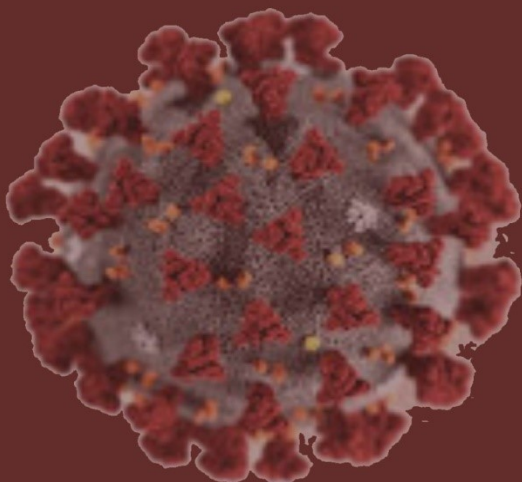


COVID-19 PANDEMIC, ICT and EDUCATION SYSTEM IN AFRICA: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Proceedings of the International
Conference of the Association
for the Promotion of African Studies
on the Impact of Covid-19 on Africa
and the Quest for Afrocentric Perspectives
17th September, 2020



Editors:
Ikechukwu Anthony Kanu
Chiugo C. Kanu
Ejikemeuwa J. O. Ndubisi

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DEDICATION

To all Frontline workers-living and dead.

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INTRODUCTION

Since December 2019, the Covid-19 virus has spread to nearly every continent in the world, and case numbers have continued to rise. There are authoritative reports from 211 countries and territories reporting several novel cases worldwide. Humanity will never forget December 2019 when the strange virus emerged. Since then, it threatens to become one of the most difficult tests faced by humanity in modern history, with a huge potentiality to take lives, overwhelm health systems, and trigger lasting geopolitical change.

With these developments of ill-health, deaths and restrictions of movements to curtail the spread of the virus, the consequence on the economy of Africa and Nigeria in particular would obviously be disastrous. This piece would focus on how COVID-19 has affected the Nigerian economy. It would further make suggestions on the way forward towards boosting the Nigerian economy.

The International Monetary Fund Report in 2020 observes that in the face of COVID-19 pandemic, the global economy faces its worst downturn since the Great Depression. Following the IMF, the Oxfam International in her 2020 report warned that half a billion people could be pushed into poverty as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. With particular reference to Africa, there are three major impacts that COVID-19 is already having. Each of the three impacts is very devastating.

1. COVID-19 has led to economic suffering in Africa, through loss of jobs and other incomes.
2. The situation is gradually dragging the African economy deeper and deeper into recession.
3. The financial and corporate sectors in Africa are beginning to suffer deterioration.

It is in the face of these impacts that scholars of the Association of the Promotion of African Studies have undertaken to study the Covid-19 pandemic from an African perspective and the to draw out the economic and health challenges on the African people. This piece, is a major contribution to knowledge not only relevant for scholars but also policy makers and None Governmental Organization workers.

AWARENESS AND PERCETION OF EDUCATORS IN ENUGU ZONE ON THE USE OF SOME ICT PLATFORMS: WHATSAPP, FACEBOOK AND ZOOM IN DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION ON COVID-19

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Abstract

COVID-19 pandemic has grossly affected life in all ramifications. For education in Nigeria, it has been brought to a halt. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is the difference. While measures are being set in place to re-strategize and re-adapt, it is pertinent to examine the use of ICT in the management of COVIV-19 pandemic. Experts found that physical distancing, regular and adequate hand washing (with water and soap, or hand sanitizer), and correct use of face masks are notable preventive means for the control.

Dissemination of information has only been made possible via the use of ICT platforms. This study examined the Awareness and Perception of Educators in Enugu Zone on the Use of Some ICT Platforms in this regard. ICT Platform Questionnaire (QICTPLA) of ten (10) items, face validated by three experts and trial - tested in Nsukka Zone, was used as instrument for data collection. Its reliability was found to be 0.88 using Cronbach Alpha from SPSS version 20. Multistage sampling technique was used from the 294 Government schools in Enugu State. Percentages (%) from MS Excel were used in analysing collected data. Awareness for the use of WhatsApp and Facebook in dissemination of information was 100%, 99.95%. For the use of zoom, awareness was 65%. The Educators' Perception on the use of WhatsApp, Facebook and zoom were respectively 89%, 72% and 49%. Challenges were poor electricity supply, high cost of data and poor ICT skills acquisition. Training of Principals was recommended so that fairly Physical school may resume soonest.

Keywords: State Educators, ICT platforms, COVID-19.

Introduction

Life as we used to know it has in almost all ramifications, changed. The year 2020 would forever be remembered with the mantra – “stay at home, stay safe”. The COVID-19 pandemic grossly affected life as we used to know it; the way we live. The range is endless, from education to economy, agriculture, security, practice of religion etc. Broken into parts, ‘COVID-19’ stands for Corona Virus 2019, which represents the year it was first identified. COVID-19 is a Public Health Emergency of international concern. It is caused by the virus SARS-CoV-2, also referred to as 2019-nCoV, a novel virus of the Corona family of viruses. It was traced to a seafood market in Wuhan, a small town in China.

Much is yet to be known about this novel disease. However, its effect has been felt wide over, globally. Initially, it was thought to be a primarily respiratory disease, but has been shown to be a multi-systemic disease, affecting virtually all systems in the body – respiratory, cardiovascular, neurological, gastrointestinal systems etc. For instance, cases of stroke have been reported in COVID-19, to mention but one.

The World Health Organization (WHO) and its agency in different countries and regions of the world such as Nigeria Center for Disease Control (NCDC) have played significant roles in helping us understand and manage this novel disease. It has been shown to affect all races, ages, genders, though with some observed variations in progression and severity.

It is with the observed data that led experts to finding that some measures can limit its spread; including but not restricted to physical distancing, regular and adequate hand washing (with water and soap, or hand sanitizer), and correct use of face masks. These are notable preventive means for the control. The WHO (2020) found that the disease spreads through droplets of saliva or discharge from the nose, coughing in an open place or inside one's palm. When an infected person touches a healthy person, spread can be on the increase. Therefore, preventive measures were taken to reduce physical contact. For instance, shaking of hands was put on a halt for the time being since prevention is better than cure.

One major landmark point in the 'winning' history against COVID-19 in Nigeria was shutting down some sectors of life, including shutting down physical schools. While this was a great winning stride against the virus, it largely affected life as we used to know it, especially as a people. It constituted a setback in every area of life.

For education at this time, in most parts of the world, particularly Nigeria, it was brought to a halt. However, this halt was largely physical. ICT (Information and Communication Technology) made the difference. While countries with the capacity took up alternative means of learning – largely online, countries like ours were at an absolute halt. ICT was the difference.

The role of ICT in the overall control of the COVID-19 pandemic cannot be overemphasized, both in the positive and negative lights. Information on COVID-19 were coming from many sources and dissemination of such information were made possible through the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in form of Social media – WhatsApp, Facebook, Zoom meetings etc. Authentic messages coming from the Federal ministry of health, Nigerian Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) and World Health Organization (WHO) were sent to Educators such as Principals of schools. The Educators on social media share such information to reach others that are on the platform. Conferences and workshops were organized via live video calls such as zoom, facebook, whatsapp, email, offline messages, etc. The Principals were instructed by the supervisors to download such social media platforms and other software in their smart phones for dissemination of information to students, staff and entire community. Preventive measures, actions needed and day-by-day situation of COVID-19 according to WHO (2020) are given in dashboard which presents daily counts of the virus. Confirmed number of cases, number recovered and death rates were reported on daily basis (NCDC, 2020). It is important to note that while these positive effects were laudably noted, the negative impacts are also felt. The total number of confirmed cases was seen to be on increase day by day, month by month. This in no small measure causes fear and panic among people, as no one wants to die.

ICT has many definitions. Writing on information and communication technology (ICT), Onah, Amoke and Nwafor (2018) indicated that ICT is a major instrument of change in education and educators explore such to enrich instruction. Teachers, students and the entire community at large regard information from Principals/State educators as reliable. Some common ICT platform common to them are WhatsApp, Facebook, Zoom.

Enugu state zonal educators are mainly secondary school principals and the members of the community regard information from these educators as coming from the right source, by being authentic and reliable. That is why it is said that principals represent governments in their respective schools (Onah, 2010). The way the

educators perceive COVID-19 can greatly influence the entire state. ICT skills acquired by the educators especially on COVID-19 issues can help a lot in dissemination of timely information, which may cause havoc when delayed. It is on this ground that the researchers found the percentage awareness and perception of educators in Enugu zone on the use of some ICT platforms: WhatsApp, Facebook and Zoom, in the dissemination of information on COVID-19.

Solution on this issue is called for as Onah and Onyebuchi (2018) stated that in ICT programme for positive leadership, a positive leader as a role model, is well informed and needs to inform others rightly. No wonder the national slogan by NTI (2020) for teachers is “Great Teacher, Great Nation”. Principals as both head teachers and state educators need to be aware of and perceive positively the precautions measures set in place to control the spread of COVID-19 by using WhatsApp, facebook and zoom to disseminate information to the entire populace entrusted in their care and hence this work. One may at this juncture ask: what are the preventive measures on COVID-19 sent across to educators and others to be disseminated across the nation to control the spread of the pandemic? From WhatsApp messages, Facebook and Zoom conferences emanating from recognized health departments, WHO, NCDC and Federal Ministry of Health, ten (10) paramount messages on prevention of COVID-19 measures include : Washing of Hand with water and soap regularly; Avoid body contact like shaking of Hands/hugging one another; Wearing Facemask covering nose and mouth which also allows breathing in a crowd; Using hand sanitizer when it is not possible to wash hands with soap and water ; Avoiding Crowd and touching of infected person/objects; Maintaining social distancing thereby avoiding clustered gathering; Washing used Facemasks/used Clothes before reusing; Eating correct diet according to one’s body system; Exercising one’s body while at Home and Staying at Home when it is not necessary for one to go out (NCDC, FMH, WHO; 2020). The above ten summarized measures were received from experts on different occasions. Receiving such information on COVID-19 and disseminating such messages were only made possible through ICT platforms due to lockdown which lead to closure of many physical

organizations. It, therefore, becomes pertinent to explore how zonal educators representing the entire state principals utilize the ICT platforms so that school can return to its normalcy after COVID-19 pandemic.

Problem of the Study

Staying at home and Stay safe is good because a dead person cannot acquire knowledge. One needs education for development and progress. Staying at home without making effort on how to resume school has a problem of its own. Learners need to be informed so as to inform others aright. It therefore becomes necessary to find out how the educators disseminate information from expert on COVID-19 so that measures can be taken to avoid being infected. When this is done, school can take its normal course.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to ascertain the awareness and perception of educators in Enugu zone on the use of some ICT platforms in dissemination of information on COVID-19. Specifically, the study sort to determine:

1. The awareness of educators on the use of: (a.) WhatsApp on dissemination of COVID-19 information. (b.) Facebook on dissemination of COVID-19 information (c.) Zoom on dissemination of COVID-19 information.
2. The perception of educators on the use of: (a.) WhatsApp on dissemination of COVID-19 information (b.) Facebook on dissemination of COVID-19 information. (c.) Zoom on dissemination of COVID-19 information.
3. The perception of educators on Challenges faced with the use of WhatsApp, Facebook and Zoom on dissemination of information on the ten measures of COVID-19 pandemic.
- 4.

Research Questions:

1. What are the awareness of educators on the use of: (a.) WhatsApp on dissemination on COVID-19 information? (b.) Facebook on dissemination of dissemination of COVID-19

- information? (c.) Zoom on dissemination of COVID-19 information?
2. What are the perception of educators on the use of : (a.) WhatsApp on dissemination of COVID-19 information? (b.) Facebook on dissemination of dissemination of COVID-19 information? (c.) Zoom on dissemination of COVID-19 information?
 3. What are the perception of educators on Challenges faced with the use of WhatsApp, Facebook and Zoom on dissemination of information on ten measures of COVID-19 pandemic?

Literature Review on Covid-19 And ICT

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) according to Onah, Amoke and Nwafor (2018) is a major instrument of change as it affects Education. Knowledge is said to be Power and COVID-19 knowledge on strategies to be safe is called for to avoid untimely death. Ten (10) notable COVID-19 preventive measures include: Regular washing of Hands with water and soap; Avoiding shaking of Hands; Wearing breathable Facemasks that properly covers nose and mouth; Using Hand sanitizers when it is not possible to wash with water and soap; Avoiding Hugging of one another; Avoiding Crowd and touching of infected persons/ objects; Maintaining social distancing thereby avoiding clustered gathering; Washing used Facemasks/used Clothes before reusing; Eating correct diet according to one's body system; Exercising one's body while at Home and Staying at Home when it is not paramount for one to go out (NCDC, FMH, WHO; 2020). Some of such messages include: *NCDC (2020; 14/05/2020) Most people with COVID-19 may not show any signs but can still spread the disease. Protect yourself: stay 2 meters away from the next person and use a mask. NCDC (2020; 19/05/2020) advises - As you go about work or business, wear a face mask, wash your hands with soap and water, stay at least 2 meters away from another person, Take responsibility. NCDC (2020; 21/05/2020) stated that COVID-19 can affect anyone. People of all races, ages and economic status have been infected. Let us take responsibility to reduce the risk of infection. According to NCDC (2020; 25/05/2020), COVID19 is NOT the same*

as malaria. Both may present with fever and both diseases can come at the same time. PCR test effectively detects COVID-19 in patients.

To show that some spread fake news during COVID-19 lockdown, NCDC (2020; 27/05/2020) stated that COVID-19 is REAL. So many of our health workers are risking their lives to protect the rest of us. Take responsibility, be supportive and stop spread of fake news. Also NCDC (2020; 03/06/2020), A facemask can spread disease if not handled properly. Take responsibility: wash your hands before and after wearing. Do not share and always wash before reusing.

NCDC (2020; 05/06/2020): it is important to remember that the COVID-19 cases reported by NCDC involve human beings like you. Do not wait to be a victim before taking action. Take responsibility today. NCDC (2020; 12/06/2020): Until scientists find a certified drug for COVID-19, let us all take responsibility by avoiding large gatherings to reduce the risk of being infected. NCDC (2020; 25/07/2020): COVID-19 spreads easily even by those showing no symptoms. When you hug, shake hands or share items with others, you risk being infected. Take responsibility. When there was ease of lockdown, the expert writes: NCDC (2020; 10/08/2020), Ease of lockdown does not mean that COVID-19 is over. Take responsibility, cover your nose/mouth with a mask, practice physical distancing and wash your hands often. Some of the messages sent by experts to educators also include: COVID-19 is real, stay safe.

Locking down of schools in the month of March and easing lockdown in August, 2020 may show sign of approaching reopening of schools and since it is still being reported that COVID-19 spread is on, it is necessary to prepare state educators on the best way to disseminate correct information to reduce the spread of the virus and also continue with normal school activities. It is also necessary to have a rethink on how information on COVID-19 spread were disseminated so as to make recommendations where necessary to enable timely and safe reopening of schools.

Conceptual/Theoretical Framework on ICT

Concept of ICT Platform: Without different ICT platforms no one will be aware when school is to be closed and when it is to be

reopened platform is a place for somebody to express one's opinion publicly ICT platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook and Zoom are mainly used to disseminate information on COVID-19. It involves the use of data in a network of computer. According to Onah and Obi (2016) computer networking involve using computer to communicate online in various ways such as email, social media platforms and the like. Each of the ICT platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook and Zoom perform similar function which is basically communication but some are preferred to others depending on what one wants. Zoom is preferred for meetings and conferences; WhatsApp number is restricted to fewer number of persons on a one-to-one bases while Facebook reach larger number of people. This is why Zoom is referred to as the leader in modern Enterprise video communications with an easy, reliable cloud platform for video webinars. While WhatsApp or Facebook videos covers only small number of audience, Zoom covers a larger number of participants where the presenter is viewed on the screen and heard by other participants provided video and audio facilities are on.

Methods

Research design used in this study was descriptive research design because educators ' opinions were sought on the use of WhatsApp, Facebook and zoom in disseminating expert's messages on COVID-19 pandemic. The population was made up 294 state educators. Multistage sampling techniques was used. The Enugu State's secondary school principals were categorized according to zones. There are six (6) education zones in the state namely: Agbani, Awgu, Enugu, Nsukka, Obollo-Afor and Udi zone with respective population of 45, 55, 31, 60, 49 and 54. Total for the entire State is therefore 294 (Ekete, 2020). Enugu zone was purposely selected for the study because of the caliber of its principals who are outspoken and can effectively represent the entire state. Nsukka zone, used for pilot test, was randomly selected from the remaining five zones before the actual study using balloting where one of the two research assistant picked yes for Nsukka zone. A structured questionnaire bearing the ten (10) items on preventive COVID-19 measures and also

Ten Challenges encountered in using the stated ICT platforms are included in Information and Communication Technology Questionnaire (QICTPLA). The QICTPLA was used as instrument to collect data. Three experts ascertained the validity of the instrument which was trial tested and its reliability computed as 0.88 using Cronbach alpha. The questionnaire had Sections A, B and C. Four responses for each Section in a 4- point scale of Strongly Aware (4), Aware (3), Not Aware (2) and Strongly not aware(1) for A; Very High Perception(4), High Perception (3) , Low Perception (2) and Very Low Perception(1) for B. Strongly agree (4), Agree (3), Disagree (2), Strongly disagree (1) for part C. For each Section, Average of 2.5 (1+4/2) or 5/2 which corresponds to ½ of 100 shows agreement in each case while below 2.5 or below 50% shows disagreement or low perception as the case may be. Therefore, Average of 2.5 or 50% and above shows High Awareness, High Perception or High Challenge while below shows Low Awareness, Low Perception or Low Challenge on the ICT platform used.

Results

Research Question 1: What are the awareness of educators on the use of: (a.) WhatsApp on dissemination of COVID-19 information? (b.) Facebook on dissemination of dissemination of COVID-19 information? (c.) Zoom on dissemination of COVID-19 information?

TABLE 1

The awareness of educators on the use of: (a.) WhatsApp on dissemination of COVID-19 information. (b.) Facebook on dissemination of COVID-19 information. (c.) Zoom on dissemination of COVID-19 information.

	WHATSAPP			FACEBOOK			ZOOM		
Average	Percentage%	Remark	Average	Percentage%	Remark	Average	Percentage%	Remark	
4.00	100%	High A	3.99	99.75%	High A	2.60	65%	High A	

Table 1 above shows high Awareness of use of WhatsApp, Facebook

and Zoom on dissemination of COVID-19 information as seen in the Percentage Awareness of 100%, 99.75% and 65%.

Research Question 2: What are the perception of educators on the use of : (a.) WhatsApp on dissemination of COVID-19 information? (b.) Facebook on dissemination of dissemination of COVID-19 information? (c.) Zoom on dissemination of COVID-19 information?

Table 2

The perception of educators on the use of: (a.) WhatsApp on dissemination of COVID-19 information (b.) Facebook on dissemination of COVID-19 information. (c) Zoom on dissemination of COVID-19 information.

	WHATSAPP			FACEBOOK			ZOOM		
Average	Percentage%	Remark	Average	Percentage%	Remark	Average	Percentage%	Remark	
3.40	85%	High P	2.88	72%	High P	1.96	49%	Low P	

Table 2 above shows high Perception of use of WhatsApp and Facebook on dissemination of COVID-19 information as seen in the Percentage Perception of 85% and 72%. For Zoom, the Percentage Perception is 49% which is Low.

Research Question 3: What are the perception of educators on Challenges faced with the use of WhatsApp, Facebook and Zoom on dissemination of information on ten measures of COVID- 19 pandemic?

Table 3: The perception of educators on Challenges faced with the use of WhatsApp, Facebook and Zoom on dissemination of information on the ten measures of COVID-19 pandemic?

S/N	EDUCATORS' PERCEIVED CHALLENGES	Average	Percentage%	Remark
1	High cost of data for accessing the Internet.	1.80	45%	Low Chall.
2	Confusion on type of Mask to be worn to enable breathing,	3.44	86%	High Chall.
3	Inability to differentiate Online/Offline messages.	3.64	91%	High Chall.
4	Difficulties in avoiding some fearful messages.	3.16	79%	High Chall.
5	Fear of disseminating wrong Information.	3.24	81%	High Chall.
6	Poor knowledge of some WhatsApp terms in use.	2.88	72%	High Chall.
7	Poor knowledge of some Facebook terms in use.	3.12	78%	High Chall.
8	Poor knowledge of some Zoom terms in use.	3.32	83%	High Chall.
9	Poor ICT knowledge generally used in social media.	2.72	68%	High Chall.
10	Poor electricity supply which is always irregular.	3.80	95%	High Chall.

Table 3 above shows High Challenge (High Chall.) in nine (9) items. Item one (1) bearing High cost of data to stay online was not a High challenge by the principals as seen in the Low average response of 1.80 corresponding to 45% which is below 50%. Some teachers and community members may see it as a challenge.

Discussion of Findings

The findings as represented in Table 1 revealed that the Educators' awareness for the use of WhatsApp Facebook and Zoom were respectively 100%, 99.75% and 65%. These results generally show High awareness. This finding is in line with that of Ugwuanyi , Onah and Ude (2018) who found out that online applications are seen in secondary schools. The Principals who are the educators that responded are aware that WhatsApp, Facebook and zoom are used in the dissemination of information on COVID-19 pandemic.

The findings seen in table 2 revealed that the Educators' perception on the use of ICT platforms:

WhatsApp, Facebook and Zoom were not as high as the awareness. The results were respectively 85%, 72% and 49%. The perception on the use of zoom was low. This is a problem because it is what the educators perceive that they can disseminate very well. This is in line with the findings of Onah and Agomuo (2016) that some lecturers do not utilize some online packages. One may ask: what are their reasons for reduced percentage perception especially on zoom?

The result presented in Table 3 answered the question especially when one considers the ten (10) COVID-19 preventive measures and the ten(10) Challenges the Educators encountered on the use of the selected ICT platforms in the dissemination of any information received on COVID-19. Generally, most of the challenges were caused by poor ICT skills and lack of constant supply of electricity. These problems were in line with Onah (2015) which stated that both online and offline multimedia projection packages are useful in dissemination of information but the problem of light caused by inadequate power supply of electricity is a hindrance. According to Onah, Ude and Obe (2017), the use of computer in teaching and learning cannot be overemphasized for no one can cultivate effectively in a farm without farming implements. Technology had really revolutionized the world especially during this COVID-19 pandemic which is refusing to end completely.

Result presented in Table 3 show that the Educators encountered many challenges on the use of the stated ICT platforms while disseminating information on COVID-19 preventive measures.

This finding is in agreement with Laudon and Laudon (2001) that training and retraining of personnel in different computer areas are needed for effective administrative purposes and other areas of life endeavours. Item one(1) bearing high cost of data to stay online was not a High challenge by the principal as seen in the Low average response of 1.80 corresponding to 45% which is below 50%. Although this was not a problem for the Educators, some teachers and community members may see it as a challenge because of economic imbalance of Nigerian citizens especially those residing in Enugu State (Onah, Ugwuanyi, Okeke, Nworgu, Agwagah, Ugwuanyi, Obe, Nwoye and Okeke (2020).The main challenges therefore are on acquiring the ICT skills needed for the Educators and the entire populace in the state. This is in line with Onah (2015) that e-learning subsets such as CAI, CAL, in ICT learning resources are needed for development and progress in this 21st century Education. No effective teaching of any sort can succeed in this period of COVID-19 without ICT platforms experienced via social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook and Zoom.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, the researchers concluded that Awareness and Perception of Educators on the Use of ICT Platforms in dissemination of information on COVID-19 were generally high for WhatsApp and Facebook but Zoom perception is a problem that needs immediate solution. Educators need to disseminate timely information. This would help to limit spread of the virus, and hence, avoid premature death.

Zoom platform allows for interactive approach in this regard. It is important to improve knowledge, raise awareness and teach educators the use of the Zoom platform, for the effective dissemination of information, especially COVID-19 related information.

Recommendation

The researchers, based on the findings, recommend the following on COVID-19 preventive measures:

1. Educators need to undergo ICT skill acquisition Training as soon as possible, for one can only disseminate information based on prior knowledge, awareness and perception.
2. Alternatives to sources of electricity such as Inverters and Generators should be supplied to every secondary school with fuel stipend to ensure full power outlet, which will in turn enable principals who have been trained spread information using ICT.
3. Terms used in WhatsApp, Facebook and Zoom should be properly explained to the principals in an organized zoom conference.
5. People who disseminate false information in the internet on COVID-19 should be sanctioned.
6. Sufficient allowance and complete materials should be given to doctors, educators/teachers and also to nurses/healthcare officers to equip them properly.
7. All the above ten COVID-19 preventive measures are to be adopted by all and sundry and constant announcement be made in all the zones in the state so as to ensure that only credible information is sent across to all and sundry and also timely.

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COVID -19 AND HAND WASHING: THE IGBO CULTURE PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

The novel corona virus (covid-19) is a pandemic which was first reported by the officials in Wuhan City, China, in December, 2019. Since the outbreak, the pandemic has torched and ravaged almost all the countries of the world, including those of the African Continent. Hand washing has remained prominent amongst all the safety measures recommended by the World Health Organization, and other health institutions, to prevent Covid-19 infection. This paper recalls therefore, that hand washing, which is being preached presently as a basic safety measure, in the wake of Covid 19 pandemic, has been there, as part of the Igbo and African Cultural values, unfortunately, people have neglected this cultural good practice and waited for World Health Organization, UNICEF and other government agencies, to remind them, before they put it into practice, even when it is for their personal safety and protection. This paper contends that if the hand washing and cleanliness culture of the Igbo is adequately propagated, it will go a long way in protecting the people from diseases and untimely death. This paper will benefit the general public, especially teachers and care givers, at this period of covid 19 pandemic and always. Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) of Albert Bandura was adopted to ex- ray the culture of cleanliness and hand washing in Igbo culture, reasons for hand washing, the benefits and the state of hand washing in the present Igbo society. The

paper exposed numerous benefits of hand washing and general cleanliness, which include,- prevention of diseases, Covid 19 inclusive, and recommends the revitalization of the Igbo culture of hand washing and cleanliness, in such a way that people will be sensitized to take initiative of doing the right thing at the right time, instead of waiting for the government or the World Health Organization to remind them to do the needful.

Keywords: Hand washing, Cleanliness, Covid-19, Culture, Infectious diseases

Introduction:

The story about Covid-19 pandemic came into lime light at the later part of the year 2019. Since the outbreak, the pandemic has touched almost all the countries of the world, killing hundreds of thousands of the people.

The pandemic has adversely affected every facets of livelihood, economically, socially, religious. As part of the measures to contend the outbreak, many countries introduced and enforced some laws, rules and regulation like restriction of movements, total or partial lockdown orders, social and physical distancing, prohibition of social and religious gatherings, closure of inter-state boundaries, flight restrictions amongst other measures, whose violators were either prosecuted or sanctioned.

The World Health Organization and other health scientists of different countries of the world have been on their feet in their efforts to produce drugs and or vaccines to treat or prevent the spread of the virus. In the interim, hand washing with soap for at least 20secs, the use of face mask, alcohol based sanitizer avoidance of hand shake or close contact, covering the mouth with one's elbow while coughing and reporting every symptoms like persistent dry cough, fever, dry and sore throat, diarrhea etc., to the designated control agencies are some measures recommended by the World Health Organization and countries agencies for infectious disease control, as further measures to prevent the spread.

As a result of the ravages, lost of lives and economic shot down already caused by this pandemic, the world health organization, international donor agencies, countries, corporate bodies, groups, organizations, individuals and philanthropists have been assisting some countries, states and individuals through donations and supplies of medical equipments, drugs, food and other palliatives on humanitarian bases, as well as to further strengthen the ties that existed between those countries or organizations.

As at the time of this research, no solution in terms of care or preventive vaccine have been discovered to tackle the covid 19 pandemic, rather the number of the positive cases continues to rise in all over the countries of the world.

The First Human Case of Covid-19

The first human case of Covid 19, the disease caused by the novel corona virus causing Covid 19, subsequently named SARS-COV-2 was first reported by officials in Wuhan City, China in December, 2019. (<https://www.who.int/situation/reports.20/06/20>.)

COVID-19 Pandemic in Africa

The confirmation of the spread of Covid-19 pandemic in Africa was on the 14th February, 2020. The first case was confirmed in Egypt while in Sub-Saharan Africa, the first case was confirmed in Nigeria. The imported cases that were identified were mostly arrivals from the United States of America and Europe, instead of China where the virus was first heard of. There is fear that Africa with its underdeveloped health care systems may be under reporting the actual cases and impact of covid-19 in that continent.

COVID-19 Pandemic in Nigeria

Like other affected countries of the world, Nigeria contacted the world-wide corona virus pandemic (Covid-19) which is caused by a severe acute respiratory syndrome corona virus 2 (SARS-COV 2). The announcement of the first confirmed case was made on 27 February, 2020 when a positive test result was confirmed on an Italian Citizen in Lagos. On the 9th of March, 2020 another positive case of

Covid-19 was reported in Ewekoro, Ogun State, this time a citizen of Nigeria who had contact with the index case, the Italian. Starting from that point, corona virus has continued to spread in all the states in Nigeria, with a continued daily increase in numbers even as at the time of this report, (cn.m.wikipedia.org/wiki).

Recommended Safety Measures Against COVID-19

In their efforts to prevent the spread of the Covid-19 virus, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the National Central for disease control of different countries recommended some safety measures which were enforced on the people, for their respiratory safety.

