and graduation ceremonies in the school have brought to halt	360.0 (90.00)	40.00 (10.00)	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)
----	---	------------------	------------------	----------------	----------------

Table 1 shows respondents responses on implications of Corona Virus (COVID -19) on the education activities. It was found that 340 (85.0%) respondents strongly agreed and 40 (10.0%) respondents agreed that all educational institutions both private and public were closed based on government directives respectively while 20 (5.0%) respondents disagreed. Also, 380 (95.0%) strongly agreed while 20 (5%) respondents agreed that it might take longer time to finish syllabuses, because pupils and students could not go to schools. Also, 200 (50.0%) respondents agreed that teachers in private education institutions suffered as their 180 (45.0%) respondents agreed while 20 (5.0%) respondents strongly disagreed with the motion. On the statement that teachers and lecturers stayed home, thus they could not involve in academic exercise, 200 (50.0%) respondents strongly supported while 150 (37.5%) respondents agreed while 50 (12.5%) respondents strongly disagreed. 300 (75.0%) respondents strongly maintained that reduction in physical contacts leading to less ceremonies in the society, as the dead are buried in silence, couple are joined with no or lesser population, new born babies are christened with no large parties while 100 (25.0%) respondents agreed.

Research Question 2: In what ways can Covid-19 pandemic be curbed in Oyo West LGA of Oyo State?

Table 2: Responses on solutions to likely future pandemic occurrences

S/N	Items	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)
1.	The government should declare curfew nationwide to prevent spreading of such pandemic	280.0 (70.00)	100.0 (25.00)	20.0 (5.00)	0.0 (0.00)
2.	Mass media education should be on air to sensitize people on environmental issues	350.0 (75.00)	0.0 (0.00)	50.0 (12.50)	0.0 (0.00)

3.	Provision of palliatives to those that are less privileged	320.0 (80.00)	80.0 (20.00)	0.0 (0.00)	0.0 (0.00)
4.	Closing of international borders particularly air transport	200.0 (50.0)	140 (35.0)	60.0 (15.0)	0.0 (0.00)
5.	Modifications in educational system for the school system to operate.	200.0 (50.00)	180.0 (45.00)	0.0 (0.00)	20.0 (5.00)
6	Social and religious gatherings must be banned.	280.0 (70.00)	120.0 (30.00)	0.0 (0.00)	0.0 (0.00)
7	Strict the inter-state transportation.	150.00 (35.7)	200.0 (50.0)	0.0 (0.00)	50.0 (12.50)
8	Need to obey the health directives to save guard the spread of such pandemic	240.0 (60.00)	160.0 (40.00)	0.0 (0.00)	0.0 (0.00)
9	There should be curfew to prevent economic activities	380.0 (95.00)	20.0 (5.00)	0.0 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)
10	Virtual teaching and learning serve as alternative means of transferring knowledge	260.0 (65.00)	100.00 (25.00)	40.00 (10.00)	0.00 (0.00)

Table 2 displays likely solutions to the pandemic in Oyo West Local Government Area. Findings showed that 280 (70.0%) respondents strongly agreed and 100 (25.0%) respondents agreed that the government should declare curfew nationwide to prevent spreading respectively while 20 (5.0%) respondents disagreed. 350 (75.0%) respondents strongly agreed while 50 (12.5%) respondents agreed that mass media education should be on air to sensitize people on environmental issues. Also, 320 (80.0%) respondents agreed that provision of palliatives to those that are less privileged while 80.0 (20.0%) respondents agreed. On the statement that modifications in educational system for future pandemic, 200 (50.0%) respondents strongly supported while 180 (45.0%) respondents agreed while 20 (5.0%) respondents strongly disagreed. More so, 240 (60.0%)

respondents strongly maintained that there is need to obey the health directives to save guide the spread of such pandemic while 160 (40.0%) respondents agreed. On the statement that virtual learning will be more valued than classroom. On the statement that virtual learning can be used alternatively, 260 (65.0%) respondents strongly supported the motion, 100 (25.0%) respondents while 40 (10.0%) respondents disagreed.

Discussion of Findings

Table 1 addressed implications of Corona Virus (COVID-19) on education activities Oyo West Local Government Area. Among the implications pointed were: all educational institutions both private and public were closed based on government directives, all programmed examinations such as WAEC and NECO were cancelled and later re-scheduled, it might take longer time to finish syllabuses, because pupils and students couldn't go to schools, Also, it was mentioned that due to Covid-19, teaching and learning ceased in all educational institutions, teachers in private education institutions suffered as their salaries was not regular, the break in the inter-state travels has brought the economy into inflation.

This study was in line with Federal Ministry of Education, FME (2020) that Federal Ministry of Education has granted an approval for the closure of all school for a period of one (1) month commencing from Monday 23rd March 2020 to prevent the spread of the (COVID19). In addition, UNESCO (2020) pointed that at the end of April 2020, educational institutions shut down in 186 countries, affecting approximately 74% of total enrolled learners on the planet.