Some of those measures include:

1. Regular hand washing with soap for at least 20 seconds, in a running water.
2. The use of alcohol based sanitizer.
3. Use of non-medical face masks covering for all persons in public places.
4. Practice of non-touch greetings, avoid handshake and hugs.
5. Maintain at least 2 meters (6 feet) physical distance between oneself and anyone who is sneezing or coughing.
6. Avoid crowded places such as open markets, crowded supermarkets and pharmacies.
7. Adhere to other national and state directives on the issue at hand. (<https://covid19.ncdc.gov.ng/faq>)

Hand washing has remained top on the list of the covid-19 precautionary measures hence the choice of this topic, in view of the writer's belief that hand washing if strictly observed, will go a long way in curtailing the spread of Covid-19. This is in line with the WHO advice to the public on Covid-19 based on scientific findings, as was last updated on 29 April, 2020, "...you can reduce your chance of being infected or spreading Covid-19 by taking some simple precautions – regularly and thoroughly clean your hands with an alcohol based hand rub or wash them with soap and water. Why? Washing your hands with soap and water or using alcohol based hand

rub kills viruses that may be on your hands...
(<https://www.who.int/diseases/advice/fa>)

The Concept of Hand Washing

One of the easiest ways of keeping the children healthy in their places of birth, home, school, hospital and their place of development is hand washing with soap.

The presence of illness necessitates the quest for medication. Access to medical information is instrumental to people's change of certain behavior in order to prevent sickness. Hand washing judging from its benefits should be part of people's behavior and way of life that is to say, a daily routine task.

According to UNICEF, "every four childhood deaths – some 1.4 million under age five globally result from diarrhea and pneumonia". This is more than AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis put together.

Sam Stevens, Opines, "...just hand washing with soap can reduce death rates from these diseases up to 65%; when people wash their hands in the appropriate manner and times, it can be more effective than medicine and vaccine".

In support of the above, Arjun Srinivasan of the United State Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) says, Anyone who is interested in the prevention of infections acquired in the hospital really needs to be passionate about hand hygiene...but for that to be truly possible, there should be proper information and awareness campaigns like "clean hands count" save lives, clean your hands by the center for disease control and world health organization respectively.

Washing hands thoroughly last for about 20 seconds only, costs little or nothing yet it helps prevent dangerous disease and saves lives. It helps in preventing those antibiotics resistant bacteria from spreading as well as reduces infectious diseases like Covid-19 in the society. (<https://www.sandoz.com/stories/wash...>)

The Global Hand Washing Day

The Global Hand Washing Partnership (GHP) is the organization that initiated the Global Hand washing Day in August, 2008, during the annual world water week in Stockholm, Sweden. This implies that the first global hand washing day, took place on 15th October, 2008 the date slated by the United Nations General Assembly.

The international year of sanitation was also marked in 2008, and the bodies and Agencies that funded the project included, FH1360 (a United State based nonprofit oriented human development organization) United States Centers for Disease Control/Prevention, Procter & Gamble, United Nations International Children Education Fund (UNICEF), Unilever, World Bank water and sanitation programme and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

Activities during the global hand washing day celebration among other things include messages concerning hand washing, like talk shops, posters and other street programmes or road walks in order to engage public in promoting hand washing, by reinforcing the messages. <https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/glob...>

Social Cognitive Theory (SCT)

The above theory discusses the influence of individual experiences, what others do and environmental situation on the health behavior of a person. The Social cognitive theory (SCT) started as Social Learning Theory, (SLT), and was propounded by Albert Bandora in 1960s. The theory metamorphosend into SCT in 1986 and states that learning occurs in a social context with a dynamic and reciprocal interaction of the person, environment and behavior.

The special characteristics of the social cognitive theory are its emphasis on social influence, external and internal social reinforcement. Social cognitive theory recognizes the special way in which persons acquire and maintain behavior. It takes into cognizance, an individual's past experience which determines the occurrence of the behavioral action.

The past experiences influence reinforcements, expectations and expectancies, all of which determine whether a person will engage in a specific behavior and the reasons why the person engages in that behavior.

Wayne, (2019) observed that many theories of behavior used in health promotion do not consider maintenance of behavior but rather focus on initiating behavior. This motion is wrong because in public health, maintenance of behavior is a more important goal than initiation of a behavior.

The goal of social cognitive theory therefore is to explain how people regulate their behavior through control and reinforcement to achieve goal-directed behavior that can be sustained overtime.

Social cognitive theory has been widely employed in health promotion with emphasis on the individual and the environment, the latter of which has become a major point of focus in the health promotional activities in recent times. (Wayne, W. L. 2019).

Hand washing as a behavior conforms with the ideals of social cognitive theory because of its relevance to health as well as being a cognitive and emotional behavior, which is prompted by some environmental factors.

According to behavioral theories, hand cleansing patterns are most likely to be established in the first 10 years of life. This established behavior subsequently influences the attitude to hand cleaning throughout life, with the practice of inherent hand hygiene, which reflects the instinctive need to remove dirt from the skin.

Worthy of consideration in this paper is the remarkable impact made by some cultural habits in relation to some health habits especially hand washing.

The Igbo Culture of Cleanliness and Hand Washing.

a. Cleanliness of the surroundings.

The Igbo of South Eastern Nigeria are well known for the cleanliness of their environment, hence the institution of the norm of road cleaning as their way of life. In the words of Osuji, (2009:149),

“Traditionally, road clearing is of general community concern... villagers organize themselves for weekly or

monthly clean up of village and market squares. During this period, adjoining roads and pathways which run into and through the market square are regularly cleared so as not to allow the areas to be overtaken by bushes and shrubs”.

In Igbo society family members as a matter of routine morning chores, engage in the sweeping of the rooms, the fire place (kitchen) and the entire compound before engaging in any other activities or stepping out of the compound. Personal hygiene, like washing the face and mouth in the morning, bathing, washing clothes, plates and cooking utensils are acquired by the children through informal education.

These as a matter of fact have been in practice over the years as well as become some of those cherished norms and values of the Igbo society, which go a long way in protecting the people from predisposing themselves to infectious and diseases, especially in the era of covid-19 pandemic.

Personal hygiene according to (WHO 2009) is a key component of human well-being regardless of religious, culture or place of origin. Human health related behavior however results from the influence of multiple factors affected by the environment, education and culture.

Hand Washing:

Hand washing/cleaning as a way of preventing the spread of diseases is clearly in harmony with the fundamental Igbo norm of *ikwọ* aka (hand washing). In Igbo traditional society, hands are rubbed with ash, rubbed vigorously and then washed and rinsed with water. In the absence of water, other substances like sand are used to rub the hands.

In most West African Countries, ancient traditions are applied in the practice of hand hygiene. Before anything passes through the lips, hands must be washed. Customarily, a bowl of water with special leaves is placed outside to enable the visitors wash their hands and faces before entering the house. (Health safety .jigsy.com. retrieved 13th September, 2020).

The above scenario also applies to Igbo Culture, in relation to hand washing, where hands must always be washed before putting anything to the mouth, hence the proverb. There is an Igbo proverb that says, “nwata kwọchaa aka,ya esoro ogaranya rie nri” (When a child washes his hand well, he or she dines with the wealthy). The real interpretation of this proverb is that a man’s or woman’s good conduct avails him or her, certain good privileges and positions in the society. Though *ikwọ* aka (hand washing) here is metaphorical and has a denotative meaning outside the literary meaning of hand washing, but for it to be used as a symbolic action in Igbo proverbs shows its recognition in Igbo life. Also, the act of providing water for visitors to wash their hands first, before further interaction, has been customary and remained in practice since the time of the Igbo forebears.

The Igbo ancestors recognized the hands as the most utilized parts of human body, which man uses to function in the environment. Hands are used to lift objects, touch animals as well as used for certain social interactions, like, shaking, hugging and patting. Unconsciously, one can touch and contact other harmful materials. To buttress the fact that hand washing has been part of the Igbo norms, especially when receiving a visitor, (Nzeako, (1965) reveals, “Ezeonyekachi summoned Ugonna and told her to get a calabash bowl and bring them some water for the hand-washing before they chewed kola. Ugonna brought them water and they washed their hands”. (www.columbia.edu>itcigbo.nzeako).

The above excerpt from “Chi ewere ehie jie (Night Has Fallen in the Afternoon), exposes the fact that hand washing has been in practice in Igbo culture from the time of their ancestors.

Kolanut hospitality in Igbo culture promotes hand washing. This is so because, observing regular prayer with Kola-nut, especially as visitors come, is a surest way of regular hand washing.

Hand washing can be practiced for the purpose of personal hygiene, ritual purpose, during ceremonies, and symbolic reasons in every life situations.

In Igbo Culture, the elders pour libations after washing their hands. They pour some wine or liquid on the floor, as well as drop

some quantity of food in a designated place, for the spirit and the forebears.

Hand washing as necessitated by dirty or contaminated hands. In most cultures, the concept of dirt is not only visual, but relates to a broad meaning which points to both interior and exterior purity.

In Igbo Culture, the norm of washing hands (as soon as one wakes up in the morning, points to the fact that during the night, when one is assumed to be between the land of the living and the dead, hands may have contacted some impurities, (spirits). The implication is that dirt can be invisible. Therefore, the concept of dirt does not refer only to situations where it is visible. ([http://www.adherents.com / Religious](http://www.adherents.com/Religious) accessed 26 /08/2020).

Another occasion where *ikwọ* aka (hand washing) in Igbo culture, is during the tradition marriage ceremony. A personal communication account reveals that in some part of Igbo community during traditional marriage, before an in-law's (the bride's family) could eat any food in their in-law's (the groom's family) place; they must put some cowry shells or coins, in a basin containing the water which is prepared for the in-law's to wash their hands. After hand washing, the parents of the bride will collect the money, and the water will be thrown away (Ezeji, 2020).

A philosophical saying in Igbo Language, "*Ikwọ* aka *tiere ọkụkọ akị* (washing hands to crack palm Kernel for the chicken), is an age long saying that is used to explain wasted efforts, yet it also exposes the place of hand washing as a reoccurring activity in Igbo culture.

Several moments in the traditional Igbo life are characterized by hand washing. Those moments include, during the early morning prayer, before libation, Kola-nut presentation, before eating, receiving a visitor, when one returns from one's daily business, and other moments.

Some hand washing in Igbo culture are for ritual purposes, hence the Igbo have both physical hand washing and spiritual hand washing, all geared towards achieving both physical and spiritual cleanliness and purity.

Most interestingly, the Igbo method of greeting, by joining their hand fan and walking stick three times, as an alternative to handshake, should be regarded as a precautionary measure put in place by the Igbo ancestors in order to avert the spread of diseases. The same also applies to the Igbo type of greeting where a woman genuflects before a man and the man in return pats her on the back with his hand fan, as an alternative to hugging or other closer contact.

Importance of Hand-Washing in Igbo Culture

The importance of hand washing in relation to public health and infectious diseases control cannot be overemphasized. Aigbiremolen, Abejeyali Ike, Momoh, lawal-luka, and Abah, (2017), assert.

Hand washing with soap and water is one of the most effective measures against infectious diseases. The practice is safe, cheap and not time consuming. Hand washing could be effectively adopted by any socio-economic class and by any community. The practice of hand washing is also culture sensitive and is generally acceptable across many population groups.

Over the years, hand washing has saved the traditional Igbo the problem of contacting diseases and defilement. From day break when an Igbo wake up from sleep, to evening when they go to sleep, they always engage in hand washing as they engage in different activities, using the hands at different times. Hand washing builds a sense of cleanliness, parity and undefilement in an average Igbo.

The Place of Hand Washing in the Present Day Igbo Cultural Life

Hand washing in Igbo life is a norm that is acquired and transferred from generation to generation through informal education. It is an experience that can be acquired from the immediate family, from the extended family, from kinship relations, as well as in social gatherings and interactions.

In the present Igbo cultural life, people still practice hand washing, at various occasions where they are needed. A question could arise from the above statement, as to why people will contact infectious diseases when they practice hand washing.

In the writer's opinion a greater number of people who practice hand washing in our local communities do it for either formality or for ritual sake, and as such the needed attention is not given to hand washing as a way of actually washing off dirt from the hands, with the aid of soap and sponge, where necessary.

A personal communication account exposes some slight differences between the usual Igbo form of hand washing, and that of the present day Covid19 prevention era of hand washing.

In the cultural setting, water is served in a bowl or calabash, and people wash their hands inside it. They may use soap or ash. More than one person may use a bowl of water to wash their hands before the water will be disposed. In the present day era of Covid19 pandemic, the hand washing technique recommended for all, is summarized thus "regular hand washing with soap, for at least 20 Secs in running water (Chukwu, 2020 P.C). This system of hand washing makes little or no difference from the way hands are washed in Igbo culture. What matters is that the consciousness for hand washing has been raised in the minds of the people, right from birth, and not just at the wake of Covid19 pandemic.

Summary and Conclusion

Covid19 is a pandemic that has claimed so many lives in all parts of the world. The World Health Organization (WHO) the centre for diseases control of various countries and other humanitarian agencies across the globe have made efforts, and are still making efforts, at the time of this work, to profer solution to this problem.

One of the key recommendations given by health experts, as a means of preventing the contraction and spread of the virus is hand washing. Before the time of this work, World Health Organization, UNICEF and other Agencies have been sensitizing the world about the importance of hand washing, in the prevention of diseases, hence they set aside the 15th day of October, every year, as the Global Hand-washing Day.

Igbo culture, the culture of the Igbo of South Eastern Nigeria, already have the norm of hand washing which they practice on several occasion in their daily activities.

This paper therefore is of the contention that the traditional Igbo society stands a better chance of survival and protection against Covid19, since they already practice the act of hand washing, which is one of the outstanding preventive measures against contacting the virus.

Recommendations

1. People of other cultures of the world should imbibe the Igbo cultural practice of hand washing, as a way of preventing the spread of Covid19, and other infectious diseases.
2. Hand washing should be practiced purposefully in line with the guidelines provided by the relevant authorities, and no longer as a formality.
3. Parents and Care-givers should as a matter of urgent importance, teach their children and wards the habit of regular hand washing, as a way of helping them to acquire and embrace the behavior right from childhood.
4. Hand washing should be seen as a personal thing and as such, people should not wait for the government or health officers to remind them of it, before they do the needful.
5. Water supply should top the list of government programmers and project, to enable the people access water for the regular hand washing.

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COVID-19 CRISES AND A SEARCH FOR AFROCENTRIC LEADERSHIP IN AFRICA: USING RELIGIOUS VALUES TO CHECKMATE HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES

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Abstract

The common cry from the African Continent is that of poor governance rooted in gross abuse of human rights. Good governance and religious values are fundamental factors for development and sustainability in the quest for a prosperous Nation such as Africa. The primary purpose of this paper is to underscore the importance of religious values in promoting good governance and peace in this age of COVID- 19, as well as to checkmate human rights abuses. The paper argues that African and religious values are prerequisites to good governance and often used to checkmate bad governance. It suggests that human rights abuses; and violence; have come about largely as a result of frequent leadership change, lack of African ideology, policy reversal and weak institutional patterns. The study adopts systematic and descriptive methodological approach of enquiry in presenting a framework for the study. To achieve the aim of this study, qualitative data were generated and collected from published and unpublished literature and analyzed accordingly. Using structural conflict theories the researcher argues for how it affects religion and COVID-19 crises that leads to the use of religious values to checkmate the polity (Government). The paper also

examines the nexus between corona virus pandemic lockdown; violations of human rights and religious values. Hence, the decline in African moral and religious values during the periods of the lockdown and this weakened the system of governance. The paper lays emphasis on COVID- 19 crises, religious values, governance and abuse of human rights in some selected African countries. The paper observes that for African countries to overcome the COVID- 19 crises; Afrocentric leadership governance is key, proper utilization of the religious values in the Country. The paper concludes that religious values is not the only factor to use to checkmate human rights abuses and only resources that have maximum empathy for the people can be relevant to the qualitative movement of African countries from COVID- 19 crises.

Keywords: COVID- 19 Crises, Afrocentric leadership, Religious Values, Fundamental Human Rights

Introduction

The paper is a critical examination of the nexus between corona virus pandemic lockdown; violations of human rights and religious values. Indeed, the common cry from the African Continent is that of poor governance rooted in gross abuse of fundamental human rights. African and religious values are fundamental factors for development and sustainability in the quest for a prosperous Nation such as Africa. The primary purpose of this paper is to underscore the importance of religious values in promoting good governance and peace in this age of COVID- 19, as well as to checkmate human rights abuses. Using a systematic and descriptive methodological approach of enquiry in presenting a framework for the study and to achieve the aim of this study, qualitative data were generated and collected from published and unpublished literature and analyzed accordingly. Using structural conflict theories the researcher argues for how it affects religion and COVID- 19 crises that leads to the use of religious values to

checkmate the polity (Government). The paper argues that Afrocentric leadership and religious values are prerequisites to good governance and often used to checkmate bad governance. It suggests that human rights abuses; and violence; have come about largely as a result of bad governance, crises and frequent leadership change, lack of African ideology, policy reversal and weak institutional patterns.

Governance is a people to people movement. It is a vibrant interaction between people, between structures, processes that support the exercise of legitimate authority in provision of sound leadership, direction, oversight, and control of an entity in order to ensure that its intention and purpose is achieved, and that there is proper accounting for the conduct of its affairs, the use of its resources, and the results of its actions. Good governance needs “goals” (cooperative endeavor) effort to realize its objectives. It is a proposition. Although there is no ‘one size-fit all’ solution to governance, however it must be a “Good” endeavor, which means all:- the government, the private sector, chamber of commerce and all stakeholders have to participate, respond and contribute positively. Good governance may be defined as the running of the affairs of government in positive and progressive manners beneficial to the governed, and which delivers the public goods (Gaya, 2006).

Bad governance has implication or effect on the economic growth, increase corruption and sands the wheels of development in our society and the world at large. According to Jespersen (1992), Africa performed well in the early years of its independence, but failed its performance tests Post 1973 as the region is now characterized by low growth rates, declining agricultural production, stagnating manufacturing, rising imports, and rapidly expanding external debts. The region has had many coups, civil unrests, violations of fundamental human rights, ethnic violence; and widespread bureaucratic corruption alongside administrative inefficiency, and institutional ineptitude or outright failure. Kuka (2018) analyzed this and said:

We have no comprehensive history of the civil war. We have no exhaustive history of the various coups that took place in our country. We have no complete narrative of the history of

political formations and culture in Nigeria. Every phase of our recorded national history is a mish-mash of half-truths, stratagems, and incomplete stories, drawn from rumor, allegations, and outright lies fed to the public, as well as of course the fact that each of us sees reality from our diverse perspectives. Indeed, as Napoleon Bonaparte stated, “History is a set of lies agreed upon” (p. 2).

To examine the extent of bad governance, we assume that leaders in some of our countries today still holds discretionary power in their rule and implementation of public policies that they have the ability to extract economic rents. They also control all relevant branches of their economy- civil service, electoral commission, judiciary, media, security forces, and the central bank (Ayittey, 2012). Bad governance results to huge loss in economic growth, records of human rights abuses. And not only that, it also affects the human resources, the human ingenuity and the personality of the citizens. Bad governance and corruption deter investment, waste national and the continent resources and forebode allocation and increase insecurity. The poor suffers most from the consequences of bad governance and violations of fundamental human rights during corona virus lockdowns.

Therefore, paper recommended that we do not know how bad the increasing spread of COVID-19 will be in Nigeria and in Africa in the coming months if not years. But what we do know is that whatever happens to the economy at the height of the crisis and whatever damage is done, would show that we have to use this crisis as an opportunity to reconstruct the country and the continent politically and its economy. The Afrocentric leadership mentality should be intensifying for critical thinking and positive movement of the African States particularly the African traditional medicine.

Corona Virus Crises (COVID-19)

The friction arising from actual or perceived differences or incompatibilities is said to be conflict. According to Corti et al. (2020) coronavirus (COVID-19) has continued to spread across the world following the first infections in Wuhan city in Hubei province of

China in December 2019. As of 9th May 2020, over 280,000 coronavirus-related deaths had been registered globally, with more than 4 million laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 cases, portraying not only the alarming levels of spread of the virus, but also its severity [World Health Organization, 2020] (P. 1). The World Health Organization (WHO) declared COVID-19 a global pandemic on the 11th March 2020. Given its geographical spread, the pandemic is projected to have devastating effects on the global economy. According to the IMF global economic Outlook, the world economy is projected to contract sharply by 3% in 2020 as a result of the pandemic. In the same vein, the Sub-Saharan African economy is expected to contract by 1.6%. UNECA (2020) observed that African businesses are being severely impacted by the COVID-19 crises. Four out of five businesses in Africa are significantly affected by the current COVID-19 crisis, rating the effect as highly severe or severe. The proportion of severity is relatively uniform across the size of enterprises and the sector of business (p. 2).

Brief History of Coronavirus in Africa

Coronavirus, or the disease which it causes ‘COVID-19’, originated from the Wuhan Province of China in December 2019. It began spreading rapidly in China and to other parts of the world through the movement of people. The spread of COVID-19 affected economic activities in China, and in February, the Chinese economy came to a halt. China is a major exporter of commodities to African countries, and therefore, a major economic contraction in China will severely affect businesses and companies in African countries. Many African countries have been affected by coronavirus and the number of confirmed cases have been rising rapidly with a particularly severe situation in South Africa (2,003 cases), Egypt (1,794 cases), Algeria (1,761 cases), Morocco (1,448 cases) and Cameroon (803 cases) on the 11th of April in 2020 (Ozili, 2020).

Again Ozili (2020) argued that prior to the COVID-19 pandemic most of the healthcare infrastructure in African countries had deteriorated. Currently, in Africa, 65% of health care expenses are made from out-of-pocket expenditure compared to Europe where the

national and regional authorities are responsible for the health policies and expenditure. During the COVID-19 pandemic, despite the quarantine and other measures adopted to stop the spread of COVID-19 in African countries, the number of infected cases continued to increase significantly. This situation mounted unprecedented pressure on the public health systems in many African countries. Some private hospitals refused to admit infected patients while public hospitals exceeded their capacity. “This pressured the government to build isolation centers in large open fields around the country; notably, football stadiums were converted to isolation centers in countries like Cameroun and Nigeria” (p. 2).

In African countries where good health care systems exist, the governments had to scale-up intensive care units and provide more resources for hospitals and health care systems to control the spread of COVID-19 disease. Some restrictive measures that were imposed to control the spread of the disease include restricting non-essential activities, closing schools and universities, encouraging people to stay home, the lockdown of entire cities, requiring essential businesses to run skeletal operations and employees should work from home. These measures inevitably affected economic activities in African countries, to which economic policy both fiscal and monetary policies had to be used to mitigate the negative effect on the economy. Many African countries deployed the national budget and Central bank’s support in developing policies to mitigate the health and economic crises. This means that African countries used broad fiscal policies or large government spending to control the spread of coronavirus and the resulting economic crises that followed. In sum, the responses in African countries were country-specific because African countries were not closely intertwined (Corti., et al 2020).

Structural Conflict Theory

The structural conflict theory has two main sub-orientations; one is the radical structural theory represented by the Marxist dialectical school with exponents like Marx and Engels, V.I Lemn and others. Two is the liberal structuralism represented by Ross (1993), Sear borough (1998) and the famous work John Galtung (1990) on

structural violence. It is also sometime similar transformative theory which addresses the reactions of individuals groups, cultures, institutions and societies to change. It further sees incompatible interest based on competition for resources, which in most cases are assumed to be source, as being responsible for social conflicts (Collier, 2000).

Afrocentricity/Afrocentric Leadership

Afrocentrism: This concept means African centeredness, does not violently confront any person or people but is a resolute attempt to put the records right, it is about placing African people within their own historical framework. It is a demand that the contribution of Africans in all areas of civilization be reflected in world history (Onyewueyi, 1993).

Afrocentricity: “Afrocentricity” is a philosophical perspective associated with the discovery, location and actualizing of African agency within the context of history and culture Asante (2003) by Agency he meant attitude towards action originating in African Experiences. He further stressed that, “Afrocentricity” is a revolutionary idea that tends to study ideas, concepts, events and political and economic processes from a view point of the “black people”. It enthrones the centrality of the Africa that is the blacks and values are expressed in highest form of African culture, and it activates consciousness as a functional aspect of any revolutionary approach to phenomenon. Afrocentricity also known as Afrocentrism is seen as a shift in thinking capacity proposed as a constructional adjustment to black disorientation, dementedness and lack of agency. Thus the central question is Afrocentricity is what is natural; resources would occur in relationships, African values, attitude towards environment, Kingship pattern and historical pattern for African people if there had not been intervention of colonialism or slavery (Asante, 2003).

Thus, Afrocentrists tend to assure that all relationships are based on centres and margins, and this then means that until black people begin to see themselves as centred (Superior and significant), it

is then they will see themselves as agents, actors, manufacturers and participators, rather than marginal (Molefi, 1999).

It is impossible to discuss Afrocentricity without dealing with Eurocentrism, it acknowledges eurocentrism only as one voice among the other voice not as a Universal perspective in understanding reality. And that is why Asante, a radical Afrocentist voiced his fulfillment “African people for 300 years have lived on the intellectual terms of European. The African perspective has finally come to dinner”, accordingly he (Molefe Asante) sees Eurocentrism as a complete dislocation, self-alienation, disorientation and misinformation of the Afroamericans (p. 42).

However, the European colonialist experiences left Africa with two main experiences, namely the denial of African identity and the imposition of Western thought and cultural realities and perspectives, what is today referred to as colonial mentality away even in leadership, and Africans took to denying and rejecting their intellectual and cultural prowess, thus those who got trapped in Europe and American during slave trade were constantly made to develop low-self Esteem (Chukwuokolo, 2010).

Africaness: “We are not Africans because we are born in Africa; we are Africans because Africa is born in us”. This was a statement by Chester Higgins Jnr (2011), a pan-Africanist advocating for the reconstruction of the indigenous African heritage. “Africaness” is a concept with no definite definition. According to Nkrumah (2005), he posited that African communities are increasingly being dismembered by the everyday practices of Euro colonial and Eurocentric institutions that require the derailing of Africa from its indigenous African culture and customs, social values and religious values. These statements are indicative of the nature of the pre-existing African society and the paradigm shift infused by colonialism, and the implication of colonialism viz-a-viz neo-colonialism on Africa. Rodney (1972), affirmed that:

“How Europe Underdeveloped Africa” is a concept that explains the typical African representations (which includes socio-cultural, economic, political configurations and influenced African and religious values) that depicts the typical African society in its traditional state before colonialism. He argued that Africa had its own suitable societal frameworks (Africaness) which was suitable for Africa’s development in contrast to the exploitative mechanisms introduced to the Africa’s domain by Europe, which eroded the “Africaness” of Africa, thus submerging Africa into perpetual impoverishment (p. 22).

Eurocentrism: Is a set of beliefs that places Europe at the centre and relegating all other ways of thinking or abilities to the periphery position by setting standards in which reality can be tested (Shohat and Stam, 1994).

General Characteristics of Afrocentricity as Well as the Practical Application of the Field- By Asante Molefi (1999)

There are **five** general characteristics of the Afrocentric method:

1. The Afrocentric method considers that no phenomena can be apprehended adequately without locating it first. Phenomena must be studied and analyzed in relationship to psychological time and space. This is the only way to investigate the complex inter-relationships of science and art, design and execution, creation and maintenance, generation and tradition, and other area’s passed by theory.
2. Afrocentric method considers phenomena to be diverse, dynamic and in motion and therefore it is necessary for a person to adequately note and record the location of the phenomena even in the mist of fluctuations.
3. Afrocentric method is a form of cultural criticism that examines etymological uses of words and terms in order to know the source of an author’s location. This allows us to intersect idea’s with actions and actions with idea’s on the basis of what is prerogative

and ineffective and what is creative and transformative at the Political and economic levels.

4. The Afrocentric method seeks to uncover the mask behind the rhetoric of powers, privileges and position in order to establish how principal myths create place.
5. Afrocentric methods locates the imaginative structure of a system of economics, bureau of politics, policy of government, expression of cultural form of the attitude, direction and language of the phenomenon. This could be text, institution, personality, interaction or event.

Leadership

The concept of leadership is conceptualized in education to mean the use of power, authority and influence in the process of managing human and material resources at work in order to produce result. In other words, leadership is about the use of strategies with the view to arrange human, material and financial resources to achieve organizational goals. Again, in education a leader is expected to utilize manpower and material resources in school to achieve the school objectives (Agada, 2018).

The Practice of Religious Values

The concept or term “value” is exposed in different life situations as significant in fulfilling our mental, emotional, spiritual or practical requirement. It may also simply be described as that which we find good or meaningful. It is very common to comment on the value of things that one prefers or likes and for which one may make conscious effort to acquire. But as human beings we are particularly struck by the values which we discerned in human relationships or in men’s actions and behavior.

Therefore, ‘value’ is a concept which is widely applied in man’s life. In view of the variety and diversity of human life, the concept cannot be easily explained. Therefore, religious values reflects the beliefs, practices and frameworks which a community or religious adherent partakes in. Most of these

values originated sacred scriptures of each respective religion or faith (Roubickez, as cited in Dajwan, 2018, 12).

Values are precepts, beliefs, moral and spiritual principles and standard criteria of behavior/conduct which determine how people of a society, nation or state think and relate with one another. Examples are honesty, contentment, faithfulness, justices, tolerance, integrity, hard work, perseverance, and so on. The most important to remember is that “values are priceless, while valuables are priced” (E.g. of priced valuables are clothes, laptops and computers, houses, lands etc). In today’s fast paced competitive world, man seems to have compromised on his values, integrity and character, in a bid to earn, use and possess more and more of material wealth, as a result, we see rampant corruption, unlawful activities, inhuman behavior and immoral consumption, which is slowly breaking the very structure of our society, nation and the world (Dajwan, 2018).

Values are what a person or group of persons consider worth doing in order to make life worth living and pleasant. It is a standard or quality of way of living considered to be worthwhile by a person or a group of persons by which he or they judge what is good and worth doing. Roy puts it (as cited in Yamsat, 2012) “A value is a belief, a mission or a philosophy that is meaningful” to a person or a people. Thus, what we take as of value to us as individuals or as a group affects our work, attitude, our relational attitude to others, those in leadership positions or those not in leadership positions. According to Yamsat (2012) said,

“A value expresses the significance of things-great or small which man ascribes to matters related to a particular activity or experience or to his life in general and thus provides him with guidance for his behavior” (p. 10).

The Practice of Compassion and Love (Assessment of the Good Samaritan Luke 10:30-37)

African masses may not be literally lying as victims of armed robbery on the road to Jericho, but many of them are lying critically injured by COVID 19 crises, bad governance, violations of fundamental human rights with social injustice on the roads of socio-

economic and political life. This paper argues that for just peace to return in this African State, compassionate measures and love must be taken by the authorities concerned to radically address issues concerning those who are marginalized, rights violated, idle, and hungry, thereby feeding terrorists with manpower. If the authorities concerned will engage the idle hands that roam our streets and bring those on the margins of the society to the center through practical compassion and love, terrorists will do so by employing such idle hands to destroy our peace through human rights abuse (Pokol, as cited in Dajwan, 2020).

Pokol's affirm (as cited in Dajwan, 2020), one of the root causes of human rights abuse and social injustice in Nigeria is lack of compassion because some people are taking more than their share, while the majority is asked to perpetually beg in order to survive. He further stressed that "Poverty is the worst violence" quoting from the words of Mahatma Gandhi; and no almighty religio-political authority can deny its citizens basic needs and expects to have peace amidst corona virus pandemic. At least, it cannot deny them violence (corona virus experience) because violence or crisis is the only thing that everyone can access without hindrance. This paper also argues that all the security camouflaging as "peace-keepers" while worsening the security situation in the Nations through human rights violation in trying enforcement of COVID 19 lockdowns. Like in Nigeria they security tax forces should return to the barracks and allow Nigerian citizens sort out their disagreements through amicable practical compassion and the use of other religious values like love and forgiveness. This is often because the presence of the military tax force in the streets of Nigeria has worsened security challenges in the country especially collecting brides during the COVID 19 experience. According to Pokol (2019), how would one explain situations where citizens are attacked, human rights destroyed and killed in military uniforms while they should serve as protectors? It appears like some of them have turned into mercenaries taking sides instead of being neutral agents of peace promoters particularly during the pic of the pandemic. African States the Nigerian experience, citizens can no longer rely on the presence of military personnel for security,

protection and peace because they are no longer able to differentiate real military officers from fake ones since the same uniforms are being used to kill citizens (p. 444). 1Corinthians 13:3-13 (cf. John 13:1-20) Paul instructs on the practice of love.

The Practice of Integrity, Respect for Life against Violations of Human Life: We, as human beings, do not live alone; we live in groups or societies. We all have our own rights and duties in the society in which we live. The enjoyment of our rights may be denied or violated of other people's rights. We should therefore be careful and imbibe the values of tolerance or patient so that we do not deny anybody his rights. We should show concern for other people's rights so as to live peacefully in the context of pluralistic society as one community. Therefore, we intensify respect for life, polite and courteous in our behavior. Being polite and courteous shows our regard or respect for others rights Friday (Tokden, as cited in Dajwan, 2018).

Religious freedom a myth or reality: The Nigerian Experience

Let's dispense with a misconception: the Nigerian constitution guarantees freedom of worship as a basic right of citizens. Similarly, there is no specific institutionalized hindrance or barrier to the right to worship in any part of the Country that can be defined as a genuine barrier to freedom of worship. The issue therefore is not to attempt to located problems relating to the exercise of freedom of worship outside the laws of the land. Disputes over freedom of worship have basically not been about what the law provides or fails to provide but rather on practice! Freedoms of thought, conscience and religion or belief, including the rights to propagate, practice and teach are guaranteed. Citizens are protected from being compelled to receive religious instruction or to partake in religious ceremonies other than those to which they profess or subscribe.

What this suggests is that disputes over the application of the provisions on freedom of worship, to the extent that they exist in that form, are social and political, not legal. In a nation with multiple religious and social categories which are substantially

shaped by faith, it is important to ask a question: are our problems with co-existence of different faith failures of the law to protect the exercise of freedom of worship, or are they symptoms of deeper social problems which are predicated on political competition for resources and power? (Ekwunife, as cited in Dajwan, 2018).

It will be misleading to assume, however, that flashpoint do not exist in relations between major religious groups in a manner which will suggest that the right to freedom of worship has not been abridged. When faith boundaries converge around other issues which encourage competition for political power, control and accumulation and allocation of economic resources, faiths of competing groups are counted among victors or losers. Groups which prevail or predominate in particular geo-political formations often define parameters for allocation of resources and conduct in such a manner that minorities feel that their faith, among others, are being punished by the majority. It is often the failure of the state to mediate relations between groups identified by specific social demographics such as faith lead to stresses and conflict (Kanu, 2017).

There are also inevitable and endemic sources of friction which are part of the fabric of a multi-cultural and multi-religious nation. Our constitution is built outside a religious context, and specifically demands that the state shall not adopt a religion. It operates on the basis that Nigeria is a multi-religious nation, and on the basis of multiplicity of legal systems which have their roots in western, Islamic and traditional values. Conflicts arise around the degree to which the application of a type of legal system impacts on others, and the manner citizen's interprets their interests in changes in the dynamics of multiple legal systems. When many states in the North expanded the scope of Sharia, many Muslims welcomed it, and Christian groups worried over its likely impact over their lives. Significantly, not a single Christian has been deprived of his right to his faith since then, and it is arguable whether Muslims in the affected states became better Muslims as a result of the changes. More significantly, hundreds of lives were lost in riots and inter-religious conflicts because elites in both religions portrayed the development in

terms of major achievements or setbacks for their respective faith (Kanu, 2016).

The Concept of Human Right Abuse: Conceptual Review

According to Andrew and Scott (2001), the movement towards greater corporate social responsibility is now entering a phase where the parameters of this responsibility are being defined. In the field of human rights, there are growing expectations that corporations should do everything in their power to promote universal human rights standards, even in conflict situations where governance structures have broken down leading to often a times violent structural conflicts (p. 339).

Ruwa (2001) affirm that the Ten Commandments are the basis of the moral, civil and religious laws that human persons live by (Ex 34; Jn 13:13-34; 15:14-17). The human race is one. The fact of its oneness is not altered by secondary differences in the various families that compose the human race. The whole human race has the same origin, the same nature, the same basic rights and duties and the same destiny {Heaven or Hell}. The whole humankind is united by the common fatherhood of God and by a common brotherhood of Christ. According to Ruwa (2001), one of the primary virtues of every human person is to exercise the virtue of justice, which means respect for the rights of others. The Church emphasizes that biblical teachings on human rights are an important aspect of the proclamation of the Gospel in ensuring that justice is triumphant (Mtt 12:20) close reference is (Mtt 7:12). As the prophet Isaiah puts it, “I love justice and hate oppression and crime” (Is 61:8). This is because the human person possesses rights that are conferred to them by God (p. 21).

Human rights are freedoms established by custom or international agreement that impose standards of conduct on all nations. Human rights are distinct from civil liberties, which are freedom established by law of a particular state and applied by that state in its own jurisdiction. The concept of human rights include the right to personal liberty and due process of law; freedom of thought; freedom of expression; freedom of religion; freedom of organization and movement to freedom from discrimination on the basis of race,

religion, age, language, sex, to basic education; to employment, and to possession of property. Human rights laws have been defined by international conventions by treaties, and organizations particularly, the United Nation. These laws prohibit practices such as torture, slavery, summary execution without trial, and arbitrary detention or exile. Human rights are a right which is believed to belong to every person. They are inherent, fundamental human rights. Human rights are about equality, justice leading to development as a result of social transformation and it is an inheritance (Churchill, as cited in Theresa, 2007).

The abuse of human rights refers to the maltreatment or pervasion of the fundamental human rights as enshrined in article 1 to 5 of the United Nations charter. Human rights advocates agreed that, sixty years after its issue, the universal declaration of human right is still more of a dream than reality that is to say it is still a myth. Violation/human right abuse exists in every part of the world. For instance, the amnesty international 2009 world report and other sources has showed that individuals are being tortured or abused in at least 81 countries, face unfair trials in at least 54 countries and restricted in their freedom of expression in at least 77 countries. Not only that, but women and children in particular are marginalized in numerous ways, the press not free in many countries and dissenters (Gideon, 2015).

The Dilemma of Bad Governance and Human Rights Abuses in Africa

The post-independence Africa, we assumed that leaders in some of the African countries hold discretionary power in their design and implementation of public policies and those they have the ability to extract economic rents. Additionally, they control all relevant branches of their economy – civil service; electoral commission, judiciary, media, security forces, and central bank (Ayittey, 2012). However, as soon as these countries gained independence post 1960s and 1970s, the struggle for political leadership and the desires to retain power for life became the overriding objectives of many African leaders. In post-independent Africa, it appears as if Africa reached its

threshold in the 1960s when it replaced the European colonialists with black neocolonialists that were more corrupt, despotic and they disregarded or discarded the checks and balances which existed during the colonial period (Ayittey, 2012).

According to Calderisi (2006), the persistent problems of inept leadership, institutional failure, and pandemic (e.g handling of corona virus resources for its fight in Africa) corruption in Africa, these problems intensified with the incursion of several thuggish dictatorial leaders upon gaining independence. In his words, “the simplest way to explain Africa’s predicament is that it has known good government” and that “no other continent has experienced such prolonged dictatorship and human rights abuse (p. 23).”

Leadership and Institutional Failure in Africa: The Foundation of Human Rights Abuse

Meredith (2006) opines that the first generation of African nationalist leaders also enjoyed great prestige and high honor. These include Ghana’s Kwame Nkrumah (1957-1966), Egypt’s Abdel Nasser (1956-1970), Senegal’s Leopold Senghor (1960-1980), Cote d’voire’s Houphouet-Boigny (1960-1993), Guinea’s Sekou Toure (1958-1984), Mali’s Modibo Keita (1960-1968), Togo’s Sylvanus Olympio (1958-1963), Kenya’s Jomo Kenyatta (1963-1978), Tanzania’s Julius Nyerere (1961-1985), Zambia’s Kenneth Kaunda (1964-1991), and Malawi’s Hastings Banda (1963-1994).

African leaders often acted in contempt of constitutional rules and agreements they had sworn to uphold to enhance their own power. Constitutions were either amended or rewritten or simply ignored.” These leaders succeeded in removing or ignoring the checks and balances, that existed pre-independence, because they preferred to rule not through constitutions or through state institutions like parliament but by exercising vast systems of patronage; and in the process, they wielded enormous power and authority which allowed them to subjugate all relevant institutions and prevent the necessary checks and balances common to good governance .As a result of their autocratic leadership, they helped lay the unstable foundation of bad governance and corruption felt in their economies. Today, corruption

remains unabated in Africa because of its weak or failed institutions cannot control the excesses of their dictators. Arguably, one can consider Africa as a continent built on an unstable foundation of bad governance and pandemic corruption (Meredith, 2006).

Dictatorship and Human Rights abuses

Dictatorship whether as in one man ruling for decades to be replaced by another man who is either a party loyal who could keep up the works of the former strong man. The real damage dictatorship governance could and has done to people is make them depend on the idea, one man, one family, or on political party (Her-Lao, 2011). Human rights abuses, particularly mass atrocity crimes, have been occurring in various intensities in Africa over a long period. Furthermore, these abuses and crimes have been occurring violently and have escalated in recent times. For example, gross human rights abuses and mass atrocity crimes have been committed repeatedly in most African countries include: torture; official impunity; rape; female genital mutilation; child abuse; trafficking in persons; use and recruitment of children in militias and other fighting forces; and unlawful killings of non-combatant civilians and sometimes combatants especially in Nigeria by Boko Haram, including aid workers and civil society activists (Oluwole, and Nicole, n.d).

Gideon (2015) in a submission said, various forms of human rights abuses and mass atrocity crimes have been committed in numerous African states, ranging from genocide and crimes against humanity to war crimes. Most notable of these crimes have been unlawful killings of civilians and aid workers (the targeting of humanitarian workers seems to be a new tendency of parties involved in conflict), the use and forceful recruitment of child soldiers, sexual violence against women and children.

General Assessment of Leadership: Implications of Bad Governance and Human Rights Abuse Durin Lockdowns in Some Selected African States

According to Ozili (2020), the corona virus pandemic which has affected the global economy has also affected the Africa economy

through spillovers to African countries. Many African countries has taken bold quarantine and lockdown measures which are not free from violations of human rights to control the spread of COVID-19 although this has come at a cost such as the collapse of health systems and a painful economic crisis or recession (p. 1). Therefore, the paper briefly examines some of the implications in some selected African countries as follows:

Nigeria: The implications of bad governance in the Nigerian experiences are that of corruption, abuse of human rights because some are threatened not to vote their candidate, mismanagement of resources, manipulation of the electoral process and not accountable and transparent. The Nigerian Government also needs to do more in the area of handling the crisis of Fulani herdsmen and Farmers because even in lockdowns there are issues of attacks. This is because it appears as if government has not given enough attention to this crisis. The fact that agricultural activities have increased in the country calls for strategies to check the deadly relationship causing violations of human rights that has come to exist between the Fulani and the Farmers (Pokol, 2019). Some women and girls were being abuse during the lockdowns either by their Landlords because they are not able to pay house rent and to have food on their tables. A 100 level student of the University of Jos Plateau state was killed by military a personnel who was trying to enforce COVID-19 lockdown rule.

According to Ozili (2020), the Nigerian experienced of COVID-19 is that of financial crisis. The economic downturn in Nigeria was triggered by a combination of declining oil price and spillovers from the COVID-19 outbreak, which not only led to a fall in the demand for oil products but also stopped economic activities from taking place when social distancing policies were enforced. The government responded to the crisis by providing financial assistance to possesses, not to households that were affected by the outbreak. The monetary authority adopted accommodative monetary policies and offered a targeted 3.5 trillion loan support to some sectors. These efforts should have prevented the economic crisis from occurring but it didn't. Economic agents refused to engage in economic activities for fear of contracting the COVID-19 disease that was spreading very fast

at the time. The paper discovered that the COVID-19 spillovers to Nigeria and the structural weakness in Nigeria's infrastructure that helped bring on the current economic crisis (p. 2). The great challenge is how can a government lockdown her citizens without providing for her? Bauchi State Governor said "I will not enforce lockdown to my citizens because my religion suggests as you lockdown a person in the house give him/her food".

Therefore, the paper also discovered that before the COVID-19 outbreak, there were major social problems in Nigeria which include human rights violation, child abandonment and abuse, armed robbery, homelessness, mental health problems, divorce, and problems of single parenting. Nigerian lack of social welfare program intensified the gravity of the COVID-19 crisis. These social problems can only be addressed with serious social welfare policy and program (Ahmed et al., 2017).

Uganda: COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown in Uganda has reduced business activity by more than 50 percentage points. This could be largely attributed to the corona virus containment measures such as transport restrictions, quarantine, social distancing and ban on weekly markets, which have hindered farmers access to input and output markets, thus undermining their productive capacities. Micro and small businesses reported experiencing a larger decline in businesses activity compared to medium and large firms (Mutegeki, as cited in Corti, 2020).

Zimbabwe: According to Collet (2020), the Zimbabwe experience of COVID-19 came to the Nation with their perennial economic and health challenges. Social distancing through lockdowns appeared to be the major strategy applied to "flatten the curve." COVID-19 laid bare the frailties in Zimbabwe, exemplified by dilapidated health care infrastructure, shortage of health professionals' personal protective equipment (PPE), and much more. Therefore, although the COVID-19 storm is ravaging the entire world, African countries such as Zimbabwe are in a different boat compared with that of China and other advanced economies said Buffin and Letzing in (p. 2).

Collect (2020), further stressed that in the case of Zimbabwe, COVID-19 arrived against a background of deteriorating health infrastructure and facilities and a worsening epidemiological profile. Morbidity and mortality trends showed that the population was still affected by infectious diseases such as HIV/AIDS, lung diseases and tuberculosis, diarrheal conditions including nutritional deficiencies, and non-communicable diseases such as diabetes CDC, JICA as in (Collet, 2020). Citizens and residents in Zimbabwe are supposed to seek health care along the four tiers starting with the primary level. However, the public health system has collapsed while private health care appears to be on life support at present. In contrast, Zimbabwe has one of the most admired education systems in Africa, which produces a wide range of skilled professionals including health care professionals, bio-medical scientists, and skilled humanities and social scientists (p. 3).

South Africa: In South Africa when decision makers responded to the COVID-19 crisis, the needs of “informal” traders and their important contribution to food security were clearly not considered. This reflects a lack of knowledge about the sector and entrenched negative attitudes towards it. Despite the high concentration of corporate ownership in the food and grocery sector in South Africa, especially when compared to other African countries, the “informal food sector” still accounts for 40 to 50% of sales and is worth around R360 of their operating budget and profits on local businesses from farmers, to local shops, and bars (Jacobs, as cited in Marc, 2020) that create safer and more hospitable public spaces.

On the 23rd March 2020, the President of South Africa announced a national lockdown effective from midnight on 26th March. Fresh produce traders lost all stock that they hadn't sold or eaten. As well as immediate challenges of poverty and hunger, it won't be easy for these businesses to start operating again once the lockdown is lifted, given the depletion of their capital. In terms of the regulations – passed under the Disaster Management Act, 2002 (Act No. 57 of 2002)-spaza shops were allowed to operate, but had to get permits. Therefore, despite this statements by a government minister,

which implied that only South African owned shops would be allowed to open, and confusion around the varied permitting systems, prevented many spaza shops from working. Some security forces that were either not well informed or took advantage of the situation, tried to extort bribes or close shops owned by non-citizens (Sizani, as cited in Marc, 2020). This is gross violations of fundamental human rights by the security forces.

Kenya: Marais, as cited in Caroline, and Loren, 2020) the Kenya experience of the COVID-19 crisis reveals both the reasons we have governments, and our reasons for fearing them. Without collective action we cannot save lives, but the brutality and repression exercised in the name of saving lives is disquieting. In Accra deaths by police have been reported, including a 13 year old boy shot dead by a stray bullet fired by police while enforcing the lockdown. In Durban's working-class Cato Manor township, South African police arrested twenty-nine women and their children. Their crime was sleeping outside and contravening the lockdown after local authorities ordered their eviction from their homes by (Socialist Revolutionary Workers Party, as cited in Caroline, and Loren, 2020). In fact, there are a lot of human rights violation during this coronavirus lockdowns which could have been averted by right thinking Afrocentric leadership not just copy and paste leadership (p. 4).

Conclusion

As the paper implies "COVID-19 crises and a search for Afrocentric leadership: using religious values to checkmate abuse of human rights in Africa". The paper explored the relevance of compassion and love, integrity and respect. Therefore, paper recommends that we do not know how bad the increasing spread of COVID-19 will be in Nigeria and in Africa in the coming months if not years. But what we do know is that whatever happens to the economy at the height of the crisis and whatever damage is done, would show that we have to use this crisis as an opportunity to reconstruct the country politically and its economy. Afrocentric

leadership mentality should be intensified for movement of African countries out of COVID-19.

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COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND THE ILLS OF NIGERIA'S EDUCATION SYSTEM: A HISTORICAL ANALYSIS

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Abstract

On the 27th of February 2020, the Federal Ministry of Health announced the confirmation of a Coronavirus disease (Covid-19) in Lagos, Nigeria. This was the first case to be reported in Nigeria since the beginning of the outbreak of the virus in China. The disease is caused by Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). Following, the confirmation of the index case and first death, the whole country was thrown into pandemonium. In a bid to curtail the spread of the virus, the Federal Government announced a total lockdown of the country for the initial period of fourteen (14) days which is believed to be the incubation period of the virus. What is the implication of the Covid-19 pandemic on our education system? What are the ills of the education sector before the outbreak? What are the effects of covid-19 pandemic on Nigerian students? Methodologically, the paper adopts the historical analysis approach while data was collected from both primary and secondary sources. The paper concludes that long term neglect of the education sector has overwhelmingly affected the system as a result of the shutdown occasioned by the corona virus pandemic.

Keywords: *Covid-19, Education system, History, Pandemic, Lockdown.*

Introduction

The Nigerian education system has been in a total mess in the recent times owing to the neglect of the sector by successive governments. The budgetary allocation for education in the country every year is always adjudged one of the poorest which does not help to ensure the development of the system. For instance, the budget for education from 2015 to 2020 is as follows; 2015: 392.2bn @ 7.74%, 2016: 369.6bn @ 6.10%, 2017: 550bn @ 7.03 %, 2018: 605.8 @ 7% 2019: 620.5bn @ 7.05%, and 2020: 691.07 @ 6.7%. (Vanguard, 2018, Premium times, 2019, Punch, 2020) Both the federal and state governments are always at loggerheads with academic institutions such as the Universities, Polytechnics and Colleges of education, secondary schools and research institutions which is the major causes of industrial actions in the education sector.

Due to the poor state of infrastructure in our educational institutions, there is mass exodus of Nigerians to foreign universities both in Africa, Asia and Europe where there is friendly learning environment. According to Uba Ifedigbo (2020), Nigerians who attend Nigerian universities are those who could not afford the fees for foreign studies. They are here because they have no option. The Nigerian school environment is harsh, uncondusive and unfriendly for learning because of decayed infrastructure occasioned by poor government funding of the education sector.

In this twenty first century, Nigerian higher institutions are still using white boards and marker to teach. In a class of about one hundred students, there is no projector, no public address system, no electricity and other e-learning facilities such as broadband Wireless Fidelity (WIFI) and networks for students to do online learning which is obtainable free of charge in other African and European institutions. The outbreak of the Coronavirus pandemic has exposed the ills of the Nigerian education system and government insensitivity towards education. There is no alternative to physical class learning as there is no facility for such. There is no government institution that was able

to successfully conduct online teaching. To cap it all, after the ease of nationwide lockdown and the opening of economic activities, schools were still closed simply because the government do not have value for education as other countries resumed full academic activities. Again, government could not afford facilities that will enhance total observance of the covid-19 protocol in schools such as enough classrooms space for social distancing of students, enough teaching staff to enhance shifting of periods to accommodate all students for lessons and protective equipment and isolation centres for emergency. The aim of this paper is to analyse the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemics and how it has exposed the weakness of the Nigerian education system. Thus the paper will give a brief account of the history of pandemics to which the coronavirus belongs. Analysis of the ills of the education system and its effects on the students will be made while conclusion and recommendation follows thereafter.

History of Pandemics

The history of pandemics is as old as the society itself. Pandemics are caused by virus and viruses exist in the society. Hence pandemics outbreak has occurred occasionally in human society even as humans try their best to pre-empt its outbreak or control its outbreak when it eventually occurs. Thus different pandemics have plagued human society in the past just as the novel Coronavirus that has brought the entire human race to a standstill with no available cure as we speak. Here we are going to explore some of the notable pandemics that gave serious concern to the world.

The Bubonic Plague

The reign of Justinian I, the emperor of the Byzantine Empire in the 6th century, was hampered by an outbreak of the Bubonic plague. Now known as the Plague of Justinian, this pandemic is thought to have killed between 30 million and 50 million people, perhaps equal to as much as half of the world's population at the time, (Wikipedia).

The dreaded Justinian plague (Bubonic) definitely happened, but researchers are still poring over the evidence as to just how bad it

was, about 1,500 years ago. The traditional narrative of this pandemic has it that trade largely ceased and the Empire was weakened, allowing other civilizations to reconquer previously Byzantine lands in the Middle East, Northern Africa, and parts of Asia. Justinian was in the process of reuniting the Eastern and Western halves of the Roman Empire when the plague hit, and that became the true end of that era. Ultimately, half of the world died, the Roman Empire was never united again, and the Dark Ages began.

Black Death (1347 - 1351)

In the period between 1347 and 1351, bubonic plague spread throughout Europe, killing approximately 25 million people. European population levels took over 200 years to return to their level from before 1347. It likely killed greater numbers in Asia, especially China, where it is thought to have originated. One of the results of the pandemic, known later as the Black Death, was the beginning of the decline of serfdom as so many people had died, that the survivors' standard of living actually increased. Workers had more work opportunities, and social mobility increased, while there was also a short-lived moratorium on warfare.

Culturally, the cataclysm prompted an increase in mysticism as so much suffering challenged the religious dominance of the Roman Catholic Church. Reactions to the plague also included an upsurge in bigotry and scapegoating, with more instances of heightened prejudice and even pogroms against minorities including Jews and Roma.

Smallpox (15th - 17th centuries)

Europeans introduced a number of new diseases when they first arrived in the continents of the Americas in 1492. One of these was smallpox, a contagious disease that kills around 30% of those infected. During this period, smallpox claimed the lives of approximately 20 million people, close to 90% of the population, in the Americas. The pandemic helped Europeans colonize and develop the newly vacated areas, forever altering the histories of the Americas, their European conquerors, and the global economy.

The exploitation of the mineral wealth of the "New World" in the form of silver and gold from Latin America, for example, led to massive inflation within the far-flung Spanish Empire. The great economic thinker John Maynard Keynes wrote in 1930 that this "price revolution" was a crucial turning point in the formation of modern capitalism (Bose, 2020).

Cholera (1961 to present)

The first cholera pandemic began in Jessore, India, and spread through most of the region and then to neighbouring areas. It was the first of seven (7) major cholera pandemics that have killed millions of people. A British physician named John Snow was said to have known some things about how to prevent it from spreading, and in 1854 stemmed the outbreak by isolating its source to a particular water pump in London's Soho neighbourhood.

The World Health Organization has called cholera "the forgotten pandemic" and said that its seventh outbreak, which began in 1961, continues to this day. (www.who.int). Cholera reportedly infects 1.3 million to 4 million people every year, with annual fatalities ranging from 21,000 to 143,000. As Cholera is caused by ingesting food or water contaminated with a certain bacteria, it overwhelmingly harms countries hampered by extreme wealth inequality and lack of social development. Cholera continues to change the world by hurting the parts of it that is least able to defend themselves, while richer countries barely worry about it.

Spanish Flu, or H1N1 (1918 - 1919) The Spanish Flu, also known as the "1918 influenza pandemic", was an outbreak of a H1N1 virus that infected around 500 million people, or a third of the world's population, in the early 21st century. The pandemic was responsible for killing over 50 million people globally. At the time of the outbreak, World War I was coming to an end and public health authorities had no or few official protocols in place for dealing with viral pandemics, which contributed to its large impact (CDC, 2020)

In the years to come, research into understanding how the pandemic happened and how it could have been prevented led to

improvements in public health and helped lessen the impact of similar outbreaks of flu-like viruses afterward.

Hong Kong Flu, or H3N2 (1968 - 1970)

Fifty years after the Spanish Flu, the world witnessed another influenza virus, H3N2, which spread around the globe. Estimates put the number of global fatalities at around one million people, about 100,000 of which were in the US. The 1968 pandemic was the third outbreak of influenza to occur in the 20th century, the other two being the Spanish Flu in 1918 and the Asian flu pandemic of 1957. It is believed that the virus responsible for the Asian flu evolved and re-emerged 10 years later into this so-called "Hong Kong flu," resulting in the H3N2 pandemic. The 21st century, though, has continued to witness influenza outbreaks. (WHO, 2020)

While not as deadly as the 1918 influenza outbreak, H3N2 was exceptionally contagious, with 500,000 people becoming infected within 2 weeks of the first reported case, in Hong Kong. The pandemic helped the global health community understand the vital role of vaccinations in preventing future outbreaks (www.who.int)

HIV/AIDS (1981- present)

The first known cases of HIV/AIDS were reported in 1981 but the disease continues to infect and kill people till today. Since 1981, 75 million people have had the HIV virus and approximately 32 million have died as a result (Dibie, 2013). As a sexually transmitted disease for which there is no cure, HIV/AIDS is a persistent epidemic that continues to impact millions of people every year. Despite the lack of a cure for AIDS, antiretroviral therapy medications can control HIV and slow its progress dramatically, allowing someone infected to live a long life.

The negative effects of HIV/AIDS on the global economy is still being studied, most especially in Africa, the continent which has the largest percentage of HIV/AIDS cases.

Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS)

The Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), is an illness caused by one of the 7 coronaviruses that can infect humans. In 2003, an outbreak that originated in the Guangdong province of China became a global pandemic as it rapidly spread to a total of 26 countries, infecting just over 8,000 people and killing 774 of them. According to Nassos Stylianou (2014), the world's worst Ebola outbreak began with one boy's death". Transmission of SARS-CoV is primarily from person to person. It appears to have occurred mainly during the second week of illness, which corresponds to the peak of virus excretion in respiratory secretions and stool, and when cases with severe disease start to deteriorate clinically (WHO, 2020)

The consequences of the 2003 SARS pandemic were largely limited due to an intense public health response by global authorities, including quarantining affected areas and isolating infected individuals. Scientists studying the new 2019 coronavirus have found that its genetic makeup is 86.9% identical to the SARS virus, and officials are now comparing the two to see if governments can successfully replicate any of the containment procedures from 2003. The SARS outbreak increased awareness about preventing viral disease transmission, particularly in Hong Kong, where public surfaces have been regularly sanitized and facemasks have become a common sight.

Ebola (2014-2016)

The Ebola virus, named after a river close to the initial outbreak, was limited in its range compared to most modern pandemics but incredibly deadly. It began in a small village in Guinea in 2014 and spread to a handful of neighbouring countries in West Africa. The virus killed 11,325 of the 28,600 infected people, with most cases occurring in Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone. Of the 8 Americans who contracted Ebola, one died, according to the Centre for Disease Control. The first case of EbolaVirus Disease in Nigeria was confirmed in Lagos on 23 July 2014 and spread to involve 20 laboratory-confirmed EVD cases. 8 of the confirmed cases of EVD in Nigeria eventually died (case fatality rate of 42.1%) and 12 were

nursed back to good health (NCDC, 2017). In Nigeria, the rapid control of the EVD was facilitated by the rapid detection of the index case, the comprehensive contact tracing measures and the isolation and treatment of the secondary cases. On October 20, 2014 Nigeria was declared free of EVD by the World Health Organization

Ebola is estimated to have cost a total of \$4.3 billion, with inbound investments dramatically dropping in the three countries of Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone. Like "the forgotten pandemics" of Cholera and Ebola most ravaged countries are least equipped to defend against it.