Table 2 shows likely solutions to Covid-19 pandemic in Oyo West Local Government Area. In order to curb the futuristic pandemic, the respondents suggested the following: the government should declare curfew nationwide to prevent spreading, provision of palliatives to those that are less privileged, the conceivable modifications in educational system for future pandemic include that school system might be in two forms (morning and afternoon) to enhance, closing of International border particularly air transport strict the inter-state transportation, need to obey the health directives to save guide the spread of such pandemic.

This study corroborated the study of OECD (2020) that as the COVID-19 Pandemic runs its course, many governments are implementing measures that limit the number of people congregating in public places. Leaders of public and private education institutions have put in place alternative methods for students and teachers to continue with their lessons when attending school is not possible and are working on methods that will make schools fit for working in a safe environment (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, (OECD) (2020).

Implications of COVID-19 on Educational Activities

According to Di Pietro, Biagi, Costa and Karpiński (2020) ,they identified the implications of COVID-19 that it affected learning leading to remote learning and teaching expected to cause greater inequality in cognitive abilities, but they may exert a similar effect as regard students' emotional well-being and motivation. In fact, students' isolation from their friends and teachers may result in an unequal distribution of behavioural and psychological problems. More so, during the lockdown, students from less advantaged backgrounds are more likely to be exposed to a stressful home environment (e.g. they are more likely to share a limited space and a limited number of digital devices with other family members).

Furthermore, parents in these households, who may be under pressure because of financial and job security issues due to the COVID-19 crisis, are probably not in the best position to support their children in these circumstances. The increased disparity in both cognitive and non-cognitive abilities that is likely to emerge during COVID-19 pandemic may have important consequences not only in the short-term, but also in the long-term. Several studies found that children's cognitive and socio-emotional skill levels are good predictors of later outcomes. Students poorly endowed with these skills tend to have lower educational attainment and poorer labour market prospects, in terms of both employment and pay rates.

Therefore, there is the risk that, in the absence of appropriate policy measures, the short-term inequality caused by COVID-19 may persist or even grow over time, leading to more economic disparity in the future. Finally, it is interesting to put the learning loss suffered by students during the COVID-19 crisis into a broader perspective. Such

loss will translate into a reduction of available human capital, with negative effects on productivity growth, innovation and employment, including future lower earnings for the student cohorts directly affected by the lockdown. For example, rough estimates indicate that the aggregate annual earnings loss that French primary school students will experience because of the COVID-19 confinement period amounts to between 700 and 800 million euro. These values are much bigger if earnings losses across all educational levels are summed up. Such consideration and these numbers should be kept in mind by policymakers when deciding about the budget to be invested in an attempt to mitigate the detrimental effects of COVID-19 on education.

Conclusion

The pandemic which started December, 2019 has caused changes in the societal values and attitudes as there has been reduction in physical contacts leading to less ceremonies in the society, as the dead are buried in silence, couple are joined with no or lesser population, new born babies are christened with no large parties. During the pandemic, there have been changes in transaction system, as sellers and buyers are both scheduled on when to be at the market and not. On the other hand, this crisis has stimulated innovation within the education sector. We have seen innovative approaches in support of education and training continuity: from radio and television to take-home packages. Distance learning solutions were developed by various governments and partners all over the world supporting education continuity. It is interesting to put the learning loss suffered by students during the COVID -19 crisis into a broader viewpoint. Such loss will transform into a reduction of available human capital, with negative effects on productivity growth, innovation and employment,

Recommendations

Based on the findings, recommendations were made that:

- The governments at all levels should declare restriction nationwide to prevent spreading of such futuristic pandemic.
- Governments at all levels should implement measures that limit the number of people congregating in public places.
- There is need for provision of palliatives for those that are less privileged in the society.

- There is need for the National Orientation Agency to educate the public on to obey the health directives to save guide the spread of such pandemic.

References

- Education in Emergency Working Group (EiEWG) (2020). Retrieved on August 10 2020 from <https://covid-19.ncdc.gov.ng>
- Di Pietro, G., Biagi, F., Costa, P. & Karpiński, Z., M. (2020). The likely impact of COVID-19 on education: Reflections based on the existing literature and recent international datasets. JRC Technical Reports. European Commission. Retrieved on June 4 2020 from giorgio.di-pietro@ec.europa.eu
- Global Education Coalition (2020). Retrieved on May 2020 from <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1fERhVRIUs2dRLkG275gjHHC7yDdpDFw/view?usp=sharing>
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, (OECD) (2020). Supporting the continuation of teaching and learning during the COVID-19 Pandemic. World Bank Group: Global Education Initiative
- Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC, 2020). Retrieved on March 25 2020 from www.publichealthemergencyofinternational@uno.com
- United Nations Educational Social and Cultural Organisation, UNESCO (2020) Covid-19 Pandemic. Retrieved on 7th July, 2020 from www.unitednationseducationalsocialandculturalorganisationcovid-19.com
- United Nations (2002). Covid-19 Pandemic and education. Retrieved on June 4 2020 from [www.https://reporthub.org/desk nitednation.com.ster.box.com/s/izocnid](https://reporthub.org/desk/nitednation.com.ster.box.com/s/izocnid)