Coronavirus, or Covid-19 (2019 - present)

The ongoing outbreak of novel coronavirus, which causes a disease known as Covid-19, has revealed vulnerabilities in the global community's response to outbreaks of viruses. As of March 18, 2020, worldwide cases had surpassed 200,000, with more than 8,000 deaths. The vast majority of cases are in China. On March 11, the World Health Organization characterized the outbreak as a pandemic. (WHO, 2020)

Estimates indicate that Coronavirus will spread largely throughout the world and could eventually infect 40% to 70% of the global population. A study by The Australian National University estimates the coronavirus will cause millions of deaths and will register a hit to global GDP of \$2.4 trillion. (WHO, 2020).

The Centre for Disease Control (CDC) has recommended practicing social distancing and cancelling or postponing gatherings of more than 10 people, wearing of face masks, face shields, washing of hands and using hand sanitizers etc. Following this guideline, many countries, have ordered restaurants and bars to close dine-in service and offer take-out and delivery only while others ordered a total lockdown as a measure of preventing the spread of the virus.

In its early stages, the outbreak exposed vulnerabilities in the modern world's preparedness and ability to contain flu-like virus transmission, hinted at roughly a decade earlier during the outbreak of swine flu. But the damage to the world economy threaten the worst recession since the Great Depression or the "panics" of the 1800s,

depending on the scale of government responses. As at the time of writing this paper, confirmed coronavirus cases in the world is 29,386,463 with 19,943,453 deaths. In Africa the total number of cases is 1,359,869 and the total number of deaths is 32,788 while the total number of confirmed cases in Nigeria stands at 56,388 and death is 1,083 (NCDC, 2020, who.int, 2020).

Index Case of Covid-19 in Nigeria

On the 27th of February 2020, the Federal Ministry of Health confirmed the first Coronavirus disease (Covid-19) case in Lagos State, Nigeria. The index case was an Italian citizen who works in Nigeria but made a trip to Milan, Italy. On his return to Nigeria, on February 25th, based on some signs and symptoms he had, he was diagnosed and confirmed Covid-19 positive by the Virology Laboratory of the Lagos University Teaching Hospital, which was a part of the Laboratory Network of the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control. Following the confirmation, the Federal Government of Nigeria, through the Federal Ministry of Health and the Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) swiftly moved for contact tracing of the index case. According to the Minister of health, we have already started working to identify all the contacts of the patient, since he entered Nigeria (Osagie, 2020). He advised Nigerians to know that most people who become infected may experience only mild illness and recover easily, but it can be more severe in others, particularly the elderly and persons with other underlying chronic illnesses. All Nigerians should take care of their health and maintain hand and respiratory hygiene to protect themselves and others, including their own families (Osagie, 2020).

Henceforth, the government of Nigeria, through the Federal Ministry of Health started strengthening measures to ensure an outbreak in Nigeria is controlled and contained as quickly as possible. The Multi-sectorial Coronavirus Preparedness Group led by the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) immediately activated its national Emergency Operation Centres to respond to this case and implement firm control measures. Isolation centres were built,

laboratory testing centres started to be equipped in readiness to contain the spread.

It should be noted that before the outbreak, that Nigeria has no standard laboratory that can boast of detecting any infection outbreak on its own without getting help from outside or treat infections of high profile such as the novel Coronavirus as a result of government neglect of the health sector while patronizing foreign hospitals such as ones in the U.K, U.S and India. The centre where Ebola disease were treated became a shadow of itself after Nigeria was declared an Ebola free country in 2014. *This shows how vulnerable and weak our public health infrastructure is*, (Health Commissioner, in Otu, 2017). The government of Nigeria in utter neglect of the health sector abandoned its responsibility of protecting the lives of its citizens by providing and upgrading its health facilities, rather the leaders seek medical tourism outside the shores of Nigeria leaving those who cannot afford foreign treatment to their own fate.

Covid-19 and Nationwide Lockdown

Following the confirmation of the index case, the country was thrown into panic as to what to do to contain the virus and its spread. There were calls by Nigerians for the closure of our international boarder both sea and air as one of the most effective ways of containing the virus, but the Federal Government of Nigeria did not obey the clarion call. People were still travelling out of the country and coming in. The likes of late Abba Kyari, Atiku's son, and others who came back from foreign trips did not observe the fourteen days self-isolation as given by the Ministry of health. (Punch newspaper, 2020) Rather they were seen in the public attending meetings and other social gathering until they developed symptoms and were diagnosed. Eventually they were confirmed positive and that was when it dawned on the Federal Government that Coronavirus is not a joke. The last straw that broke the Carmel's back was the death of Mr. Suleiman Achimugu, a former managing director of the Petroleum Products Marketing Company (PPMC), on Monday 23rd March 2020 as announced by the National Centre for Disease Control, (Echenim, 2020). This promptly made the Federal Government to

announce a fourteen days lockdown in Lagos, Abuja and Ogun on the 29th of March, 2020. (Cnbc.com). Then on April, 22, the governors of the 36 states of the federation after a meeting regarding the increase in the numbers of cases resolved to declare a fourteen days nationwide lockdown with only essential service providers like food, petrol and medicals with a verifiable identity card to move about, (Muideen, 2020).

Covid-19 and Schools Shutdown

The lockdown of activities in the country was initially the affairs of states as they determined when their states go on lockdown. This was after the Federal Government announced a fourteen days lockdown in Abuja, Lagos and Ogun following the reported cases in these cities. Afterwards the 36 states governors in collaboration with the Federal Government agreed on a nationwide lockdown and this invariably affected the education sector. Due to the latent nature of the Coronavirus, its mode of transmission and death rate, academic sessions was disrupted for students at all levels. The government and administrators of education had expected the shutdown to be brief, enough to contain the spread of the virus and return to normal life. Unfortunately, instead of the situation to abate, it kept surging to the consternation of all.

As the education sector was abruptly closed, schools at all levels were unable to conclude their sessions with both lectures and examination. Thus, the second term for primary and secondary schools were not concluded while higher institutions did not complete their first or second semester sessions as the case may be. Thus the education system remains the worst hit as we witness the reopening of other activities in batches with the education sector being far from the mind of the administrators as they were in total dilemma on what to do to ensure safe reopening of the entire education sector.

Unlike other countries, the Nigerian Federal Ministry of Education's school-closure directive did not come with any clear-cut policy measures on how to mitigate learning disruptions for children or how to address the digital divide. There was no provision whatsoever on how to fill the gap that will emanate from the sudden

closure and its attendant negative effects on the students, the teachers and the society at large. Even efforts made by the Parents, Teachers and Education stakeholders such as the All Nigerian Conference of Principals of Secondary Schools(ANCOPPS), Examination Bodies, Nigeria Union of Teachers, Vice Chancellors and State Commissioners of Education was frustrated by a declaration made by the Minister of Education, Mallam Adamu Adamu that schools in Nigeria will not reopen any time soon. (Adamu, 2020)

Thus, the inability of Nigeria to reopen their education sector is a clear attestation to the ills that the Nigerian education system has to grapple with in recent times as the government has no plan for education.

Schools Reopening and the Ills of the Nigerian Education System

Before the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Nigerian education system has been in crisis as a result of the utter neglect of the system by successive administrations as well as corruption. First the budgetary allocation for the education sector has continued to dwindle. For instance, the budget for education from 2015 to 2020 is as follows; 2015:392.2bn @ 7.74%, 2016:369.6bn @ 6.10%, 2017:550bn @ 7.03 %, 2018: 605.8 @ 7% 2019: 620.5bn @ 7.05%, and 2020: 691.07 @ 6.7%. (Vanguard, 2018, Premium times, 2019, Punch, 2020). This is grossly inadequate if Nigeria is to achieve a robust education system that will measure with the World Education standard. This meagre budgetary allocation for education has led to consistent poor management and development of the education sector. Recall that the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) went on strike because of the poor condition of the Nigerian universities as well as the inability of the Federal government to honour its agreement with the Union since 2009. The union's industrial action coincided with the schools closure as a result of the Coronavirus. The current union's action began on Monday, March 23rd 2020 over what it described as the use of force to compel university lecturers to enrol in the Integrated Payroll Personnel Information System (IPPIS) (Adedigba, 2020). ASUU embarked on the strike over the non-payment of salaries of their members who failed to enrol into the

federal government's IPPIS, a payroll software mandated for all public officials.

ASUU and other institutional unions like the Colleges of Education Academic Staff Union, (COEASU), and the Polytechnic union, (ASUP) have advocated for increased funding of Nigeria's higher institutions for the greater good of the nation. This has resulted to incessant strike action of these unions against the federal government. The Federal government had always fooled the unions into signing agreements with them and allowing them to go back to work after which they will renege on the agreement.

One of such agreements was the ASUU-FG agreement of October 2009. The agreement was reached after two years of negotiation between the lecturers and a government team appointed by the then Education Minister, Obiageli Ezekwesili. The agreement reached at the negotiations included conditions of service for university lecturers, funding of universities, university autonomy and academic freedom, and issues that required legislation to implement (Ogala and Mohammed, 2013). From all indications, the contents of the agreement is for the benefit of the nation which the universities represent in that capacity. The funding of universities is the duty of the government. The lecturers are only agents through which the dreams would be achieved but it looks to the government as if the union is demanding something impossible or they are after their own pocket.

The educational institutions we have in Nigeria are the shadows of itself. No wonder the leaders send their children abroad for studies where they know that the education system is good. Thus according to Anowai (2020) as the Federal Government neglected the health sector across the nation that even at the Aso Villa Clinic, no better treatment can be received there by the occupants including the president himself that made him seek medical tourism abroad. The same way they left the education system to rot because none of their children are studying here in Nigeria.

The Federal and State governments neglected technical education which is a sure tool for national reconstruction and development (Agbodike, 2006) thus, the education system became a

social assembly where people gather to learn nothing different from what has been learnt in the nineteenth century. The Nigerian education system is still using most of the versions of colonial education policy which do not promote technical and vocational development, (Etuk, 1984) rather the theoretical aspect of education which enables Nigeria to be dependent on foreign help for her technological needs.

It is this technical education that is needed in Nigeria and the government are aware of it but is not responsive to it because their children are not studying in Nigeria. Again, the Nigeria system with its attendant mediocrity as against meritocracy that made an Economist to work in the Ministry of culture and tourism while an Igbo graduate works in the ministry of power and energy. The rate at which round peg is been put in a square hole is quite alarming in our country. The value of education is no longer taken serious since a man with O' level result can head a Ministry or parastatal where a Professor works. It is only in Nigeria that workers in the Ministry of Power and energy uses generator to receive bill payment in their office because there is no electricity. It is only in Nigeria that a whole university depends on generator for it electricity needs.

The university is a place of research and development, and the university lecturers are willing to go the extra miles in making Nigerian university a place to be. But the Nigerian government with its corrupt politicians prefers robust parliamentary salary and seating allowances amounting to millions than fund education for the benefit of all.

This infrastructural decay in Nigerian education sector is what has led to the delay of schools resumption in the wake of the lifting of nationwide lockdown occasioned by the Covid-19 pandemic. The government is aware that facilities in the schools are not enough to guarantee safety of the students in the classes. Talking about the virtual learning method, as obtainable in other countries, Nigeria cannot boast of twelve hours steady electricity supply, for those who are oppertuned to have electricity in their domain. Some towns in Nigeria has not being with electricity for decades while exorbitant estimated bills has made some people cut off their line from the electric poll. This is quite telling on every aspect of our national life.

Manufacturers are complaining about electricity and other small businesses using electricity resort to using generator which is expensive and risky too.

Although, the Academic Staff Union of Universities(ASUU) were on strike before the outbreak and subsequent lockdown, there was need for online teaching for primary, secondary and higher institutions, but there was no facility to promote that. There is generally epileptic power supply in Nigeria to the extent that one cannot be able to charge his computer system, no available network for the students to lay their hands and the one available is costly and unsteady, poor and inefficient. The radio on-air teaching method adopted by some state governments had major setbacks as majority of the students do not have access to radio sets. Even those that have radio, the problem of replacing the batteries surfaces as there is no light to charge it with electricity or money to buy cell batteries. The online WhatsApp tutorial was inconsequential as many students could not logon because of lack of data and those that have data cannot boast of steady network as it fluctuates at will.

Non-governmental Organizations (NGO) like Teach for Nigeria, are partnering with government agencies to facilitate implementation and adoption. For example, in Ogun state, Teach for Nigeria is working with the government to deliver classes on TV and have deployed online capacity building workshops for teachers on programming using Scratch. In as much as this is a very good initiative, can the Teach for Nigeria, provide electricity to power these televisions? The answer is no. it is still the duty of government at all levels to provide electricity to the citizenry and power is vital in education. The truth is that our government have failed us. At least our leaders starting from the governors to the president travel to countries like the U.K and the U.S and see how their education systems works. Why won't they replicate such here or is it all that impossible to do here?

It follows that education is not paramount to the Nigerian government at this time. The only well-documented response is the Nigeria Education in Emergency Working Group Strategy (NEEWGS) published on April 7th 2020. The objective of the strategy

is to mitigate the negative impact of school closures on students and teachers in North-East Nigeria. (Taibat, 2020). The school system was closed nationwide but the education in emergency working group was created for only the north-east states. As if that was not enough there was the home grown school feeding for children in the north while the entire system is on lockdown. How then do they identify those to be fed? And why should the home feeding be only for the north? This is exactly where Nigeria problem lies. They only take care of insignificant things while neglecting the vitals which is for greater good.

Although the government responded swiftly in the health and economic sectors, it should have done same in the education sector. Ignoring the education sector would be disastrous. As emphasised by UNESCO, temporary school closures come with high social and economic costs, with severe impact on children from disadvantaged backgrounds (UNESCO, 2020). This is exactly what is happening now. As at August 31 2020, the country's education system is completely shutdown with no hope of resumption soon. In the words of the Minister of Education, Malam Adamu Adamu, the school system remains closed and that the schools will not reopen any time soon (Adamu, 2020). This was after series of meetings by education stakeholders and the education ministry headed by the Minister of State for Education, Mr Emeka Nwajiuba had articulated strategies for safe re-opening of schools in the country starting with exit classes. According to their calculation, they targeted that schools would reopen for students in their final years to enable them conclude their exam while serving as an acid test for others to follow. But their initiative and effort was clamped down by the pronouncement of the Minister of education who in his words noted that it is better for the students to miss one academic year that get infected with coronavirus. In fact, his statement attracted a lot of condemnations as it was viewed as an act of neglect on the future of the Nigerian students who becomes the leaders of tomorrow. This is a clear indication of the ills of the Nigerian education system. While provisions for the reopening of other activities like markets, churches, mosques, airports, and road transports were being made, the education system was neglected,

probably because of the less importance attached to the sector. Perhaps it is not a money yielding venture as other sectors. But they forgot that any economy with enormous material resources but lack human resources cannot foster development and education remains the major producer of human resources.

Children on the higher end of the socio-economic ladder may experience less disruption to their learning because their private schools are well-equipped with ICT infrastructure and they can afford remote learning resources at home. The majority that would be left struggling are the students from vulnerable and disadvantaged backgrounds, who made up the greater majority of public schools in the country, and who do not have access to computers and other devices both within and outside the school. In most cases, these children live in communities with poor or non-existent internet connectivity and unreliable power supply. Inevitably, this digital divide will exacerbate the learning disparities among these children.

But can we estimate how much the Covid-19 pandemic has affected education? Are the estimated 46 million students forced to stay at home in Nigeria still learning? With the uncertainty regarding how long the shutdown will last, there have been several interventions to ensure that students are still learning. But these interventions are underutilized. In line with global trends, highbrow private schools in the country have adopted a virtual learning model. However, a significant number of students in the Nigerian educational system are found in public schools. Again, most of these public schools are situated in remote areas where there is no electricity, network and other devices that could enhance learning, hence the effects of schools shutdown on the Nigerian student is touching.

Moreover, what happens to this category of learners? How do they cope in situations such as this? Also, some state governments have introduced television and radio learning but one can observe that almost 70% of states in the country have done nothing to meet the learning needs of these students. Thus, we see education taking the back seat.

Furthermore, in a country like Nigeria with an epileptic power situation, another reality hits. Do all homes have access to electricity

to view television programs and how many homes have access to a television? This is vital as approximately 40% of our population is living in extreme poverty, according to the latest report by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS, 2018). Whilst we accept that radio and television can help in reaching a wide audience, the question is, how many subjects can be effectively taught over the radio? How many hours can be allocated to a subject and how many teachers will be available for the program? In responding to this, we need to remember the learning styles of students, the time it takes to understand what is being transmitted, and their different learning environments. How about slow learners and how about visually impaired people? In this situation learning peculiarities are not considered thereby impeding the educational rights of the students.

Again, what infrastructure can be put in place to cater for all students in the system irrespective of location? As an offshoot of the above, another reality still remains that the rate of internet penetration is not evenly spread and it is not every student that is ICT compliant. Thus the problems to be encountered are numerous.

Effects of Covid-19 Pandemic on Nigerian Students and Nigeria

The outbreak of Covid-19 and the subsequent closure of schools have had tremendous effects on Nigerian students in particular and Nigeria at large. An adage has it that when two elephants fight, it is the grass that suffers. In this case, both the elephants and the grass are suffering. First, there has never been an all-inclusive and abrupt holidays for students at all levels in Nigeria since the eighties that lasted more than three months especially for those in the primary and secondary schools and except for industrial action by higher institution's unions like the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU), the Colleges of Education Academic Staff Union (COEASU) and the Academic Staff Union of Polytechnics (ASUP).

As a result of this abrupt and sudden closure of schools, most of the boarding school students returned home because of the latent nature of the covid-19 pandemic, thus exposing them, mostly the girls to both their male counterpart and men who entices them with gifts, money and other goodies in order to have their way with them. This

has invariably affected most students as evidences on ground in most of the secondary schools shows that most of the girls have become pregnant for unknown men in their streets and neighbourhood. As a result they may not return to school when the school eventually reopens.

Speaking on the implications of the schools closure occasioned by the pandemic, Amadi (2020) noted that most of the students who ventures into business or casual works may not be willing to go back to school because of the money that comes to them either daily, weekly or monthly. Even those who may willingly come back, may not show serious interest in their studies as they will occupy their minds on how to go back to continue with their business. He also noted that most of those who serve as pump attendants at filling stations and those who sell nose mask and face shields are students.

Again, some students may no longer be submissive to their teachers and parents because of the exposure to money and other fringe benefits. They boast that they can survive even if they stop school. Therefore they should be allowed to live their lives as it pleases them. On the other hand, the implication of the closure of schools on the country is that the country will have more people who are money conscious, academically unviable, morally bankrupt and criminally minded because they have all believed that “school is scam” and that if they wait to finish school that they may not be able to make the money they are making presently. Thus the country become a fertile ground for producing trouble makers than problem solvers as capture by the Anambra State Anthem, (Anambra State Anthem, 2014)

Conclusion

Covid-19 pandemic like its predecessors must eventually disappear but its effects worldwide will remain indelible. Apart from the number of deaths recorded, its physical, psychological and moral effects on the populace must not be forgotten in a hurry. No wonder bill gates asserted that “no one who lives through Pandemic will ever forget it” (www.gatesnotes.com/Health/Pandemic-Innovation) For instance an illness that separates mother from son or son from mother

is rather strange. In this regard if a mother contracts the virus, invariably all the members of the family is at risk. Who then takes care of them? Thus in the education system, the teacher is separated with student and vice versa. Therefore the worldwide lockdown of educational establishments is going to ignite major break in students' education; disruptions in internal assessments; and the annulment of public evaluations for credentials or their auxiliary by a substandard substitute. What then can be done to improve these damaging effects? Schools need resources to reconstruct the damage in education, once they open again. But how these resources are used, and how to target the children who were particularly hard hit, is a question. Schools should also consider postponing rather than skipping internal assessments, given the signal of the importance of assessments for learning. This is true in view of the fact that the resources for the reconstruction of the education system may be mismanaged with no tangible result achieved while children who are supposed to be captured in this reconstruction continues to suffer.

Temporary school closures is supposed to give educators, funders and policymakers the opportunity to thinker the way education is delivered and accessed by students. In China, for instance, governments are providing computers to students from low-income households and offering mobile data packages and telecommunication subsidies. In France, efforts are being made to lend devices to students who do not have access to computers. Similarly, Portugal is partnering with postal services to deliver working sheets to students who do not have access to the internet at home.

In Nigeria, state governments are adopting local media channels such as radio programmes to reach out to students in remote communities. The quality of such educational programmes, its coverage and number of end users remains significantly low and the number of subjects covered by such teaching method is still a source of concern to stakeholders. Thus the stakeholders in education should advocate adequate funding of schools to improve the infrastructures and ensure learning did not discontinue.

The government could further mitigate the negative impacts of COVID-19 on education by providing solar-powered educational devices, pre-loaded with offline academic resources, to students in disadvantaged and vulnerable communities, such as the tablets and laptops and providing free networks to schools and homes, steady electricity and ensure maintenance culture is imbibed to put those infrastructures provided in good order and ensure its longevity is guaranteed. This calls for accountability on the part of the education administrators to ensure government effort is not in vain.

The Nigeria Education in Emergency Working Group Strategy (NEEIWGS) could also be scaled-up to include other regions in the country. Of course, these policy measures would require significant financial investment, but such investment is worthwhile for the progress of the economy in the long-term. This is to ensure that learning continues during this pandemic. Any investment made in education will continue to benefit the nation at all times as education is the bedrock of every country's development.

We therefore admonish government at all levels to be proactive in their governance and ensure the provision of basic amenities for the citizens at all times and not to wait at emergency periods before carrying out their responsibilities. Hospital should be well equipped and school highly functional. Functional schools are capable of producing all the equipment needed in the hospital without waiting for America or China or the United Kingdom to provide for us.

Finally, we conclude with Bill Gates assertion on Covid-19 when he said; “the disease is both a symptom and cause of inequity. Today, it is Covid-19; tomorrow, it could be another pandemic, but in all, they are all fuelling the inequity gap”. Therefore we encourage the government to learn from the inequity caused by this pandemic, as it is inefficiency of the government that prolonged the containment of the pandemic outbreak to this unprecedented heights. As we learn to live in the new normal post covid-19 era, let the government give adequate attention to the education sector in order to avert a repeat of what is happening in this present 2020 education system.

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DETTOL'S HANDS-ON AD ON HUMAN CORONAVIRUS: BETWEEN FAKE NEWS AND EFFECTIVE PR IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

The deadly Coronavirus codenamed COVID-19 caused by a large family of viruses which results in illnesses that range from common cold to more severe diseases such as respiratory syndrome and severe acute respiratory syndrome which broke out in Wuhan, China on 31st December 2019 has recorded fatalities. The fear and confusion associated with the disease is further heightened by arguments for and against its cure leading to various solutions such as the latest Dettol's Hands-On Ad on Human Coronavirus making the rounds on various social media handles such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram et al. To this end, the researchers embarked on a qualitative narrative study titled "Dettol's Hands-On Ad on COVID-19: Between Fake News and Effective PR in Nigeria" to investigate the matter. The study which used the individual differences theory as theoretical framework found that the "human coronavirus" written at the back of Dettol sanitizer refers to common cold and not COVID-19. To checkmate the trend, the paper recommended multimedia approaches, invoking media ethics and procurement of high-tech equipment as possible panacea.

It concluded that with the right advice from health experts and requisite information by the press, the scourge of COVID-19 could be minimized and eventually fought.

Keywords: *COVID-19, Dettol, Fake, News, Nigeria.*

Introduction

Globally, the fear of Coronavirus has gripped everyone as the numbers of fatalities continue to rise with the pandemic spreading over 30 countries. The novel disease which simply goes by the acronym COVID-19 is both an **epidemic and a pandemic**. It is also generating tensions amidst various information and updates on social media platforms like Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, Instagram to mention a few. Apparently, a lot of fake news and reports are shared online as to the possible cure of the disease. One of such recent messages is the hand-on advertisement (Ad) written on the label of Dettol cleanser. The said text is that of an image on the sanitizer which reads: “Kills E.Coli, Sammonella [*sic*], MRSA, Rotavirus, Flu virus, Cold viruses (Human Coronavirus and RSV).” Circulating the hands-on Ad on social media handles suggests that finally a cure has been found for COVID-19.

As at now, it is yet to be seen that Dettol has already provided cure for the deadly disease. With the avalanche of Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter and Instagram messages about the Dettol Disinfectant Ad which recently went viral, many people have insinuated that the company had prior knowledge of the outbreak but did not alert the public. What is more, the economic remedies for the coronavirus are dire. For instance, Reuters reported that the United States of America approved a \$8.3 billion bill for the epidemic; China earmarked 110.5 billion Yuan (\$15.9 billion) and Germany 50 billion Euros among other world powers to combat the spread of the new coronavirus and develop vaccines for the highly contagious disease (Reuters, 2020). Meanwhile, the United Nations reported that “apart from the devastating impact of the coronavirus outbreak on humans, the global economy has lost as much as \$50 billion to the disease” (Jimoh, Daka, Jeremiah, Onyedika-Ugoeze & Alabi, 2020). In

Nigeria, it was reported that the federal government released N386million to two health agencies to strengthen *Coronavirus* (COVID19) preparedness in *the country* (NAN, 2020).

It is in the midst of this that purported cure of the outbreak is linked with Dettol. Perhaps the lack of regulation of social media act in Nigeria to address the menacing effect of fake news is responsible for the spread of misinformation in the society. Therefore, this study aspires to:

1. Ascertain the impact of Hand-On
2. Investigate the veracity that the Hands-On Ad at the back of Dettol disinfectant is a possible panacea for COVID-19
3. Discover the danger of fake news in the fight against Coronavirus
4. Interrogate whether the Human Coronavirus Ad that appeared on the back of Dettol is the same with the novel COVID-19 and also propose Public Relations (PR) as effective ways of enlightening the public about health issues.

Deconstruction of Concepts

Dettol's Hands-On Ads

In this paper, Dettol hands-on Ad refers **to the visible text laced with advertorial image on Dettol sanitizer which can be seen and touched with the hands**. The text on the image reads: “Produced in Oct 2019 before Coronavirus was introduced. How did Dettol (company) knew about this virus??” Dettol is an antiseptic used to disinfect the skin and surfaces against bacteria and germs.

Human Coronavirus

Corona viruses are a large family of viruses that cause illnesses ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as Middle East respiratory syndrome and severe acute respiratory syndrome. They refer to the Wuhan Coronavirus outbreak which started in China on 31st December 2019 (Latesty.com, 2020) which has symptoms which range from mild symptoms to severe illness and death for confirmed cases. Usually, **2-14 days after exposure**,

suspected patients suffer from fever, cough and shortness of breath (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2020a).

Fake News

In this study, fake news would be understood as misinformation, disinformation and mal-information which comprises of information with little or no facts that is published based on falsehood which has devastating consequences on governments, people, businesses, information professionals, user experience designers and other groups in society. As a deliberate or intentional lie, fake news creates confusion and mistrust among receivers making information difficult to use (Wilson & Umar, 2019).

Effective PR

As an operational definition, effective Public Relations (PR) here is the art of presenting a person or an establishment to the public through various media platforms in a way that it improves their public perception and impacts positively on their aims, objectives and output. In light of advertising, PR entails the alluring appeal business owners make to their customers for patronage and profit.

Theoretical Framework

This study adopts the psychological or individual diffusion theory which makes claims that the effect of media messages varies from person to person because of their individual psychological structures (Mgbejume, 2009). The theory makes the claim that it is as a result of individual differences amongst people that their judgment of reality is based upon. It makes the point that selective perception is based on an individual's psychological difference from that of others. The theory argues that different types of people select and interpret mass media content in widely different ways.

The theory proposes that individuals respond differently to the mass media according to their psychological needs. It maintains that individuals consume the mass media to satisfy specific needs like that of "information (e.g. providing statistics about players and teams), integrative (offering a sense of belonging to a group of similarly

interested people), affective (e.g. by providing excitement), or escapist (helping to release pent-up emotions)” (Oxford Reference, 2020).

Although this theory talks about mass media, it also relates to social media such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, Instagram *et al* because most times, messages that are shared on those platforms are subject to individual interpretations unless where they are plain and explicit. This is why social media is a rich resource for selective perception as people choose what to share and who to share what with. The challenge here is the rise in the spread of misinformation, fake news and unwholesome information to unsuspecting members of the public. Sometimes, because these media exist on virtual space, it becomes difficult to identify sources or distinguish between genuine and fake news.

Besides, there is strong evidence that “individual choice behavior can be based on affective as well as rational factors. Further, the impact of mood states on the consumer decision process appears to be a function of the valence of the current mood. Most of the studies that have investigated the role of mood or emotion in advertising have looked at the ability of ads to elicit different affective states. This work has popularized the “attitude toward the ad” stream of research which typically views this construct as an intervening variable that mediates the effects of the advertising message on brand attitudes and preferences” (Ashley, 2017).

Other scholars think that the specific effects of Ads often depend on message content and/or execution in combination with consumer characteristics (Pechmann, & Catlin, 2016). The psychological or individual diffusion theory is used here because it aligns with the submission of the authors referred to above. It is also utilized because it is appropriate to the selective perception that people are giving the Dettol hands-on Ad which is viral on social media.

Literature Review and Discussion

COVID-19: Early Beginnings, Fatalities, Humanitarian Endemic and Preventive Measures

COVID-19 is a new fatal disease that is characterized by mild symptoms such as runny nose, sore throat, dry cough, tiredness, fever and difficulty in breathing for severe cases. Some patients suffer aches and pains, nasal congestion, sore throat or diarrhea. The disease is fatal as older people or those who have medical conditions such as pneumonia, breathing difficulties or asthma, diabetes or heart disease are more vulnerable to being severely ill (WHO, 2020d). Since the outbreak of the deadly COVID-1 in Wuhan, China on 31st December 2019 and its subsequent spread to other countries in the world, one of the crucial strategies to combat the disease has been to identify all contacts, ensure their strict isolation and to follow up daily with checks for any symptoms (Ehanire, 2020).

Coronavirus has affected **112 countries and territories** around the world with about 114,078 cases (Worldometers.info, 2020). According to data provided by World Health Organization (WHO) as at 10am CET02 March 2020, the situation in terms of total numbers and new cases globally is 88 948 confirmed (1804 new); in China 80 174 confirmed (206 new) with 2915 deaths (42 new) and outside of China there are 8774 confirmed (1598 new); 64 countries (6 new) and 128 deaths (24 new). The organisation also gave the risk assessment in China, regionally and globally as very high. It highlighted that the disease has spread to six new member states (Armenia, Czechia, Dominican Republic, Luxembourg, Iceland, and Indonesia) (WHO, 2020a).

In Nigeria, first diagnosed case was that of an Italian on 27 February 2020. “Since then a total of 217 contacts were linked to the index case. Of the 217, 45 traveled out of Nigeria and 172 are presently in Nigeria. Of the 172 contacts currently in Nigeria, 69 are in Lagos, 40 in Ogun and 52 in other States, with 11 in unknown locations” (Ehanire, 2020). To arrest the situation, the Federal Ministry of Health in collaboration with the Lagos State Ministry of Health and NCDC and a team of researchers from various institutions in Nigeria which includes scientists from the Centre for Human and Zoology Virology in LUTH, African Centre for Genomics of Infectious Diseases in Redeemers University and the Nigeria Institute

of Medical Research (NIMR) Lagos rose to the occasion to perform the genome sequencing of the coronavirus. On 8th March 2020, scientists also confirmed the presence of coronavirus in one of the Italian's contacts. The newly confirmed case is an Ogun State contact of the index case. This brings the total number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in Nigeria today to two (Ehanire, 2020). Meanwhile, coronavirus is a humanitarian crisis. For instance, the case fatality rate for COVID-19 was 2.3% (Roser, Ritchie & Ortiz-Ospina 2020).

WHO has advised the public on the following preventive measures:

1. Frequent thorough washing of hands with alcohol-based hand rub or with soap and water so as **to** kill viruses that may be on your hands;
2. Maintain social distancing of at least 1 metre (3 feet) distance between yourself and anyone who is coughing or sneezing;
3. Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth to prevent transfer of the virus to other parts of the body;
4. Practice respiratory hygiene by covering your mouth and nose with your bent elbow or tissue when you cough or sneeze;
5. Avoid self-medication by seeking medical care early if you have fever, cough and difficulty breathing;
6. Reporting persons who are in or have recently visited (past 14 days) areas where COVID-19 is spreading to appropriate health experts
7. Staying informed and following advice given by your healthcare providers about latest developments on COVID-19 (WHOc).

Between Human Coronavirus and Novel COVID-19: Fact Check

It is no longer news that the viral photo displaying the label of a Dettol disinfectant product with the mention that it is effective in fighting Corona Virus has led to confusion and misinformation. Since the appearance of the said Ad, various commentators have come out with theories such as, the company must have known about the existence of the virus before its outbreak was reported on 31st December 2019. To put the facts straight, experts are of the view that "Coronaviruses are actually a family of viruses that cause infections in both mammals and humans. The virus transmits through airborne

transmission. The recent 2019-nCoV is a newly emerged virus which has a similar genomic sequence as the old viruses but its source is yet to be identified. The genomic sequence of the current virus has been made available online by the researchers” (Sutaria, 2020).

Through an emailed statement, British MNC Reckitt Benckiser, the makers of Dettol, clarified that they are yet to test their product on the new strain of Coronavirus. However, the company predicted that Dettol would be effective against the novel 2019-nCoV strain. It maintained that some of their products indicated greater than 99% effectiveness against strains which belong to the same family as the 2019 Coronavirus. They, however, emphasized that they cannot confirm its efficacy in treating the new virus since Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) is a new strain of coronavirus that has not been seen in humans before (Sutaria, 2020). BOOM discovered that the said Dettol label refers to other older strains of the Coronavirus and not the recent new Coronavirus that ravaged China. It found that the term referred to a family of viruses which cause infections in both mammals and humans which is quite different from the recent novel Coronavirus outbreak in Wuhan, China that led to death of over 493 people (Sutaria, 2020).

Interestingly too, in another quarters, the point has again been made that “coronavirus is a broad category of viruses which includes a number of different respiratory illnesses. One is the common cold, but the category also includes SARS (the severe acute respiratory syndrome of which there were outbreaks in 2002 and 2004), and the new coronavirus identified in Wuhan. The ‘human coronavirus’ mentioned on the back of the Dettol bottle is almost certainly referring to the common cold. The coronavirus identified in Wuhan is a new virus, which hadn’t been identified in humans before the first cases at the end of 2019” (Rahman, 2020).

Dettol Ad: Fake News And Effective PR? Fake News and the Fight against COVID-19

It has been observed that fake news is summarily unethical, dangerous, provocative and subversive to peace and societal serenity especially in a multicultural setting like Nigeria. This is because it

heightens tension and builds fear among people besides misleading the public. It is even worse when it comes to health concerns. The sheer volume of misinformation circulating across the world is overwhelming. Fake news could threaten and destroy the country. Unfortunately, in the world of advertising and PR, fake news sales for various reasons.

For example, there is often a commercial angle to news. Advertisements, whether they are done through traditional or social media outlets are attached to pecuniary reasons. No one goes into business to lose. As such, Ads are specifically designed with the customer in mind – to lure prospective buyers. It is suggestive that the manufactures of Dettol may not have envisaged a situation where their product would attract the world's attention or patronage. However, that their sanitizers are recommended for keeping hands clean against various infections fulfills the commercial purpose of Ads. In light of our discussion, it is crucial to identify the effects of fake news on advertizing with particular reference to the text on Dettol cleanser.

Love of Money

In a society with low literacy level, people who are gullible could easily join the band wagon to patronize a product simply because they saw the said item being circulated on social media outlets. In the case of Dettol sanitizer, those who may not have the patience to interrogate the issues or seek proper health-guidance could actually buy as many bottles as possible hoping that doing so would protect them from the viral disease. Advertising increasing income for people (Ashley, 2017 & Samiksha, 2020).

Health Hazards

Experience has shown that lack of adequate enlightenment on health-care issues has led to health hazards and deaths. It would be recalled that the scare of Ebola made many Nigerians to drink salt and bath with same. This led to the loss of lives and various health complications especially among the aged. In like manner, although there is no empirical evidence that anyone drank Dettol, lack of creating awareness could mislead the public that a cure has finally

been found for the new COVID-19. In the long run, those who depend on such pedestrian news would experience health challenges.

Some Ads promote products that are harmful to the youths who often depend on television, radio, film and popular music as sources of influence for their choice about alcohol and drugs. The official Journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics disclosed that the negative effects of advertising on teenagers include increased cigarette and alcohol use, obesity, poor nutrition and eating disorders, according to Pediatrics” ([Ashley](#), 2017).

Misinformation and Propaganda

Social media-mania has created a mentality of pressing the share button even if one is not sure of the information. This has made social media handles temples for misinformation and propaganda. This is why, when for instance, a piece of information is shared on Facebook, in a matter of seconds, the news goes viral on several other platforms such that when it is finally discovered that the information is fake, it becomes difficult to retract. The current delete feature and limitation of sharing to only five people at a time on WhatsApp is a major step in stemming the tide of misinformation and propaganda. Mischief makers are often on the prowl to fulfill their clandestine motives. This is view [Ashley](#) (2017) opines that: “Advertising influences how people feel about themselves — often in a negative way. These images are often unrealistic and unattainable.”

Customer Dissatisfaction

Chances are that when customers realize that a certain product which is projected to provide cure for A and B does not do so in the end, they are left disenchanting, dissatisfied and discouraged. This is where the leading example of the manufacture of Dettol, British MNC Reckitt Benckiser, who came out to clarify that the human coronavirus mentioned at the back of their product is different from the new COVID-19, is worth commending. Where clarification like this one is made, it increases trust and reduces the level of customer dissatisfaction. This is key to effective PR. It has been observed that some Ads invent false “needs” and stimulates the formation of

compulsive consumption habits among people which totally violates the conditions for maintaining an equilibrium (Ashley, 2017). Besides, **Ads also tend to create an unnecessary need like endless messaging often associated with sex and violence** (Suggett, 2019).

Fear and Panic

Earlier in this study, we mentioned that COVID-19 is both **an epidemic and a pandemic** (WHO, 2020a). With the number of casualties across the globe coupled with the huge amounts of money being spent to fight the deadly disease, there is palpable fear and panic. Whether it is deliberate or not, one of the effects of fake news is fear. There are advert moguls who manipulate their customers through psychological means by creating a sense of danger so as to sell their products. Studies suggest that health-related communications can have significant and measurable effects on consumer cognitions, emotions and behaviors based on discounted or even counterproductive messages (Pechmann, & Catlin, 2016).

DETTOL'S HANDS-ON AD AS BANDWAGON PROPAGANDA

According to estimates, there are about 20,000 marketing and advertising messages every single day (Suggett, 2019). Without advertising, many businesses would fold up. This is why experts are of the view that “without advertisement, many forms of mass media such as newspapers, radio, magazines, and television, might not exist as they do today. Advertising positively impacts society because it helps maintain mass communications media, making them much less expensive for the public” (Ashley, 2017). To this end, advertisers often use appealing techniques to sell their products. As such, the bandwagon propaganda tool comes in handy.

Both advertisers and propagandists make use of this technique to persuade the audience to buy their products. Capitalists who are into either wholesale or retail advertising often manipulate their customers through the bandwagon technique. Because this device plays on the feelings of loneliness and isolation, it also creates the impression of widespread support by reinforcing the human desire to

be on the winning side (Edward, 1937) through patronizing goods because others are purchasing them.

Often times, propagandists adopt this method to convince people who are not already on the bandwagon to join in a mass movement while simultaneously reassuring that those on or partially on should stay aboard (Dyikuk & Gudaku, 2020). Perhaps this is why the Dettol Ad went viral on social media handles with each sharer claiming the company which produces the cleanser knew about COVID-19 many years ago. The news created a feeling as if those who do not share the information were late comers about the great discovery.

Interestingly, the new twist which bandwagon propaganda has now taken is that propagandists try to convince the target audience that if they don't join in, they will be left out. The phenomenon creates a sense of urgency about dissemination of such news within seconds. Studies have indicated that people join the bandwagon principally for two reasons – first, majority is the winner and the winner has great influence; second, most people like to be conformists rather than being different and as a result, make themselves vulnerable to criticism (Ronald, 2005). Therefore, from audience's perspective, the Dettol's hands-on Ad is fingered as a mere bandwagon propaganda.

Conclusion

Earlier in this study, it was emphasized that the psychological or individual diffusion theory which holds this work creates room for selective perception. Unfortunately, this gives way to misinformation and breeds fake news. Because people are different by default, it becomes easy for them to perceive things differently and also subscribe to news and information based on those perceptions. This is where drawing a line between what sounds good and appeals to me and what is true and for public good comes in. Manufactures, PR professionals and advertises will always have a hard time creating awareness about useful information and public health concerns. One constant challenge in the fight against coronavirus is the fact that life is not static - people are always moving from one place to another. As

a result, chances are that the disease might continue to spread. However, with the right information and advice from health experts, the scourge of COVID-19 could be minimized and eventually fought. By way of summary, the first aim of the study was achieved because the paper ascertained that hand-On Ads have huge impact on audiences. The second aim which was to investigate the veracity that the Hands-On Ad at the back of Dettol disinfectant is a possible panacea for COVID-19 has been answered because as things stand, it is not – although it can be used as a cleanser to stop the spread of the disease. The third aim came through because the paper disclosed that fake news is a counter force to the fight against the novel coronavirus. The fourth aim which was to interrogate whether the Human Coronavirus Ad that appeared on the back of Dettol is the same with the novel COVID-19 and proposing Public Relations (PR) as effective ways of enlightening the masses about public health has been fulfilled because, first, we know that human coronavirus refers to common cold and is distinct from COVID-19; and second, the paper has highlighted the role of PR as indispensable tools for advertisement, advertorial and public enlightenment.

As it were, the claim that Dettol prevents from coronavirus is not true. This is because the producers of product disclosed that: “RB has become aware of speculation about Dettol products and the novel 2019-nCoV coronavirus. As this is an emerging outbreak, RB, like all manufacturers, doesn’t yet have access to the new virus (2019-nCoV) for testing and, as a result, are not yet in a position to confirm levels of effectiveness against the new strain” (Latestly.com, 2020). Therefore, it is safe to conclude that “with the company’s own clarification on the image, the claim of disinfectant killing COVID-19 stands false. If you come across this image on WhatsApp or Twitter, make sure you correct the person on the partial truth of the claim” (Latestly.com, 2020). The task of curtailing fake news and ensuring effective PR is not limited to advertiser’s hands-on Ads but a collective responsibility since life is involved. On a whole, in line with the *individual differences theory* upon which this work is built, it is essential to always tailor Ads or communications to the target consumers so as to test their intended and unintended effects (Pechmann, & Catlin, 2016).

Recommendations

Multimedia Approaches: Various media outlets could be employed to deliberately counteract fake news such as the Dettol Ad. Through the use of both traditional and social media platforms such as television, radio, newspapers and magazines as well as Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, Instagram et al, rumors such as those associated with the alleged COVID-19 cure could be quashed. This is in addition to the use of billboards and public enlightenment campaigns aimed at creating awareness about the deadly disease and preventive procedures. British MNC Reckitt Benckiser, the makers of Dettol could also utilize multi-media approaches to advertise these brands and make the facts straight.

Invoking Media Ethics: Print and broadcast media have clear codes of conduct regarding content that incites violence but unfortunately, these regulations do not specifically mention dangerous news. To this end, it crucial to fill this void in terms of making clear regulations about fake news which are often published in print media or online for either commercial purposes or to cause unnecessary panic. In this vein, is crucial to hold fast to the doctrine of humanistic ethics which hinges on doing what is best for society (Dyikuk & Gudaku, 2020). The media plays an enviable role in forming public opinion about health concerns especially in the area of creating awareness (Dyikuk, 2017).

Public Enlightenment Campaigns: While the set of guidelines provided by The World Health Organization which include maintaining personal hygiene by washing hands with soap and water or using a alcohol based disinfectant is a right step in the right direction, the measure taken by manufacturers of Dettol to publish advisories on a poster in all the different countries that they operate in to create awareness about the new virus (Sutaria, 2020) is even more laudable. Public enlightenment campaigns are at the heart of creating a clean bill of health for the nation.

Procurement of High-Tech Equipment: In line with the recommendations of The World Health Organization (WHO) governments should manufacture or procure high-tech personal protective equipment to meet rising global demands of COVID-19 (Jimoh, Daka, Jeremiah, Onyedika-Ugoeze & Alabi, 2020). Institutions like The Nigerian Institute of Public Relations (NIPR) should also be proactive in this regard (Amujo & Melewar, 2011). This involves putting state-of-the-art facilities in place (Dyikuk, 2017b) to address this endemic disease.

Protecting Public Health: Media professionals and regulators of the media space should rise up to promote practices that protect public health on the one hand and proscribe those that are detrimental to the health of the citizenry. The Ministry of Health and Nigeria Centre for Disease Control through the National Orientation Agency (NOA) should expedite action in creating awareness about the difference between the new COVID-19 and the Human Coronavirus which Dettol can prevent.

Ensuring Civility of Language: The onus lies on media corporations and professional associations and organisations like the Nigerian Press Council, Nigeria Union of Journalists, Public Relations Professionals, Advertisers Association of Nigeria, Standards Organisation of Nigeria and the Federal Ministry of Health to monitor Ads towards ensuring that only authentic ones which employ civility are allowed. Journalists working in media organisations should help to expunge fake news from the lexicon of the press even as they refrain from using offensive, abusive, or vulgar language which glorifies propaganda, hate speech and fake news (Dyikuk & Gudaku, 2020).

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EDUCATION BEYOND COVID-19: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES OF DIGITAL LEARNING IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

The incorporation of digital learning into the Nigeria tertiary education system has always heralded plethora of challenges that has continued to stall such effort. Nevertheless, the year 2020 would always be a point of reference towards surmounting such challenges. It is the year, every education system activated emergency response to mitigate the effect of school closure on the education calendar resulting from COVID-19 pandemic. To continue teaching and learning during the lockdown period, efforts were directed towards online classes, digital learning and various education technological connections between teachers and learners. One big lesson of COVID-19 with respect to education is that learning processes can be innovative. COVID-19 global emergency heralded such an unprecedented shift in education and innovation which hitherto has never been felt simultaneously on a large scale around the globe. Such paradigm shift in teaching and learning during this emergency buttressed this, and would always be referred to in post-COVID education reformation. However, the question now is- judging from the peculiarities of Africa schooling system and technological advancement, how prepared is Nigeria for such reformation? How would we look beyond the challenges of digital learning to the opportunities presented forthwith? It is on this note, that this paper, through a descriptive study highlighted some

of the challenges and opportunities of incorporating digital learning into the tertiary education system in Nigeria, beyond COVID-19. It further proposed modalities for achieving this. Through the connectivist theory of learning, guidelines for developing digital learning materials were also highlighted. In conclusion, the paper thus opined that beyond COVID-19, there is urgency in the need to incorporate digital learning into the tertiary education system in Nigeria. Such would enable the sector surmount the challenge of similar closure of schools in the future as well as other noted opportunities.

Keywords: *Digital learning, online learning, digital literacy, education, COVID-19 and beyond COVID-19*

Background to the study

Around the globe, the year 2020 would be remarkable for its unprecedented health crisis. The year would figuratively be synonymous with COVID-19 in years to come. The 2019 Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) which started in Wuhan city, Hubei Province of China, constituted a serious health crisis, to the degree that it was declared a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) by WHO. Besides being a health crisis, its intense impact on education was felt. Simultaneously, there was a total lockdown of education activities globally, presenting the largest shock experienced in this present age. This was to curb its transmission. Report has it that as at March 18, 2020, 107 countries have closed their schools (Viner, R., Russel, S., Packer, J., Stansfield, C., Bonells, C., Croker, H., et al (2020). Academic research and activity in tertiary education institutions were also disrupted. According to World Bank Group, (2020:12) "as at April 8, Universities and other tertiary education institutions are closed in 175 countries and communities and over 220 million post-secondary students had their studies ended or significantly disrupted".

To mitigate learning loss resulting from school closures, many countries, Nigeria inclusive, introduced emergency digital learning programs. Efforts were directed towards the use of education technology to support access to this remote learning. Virtual and audio classes were held using smartphones, laptops, tabloids, etc., via various digital platforms such as Zoom, Whatsapp, Google classroom, etc. Furthermore, to take learning to the grassroots, teaching via radio and TV stations were also incorporated into the learning programs. It would be noted that the COVID-19 lesson on education revealed that learning can be innovative and digitally accessible. As a matter of fact, it heralded a new normal in the education system through revolutionizing innovations in digital learning. It introduced a paradigm shift in teaching and learning. By extension, it emphasized the indispensability of digital literacy in the affairs of man. Many countries, even in Africa responded to this education disruption in their own innovative ways. They worked together to surmount various challenges to make learning a reality. For instance, Kenya, an African country rapidly innovated and embraced the new normal. In their submission, the World Bank Group (2020: 48) reporting World Bank (2020) has it that "in addition to radio and TV, education programming is made available as both live stream and on-demand content via EduTV Kenya YouTube channel". In addition, the above source also revealed that Kenya Publishers Association, partnering with the government made available free electronic copies of textbooks on the Kenya Education cloud for all students. It is also recorded in the same source that the Kenya Civil Aviation Authority also in partnership with Alphabet Inc and Telkom Kenya "deployed Google's Loon Ballons carrying 4G base stations over Kenyan airspace" (48) which provided internet connection across an 80km diameter area.

In a similar way, Argentina, in April, introduced "Seguimos Educando Program" where students were engaged in educational activities through 14 hours a day of TV content, and 7 hours a day of radio content. (World Bank Group, 2020:21). More so, their ministry of education created the website Educ.ar where collections of on demand digital learning resources such as videos with recorded

teaching activities were made available to the learners. A section of the website is tagged “the class of the day” (Ibid) which contains a daily plan for students’ lessons accessible to them. In addition to their efforts to continue teaching and learning, they equally delivered learning resources to the homes of those who are without access to connectivity and technology. Rwanda and Senegal also encouraged the school administrators and teachers to support learning activities through live lessons or record Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) styled lessons. They also encouraged the use of TV and radio stations for learning activities (gemreportunesco.wordpress.com cited in Nafungo, 2020). Other countries such as France and China equally did their bid to ensure the continuity of education and its accessibility to all, during the COVID-19 lockdown. On the one hand, France, in addition to lending technological devices to students, provided printed assignments to their identified 5% of students without access to internet. While, on the other hand, China provided computers, mobile data packages and telecommunication subsidies to students from low income families. (gemreportunesco.wordpress.com cited in Nafungo, 2020)

Nations, developed, developing and under-developed introduced varying education learning technologies to mitigate the learning loss brought upon them by COVID-19 lockdown of activities. Digital learning became the order of the day. Although there must have been notable challenges in the quest for digital learning, especially in African counties, some of the challenges elicited vital questions. One of which is whether Nigeria, an African country was prepared for such paradigm shift in teaching and learning. Another one is whether Nigeria is or will be prepared for digital learning transformation in her education sector beyond Covid -19. The above are for both the government and appropriate stakeholders to deliberate on.

Nevertheless, the crux of the matter is that prior to the pandemic, some tertiary institutions in Nigeria had commenced the process of incorporating digital learning in their academic schedule. There were concerted and rewarding efforts of training and incorporating digital learning in the Nigerian university system. For

instance, late 2019 and early 2020, the deputy vice chancellor, Research, Development and Innovation (RDI), of the Federal University of Technology Owerri, engaged the lecturers in online teaching presentation and also developed FUTO e-learning App, amongst other things. It is equally recalled that the process of taking off was met with various challenges peculiar to the Nigeria system, the Afrocentric peculiarity.

Be that as it may, this paper argues that in as much as COVID-19 heralded challenges in the education sector, in the course of its paradigm shift in teaching and learning, it is high time, the concerned stakeholders converted these challenges to opportunities. To this end, the paper in its research questions asks: What are the challenges and opportunities of digital learning made prominent by the COVID-19 crisis? To advance this course, what are the modalities of institutionalizing digital learning in tertiary institutions, beyond COVID-19? For the records, most discourses on digital learning and its implementation have always been met with more of pessimism rather than optimism. Researches have even identified and categorized three types of central arguments when it comes to debates on online learning. Anderson (2004) in Pratibha (2020:41) postulates that the argumentative voices inherent in three schools of thought when it comes to such discourses are the Utopians (Advocates), Dystopians (Critics) and the Utilitarians (Skeptics). Exploring these concepts, while the Dystopians and Utopians criticize and hail online learning respectively, the Utilitarians are neutral. The point to note here is that, while the Dystopians focus on the encountered challenges, the Utopians look at the opportunities it heralds and advocate for its use as the latest approach to education.

Responding to all these, this paper features the challenges and opportunities of digital learning buttressed by COVID-19 crisis. Succinctly put, the objective of the study is to highlight the various challenges facing digital learning. It would also highlight the opportunities therein while proposing modalities for incorporating digital learning in government owned tertiary education institutions beyond COVID-19. The paper discoursed that eventually there would be resumption of schools and also a post COVID-19 period. It then

becomes paramount to look beyond these challenges to their opportunities as soon as schools re-open. Just like the Utopians, it envisages the education sector rising above these challenges to embrace the opportunities. The COVID-19 lessons to education remind us to modify the pre-COVID-19 system of education, build towards a technologically driven and accelerated learning. Considering the immediate response outcome of remote learning during the lockdown period, it clearly depicts that we can build upon what we have to make our education system stronger and position it take care of future uncertainties.

The outcome of this study if given due attention would be very relevant and significant to the consolidation and continuity of our education system. It would also be significant to the learners and teachers, for it would better reposition them to participate with their contemporaries in the new world order with wide range of opportunities. The outcome of this study would also be significant to teaching and learning because it would ensure the right blend between offline and online method of education for quality education outcome. Lastly, but probably may not be the least, it would equip stakeholders in the government sector and tertiary education sector with the needed guide towards coming to terms with the Utopians online learning school of thought.

The methodology this study would adopt is the descriptive survey method where there would be an asynchronous analysis and review of related concepts through scholarly and up to date literature sources. The literature and data collection of the study are from published books and journals of good repute, as well as a first hand experienced on the process of digital learning in Federal University of Technology Owerri. It also includes e-books, e-reports of renowned government and private agencies, newspapers, etc.

Review of Related Concepts

The following concepts would be explored in other to elucidate the perspective of this paper. They are: modern pedagogy to education, the concept of e-pedagogy, and digital literacy competence for digital learning.

Digital Literacy Competence for Digital learning

Digital learning is equated with similar terminologies such as e-learning, distance learning, computer assisted learning, online learning, virtual learning, internet learning, online education, blended learning, remote learning, etc. Be that as it may, the underlying fact remains that in all, learning is done from a distance (no physical contact) and via the use of technological facilities. For the purpose of this paper, they would be used interchangeably here.

Digital learning is the new normal in education globally. However, the operational demands of it present numerous challenges to many African countries owing to their peculiarities. Nevertheless, the COVID-19 pandemic has proved that access to digital learning is now a necessity irrespective of one's country or continent. Digital learning entails the incorporation and use of specific digital devices and applications in the pedagogy of education. One must be digitally literate to be capable of using these digital devices and applications in learning processes. By implication, digital literacy is a pre-requisite for teaching and learning on the digital space. If one must acquire digital literacy for productive digital learning, it then behooves on this paper to succinctly expound the concept of digital literacy and competence. Digital literacy is an aspect of literacy that has come to be influential in all facets of human activities. Judging from its usefulness in computer-mediated communications to its pride of place in digital learning, digital literacy is very pivotal to the current education needs in tertiary institutions. Having mentioned that digital literacy is a branch of literacy, it would be appropriate to briefly talk about literacy before we get back on track.

Literacy traditionally denotes the ability to read and write. As a matter of fact, it comprises the acquisition of the skills of reading, listening, speaking, writing and numeracy. This places literacy in tandem with language because reading, writing, speaking and listening constitute the four basic language skills. Well, that is by the way. The Green Paper publication, 2015, has it that, the concept of literacy, "300 years ago meant being an effective public speaker" (7). Therefore, a history of literacy is incomplete without reference to spoken and written language skills for effective communication. The

use of spoken and written means of communication was accompanied by the use of images, visuals to communicate meaning thus yielding the concept of visual literacy. At the heels of visual literacy is the information literacy which was heralded by the need to acquire competencies in the search and evaluation of information on various data bases. Be that as it may, literacy needs of today, as a result of revolutions in technology have presented the world with a dimension of literacy known as digital literacy. Again, since Nwachukwu and Ahumaraeze (2014:6) posit that “literacy is the ability to understand and use a concept to achieve a set goal” therefore, the ability to understand and use digital devices and applications to achieve the set goal of learning in education could be referred to as literacy, in a narrow sense of it, digital literacy.

Defining digital literacy is a phenomenon that is very much contended with. Researchers agree that getting specific and uniform definition has been a nebulous task. Thus a working definition to address research objectives has always emerged (Gillen & Barton, 2010). There are notable notions of digital literacy which would illumine the aims and objectives of this paper. Amongst these, is that given by The National Curriculum Framework for All, (NCF,2012) which states that being digitally literate entails that one would “acquire skills that include confident and critical use of IT for communication, work and leisure” (cited in Green Paper, 2015:7). The critical IT for communication as mentioned would refer to the understanding, creation and communication of digital contents for education purposes. Again, the Norwegian Ministry of Modernization (2005) cited in (Green Paper, 2015:8) also presented the notion of digital literacy as possessing the digital skills which include “the ability to exploit the opportunities offered by ICT and use them critically and innovatively in education and work. The above source further states that “digital skills also include the ability to be critical to source and assess content”. A notable fact in these definitions is that there is the critical evaluation and creation of digital content for work. These cited definitions of digital literacy would also illumine the conceptual framework of this study. Digital literacy as defined by the University of Illinois, cited in Osterman (2012:4) also involves “the

ability to use digital technologies, communication tools or networks to locate, evaluate, use and create information; the ability to understand and use information in multiple formats from a wide range of sources when it is presented via computers; and a person's ability to perform tasks effectively in a digital environment". For quality digital learning, those involved must be digitally literate, so to say, they must possess the ability to critically assess, evaluate, create and consume digital contents for education purposes. Digital literacy as also captured by e-learning department (eLD 2015:10) is "seen as including the more complex skills of understanding and analysis which leads to deciding and selecting the proper digital tools, be they software or hardware, to create a variety of content". This definition further establishes the correlations between digital literacy and digital competence. This is because; it requires not only competence in the use of digital technologies, but also the critical evaluation of digital contents as well as social and ethics of the practice. Reiterating, you require digital literacy for high digital competence. Furthermore, Alex Grech, cited in eLD, 2015:10 put forward what a digitally literate person can do, in other words the various competencies of a digital literate person. They argue that "a digitally literate person can use technology strategically to find and evaluate information, connect and collaborate with others, produce and share original content, and use internet and technology tools to achieve many academic, professional and personal goals". Achieving these goals through digital literacy is the focal point of this study, especially in the sense of the purpose of education attainment.

Digital literacy involves being competent in the critical use of ICT and IT skills in the digital domain. By being digital competent, the e-learning department (eLD) of the Directorate for Quality and Standards in Education (DQSE) in the Ministry for Education and Employment (MEDE) itemized these five areas of digital competence.

- Information: Here, digital competence includes the ability to identify, locate, retrieve, store, organize and analyze digital contents, assessing their relevance and need.
- Communication: Here, digital literacy requires the digital competence for communication in digital space. It also involves linking and collaborating with others in the digital

space, sharing of resources through digital tools, networking and participating in virtual communities.

- **Content-creation:** This involves the creation and editing of digital contents using Ms Word, and other related applications. It also entails producing creative expressions and innovations, media output and programming; knowledge and the application of intellectual property rights and licenses.
- **Safety:** Digital literacy entails the knowledge of data protection, personal and digital identity protection, safe practices and sustainable use, security practices and measures.
- **Problem-Solving:** You have to possess the problem solving capability to be certified digital competent. Such means possessing the ability to creatively use technology, identification of digital needs and resources, solving technical problems, solving conceptual problems, knowing the most appropriate digital tools to use for specific purposes as well as constantly updating one's knowledge and competence. (eLD,2015: 12). There is no gain saying the fact that competence in digital literacy is vital to digital learning in tertiary institutions. Therefore, for a meaningful learning in the digital space, competence in digital literacy is highly required.

To be digitally literate is dimensional. First and foremost, it involves the capacity to identify and effectively use various technological gadgets to navigate the digital space. The gadgets include smart phones, laptops etc. again, it also involves the mastery of locating, identifying and evaluating the relevance and authority of digital contents. In addition, one must be digitally literate enough to critically interpreted and communicate the located contents. There must be a great skill demonstrated in presenting located contents. In digital communication of contents, Paul, Spires and Kerkhoff (2017:6) reporting Thompson state that curating is a needed skill here. Curate as opined by Paul, et al means “to pull together, sift through, select for presentation”, (6). In this, digital literacy is stipulated to involve the ability to surf the net, identify relevant content and analyze them for effective learning. O' Byrne (2012), further reveals that, the ability to curate digital contents contribute towards making learners critical

readers. Another dimension to digital literacy comes in the ability to create digital contents. It is certain that by being able to curate and communicate digital contents. One should be conversant with digital contents creation. Digital contents creation is easily carried out “through multiple media and a variety of Web 2.0 tools” (Paul et al, 2015:5). It is vital to note here that digital literacy is a necessary skill required for online education by not only learners but also teachers as well.

Digital learning requires digital literacy for a productive output. Learning via the digital space promotes creative learning where the students are turned learners and the teachers turned mentors. Teachers as mentors stimulate the learner’s interests and curiosity. They motivate and encourage them to discover their academic potentials by themselves in a most interesting and rewarding experience. In consonance with the above, Paul, et al has it that digital resources enable teachers “to spend more time facilitating student learning and less time lecturing” (2017:5). Digital learning can be adjudged to walk hand in glove with digital literacy. Being literate on the digital tools, applications and spaces enhances quality virtual learning. You must be digitally literate to experience productive digital learning. In conclusion, digital literacy involves the knowledge and incorporation of the mentioned dimensions of digital literacy for productive digital learning in the education system. To this end, digital literacy would be defined here as the attainment of a great level of competence in the use of digital devices and applications to critically curate as well as create digital contents for optimal success in digital learning. While, digital learning is equally conceptualized here as teaching and learning via the online / virtual platforms.

Modern Pedagogy to Education: The Concept of E-Pedagogy

This section would illumine the concept of education, situating it as a formal process of knowledge acquisition. As a formal process, the fact that it involves three things Viz-a-viz content, pedagogy and assessment is brought to fore, with emphasis on pedagogy as it relates to technology and digital learning.

The comprehension of education as a concept basically involves the knowledge of three indices which include: education as a subject, education as knowledge and education as a process. Education as knowledge refers to a particular level of knowledge someone attains, a certain degree, for instance education up to the Master's level. As a subject, education is talked about in the sense of a discipline or course of study in any tertiary institution. In addition as a process, it entails the systematic order of learning which involves pedagogy and a curriculum. These indices play their roles in any discourse on the meaning and definition of the concept education. However, for this paper, education defined as a process is ideal to achieve its objectives. John Dewey's notion of education directly captures it as a process. Education as defined by Dewey is "the development of all those capacities in the individual which will enable him control his environment and fulfill his possibilities", (Kumar and Ahmad, 2019:2). By implication the above definition refers to education which is that process of giving an individual the requisite training with which to develop himself and take charge of his environment. According to Aristotle, the famous western philosopher, "education is the process of training man to fulfill his aim by exercising all the faculties to the fullest extent as a member of society", (Saeed, n.d). Agwuocha (2019:262) posits that "education entails the acquisition of knowledge with which to improve the existence of man and the environment". As a process, Agwuocha (ibid) still maintains that to acquire education "requires going through a formal process, a stipulated procedure". Such formal process comes with defined pedagogical approach to learning. For Smith, (2019), education is a "deliberate process of drawing out learning (educere), of encouraging and giving time to discover"

Education evokes diverse notions to diverse people. For the idealists, it is a means to attaining spiritual development. The pragmatists perceive it as "a process of social progress" (Kumar & Ahmad, 2019:3). In all, the above authors defined education as "a purposive, conscious or unconscious, psychological, sociology, scientific and philosophical process which brings about the development of the individual to the fullest extent and also the

maximum development of the society in a way that both enjoy maximum happiness and prosperity” (3). In as much as this definition tries to capture a whole lot in a swoop, its major preoccupation reveals that education is a process of developing the individual for his prosperity and that of the society. For this paper, education would simply be viewed as the formal and systematic process of knowledge acquisition in any online or offline classroom setting where an individual is equipped to actualize personal growth and contribute meaningfully to the society.

The search for a universal definition of education is a continuous one. Philosophers, pragmatists, educationists, linguists, economist as well as various great thinkers would also always tailor the definition to their research objectives, thus giving rise to diverse notable definitions. Be that as it may, education is very necessary to the development of an individual and the society at large. It is a very vital aspect and goal of any human civilization and national development. The process of education attainment is followed properly. It has stipulated approaches, methods and curricular which culminate in the achievement of set objectives. In the education process, there are three things involved. They are content, pedagogy and assessment.

Pedagogy can be seen as the vehicle for the propagation of the content of education and eventual assessment. It is very essential to achieving the goals of education. According to Persaud (2019), pedagogy evolved from a Greek word which literally denotes “the art of teaching children”. Pedagogy means the theory and practice of educational system. For Cole, it “comes down to teaching methods”. Meanwhile, Persaud (opcit) opines that, it does not necessarily relate to the materials used in teaching, rather, it is about “the process and the strategy adopted to lead to the achievement of meaningful cognitive learning”. Pedagogy refers to the diverse approaches to learning in education. It involves the inculcation of skills and approaches to learning usually modeled after particular times and events. This is to say that pedagogy approach to education evolves. Pedagogical approach to education defines best processes of inculcating learning to students. It is about adapting learning tools,

learning styles, learning processes and approaches which work best in achieving teaching objectives. Generally, pedagogy refers to the simplest approach to the breakdown of concepts for the learners' easy assimilation and connection of learnt concepts to solve real world problems. However, as an evolving phenomenon, the content, context of use and understanding of pedagogy has changed with time. The 21st century which is synonymous with digital/internet age played an important role in this new normal of pedagogy in education. It has brought about modern changes in skills and nature of teaching which connote modernity. It has evolved to include digitalization of education, online learning as well as technologically influenced learning. Modern pedagogy practices and approaches to education gave rise to the concept of e-pedagogy.

According to Baldins (2016), in pedagogical practices, “e-pedagogy is understood as a branch of pedagogy which studies and develops learning technologies, and improves didactic approaches to a successful technological application”. Furthermore, Salmons, W (2009) as cited in Baldins (2016) defines e-pedagogy as “teaching and learning strategies developed specifically for online and/or blended environments”. By implications, e-pedagogy includes the understanding and working with digital technologies, multimedia, virtual platforms and applications in fulfilling the goals of education. There are notable differences between pedagogy of the 20th century and that of the 21st century. Mynbayeva, Sadvakassova and Akshalova, (2017), opine that “the most observable phenomenon is now the internetization of society and the penetration of digital technologies into learning” Online learning has become the order of the day, the new normal which has brought about change in the traditional classroom setting. Aptly captured, the above authors (2017: 3.3) opine that “in the modern school, we observe serious introduction of multimedia in the educational environment”. The assertion of Cole (2019) succinctly captures the dimension of technology being explored here. In the above, pedagogy in teaching/education “can either be teacher centred or learner centred with low-tech or high-tech approach”. While explicating these concepts, Cole (ibid) asserts that in the student-centre learning, the student becomes an active

participant in the learning process. This aligns with the online learning activities where the student assumes the learner role while the teacher assumes the mentor role. The above author still posit that the high-tech and low-tech approaches refer to how much technology a teacher uses to help teach the content. High-tech includes the use of Google suite, personal devices, web quests and Apps, while Low-tech is more paper-based like worksheets and hands-on projects, Cole (ibid) stated.

The world as a global village is evolving and thus, learning processes have evolved in response to the digital learning. Following this trend, modern pedagogy ensures the ability of the students to learn more independently with the aid of technology and internet. It invariably ensures that educators use new forms of technology to teach, which includes the use of visuals, pictorials, animation, chart, video, audio, and slides. This is the new normal in teaching and learning which the world has come to its reawakening. This paper, as a matter of fact, posits that the modern pedagogy approach to education involves the interaction between teachers and learners beyond the confines of the traditional classroom, which is digitally influenced. It further argues that the future of education is fast knocking on our doors, bringing home the realities of using online/virtual platform and applications in the pedagogy of education. These digital processes, as Persaud (2019) has it, make it easier for teachers to track learning activities and actively play their mentorship role. Having critically examined the above concept in relation to the aim of the paper, it then behooves on it to reiterate that for a 21st century education, following the times and events which unfold, the pedagogy approach to education must be modified. The concept of e-pedagogy should be revolutionized because e-pedagogy is vital to digital learning.

Theoretical Framework: Connectivist Theory for Online Learning

As a guiding principle, the tenets of this theory would greatly illumine the needs as well as the processes and technicalities of incorporating digital learning in tertiary education system.

The connectivist theory or connectivism is amongst the theories of learning receiving recent scholarly attention. (Siemens, 2004; Downes, 2006 and Ally, 2008). It is a theory proposed to equip learners with the requisite ability to function in a digitalized and networked age. Downes opines that it is a theory of learning that is online specific, while Ally (2008:34) reporting Siemens posits that it is a theory “for the digital age where individuals learn and work in a networked environment”. In all these, the theory could be deduced as a theory for the age of digital learning which put forward the requisite digital skills for developing digital contents for education advancement in a globalized and networked era.

As put forward in Ally, Siemens put forward these guidelines in support of online learning which are based on connectivism theory. They include:

- Because of the information explosion, learners should be allowed to explore and research current information. Learners of the future need to be autonomous and independent learners so that they can acquire current information to build a valid and accurate knowledge base. Appropriate use of the Internet is an ideal learning strategy in a networked world.
- Some information and procedures become obsolete because of changes in the field and innovation; learners must therefore be able to unlearn old information and mental models and learn current information and mental models. The information that is valid today may not be valid tomorrow.
- The rapid increase of information available from a variety of sources means that some information is not as important or genuine as other information. As a result, the learner must be able to identify important information from unimportant information.
- Learners must have the ability to recognize what knowledge is no longer valid so they can acquire the new knowledge for a discipline. This requires that learners keep up-to-date in the field and be active participants in the network of learning.
- Because of globalization, information is not location-specific, and with the increasing use of telecommunication, technologies

experts and learners from around the world can share and review information. Learning and knowledge rests in a diversity of opinions. As a result, learners must be allowed to connect with others around the world to examine others' opinions and to share their thinking with the world. Mobile learning promises to help learners function in a networked world where they can learn at any time and from anywhere. (2008: 34-35)

Challenges of Digital Learning in Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria

In practice, the offshoot of a new thing always meets with a lot of challenges. It would invariably be the case with the incorporation of digital learning in the education system in Nigeria. The digital learning that took place at the peak of COVID-19 lockdown exposed certain realities about digital learning in Nigeria. The first is that it proved that remote learning is achievable in our education system. Second, is that it exposed the challenges facing the success of online learning thereby re-directing stakeholders to the drawing board on the strategies of surmounting the experienced challenges. Prior to the pandemic, the nation was already faced with challenges on her quest to making giant strides in the education attainment for all. Such included lack of adequate financing, infrastructural decay as well as cultural bias on the need to attain education. However, with the attendant closure of schools, and temporary switch to online learning by specific sectors of the education system, came several challenges which became glaring for all to see and thus resolve to address. Notable amongst these challenges are:

Digital illiteracy and the Dystopian mentality: Lack of appreciable level of digital literacy acquired by learners and teachers is a major challenge to digital learning in tertiary institutions. Digital literacy does not end at navigating the internet for information seeking and sharing. Rather, it demands the ability to effectively and efficiently select the appropriate digital tools and applications to critically evaluate, curate, innovate and communicate digital contents. Certain questions are directed to instances where participants are adjudged digitally literate. They include: how many of the teachers are attuned

to the creation of digital contents using web 2.0 tools and multiple media? The Screencast-o-matic application is one of the vital applications for uploading lecture slides, how conversant are teachers with how it is run? How up to date are they with safety practices and security measures which ensure the protection of data and digital identity? Teachers might be literate in MsWord, Excel, Power point, etc., how effortlessly do we use them to innovate and prepare our teaching for lucid interpretation of concepts? These rhetoric questions go a long way to reveal how digitally literate we are in handling digital learning. Again, amongst the learners and teachers are those who may be classified as the dystopians. The dystopians otherwise known as the critics, according to Pratibha (2020:41) see the negative sides and consequences of online learning. They dwell more on its challenges rather than opportunities. They see it as not being feasible. It is certain that we have amongst the stakeholders in this course those who constitute the dystopian category. They only sight the challenges of digital learning in education and decide to stop or dissuade any progress in that line.

Nevertheless, for effective online learning, teachers and learners need to be constantly trained and re-trained. During digital learning, projects and assignments are given to students. Their inability to curate digital contents in response to the demands of such tasks is manifested. Therefore, training and re-training would address the needs of digital literacy as well as the psychological need of re-directing the mindset of the participant from being ‘dystopians’ and ‘Utilitarians’ to becoming ‘Utopians’. During a webinar organized by ORF of Mumbai chapter on the topic- “the explosion of online education in India during the Covid-19 pandemic: What have we learnt?” Sahana Murthy, a professor from the Interdisciplinary Programme in Education, IIT Bombay made useful statements. Her presentation supported the need for training the teachers in effective online teaching. According to Murthy (2020), Prof Sahana explained that “for online teaching, along with the requirement of tools such as online platforms, one needs access as well as trained teachers”. Similarly, Dr Fernandes, Ashwin during his own session as captured in Murthy (2020) maintains that there is the need to “enable a shift in

mindset towards online teaching and learning and conduct a robust training for faculty and students on ed-tech tools”. Hence, in addition to training and re-training, changing their mindset to do away with pessimism, leave their comfort zone to embrace this all important new normal is very crucial for change is forever constant.

Non-reliable internet connections and low internet speed: Virtual learning requires the use of internet connections to navigate the digital space. Besides connecting to the web, the speed at which the network serves the user is very important and would be useful for e-learning. However, unreliable internet connections and very snail-like speed of the connections are the hallmark of internet service providers in Nigeria. According to nigerianfinder.com, these internet service providers commonly used to browse in Nigeria has the following internet speed, MTN Nigeria has 8.73 Mbps while GLOBACOM LIMITED has 5.48 Mbps. EMTS LIMITED/ ETISALAT Nigeria has 4.96 Mbps, while GLOBACOM LTD has 2.40 Mbps. COOL LINK has 6.46 Mbps, while VODACOM BUSINESS Nigeria has 6.87 Mbps and SPECTRANET has 7.74 Mbps. This record is against more than 25 Mbps internet speed seen in countries like South Korea, Sweden, Japan and USA, Pratibha (2020) reports.

Furthermore, the Cable, a UK-based price comparison website cited in Adesoji (2019) opined that Nigeria’s internet download speed is ranked 176th of 207 countries measured in the world. It is stated to be one of the lowest in the world and it took a down turn from 95th in 2017 to 176th in 2019. To illumine the low internet speed peculiarity of African countries, the above author while reporting Cable reveals that amongst the top 50 countries with fastest internet speed, only one is an African country, while amongst the 50 slowest, 25 of them are African countries. The slow internet speed rate if not checked can defeat the opportunity of digital learning in Nigerian tertiary institutions beyond COVID-19. Account has it that Nigeria rank 7th on the highest number of internet users in the world list (Adesoji, July 16, 2019). Quoting the internet world stats, the above author has it that Nigeria’s total internet users stood at 111.6 million out of about 200 million Nigerians, as at March, 2019. Although, this is low if

compared with the level of internet penetration in the world. The point of note here is that the above reading would lead to the realization that with majority of the country's population using internet facilities, it would help achieve the goal of digital learning as proposed here.

Data price seems not to be a problem in all these, because out of 6,313 mobile data plans in 230 countries reported by the Cable; Nigeria is amongst the African countries with the cheapest mobile data subscription rates, (Adesoji, March, 2019). The record has it that Nigeria 11th out of the 57 African countries with low data prices. It has an average price of \$2.22 for 1GB. Even though, this record for the sake of digital learning needs to be improved. Besides its benefit to the education sector, the economy would still gain, for the more people to connect to the internet, the greater the ICT sector's contribution to the country's GDP.

Be that as it may, the telecommunication service providers should take cognizance of the already teeming population of internet users which would still increase with the digitalization of education and thereby improve on service delivery. More so, there is need for the Nigerian Communication Commission (NCC) to rise up and ensure that internet consumers get the value of their money on data purchase.

Poor power supply and high electricity tariff: Although lack of electricity or epileptic power supply is a common occurrence in low and middle income countries which Nigeria is inclusive. Just as Mcdonnell (2019) citing a UN's report says, 840 million people are without access to reliable electricity, and most of these people are in Africa, live in rural areas and out of the installed power grid circumference. Nigeria, a country with the requisite strength to provide stable electricity supply unfortunately is unable to do so. The above is evident in USAID (2020) which has it that Nigeria is endowed with large oil, gas, hydro and solar resource and it already has potential to generate 12.522 mega-watts (mw) of electric power from existing plants, but most days is only aide to generate around 4,000 mw. With the digital learning, this record, if not improved would pose a serious challenge to the process. More so, James-

Igbinadolor of This Day newspaper reports that “some 55 percent of the population has no access to electricity”. The above author citing a 2015 report by GIZ has it that “2700 MW of power generation capabilities are regularly lost due to gas constraints in a country with one of the largest gas deposits in the world. Up to 500mw are lost due to the line constraints. Perhaps the stakeholders and authorities in the power sector should look into this statistics and look for a way out of the problem.

In Nigeria as well as most African countries, lack of adequate power supply has been an issue. Power generated through electricity or generator is required to give operational energy to the digital devices. However, learners and teachers face the problem of irregular power supply. This affects the ability to give quality attention and sustain digital learning and teaching. The need for regular power supply in education sector has been demonstrated, should there be another pandemic or any other event capable of disrupting education activities, the nation might be faced with the dire consequences of having idle minds that would possibly constitute security threat to the nation.

Lack of quality digital/technological facilities: The ability of teachers to innovate during digital teaching and that of the students during learning is dependent upon the availability of technological facilities. The facilities meant here include but not limited to smart phone, laptops, desktops, modern, printer, projector, pointer, interactive board, conference room and digital camera. Digital learning requires not just the availability of these facilities but also the best quality of them for optional function. Where this is not the case, digital learning becomes unachievable. One can posit here that majority of the teachers have smart phones, however, the question is how reliable and digital learning compliant are these tools when it comes to using them to prepare lectures? Even though, students of the tertiary institution embrace technology faster, however, this may only be in the ownership of smart phones. Of course, Nwachukwu and Ahumaraeze (2014:9) in their empirical study discovered that 80% of the study respondents agreed to the ownership of mobile phones

which they use for browsing. Nevertheless, the fact remains that lack of fund would surely inhibit access to reliable and quality smart phones, as well as other facilities like laptop, desktop, etc. Just like Hamilton-Ekeke and Mbachu (2015:10) in their study assert, students are financially unable to buy personal laptops which grossly affected e-learning. Similarly, in Nwachukwu and Ahumaraeze (2014:9), only 25% of the total number of respondents who are students agreed to the ownership of laptop for learning. Be that as it may, learners and teachers to a great extent lack the required digital facilities for quality digital learning.

Challenge of funding: The education sector has always suffered the challenge of adequate funding when it comes to infrastructural development to realize set objectives. In the same vein, for a productive and quality digital learning, tertiary institutions require adequate funds to set in motion several modalities for e-learning. This also includes funds for meaningful and productive collaboration amongst institutions in and around the world. Lack of adequate funding of the education sector remains a major challenge to the incorporation of digital learning into the tertiary education curriculum. For smooth operation of digital learning, amongst other things, there should be construction and equipping of digital learning centres, which would require adequate funds.

Challenge of assessment modalities: Besides content and pedagogy, assessment is crucial in the education attainment process. Method of ensuring quality assessment of students during online learning may not be familiar to the learners as well as teachers. Critically, these questions need to be addressed. How should learners be assessed? How should quality and fair assessment be ensured? How should the evaluation marks be allotted? These questions constitute part of the challenge which needs to be addressed in implementing digital learning. More so, the fact that both learners and teachers are digitally illiterate or semi-literate in the use of digital facilities in education would affect assessment processes and modalities.

Opportunities of Digital Learning in Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria

Technology has always been a blazing force behind sustainable progress and development globally. Its revolution in the 21st century has been felt in the mainstream of education. With the lockdown of education activities as part of the safety measures to curb the spread of the virus, a paradigm shift in teaching and learning is imperative. It is necessary to run offline classes with online classes. Despite the challenges encountered during this process which are peculiar to Africa nations, the opportunities presented evokes the bigger need for digital learning in tertiary institutions today. Just as Pratibha (2020:41) citing Anderson (2004) recounts, amongst the three types of central arguments for online learning, the Utopians recognize these inherent opportunities. They are optimistic about such paradigm shift and thus advocate its incorporation into the education system. We live in a technologically driven world; hence the afro-centric induced cling to the traditional classroom method of teaching should be reformed. To achieve this, the dystopians should reckon with the fact that the world of technology and digital communication is a moving train, which without hesitation leaves the unprepared behind. More so, technology has brought faster and improved ways of doing things, consequently digital learning in tertiary education would herald several opportunities and gains. This study put forward some of these opportunities.

Accessible teaching and learning at convenience and space: Digital learning, in its asynchronous mode gives room for learning at one's convenience and space. In this process, teachers prepare their course contents which they upload online on designated platforms. First and foremost, learners are able to access and have a direct experience of the teaching from the lecturer. It would minimize the issue of learners missing their lecturers due to unavoidable circumstances. Secondly, learners can learn from the comfort of their homes, at their own space, in a favourable environment. This addresses the classroom environment peculiar to Nigeria tertiary institutions. It would also yield greater comprehension and assimilation. Just as Cole (2019)

opines, digital learning enables learners and teachers to collapse time and space. This implies that there is easy access to teaching and learning at any time and from any place.

Learning reinforcement: Again, in asynchronous digital learning, learning materials, lecture contents are sent online for learners to access at any time. At this instance, learners are at the liberty to access lecture contents and listen to them severally for greater understanding. Learners are able to learn, re-learn and re-in force their learning when education is digitalized.

Quality content delivery and monitoring of lectures: Digital learning ensures quality and up to date delivery of education content. A lecturer whose lecture would be delivered virtually or uploaded online would painstakingly leave no stone unturned in the preparation and teaching of course contents. It would bring back on track lecturers who deviate unnecessarily from the learning objectives during lectures. A constituted quality assurance units in all departments would be able to monitor teaching processes and ensure quality lecture and effective time management. The fact that digital learning, be it synchronous or asynchronous can be monitored would mandate the lecturers to do extensive research, innovate and deliver current findings in their subject areas. The various innovations in the use of digital devices and applications to create charts, pictorials, symbols, illustrations etc., would greatly ensure content quality and an engaging experience.

Digital learning turns teachers to mentors and students to learners: Another good opportunity of online learning is that in the process, teachers play the role of mentors while students, the role of learners. By being mentors, teachers stimulate the learners' interest, motivate and encourage them. All these are obtainable in the opportunity they have to interact discuss and attend to students questions that are of educational benefits beyond teaching hours.

Digital citizenship: Digital citizenship is fast becoming the hallmark of every literate person. Digitalization of education would ensure that participants compulsorily acquire digital literacy skills which, besides their educational needs, would equip them with the wherewithal for a new world of opportunities. Just as Digital Literacy, (2015), asserts “digital literacy is essential if we want our citizens to participate in today’s modern world”. Digital learning would expose participants to the academic networking, webinar, e-conference preparation and participation and so on. It would surely bridge the digital divide between Nigerian students, teachers and their counterparts globally. Many researchers are of similar opinion that teachers who are highly digitally literate engage in all digital resources obtainable to enrich the learners learning experience. In their submission, Kenya Education Network (KENET, 2020) posits that “when teachers are digitally literate, highly order thinking skills become evident in the students”. Therefore, digital learning provides the participants the opportunity of acquiring digital literacy, for with such skill, learning outcome would be greatly enhanced.

Completion of course content/outline: In tertiary institutions, sometimes, lecturers battle against odds to cover stipulated course outline. There are usually the learner/teacher unforeseen factors militating against such. There is also the problem of inadequate time allotted to various courses with high units which makes finishing such courses contents impossible. Inadequate infrastructure has always been a major problem facing the education sector which result to lack of lecture venues and halls for learning. Lack of lecture halls for specific class size of students, at the allotted time hinder the completion of course contents in some cases. If digital learning is implemented, teachers should be able to navigate through this problem as they would conveniently and at the required pace prepare and teach students. In the asynchronous learning situation, course contents can be prepared and delivered before their appropriate time, and learners access them at their space.

Opportunities for distant learning as well as local and international collaboration: With full implementation of online learning for some courses, opportunities to have distant learners would be opened. Institutions both in Nigeria and beyond can collaborate and run some programmes. Besides the increase in the internally generated revenue from the distant learners, teachers and learners would benefit academically as knowledge, pedagogical approach, syllabus and assessment modalities would be shared amongst collaborating institutions. Already Ahmed and Nwagwu (2006:4) discovered in their research on e-learning that “new forms of local and international collaboration are starting to emerge among countries and private and public sector agencies in Africa for the purpose of educational development”. The collaboration between Kenya and United States in the form of KENET was used to buttress this fact. Local or international collaboration can be done through the establishment of remote satellite campuses and twinning. Twinning means the agreement by institutions in different countries to offer joint academic program. It came from the concept ‘twin’, two institutes act as a team to run the same programme, and the programme is in two parts, each part being offered in either of the institution. The partnership could also involve franchising. Just as Ahmed and Nwagwu (2006) stipulated, franchising is a sort of arrangement where an institution may be in United States approves the partnership of another institution in another country, to offer certain educational programmes. Suffice it to say that reputable institutions can decide to accredit and approve the teaching of some of their courses to upcoming universities. Such partnership would greatly impact the status and standard of the upcoming universities.

Continuity of learning in the event of unpredicted circumstances: The last but definitely not the least in the numerous opportunities of digitalizing education in Nigeria is the continuity of the academic calendar whenever it is needed. Digital learning if incorporated into the tertiary education would enable teaching and learning to be continued in the face of future pandemics or other unforeseen circumstances. Digital learning is definitely the way forward in

tertiary education in Nigeria which COVID-19 lessons reaffirm. We would not need to worry about the disruption of academic calendar and by extension the meaningful engagement of the youths in the case of future pandemic. Having itemized a few out of the numerous opportunities which online learning would herald, the next section would briefly propose modalities for institutionalizing digital learning in tertiary education.

Proposed Modalities for Incorporating Digital Learning in Tertiary Institutions

Although proposing the modalities for incorporating digital learning is outside the purview of this study, however, the need to briefly state them here has been identified. It is very necessary, considering the global trend of ‘technovation’ (technology and innovation) in education and the possibility of future pandemics, the future of education in Nigeria needs to be secured. As a matter of fact, the significance of this study if probably taken cognizance of, would require these modalities as guide towards achieving digital learning in tertiary education. To this end, the following dimensions to it are brought to fore. They include: Human capacity structure, institutionalizing and funding of e-learning centres, curriculum development (course content) and course evaluation) pedagogy and funding.

Human Capacity Structure: By this, the study proposes the constitution of bodies with the requisite expertise to plan and execute the project. This constituted authority would oversee and bring to fruition the goal of the other mentioned dimensions viz-a-viz institution of e-learning centres, curriculum development etc. They would ensure an enabling environment in tertiary institutions for online education to thrive in.

Institution and funding of e-learning centres: Reiterating, the major challenge facing the education industry has been poor funding which has always affected infrastructural development within the sector. In the case of online education, there would definitely be the need for

human capacity development, facilities and structures to run the programme. For instance, e-learning centres need to be built; their offices and laboratories also require equipment etc. In addition, there should be human capacity development which requires training and retraining of teachers etc. More so, the issues of digital facilities, broadband, power supply and so on would be taken care of. These require funds to be established. Digital learning has many prospects; however, it requires a great level of commitment in the infrastructural development and capacity building which requires fund. The government, concerned agencies and good spirited individuals as a matter of responsibility should brace up to the challenge and set the ship sailing smoothly.

Curriculum development (Course content and evaluation): For e-learning, there need to be e-curriculum so to say. The course content and evaluation parameters of various courses require reformation to suit the e-learning purpose for quality outcome. Since the study suggests that for a start, online learning can run simultaneously with offline learning, courses which require laboratory experiments can be taking offline. Those without such in their content can go online. It is essential to really develop online education curriculum. In addition to this, the assessment modalities should also be modified. The study proposes the allocation of stipulated percentages of the required grade to offline and online modes respectively. For instance, on the one hand, out of a 100% score, 50% can be allotted to exam, further divided into 30% for theory and 20% for practical. On the other hand, 50% can be for continuous assessment broken down to 30% online Projects, quiz, assignment and 20% offline submission of practical and essay questions.

Pedagogy: As stated previously, digital learning requires the incorporation of e-pedagogy in its teaching. Consequently, in addition to the guidelines for developing online learning materials as proposed by connectivism theory, the act and practice of using digital devices and application to teach and evaluate learners should be stipulated and used forthwith.

Funding: The beginning of a worthwhile venture is usually met with challenges which finance is a crucial part of. Funding of digital learning can be sourced from three possible angles. Firstly, telecommunication industries, network providers as well as digital facilities merchants should as a matter of their social service responsibilities support institutions with funds for e-learning. Their support can equally come in zero tariff of network to designated areas and packages, and/or at reduced costs of digital facilities. Secondly, good spirited individuals, philanthropists, companies etc. can donate structures and facilities for the good course of e-education. Thirdly government in their responsibility should allocate more funds to the education industry. They can also make and implement laws that would mandate and monitor concerned sectors to live up to their social services responsibilities. The nation stands a lot to gain from incorporating digital learning into the education system. Besides, digital learning would also equip learners with the requisite digital skills with which to contribute positively to these sectors and thus move the nation's development indices upward.

Conclusion

Globally, educators demonstrated commendable resilience and technological innovation in the face of total lockdown of activities and subsequent school closure orchestrated by the COVID-19 pandemic. To mitigate its effect on the academic calendar, there was a paradigm shift in teaching and learning across the globe, African nations inclusive. Online learning became the new normal in the education sector, even though there were challenges encountered in the process which hitherto had been there. However, the process if not for any other gain, demonstrated the need and urgency in incorporating digital learning just as it is done in most western world. Every challenge herald opportunity, it became imperative for optimistic stakeholders in the various scheme of affairs to convert these challenges to opportunities. Beyond COVID-19, educators need to harness the opportunity brought by COVID-19 to reposition the education system for continuity of academic calendar in the face of future pandemics and also to join the globe to embrace the new normal. This study

therefore noted the need to digitalize learning in government tertiary institutions in Nigeria beyond COVID-19. To advance its course, it demonstrated the fact that at some point in the future, literacy definition might change; unless you are digitally literate, you would not be called literate, for you might not be able to participate in the modern world. The study further stated that for digital learning, competence in digital literacy is highly required. Digital learning strives effectively when one is digitally literate. Consequently, the study examined the concept of digital literacy and digital literacy competence and brought to fore their bearing on digital learning, e-pedagogy and e-learning materials put forward by the theory of connectivism.

Subsequently, the study highlighted surmountable challenges to digital learning. Some of them included digital illiteracy and the dystopian mentality, challenge of access to reliable and affordable internet connections, poor power supply, quality assessment modalities and funding for infrastructure and facilities, etc. However, just as the Utopian's central argument on online learning posit, the study looked beyond these challenges to highlight the numerous opportunities derivable from the process. For clarity here, digital learning as the new normal is not advocated as a substitute to direct face to face teaching and learning. It is rather suggested that the offline should for a start be complemented with online learning pending when the institutions would be fully equipped in all ramifications to host online degrees. Simply put, online education should complement offline teaching and learning for it has numerous opportunities and potential of enhancing learning outcomes. The opportunities include making learning remotely accessible to learners at their convenience and space, as well as partnerships with and amongst institutions of national and international repute. It would also make way for continuity of academic activities in the event of future pandemics or otherwise. Furthermore, the paper also x-rayed that digital learning can be both synchronous and asynchronous for quality learning outcome. While we cannot totally do away with offline learning method which involves the association with contemporaries and the school environment designed to nurture critical thinking and

learning, the prospects of online education should still be harnessed to position our graduates to compete favourably in a technologically driven world and economy.

To demonstrate the urgency of this course, in addition to the challenges and opportunities of digital learning put forward here, five-point modalities for the commencement of digital learning in tertiary institutions were proposed. The key lesson from the COVID-19 pandemic for us the educators to take home is that digital learning cannot be divorced from the future of education. It is thus timely to give a serious thought and action to digital learning in tertiary institution beyond COVID-19. The rapid spread of 2019 Coronavirus disease demonstrated the need to be resilient and technologically proactive. The challenges it heralded during paradigm shift in teaching and learning should be turned to opportunities. Even though, digital learning is not widespread however, there have been exponential growths in the number of African countries resorting to its innovation and adoption. Therefore, the paper concludes that the tertiary education system in Nigeria should join the moving train all over the world and incorporate digital learning into their academic curriculum.

Recommendation

Following the urgency in the digitalization of learning in tertiary education system, this study therefore gives the following recommendations.

- The government and concerned bodies should properly fund the education system for such projects.
- Digital learning centres should be instituted in all government tertiary institutions where logistics of online learning would be addressed.
- Human capital development in the form of training and re-training of teachers should be solely or partly sponsored by the government.
- Digital devices, interactive technologies and tools should also be provided free or at a discount rate to the students and teachers.

- Free browsing access to all education platforms for students and teachers of tertiary education should be provided. Where the burden might be too much, considering the effect on the economy, telecommunication industries can be mandated as part of their social services to reduce the browsing rates for users. In addition, the internet browsing speed rate should be improved.
- Regular and improved voltage of the electricity supply should be given especially in tertiary institutions environment. In addition researches by institutions on the provision of alternate power supply should be funded and made a reality.
- Quality assurance units should be properly trained and equipped for effective monitoring of learning activities and assessment of learners.

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ICT SKILLS REQUIRED BY TEACHERS FOR EFFECTIVE TEACHING OF BASIC ELECTRONICS TO STUDENTS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS DURING AND AFTER COVID-19 PANDEMIC IN MAINLAND LGA OF LAGOS STATE

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Abstract

This study was carried to determine the ICT skills required by teachers for effective teaching of basic electronics to students in secondary schools during and after covid-19 pandemic in mainland LGA of Lagos State. Three research questions guided the study. Descriptive research design was adopted for the study. The population for the study was 67 teachers purposively chosen from colleges, polytechnics and universities in Lagos State. A – 30 item questionnaire was developed for gathering data. The questionnaire was validated by three Experts. Cronbach alpha reliability method was used to determine the internal consistency of the instrument, reliability coefficient value of 0.85 was obtained. Sixty seven copies of the questionnaire were administered and retrieved from the respondents. Mean and standard deviation were used for data analysis. The result showed that; 13 ICT skills are required by Teachers to operate computer for the effective teaching of Basic Electronics, 8 ICT skills are required by Teachers to access internet for effective teaching of basic Electronics and 9 ICT skills are required by Teachers to solve some computer problems for effective teaching of basic Electronics. It was recommended that all the identified skills should be packaged into a training

programme and be utilized in retraining the teachers of Basic Electronics through workshops and seminars.

Keywords: *ICT, Skill Teachers, Basic Electronics, Covid-19*

Introduction

Coronavirus also known as COVID-19 can be defined as an illness caused by a novel virus. It is severe and acute respiratory syndrome. It was first discovered as an outbreak amidst respiratory illness cases in Wuhan city, Hubei Province, China (CDC, 2019). WHO declared the outbreak the outbreak of COVID-19 a world health emergency on 30th of January, 2020 (Gallegos, 2020; Ramzy, 2020). Coronavirus disease is an infection which is as a result of a novel severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) (Zhong, Luo, Li, Zhang, Liu and Li, 2020). Coronavirus has resulted to total shutting of schools in about 213 countries all over the world with 91.4% of the total enrolled learners in these countries momentarily mandatory out of school (UNESCO, 2020). It is reported that 1.6 billion students transversely the world which are presently obliged to stay out of schools as social distancing is being enforced around the world so as to enclose the extend of coronavirus. Lockdown of schools is important in some continents such as: Africa, South America and some parts of Europe (UNESCO, 2020). Africa is one of the continents which educational system have been typically affected by the deadly disease as more than 98% of teaching and learning cannot be possible due to lockdown of the country. In shutting of schools across sub-Sahara Africa, 91 percent of learners that are affected are primary and secondary school learners (Anifowoshe, Aborede, Ayodele, Akinjo, Iretiayo and Ogunjemilua, 2020). Ngogi (2020) said that long period of learning would be lost for as long as the closures lasted because more cases are recorded daily. Keki and Miladinovic (2016) note that schools are losing long period of learning because of coronavirus outbreak. The temporal damage is disruption of curriculum which could take a long time to be

recovered while the big problem is that some students may never resume to school even when the outbreak is no more.

UNESCO reported that 89% of students in sub Saharan do not have right to use home computers and 82% do not have access to internet. Digital Global Overview Report (2020) reported that about 60 percent of people from Nigeria do not have access to the internet. According to the report, around 169.2 million people, 83 percent of Nigeria have right of entry to mobile phone connections. Therefore Information and communication will play a vital role during and after covid 19. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) defined as a diverse set of technological tools and resources used to communicate, and to create, disseminate, store, and manage information (Gunton, 1993; Victoria, 2002). ICT as a means of sharing information is no simply a connection between people but a link in the chain of the developmental process itself (Hudson, 1999). According to UNESCO (2002) “ICT is a scientific, technological and engineering discipline and management technique used in handling information, its application and association with social, economic and cultural matters”. Information Communication Technology (ICT) are enabling technologies which include both hardware and software’s necessary for delivering of voice, audio, data, videos tax and internet service from one point and associated equipment’s that are connected via internet proto cold (IP) and non-IP network (Aluko, 2011). It involves all internet- based communications as well as the general use of computer or electronic devices in storing, processing, and sharing information. In education as applied to teaching and learning, ICT encompasses all computing and communicating facilities and features that variously support the teaching and learning process.

ICT is divided into two main approaches in education such as; ICT for education and ICT in education. ICT for education implies the development of information communication technology for learning and teaching purpose while ICT in education involves the adoption of general components of information and communication technology in practical use in teaching and learning processes (Voogt & Pelgrum, 2005; Watson, 2006). ICT (Information and Communication Technology) is referred to as a part of learning – teaching process

through a teacher. A teacher is an individual who is trained in pedagogy and technical area of a particular subject to impart knowledge, skills and attitudes to students. Teacher according to Encarta (2009) is somebody who teaches especially as a profession. In the context of this study, a teacher is a person who has been trained professionally in the art of teaching technical courses in automobile technology, building technology, electrical/electronic technology and woodwork technology to students in schools and colleges.

Teaching is the process of assisting an individual to acquire knowledge, skill and attitude through instruction. Ogwo and Oranu (2006) viewed teaching as the science and art of assisting a person to learn. The authors stated further that the science of teaching involves the use of acquired knowledge from natural and behavioural sciences in order to help appreciate the circumstance and personality of the learner while the art aspect of teaching involves the use of creative and administrative skills in aiding delivery of instruction. Olaitan, Alaribe and Nwobu (2010) added that teaching is the process of helping an individual to learn through instruction. Teaching in the context of this study is the process of assisting students learn the content of technology curriculum in schools and colleges through instruction by the teacher with the aid of ICT. Linways (2017) expressed that Policy -makers accepts that ICT in education can help the students to compete in the global economy by being part of a skilled workforce and facilitate social mobility by Enhancing learning experiences and providing new sets of skills, Reaching more students with Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), Facilitating the training of faculties, minimizing costs and saving time associated with information delivery and automating regular day-to-day tasks, improving the administration of institutions to enhance the quality and efficiency of service delivery among others. However, for optimum utilization of information and communication technology (ICT) the instructors must be equipped with vast knowledge and skills needed for implementation.

Skill is the ability to perform something well. Skill according to the business dictionary (2019) refers to the ability and capacity acquired through deliberate, systematic, and

sustained effort to smoothly and adaptively carryout complex activities or job functions involving ideas (cognitive skills), things (technical skills), and/or people (interpersonal skills). It is the ability to carry out a task with determined results often within a given amount of time, energy, or both which requires special training and knowledge. Besides Allyson (2019), who defines skill as a particular category of knowledge, abilities, and experience necessary to perform a job; noted that skill can either be soft skill or hard skill. Soft skills are interpersonal or people skills. They are somewhat difficult to quantify and relate to someone's personality and ability to work with others. This in-demand skill includes good communication, listening, attention to detail, critical thinking, empathy, and conflict resolution abilities, among other skills. Hard skills are quantifiable and teachable: they include the specific technical knowledge and abilities required for the teaching of basic Electronics

Basic Electronics is one of the vocational courses offered at the upper level of the Nigerian secondary school system. It is a branch of science and technology which deals with the study of the flow and control of electrons in electrical circuits and their behaviour and effects in vacuums, gases, and semiconductors. The objectives of the curriculum are to: (i) support understanding of the basic electronic components in addition to circuits; (ii) lay a good foundation for communication and control systems; (iii) provide a foundation for creativity and technological development in electronics; and (iv) stimulate, develop and enhance entrepreneurial skills in electronics (Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC, 2007). In order for these objectives to be realized, teachers of electronics, apart from being versed in the subject matter, needs to be skilled in the use and application of ICT for appropriate instructional delivery. changes in terms of quality have been achieved with regards to teachers' performance and classroom interactions. ICT, as an industrial revolution, has brought about a new era of Information and Communications followed by information society, where ICT is among its main elements. Acquisition of ICT skills by teachers will enabled better and swifter communication, presentation of ideas in a more effective and relevant way. It is an effective tool for information

acquiring-thus students are encouraged to look for information from multiple sources and they are now more informed than before. For effective implementation of certain student centric methodologies such as project-based learning which puts the students in the role of active researchers, Information communication technology becomes the appropriate tool. Thus, training of Electrical/Electronic teachers in ICT skills is the way to go during and after covid 19.

Effective teaching can be defined in many ways including teacher behavior (warmth, civility, clarity), teacher knowledge (of subject matter, of students), teacher beliefs, and so forth. It is defined as the ability to improve student's achievement. Effective teaching should be considered only in relation to effective learning. Most studies emphasized that for an effective teaching, qualities such as knowledge of subject matter, skills in instruction and personal qualities are useful when they work with students. When more importance is given to personal qualities, effective teachers are described as energetic enthusiastic, imaginative, having a sense of humor etc. If the teaching skills and knowledge of subject matter are considered effective teachers, are viewed as being masters of subject they teach, having ability to clarify ideas, able to establish relationships, able to elicit maximum participation of students, creative, and reasonable among others. In the words of Akudolu in Igweh (2013) effective teaching is the deliberate effort by a mature or experienced person to impart information, knowledge, skill and so on to an immature or less experienced person through a process that is morally and pedagogically acceptable. However effective teaching requires a shift in the traditional or conventional method of instructional process to a technological inclined method which includes the use of information and communication technology (ICT). ICT is becoming a driving force for educational reforms and that information communication technologies have become an integrative part of national education policies and plans in Nigerian tertiary education. In the field of education, implementation of appropriate ICT skills can play an essential role for the effective teaching of basic electronics in senior secondary schools and learning of students. ICT play a role as a catalyst in education, to enhance the

speed of teaching learning process among basic electronic teachers as well as students offering the subject. Therefore, there a need to ascertain the ICT skills required byElectrical/ElectronicTeachers for effective teaching of basic electronic in senior secondary school in Lagos State

Statement of Problem

It is evident that most advanced countries invest more in the area of information communication technology(ICT) as a key instrument in the field of education more specifically in instructional process that is, from the stage of operation, access, to problem solving stage. Technology- based teaching and learning offers various interesting ways which includes educational videos, stimulation, storage of data, the usage of databases. Previous researches proved that use of ICT in teaching will enhance the learning process and maximizes the students' abilities in active learning. However, increasing implementation of ICT in schools does not ensure effective use of the tools by teachers to improve student outcome. Therefore, the skills in manipulating and using ICT tools for effective teaching should first be established. Result from past researches have shown that teachers have a keen desire to use ICT tools in teaching and they are aware of its existing potential in the field of education; but most teachers are facing difficulty on the knowhow and the required ICT skills needed for effective teaching and for implementation of methodologies which puts the students in the role of active learning, Information communication technology becomes the appropriate tool, Thus, training of basic Electronic teachers in ICT skills is the way to go during and after covid 19. Hence, this work is focused on determining the ICT skills required by teachers of electrical electronics for effective teaching of basic electronics in senior secondary schools in Lagos state. The purpose of this study was to determine the ICT skills required by teachers for effective teaching of basic electronics to students in secondary schools during and after covid-19 pandemic in mainland LGA of Lagos State. Specifically, the study sought to determine;

1. ICT skills required by Teachers to operate computer for effective teaching of basic electronics?
2. ICT skills required by Teachers to access Internet for effective teaching of basic electronics.
3. ICT skills required by Teachers to solve some computer problems for effective teaching of basic electronics.

Research Questions

The following questions guided the research study;

1. What are the ICT skills required by Electrical/Electronic Teachers to operate computer for effective teaching of basic electronics?
2. What are the ICT skills required by Electrical/Electronic Teachers to access Internet for effective teaching of basic electronics?
3. What are the ICT skills required by Electrical/Electronic Teachers to solve some computer problems for effective teaching of basic electronics?

Methodology

The study adopted survey research design. Ayoade (2013) described survey research design as type of design to get detailed information that describes the existing phenomena of identified problems which justifies current conditions and practices to determine what others are doing with similar problems or situations and benefit from the experience and to make future plans and decision. This design was suitable for this study since it's aimed at identifying Skills. This study was conducted in Lagos-State south-western Nigeria. There are 16 colleges in Lagos-State but only 5 are offering Basic Electronics courses.

The population for the study was 67 Teachers of electrical/electronic technology in Colleges, polytechnics, college of education (Technical), and universities in Lagos State. The entire Teachers were involved in the study because of the manageable size. Therefore there was no sampling. Structured questionnaire was used as the instrument to collect data from the respondents. The

questionnaire contained 30 items structured in-line with research questions. The questionnaire was divided into five main sections. Section A was used to obtain personal information from respondents. This section covered items 1-3 with options and blank space to enable respondents to complete as appropriate. Section B of the instrument dealt with research questions

The instrument was subjected to face validation by three experts, Two experts from Department of Technology and vocational Education, Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki, Ebonyi State and one expert from Federal College of Education (Technical), Akoka Lagos State. Each expert was served with a copy of the instrument and was requested to identify ambiguities and ensure that items were clearly stated and appropriate for the research questions. In order to determine the reliability of the instrument, 20 copies of the questionnaire were administered to teachers of electrical/electronic technology in Ogun State, South West, Nigeria. The internal consistency of the instrument was computed using Cronbach alpha. The overall reliability coefficient of the instrument was 0.85. Since reliability coefficient of above 0.60 was obtained, the instrument was considered reliable for use in the present study. This is because, according to Ogbazi and Okpala (1994), if the correlation coefficient obtained on an instrument is up to 0.60 and above, the instrument should be considered good enough to be used for a study.

Copies of the questionnaire were administered to 67 Electrical/electronic teachers in Lagos State with the help of five research assistants. The research assistants were selected within the State and instructed by the researcher on procedures for administering the instrument so as to ensure safe handling. The same research assistants went round after two weeks to collect the copies of the administered questionnaire from the respondents. Sixty seven copies of the questionnaire were administered, and all were retrieved back which represented hundred percent return rate.

The data collected for the study was analyzed using Mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions. In deciding on the items, any item with the mean value of 2.50 or above was

considered as required. While any item with the mean value of less than 2.50 was considered as not required

Results

Results for this study were obtained from the research questions answered through data collected and analyzed.

Table 1: Responses of the Teachers on ICT Skills required by Electrical/Electronic Teachers to Operate Computer for Effective Teaching of Basic Electronics

S/NO	Item Statements	\bar{x}	SD	Rmks
1	Manipulate a mouse proficiently	3.22	0.79	Required
2	Demonstrate ability on computer, sign onto the network, restart, and shutdown	3.18	0.67	Required
3	Demonstrate ability to start and end a program	2.66	0.78	Required
4	Demonstrate ability to print student work	3.44	0.66	Required
5	Use the server to save and retrieve student work	3.27	0.60	Required
6	Use formal keyboarding skills with home keys and correct posture	2.74	0.61	Required
7	Type 10-15 words per minute	3.10	0.61	Required
8	Use paint or drawing tools changing colours, shapes, and size to create a graphic	2.73	0.75	Required
9	Demonstrates word processing skills	3.33	0.74	Required
10	Change the margins, line spacing and use bullets	3.29	0.74	Required
11	Create and use indents,	3.19	0.79	Required

12	tabs, change margins, line Create a short power pointpresentation using pictures, text, sound, and animation	3.28	0.67	Required
13	Introduction to basic charts and graphs in excel	2.77	0.78	Required

Keys; X= mean, SD=standard deviation, decision $X \geq 2.50$ Agree

The data presented in Table 1' revealed that all the I3 items had their mean values ranged from 3.44 to 2.73. This showed that the mean value of each item was above the cut-off point of 2.50, indicating that all skills are ICT skills required by Electrical/Electronic Teachers to operate computer for effective teaching of basic electronics. The Table also showed that the standard deviations are within the range of 0.60 to 0.79. This indicated that the mean values of the respondents were not far from one another in their responses.

Table 2: Mean Responses of the Teachers on ICT skills required by Electrical/Electronic Teachers to access Internet for Effective Teaching of Basic Electronics

S/NO	Item Statements	\bar{x}	Sd	Rmks
1	Properly download files from internet to student's own folder	3.24	0.60	Required
2	Can save and organize files for various software applications	3.37	0.68	Required
3	Demonstrate an advanced ability to navigate between websites	3.45	0.48	Required
4	Understand basic ethics of computer and internet use	3.06	0.47	Required
5	Use the internet for basic research; citing electronic	3.43	0.46	Required

6	sources Evaluate the accuracy, relevance, appropriateness, and bias of electronic information sources	3.55	0.45	Required
7	Understand basic internet URL addresses and basic extensions	3.43	0.60	Required
8	Use Blogs and other forms of web communication; such as email, Polycom, online discussions.	3.35	0.68	Required

Keys; X= Mean, SD=standard deviation, decision $X \geq 2.50$ Agree

The data presented in Table 2 revealed that all the 8 items had their mean values ranged from 3.06 to 3.55. This showed that the mean value of each item was above the cut-off point of 2.50, indicating that all skills are ICT skills required by Electrical/Electronic Teachers to access Internet for effective teaching of basic electronics. The Table also showed that the standard deviations are within the range of 0.45 to 0.68. This indicated that the mean values of the respondents were not far from one another in their responses.

Table 3: Mean Responses of Teachers on ICT skills required by Electrical/Electronic Teachers to Solve Some Computer Problems for Effective Teaching of Basic Electronics

S/NO	Item	Statements:	\bar{x}	Sd	Rmk
1	Computer shut down	start up or	3.58	0.62	Required
2	system Is hanging	reboot when app.	3.47	0.72	Required
3	Connect electrical power	System to	3.65	0.49	Required
4	Format problems	computer	3.58	0.60	Required

5	Install Programs on your computer,	3.51	0.68	Required
6	Solve Technical hitches about computer programs' performance	3.65	0.48	Required
7	Ability to connect to the Internet	3.67	0.47	Required
8	Change computer faulty RAM	3.69	0.46	Required
9	Replace bad Hard disk	3.71	0.45	Required

Keys; X= Mean, SD=standard deviation, decision $X \geq 2.50$ Agree

The data presented in Table 3 revealed that all the 9 items had their mean values ranged from 3.71 to 3.47. This showed that the mean value of each item was above the cut-off point of 2.50, indicating that all skills are ICT skills required by Electrical/Electronic Teachers to solve computer problems for effective teaching of basic electronics. The Table also showed that the standard deviations are within the range of 0.60 to 0.79. This indicated that the mean values of the respondents were not far from one another in their responses.

Discussion of Results

It was found that teachers needed ICT skill in operating computer, using the computer to access the internet and solving problems arising from the use of the computer and internet in teaching basic electronics. This result is in agreement with Miller, Bakare and Ikatule (2010) who conducted research on professional capacity building needs of teachers for effective teaching of basic technology curriculum to students in junior secondary schools in Lagos State. The authors found out that teachers of basic technology needed skills in teaching contents of basic technology curriculum to students in junior secondary schools.

The results of this study was also in agreement with the finding of Ellah (2007) who in a study carried out on competency improvement needs, The author found out that the teachers needed

access and problem solving skills in their subject. The findings of the above authors help to validate to the finding of this study on ICT skills required by teachers for effective teaching of basic electronic in in secondary schools in Lagos state Nigeria.

Conclusion

From the results of this study it was discovered that teachers needed ICT skills in areas of computer operation, use of computer to access the internet and solving problems arising from the use of the computer and internet for effective teaching of basic electronics. The identified skills will help teachers to overcome some of the inadequacies they encounter in the teaching of basic electronics. It is therefore recommended that the identified skills should be packaged into a training programme and be utilized for retraining the teachers through workshops and seminars.

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IMPACT OF COVID 19 ON PRIMARY EDUCATION IN UZO UWANI LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF ENUGU STATE

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Abstract

This study sought to ascertain the impact COVID-19 on primary education in Uzo Uwani Local Government Area of Enugu State. The specific objectives were to: examine the extent of academic negligence suffered by primary school pupils during the COVID-19 lockdown, examine the extent to which primary school pupils were abused and neglected during the COVID-19 lockdown and the extent to which the lockdown affected the digital literacy of primary school pupils. The study used the survey approach. The study covered the sixty (60) primary schools in the local government area. The primary source was the administration of questionnaire to teachers, pupils, and parents drawn from the selected schools. Out of a population of six thousand three hundred and eighty-three (6383), 688 teachers, pupils and parents were sampled. The sample size was chosen after applying the Freund and William's formula for determining sample size. Out of 688 respondents, 510 returned the questionnaire accurately filled. The hypotheses were tested using a z-test. The criterion mean is 2.50. Any grand mean of 2.50 and above on the 4-point scale was considered as a high level of competence, while the same below 2.50 was considered a low level of competence. The empirical results show that COVID19 impacted primary education in Uzo Uwani badly. It kept the children out of school and posed a serious threat to their health and safety. Based on the findings, recommendations were made regarding how to

continue the education and protection of the little ones during the COVID-19 era.

Keywords: *COVID-19, Lockdown, Primary Education, Academic Negligence, Child Abuse, Digital Literacy.*

Introduction

COVID-19 took the world by storm in the first quarter of the year 2020. No sooner than it reared its head in China than it recorded new hot spots in the United States of America, Spain, Italy, France, and Germany (Worldometers, 2020). The risk posed by the soaring numbers of cases in Italy, Iran, South Korea, and Japan prompted the declaration of the disease as a pandemic by WHO on 11 March 2020 (McKibbin& Fernando, 2020). In order to halt the spread and reduce the risk of infection, Nigeria like other nations across the world, implemented a nationwide lockdown. Offices, factories, businesses, churches, mosques and schools were shut down with religious people live streaming worship and offering services digitally, workers working from home and students learning through various e-platforms.

So far the pandemic has spread to 210 countries and 2 international conveyances around the world (Worldometers, 2020) and has continued to rise and ravage the world, defying complete understanding and solutions, including the authorized use of Hydrozychloroquine and other remedies that have not been clinically tested (Addi, R. A., Benksim, A., Amine, M., & Cherkaoui, M. 2020). As at today, 15th Oct, 2020, the confirmed cases have exceeded 38.5 million while the no of deaths has now passed 1 million.

In addition to staggering infections and deaths, the pandemic has created a lot of social and economic issues, including student debt, digital learning, food insecurity, and homelessness, as well as access to childcare, health care, housing, internet, and disability services (Ngumbi, 2020). What is more, the spread has also caused fear and raised a lot of concerns among citizens around the world (NCIRD 2020). The virus has really cost the world dear and it is difficult to

calculate how much harm humanity has suffered from this deadly disease.

The impact has been devastating for primary school children. It literally cut the ground from under their feet. As in other countries, the lockdown in Nigeria has meant the absence of face-to-face instructions, absence of traditional classrooms and absence of guidance counsellors. Even examinations were indefinitely shifted by examination bodies (Lindzon, 2020). More than 1 billion and 575 million students in approximately 188 countries around the world have reportedly been affected by the closure of schools (UNESCO, 2020).

Before the outbreak of COVID-19, academic life was going on as normal in the primary sector. There was normal face-to-face learning. The teachers were delivering instructions in the classrooms with the prescribed syllabuses according to set timetables. But when this deadly enemy entered the equation, things took a sharp turn for the worse. The children were now compelled to learn online with all the attendant problems such as the unpreparedness many teachers and parents to assist their children in remote/online learning, lack of access to the necessary technology and the internet, the inadequacy of the technological formats for children with special educational needs and economic difficulties (UNESCO 2020).

The situation is complicated by the issue of child abuse and other risks which many children have been exposed in the circumstances. Millions of children are living in very confined spaces places with abjectly poor parents and caretakers often feel pressured to help in providing for their families who are burdened by costs associated with online education during the COVID-19 era (COVID-19 and Children, 2020).

What we have on our hands is a situation where the little ones are cut off from the environments of care they are used to and left to the mercy of abusers and molesters. This has caused devastating effects on their emotional, psychological, physical, and mental health. As observed by the researcher, there have been increased cases of child labour, early marriage, teenage pregnancies, sexually transmitted diseases, and unwanted pregnancies for girls and abuse of sorts due to

the COVID 19 lockdown. The deadly virus has been decimating the world and people are understandably nervous and worried about what the future holds for them.

It is against this background that this research on the effects of COVID-19 on primary education in Uzo Uwani Local Government Area of Enugu State was conducted. Uzo Uwani is a Local Government Area of Enugu State, Nigeria bordering Kogi State and Anambra State. Located within the tropical rainforest and savannah belt with its headquarters in the town of Umulokpa, Uzo-Uwani is made of the following communities: Adaba, Abii, Nrobo, Ugbene Ajima, Nkpologu, Akpugo-Ezedike, Ogurugu, Asaba, Nkume, Ukpata, Umulokpa, Ojor, Igga, Adani, Uvuru, and Nimbo.

Statement of the Problem

Primary education plays a foundational role and serves as the gateway to secondary education and other levels of education. What a child turns out to be educationally largely depends on it. Unfortunately primary education in the time of COVID 19 is under threat as the lockdowns and shutdowns prompted by COVID-19 have kept so many children out of school, posing a serious threat to their health and safety. The radio and television programmes and the online learning which many parents resorted to have not helped matters. Many students especially those in the rural and remote areas have no access to radios and television and teachers and parents with the specialized skills to mediate distance and online lessons are in short supply. Besides, with the spiralling rate of infection, there is a danger that COVID-19 could destabilise primary education in Nigeria if adequate care is not taken. It is in the light of these problems that the current study sought to examine the impact of COVID-19 on primary education in Uzo Uwani Local Government Area of Enugu State.

Objectives of the Study

The broad objective of the study was to examine the impact of COVID-19 on primary education in Uzo Uwani Local Government Area of Enugu State. The specific objectives were to:

- i. Examine the extent of academic negligence of primary school pupils during the COVID-19 lockdown.
- ii. Ascertain the extent to which primary school pupils have been neglected and abused during the COVID-19 lockdown.
- iii. Find out the extent to which the COVID-19 lockdown has affected the digital literacy of primary school pupils.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

- i. What is the extent of academic negligence of primary school pupils during the COVID-19 lockdown?
- ii. To what extent have primary school pupils been neglected and abused during the COVID-19 lockdown?
- iii. How has COVID-19 lockdown impacted the digital literacy of primary school pupils?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses guided the study:

- i. To a low extent, there is academic negligence on primary education pupils during the COVID-19 lockdown.
- ii. To a low extent, there is abuse on primary education pupils during the COVID-19 lockdown.
- iii. To a low extent, there is digital literacy on primary education pupils during the COVID-19 lockdown.

Significance of the Study

This study will benefit all and sundry. The study will expose to parents, school administrators, the government and the general public the various challenges faced by children in the period of COVID-19 and assist humanity in the search for solutions. The study will shed more light on the importance of digital literacy and online education and inspire all to embrace e-learning and other distance learning strategies as ways to overcome the barriers imposed by COVID-19 and survive the crisis. It will add to the existing literature on COVID-19 and it could pave the way for future research.

Review of Related Literature: Conceptual Framework COVID-19

COVID-19 is the name given to the disease caused by a virus known as severe acute respiratory syndrome corona virus 2 (SARS-CoV-2. Based on its genetic structure, it was previously named 2019-nCoV by the International Committee on Taxonomy of Viruses (ICTV). The virus, which first appeared in a wholesale market in Wuhan, China, in December 2019 (McKibbin & Fernando, 2020) is believed to have an animal origin although the intermediate source that caused the transmission of the virus to humans remains unknown. It is not clear how the highly infectious disease is transmitted although most medical researchers and centres for disease control have noted that it is transmitted via fluid contact with an infected person (Kim, 2020, Bai, Yao, Wei, Tian, Jin, Chen & Wang, 2020, NCDC, 2020). Among the known symptoms are sore throat, dry cough, fever, shortness of breath, and (in the worse stage) acute pneumonia and death. According to NCDC (2020), the incubation period for COVID-19 is between 2-14 days.

Although for most people, COVID-19 causes only mild illness, it can actually make some people very ill and even cause death as can be seen in the US, Russia, Brazil, Italy, Germany and other countries with high fatality rates. Those especially at risk from the virus include the aged and people with underlying health problems (such as high blood pressure, heart problems or diabetes). Bai et al (2020) has attributed the high level of the spread to the asymptomatic nature of some of the cases. Failure to identify and properly manage the COVID-19 cases places more people at risk (Addi et al, 2020). Given that there are as yet no proven remedies against the disease and since the numbers of infections and fatalities have continued to rise, people are advised not to let their guard down. Prevention remains the best protection.

Primary Education

Primary education, otherwise known as elementary education is a critical stage in the education process. It is the education given to children in primary schools. It lays the foundation that ensures the

success of other levels of education (Okwori and Amenger, 2014). Its importance in the educational process can never be overstated. Children who are deprived of it are at a decided disadvantage. That accounts for why it is compulsory for children in most countries of the world, including Nigeria. In most countries, it takes up where the pre primary education left off. However in Nigeria, where the pre primary is virtually left in the hands of private schools, it marks the official beginning of early childhood education. It usually begins around the ages of 5–7 as part of the Universal Basic Education scheme introduced by the government of Obasanjo in 1999 (David and Olabanji, 2008). The pupils spend six years and graduate with first school-leaving certificate before entering the Junior Secondary to complete the programme.

Academic Negligence

Negligence simply means failure to give needed care or attention. Academic negligence thus is failure to fill needed educational needs. It could be caused by ignorance as in the case of one who unwittingly breaches a duty of care and injures someone. Schools have a duty to protect students from reasonably foresee-able risks of harm (Russo, 2014). Many primary school pupils have been neglected as they cannot easily cope with virtual learning and to suppose that they would stay devoid of structured learning, with no impact on their development, can only be considered naïve at best (Carlsson, Dahl, BÖckert & Rooth, 2015). the pandemic has deprived pupils of academic support.

Child Abuse

Child abuse is any behaviour that harms a child who is under 18. Note that the abuse can take many forms. It can be physical, spiritual, sexual or emotional. Note that it is immaterial whether it is intentional or not. Once the treatment is unfair, cruel or violent, it is an abuse. Note that abuse also includes neglect-what one fails to do. In fact, as this writer wrote in one of his books, abuse and neglect go hand-in-hand such that what abuse achieves by commission, neglect achieves by omission (Ogara, P. I., 2011). Putting children in unsupervised,

dangerous situations, exposing them to sexual situations, or making them feel worthless or stupid are all forms of child abuse that can leave deep and lasting scars on kids (Burlew, 2013) just as ignoring children's needs and leaving them hungry, unattended to and abandoned can result in dysfunctional behaviour and abuse (Shumba & Abosi, 2011).

Digital Literacy

Literacy is defined as the ability to read and write. It also means competence or knowledge in a particular field. Digital literacy therefore is competence in the use of technical tools. It is the ability to understand and use technology (Heidi, 2015; Hagel, 2012). Spires and Bartlett (2012) have divided the various intellectual processes associated with digital literacy into three categories: (a) locating and consuming digital content, (b) creating digital content, and (c) communicating digital content. Digital literacy is the set of skills, knowledge and attitudes required to access digital information effectively, efficiently, and ethically.

Online Education

Online education is a general concept for teaching and learning online with the help of technological tools and platforms. Online education has been traced to distance education and the emergence of digital technologies that facilitate the efficient and reliable delivery of lectures, virtual classroom sessions, and other instructional materials and activities via the internet (Onlineeducation.com, 2020). The use of appropriate educational technologies increases accessibility to learning resources such as Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), and multiple learning approaches to meet the need of diverse learners (Onyema & Deborah, 2019). It has improved traditional teaching, making teachers facilitators, mentors and motivators, inspiring students to participate and learn (Onyema et al., 2019).

Theoretical Framework

Constructivism

Constructivism learning theory is defined as the active construction of new knowledge based on a learner's prior experience. Research confirms that constructivism learning theory, which focuses on knowledge construction based on learner's previous experience, is a good bet for e-learning because it ensures learning among learners (Modritscher, 2006). Constructivism places emphasis on situated learning, which sees learning as contextual. Learning activities that allow learners to contextualize the information should be used in online instruction. In most pedagogies based on constructivism, the teacher's role is not only to observe and assess but to also engage with the students while they are completing activities, wondering aloud, and posing questions to the students for promotion of reasoning. Constructivists see learners as being active rather than passive with the instructor playing advisory and facilitating roles, encouraging them to arrive at their versions of the truth, influenced by their backgrounds, cultures and worldviews (Hung, 2001). Learning should be an active process, keeping learners active with high-level activities such as asking learners to apply information in practical situations, facilitating the personal interpretation of learning content, discussing topics within a group, assessment, and so forth. This theory of learning is important in this study as it underlines the importance of e-learning, which has been the kiss of life for many during the COVID-19 lockdown.

Behaviourism

The behaviourist school sees learning as a change in observable behaviour caused by external stimuli in the environment. It claims that it is the observable behaviour that indicates whether or not the learner has learned something, and not what is going on in the learner's head (Modritscher, 2006). For the behaviourists, the mind is like a "black box" that observes a response to a stimulus in a purely quantitative fashion- without taking into account the thought processes occurring in the mind. Skinner (1974) argued that since it is not possible to

prove the inner processes with any available scientific procedures, researchers should rather concentrate on ‘cause-and-effect relationships’ that could be established by observation. The behaviourist theory explains that individuals learn based on what they see in their environment. The theory could also explain the difference that could be present in the learning abilities of primary school pupils whether in the classroom and at home.

Empirical Review

Iwu and Iwu (2013) carried out a study on factors inhibiting the effective management of primary schools in Nigeria. The study aimed at identifying some of the problems militating against effective management of primary schools in Afikpo South local government area in Ebonyi State of Nigeria. A self-administered questionnaire containing eight research questions with twenty-four (24) questionnaire items was used for the study. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data. The study found, among others, that high numbers of enrolment put pressure on meagre school facilities, while heads of schools, teachers, and pupils were affected by a general lack of facilities. This is exemplified by some schools where classes took place outside the normal classrooms and in some cases, outside the school compound. The authors insist that provision of adequate and qualified teachers must be a conscious programme of both government and heads of schools because the successful administration of primary schools is possible with qualified and dedicated teachers, well equipped primary schools, expansion of schools to accommodate the increasing enrolment of pupils and a co-operative community incorporating parents of pupils.

Aitokhuehi and Ojogho (2014) examined the impact of computer literacy on students’ academic performance in Esan West Local Government Area of Edo State, Nigeria. To determine the impact of computer literacy in the academic performance of students in the senior secondary schools in Esan West Local Government Area of Edo State, four (4) questions were raised and answered. Data were obtained via the use of an instrument titled: Questionnaire on Students’ Computer Literacy Level and Computer Usage

(QSCLLCU). One hundred and twenty (120) out of 1,200 final year students, representing 10% were used from the fourteen (14) existing secondary schools in Esan West local government area of Edo State, Nigeria. The data for the study were analysed using correlation analysis. The findings revealed that: computer literate students perform better than non-computer literate; computer literate female students perform better than male students who are also computer literate; computer literate students who are not addicted to the use of computer facilities perform better than those who are addicted; computer literate students in co-educational secondary schools perform slightly better than those in single-sex schools. Based on the findings, it was recommended among other things that all the students in Esan West Local Government Area of Edo State should be taught how to use computer facilities to search for valid information related to their academic activities.

Edeh, Nwafor, Obafemi, Sen, Atonye, Sharma, and Alsayed (2020) investigated the impact of COVID-19 on education. Data were collected through structured questionnaires administered to 200 respondents that consisted of teachers, students, parents, and policymakers selected from different countries. The collected data were analyzed using STATA/Regression. The results show that COVID-19 has adverse effects on education, including learning disruptions and decreased access to education and research facilities, Job losses and increased student debts. The findings also show that many educators and students relied on technology to ensure continued learning during the Coronavirus pandemic. However, online education was hindered by poor infrastructures including, network, power, inaccessibility and unavailability issues, and poor digital skills. The study underscores the detrimental effects of COVID-19 on the education sector and the need for all educational institutions, educators, and learners to adopt technology and improve their digital skills in line with the emerging global trends and realities in education.

Duraku and Hoxha (2020) explored and described the concerns of students, parents, and teachers in relation to the present circumstances caused by social isolation and the perspectives of

teachers and parents about remote or online learning. This study adopted the qualitative approach. In the framework of the study, the case study research strategy was used. For data collection, semi-structured interviews were used, which were conducted with (N = 13) parents, and (N = 11) teachers. Study participants are an active part of pre-university public institutions within (n = 14) municipalities from (n = 7) regions of Kosovo. The study shows that the new circumstances created by the spread of COVID-19, including changes in education, have caused some concerns among students, parents, and teachers in Kosovo. The findings confirm the common concerns of the two reporting groups in the study about student assessment, worries, and overload, as well as evaluations of the incompatibility of the learning conducted so far and the readiness and motivation of teachers to advance their knowledge and skills, as well as to contribute to advance the quality of education. Opportunities to advance the quality of online learning, the support of teachers, parents, and families, coupled with practical suggestions for parties involved in the field of education, are also included.

Mhlanga and Moloji (2020) assessed the influence of the COVID-19 pandemic in motivating digital transformation in the education sector in South Africa. The study was premised on the fact that learning in South Africa and the rest of the world came to a standstill due to the lockdown necessitated by COVID-19. To assess the impact, the study tracked the rate at which the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) tools were used by various institutions during the COVID-19 lockdown. Data were obtained from secondary sources. The findings are that, in South Africa, during the lockdown, a variety of 4IR tools were unleashed from primary education to higher and tertiary education where educational activities switched to remote (online) learning. These observations reflect that South Africa generally has some pockets of excellence to drive the education sector into the 4IR, which has the potential to increase access. Access to education, particularly at a higher education level, has always been a challenge due to a limited number of spaces available. Much as this pandemic has brought with it massive human suffering across the globe, it has presented an opportunity to assess successes and failures

of deployed technologies, costs associated with them, and scaling these technologies to improve access.

Summary of Review of Related Literature

The study examined the impact of COVID-19 on primary education in Uzo Uwani Local Government Area of Enugu State. Throughout the study, various theories and empirical studies were analysed. The theories analysed were Behaviourism and Constructivism. Both theories try to explain how the primary school pupils could keep track of their learning using e-learning during the lockdown. The study also reviewed several empirical studies related to the study. Edeh et al. (2020), Vallejo and Maron (2020), and Duraku and Hohxa (2020) all noted that the pandemic has had undesirable effects on the education levels of people. However, Mhlanga and Mloi (2020) believe that the pandemic has boosted digital learning.

Gaps in Knowledge

The current study has identified a few gaps in the existing literature. The gap could be found in both the content and the geographical scope of the study. Previous studies did not specifically investigate how the new coronavirus impacted primary education. Also the geographical location of the current study provides an interesting gap to fill.

Methodology

The study covered the sixty (60) primary schools in Uzo-Uwani, using a systematic sampling. Sixteen primary schools were selected, each from Adaba, Abii, Nrobo, Ugbene, Nkpologu, Akpugu-Ezedike, Ogurugu, Asaba, Nkume, Ukpata, Umulokpa, Ojor, Igga, Adani, Uvuru, and Nimbo communities in Uzo-Uwani Local Government Area of Enugu State. The study used the survey approach. The primary source was the administration of questionnaire to the teachers, pupils, and parents of the selected schools. Out of a population of six thousand three hundred and eighty-three (6383), 688 respondents were sampled. The sample size was chosen after applying the Freund and William's formula for the determination of adequate sample size. Out

of the population sampled, 510 returned the questionnaire, accurately filled. The criterion mean is 2.50. Any grand mean of 2.50 or above on the 4-point scale was considered as a high level of competence, while the one below 2.50 was considered low. The hypotheses were tested using z-test.

Data Presentation and Analyses

Research question One: What is the extent of academic negligence of primary school pupils during the COVID-19 lockdown?

Table 4.2: Responses to research question One: on the extent of academic negligence of primary education pupils during the COVID-19 lockdown.

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation
The desire to study at home has reduced	510	1	4	1618	3.17	.749
Children Spent more time watching TV, playing video/computer games.	510	1	4	1632	3.20	.874
While learning from home, the environment was not always conducive for academic work given that the entire family is home	510	1	4	1551	3.04	.959

COVID-19 schools close down led to the suspension of all extra-curriculum activities	510	1	4	1507	2.95	1.001
Pupils could not easily provide feedback through questions, tasks, activities, and quizzes	510	1	4	1601	3.14	.841

Source: Field Survey, 2020

From table 4.1, the mean for the items in table shows that the mean score is above 2.5 on a 4-point calibrated scale. With the mean score of 3.17 and the deviation of .749 showing that the desire to study at home has reduced. Children Spent more time watching TV, playing video/computer games with a mean score of 3.20 and standard deviation of .874, While learning from home, the environment was not always conducive for academic work given that the entire family is home with a mean score of 3.04 and standard deviation of .959 as shown by the data, the high mean score of 2.95, it is evident that the respondents agreed that COVID-19 schools closure led to the suspension of all extra-curriculum activities. Pupils could not easily provide feedback through questions, tasks, activities, and quizzes with mean score of 3.14 and standard deviation of .841.

Research question Two: To what extent have primary school pupils been neglected and abused during the COVID-19 lockdown?

Table 4.2: Responses to research question two: on the extent to which primary school pupils have been neglected and abused during the COVID-19 lockdown.

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Child maltreatment increased.	510	1	4	1687	3.31	.775
Pupils faced corporal punishment, present with more aggressive and antisocial behaviours from their elders at home	510	1	4	1637	3.21	.697
Sexual exploitation of children increased	510	1	4	1620	3.18	.860
Children's right were violated	510	1	4	1645	3.23	.703
Domestic violence increased	510	1	4	1614	3.16	.523
Grand Mean and Standard Deviation						

Source: Field Survey, 2020

From table 4.2, the mean for the items in table shows that the mean score is above 2.5 on a 4-point calibrated scale. With the mean score of 3.31 and the deviation of .775 showing that Child maltreatment

increased. Pupils faced corporal punishment, present with more aggressive and antisocial behaviours from their elders at home with a mean score of 3.21 and standard deviation of .697, Sexual exploitation of children increased with a mean score of 3.18 and standard deviation of .860 as shown by the data, the high mean score of 3.23, Children’s rights were violated. The respondents agreed that domestic violence increased with mean score of 3.16 and a standard deviation of .523.

Research question Three: How has the COVID-19 lockdown impacted the digital literacy of primary school pupils?

Table 4.2: Responses to research question three: on the extent to which the COVID-19 lockdown impacted the digital literacy of primary school pupils
Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Lack of access to internet facilities made e-learning difficult	510	1	4	1470	2.88	1.013
Teachers and parents did not quickly adapt to the digital teaching and learning	510	1	4	1445	2.83	.992
The child’s school offered online learning while closed	510	1	4	1650	3.24	.714
There was no high-speed broadband internet access at home	510	1	4	1655	3.25	.809

There was no sufficient training on ICT usage.	510	1	4	1702	3.34	.717
Grand Mean and Standard Deviation						

Source: Field Survey, 2020

From table 4.3, the mean for the items in the table shows that the mean score is above 2.5 on a 4-point calibrated scale. With the mean score of 2.88 and the deviation of 1.013 showing that lack of access to internet facilities made e-learning difficult. Teachers and parents did not quickly adapt to the digital teaching and learning with a mean score of 2.83 and standard deviation of .992, the child’s school offered online learning while closed with a mean score of 3.24 and standard deviation of .714 as shown by the data, the high mean score of 3.25, there was no high-speed broadband internet access at home. The respondents agreed that there was no sufficient training on ICT usage with a mean score of 3.34 and a standard deviation of .717.

Test of Hypotheses

4.2.1 Hypothesis One: To a low extent, there is academic negligence on primary education pupils during the COVID-19 lockdown.

Table 4.2.1.1: Z – test on the extent of academic negligence on primary education pupils during the COVID-19 lockdown

N		510
Normal Parameters	Mean	3.1
	Std Deviation	0.8848
Most Extreme	Absolute	0.231
Most Extreme	Positive	0.161
Differences	Negative	-0.231
Kolmogorov-Smirnon Z		5.2204
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.000

- a. Test distribution is Normal
- b. Calculated from data

Decision Rule

If the calculated Z-value is greater than the critical Z-value (i.e $Z_{cal} > Z_{critical}$), reject the null hypothesis, and accept the alternative hypothesis accordingly.

Result

With Kolmogorov-Smirnon Z – a value of 5.2204 and on Asymp. Significance of 0.000, the responses from the respondents as display in the table is normally distributed. This affirms the assertion of most of the respondents that to a great extent, there is academic negligence on primary education pupils during the COVID-19 lockdown. Furthermore, comparing the calculated Z- value of 5.2204 against the critical Z- value of 2.18 (2-tailed test at 97% level of confidence) the null hypothesis was rejected. Thus the alternative hypothesis was accepted which states that to a great extent, there is academic negligence on primary education pupils during the COVID-19 lockdown.

4.2.1 Hypothesis Two: To a low extent, there is abuse on primary education pupils during the COVID-19 lockdown.

Table 4.2.1.1: Z – test on the extent of abuse on primary education pupils during the COVID19 lockdown.

N		510
Normal Parameters	Mean	3.218
	Std Deviation	0.7116
Most Extreme	Absolute	0.1922
Most Extreme	Positive	0.14
Differences	Negative	-0.1922
Kolmogorov-Smirnon Z		4.3414
Asymp. Sig.(2-tailed)		.000

- a. Test distribution is Normal
- b. Calculated from data

Decision Rule

If the calculated Z-value is greater than the critical Z-value (i.e $Z_{cal} > Z_{critical}$), reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis accordingly.

Result

With Kolmogorov-Smirnon Z – value of 4.3414 and on Asymp. Significance of 0.000, the responses from the respondents as display in the table is normally distributed. This affirms the assertion of most of the respondents that to a great extent, there is abuse on primary education pupils during the COVID-19 lockdown. Furthermore, comparing the calculated Z- value of 4.3414 against the critical Z-value of 2.18 (2-tailed test at 97% level of confidence) the null hypothesis was rejected. Thus the alternative hypothesis was accepted which states that to a great extent, there is abuse on primary education pupils during the COVID-19 lockdown.

Hypothesis Three: To a low extent, there is digital literacy on primary education pupils during the COVID-19 lockdown.

Table 4.2.1.1: Z – test on the extent of digital literacy on primary education pupils during the COVID-19 lockdown.

N		510
Normal Parameters	Mean	3.108
	Std Deviation	0.849
Most Extreme	Absolute	0.2024
Most Extreme	Positive	0.1564
Differences	Negative	-0.2024
Kolmogorov-Smirnon Z		4.5752
Asymp. Sig.(2-tailed)		.000

- a. Test distribution is Normal
- b. Calculated from data

Decision Rule

If the calculated Z-value is greater than the critical Z-value (i.e $Z_{cal} > Z_{critical}$), reject the null hypothesis, and accept the alternative hypothesis accordingly.

Result

With Kolmogorov-Smirnon Z – value of 4.5752 and on Asymp. Significance of 0.000, the responses from the respondents as display in the table is normally distributed. This affirms the assertion of most of the respondents that to a great extent, there is digital literacy on primary education pupils during the COVID-19 lockdown. Furthermore, comparing the calculated Z- value of 4.5752 against the critical Z- value of 2.18 (2-tailed test at 97% level of confidence) the null hypothesis was rejected. Thus, the alternative hypothesis was accepted which states that to a great extent, there is digital literacy on primary education pupils during the COVID-19 lockdown.

Discussion of Findings

From hypotheses one, the null hypothesis was dismissed by contrasting the measured Z- value of 5.2204 to the critical Z- value of 2.18 (2-tailed check at 97 percent confidence level). This acknowledged the alternative hypothesis that to a great extent, there is academic negligence on primary education pupils during the lockdown. While COVID-19 has forced schools in developed climes to switch to the online mode of learning, millions of children in developing countries like Nigeria, who have no access to remote-learning, have been left behind. In line with the study, Edeh, *et al* (2020) investigated the impact of COVID-19 on education, their results show that COVID-19 has adverse effects on education including, learning disruptions, and decreased access to education and research facilities, Job losses, and increased student debts.

The lockdown itself has caused child abuse and molestation. It has become a major challenge in the sense that the little ones have been constrained by the COVID-19 restrictions to stay in one place with their abusers. Children face increased risk of child labour and sexual exploitation as families struggle to feed their families. In hypothesis two, the measured Z- value of 4.3414 against the critical Z- value of 2.18 (2-tailed test at a confidence level of 97 percent), the null hypothesis was rejected. Thus it accepted the alternative hypothesis which states that to a great extent, there is abuse of primary education pupils during the COVID-19 lockdown.

From hypothesis three comparing the calculated Z- value of 4.5752 against the critical Z- value of 2.18 (2-tailed test at 97% level of confidence), the null hypothesis was rejected. Thus the alternative hypothesis was accepted which states that to a great extent, there is digital literacy of primary education pupils during the COVID-19 lockdown. In line with the study, pupils who currently cannot keep up with their peers because of inaccessibility to digital tools may never catch up and will continue to feel the effect of this gap long after the pandemic is over. This may result in a severely diminishing pool of young adults who have not garnered the necessary skills to stay ahead in the future. With Nigeria already behind in preparing its young people for the workplace of the future, the effects of the pandemic further exacerbate this issue.

Conclusions

COVID-19 has dealt a deadly blow to the world and primary school children have been reeling from the effects. The lockdown that it triggered kept many of them in rural areas like Uzo Uwani out of school bringing to the fore the importance of digital literacy and online learning. In the period of COVID-19, it has come in handy, ensuring that children are not deprived of education. In the absence of schools and daycares, it is only natural that Nigerians should embrace it and maximize its benefits.

Recommendations

1. It is a relief to see that quality education is still possible even in these difficult times thanks to online learning. The need for government, students, teacher and parents to prioritize digital literacy cannot therefore be over emphasized. This includes the need to seek ways to reach out to the rural and semi-urban areas without access to television, radio, or the internet. Indeed, in precarious times such as this, digital literacy is no more an option; it is a necessity.
2. There is an urgent need to protect and save the children. The Government at the various levels should adopt measures to mitigate the impacts of abuse and neglect. Posters and flyers with messages on what to do to protect children including the

danger signs to look out for and the phone numbers to call in cases of abuse should be produced and made available to victims of abuse. All hands must be on deck to ensure the safety of our children as we battle the pandemic.

3. As humanity awaits solutions, people are warned not to let their guard down. All must try to not to get carried away. The government have the obligation to monitor and enforce peoples' compliance with the safety guidelines. It must be stated that NCDC occupies the driver's seat in this. The rest of us as passengers must rely on them to provide a sense of safety and security.

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COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND THE INFODEMIC OF DISCORDANT PROPHECIES IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

The present paper sets out to examine the phenomenon of proliferation of prophecies in Nigeria particularly as it relates to the COVID-19 pandemic. The focus is on Christian prophecy as reeled out by some acclaimed Nigerian pastors. The approach is both analytical and phenomenological. It is discovered that, the infodemic of contradiction prophecies grossly deviate from the raison d'être of Christian prophecy. In the circumstances of COVID-19, it impedes the authentic efforts to combat the spread of the disease by dissemination of wrong information about the pandemic and brings about social division. The otherworldly and extraneous nature of the prophetic ministry vitiates its application to methodic or systematic solution of problems. Borrowing a concept from the field of public health, the paper sounds a caveat that such discordant prophecies should be "quarantined" and be taken with a pinch of salt. This simply makes a clarion call for skeptical attitude towards the prophecies.

Keywords: *infodemic, prophecy, covid-19 pandemic, extraneous, quarantine.*

Introduction

The preponderance of misinformation about the COVID-19 pandemic poses a big challenge in the battle against the dreaded disease. At the Munich Security Conference on 15 February 2020, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General of the World Health

Organization (WHO), remarked that, “We’re not just fighting an epidemic; we’re fighting an infodemic.” He further stressed that, the plague of infodemic spreads faster and more easily than the virus (Ghebreyesus). While the focus has predominantly been on the misinformation coming from the social circle, that from a more subtle and less susceptible source like religious circle which is often taken as sacrosanct by both members and nonmembers alike, seems to draw less attention. Above all, given the sensitive nature of religious issues in a volatile nation like Nigeria, to combat such misinformation becomes an uphill task. The present work isolates and examines one of such religiously motivated infodemic, the COVID-19 prophecies. The focus is on the prophecies reeled out by some popular Nigerian pastors or ‘men God.’ In the misty twilight of the COVID-19 pandemic, a critical mind, like the owl of Minerva which according to Hegel flies at the dusk, is compelled to ask questions or appraise how the prophecies which reverberated around the pandemic have fared.

The paper therefore examines the essence or *raison d’être* of prophecy, causes and effects of proliferation of prophecies on COVID-19 in particular and in the Nigerian society in general. To what extent does this modern trend synchronize with the ‘reason of being’ of the biblical prophecy? How does this proliferation impact on the control/spread of COVID-19 disease and on the society? How reliable and sustainable is the prophetic exercise as a tool for problem solving in the society? Though the prophetic malfeasance obtains in the three major religions in Nigeria (Christian, Islamic and African traditional religions), the focus of the present work is on Christian prophecy which leans heavily on the biblical prophecy. The paper gleans from available literatures, news and social media. As part of the phenomenological approach, the work sometimes allows the authors speak for themselves by way of direct citation of the authors. As we shall see, it’s quite informative that, the linguistic style of some of the citations in Pidgin English rhymes with the aberration of the discordant prophecies as distinguished from true or genuine prophecy.

In the first section, I present a bird’s eyes view of biblical prophecy which simultaneously serves as background and model for modern Christian prophecy. The *raison d’être* and mechanics of

prophecy is here also x-rayed. The second section is on proliferation prophecies especially as it relates to COVID-19 pandemic, nay infodemic of incongruous prophecies. The causes and effects are highlighted. The third section is a critical consideration on the phenomenon of COVID-19 and proliferation of prophecies. The final section concludes by sounding a caveat by way of adopting skeptical approach to prophecies.

The Nature and Mechanism of Biblical Prophecy: A Bird's Eyes View

A *prima facie* prejudice about the prophet is that he/she traverses the mystic or esoteric spiritual realm and is famous for reeling out predictions and messages which for most parts spell doom. But, a flashback to the biblical prophets shows that the prophet is not so much the one who traverses the spiritual realm as to be traversed by divine influence; nor so much an announcer as to be called to announce. His or her concern is most often about the present or current situation and problems bedeviling the immediate environment. These immediate concerns however, may have future consequences. The content of their message most times revolve around social justice, issues of fundamental religious importance and prevalent problems in their times. Joseph Ratzinger succinctly articulates the essence of the prophet in these terms:

What is a prophet? A prophet is not a soothsayer; the essential element of the prophet is not the prediction of future events. The prophet is someone who tells the truth on the strength of his contact with God— the truth for today, which also, naturally, sheds light on the future. It is not a question of foretelling the future in detail, but of rendering the truth of God present at this moment in time and of pointing us in the right direction. (vii)

Commenting on the etymology of the word 'prophet', W. F. Albright forcefully argues that the interpretation of the Hebrew word *nabhi* which means "prophet," as "speaker or announcer" does not properly convey the essence of the word. For him, the correct interpretation should rather be "one who is called (by God), that is to say, "one who

has a vocation (from God)” (231-232). This, he maintains, is in consonance with the Accadian verb “nabu” which means “to call” and which is predominantly employed in the passive voice. Albright further remarks that, “The king for instance, is acclaimed as the one whom the great gods (or a special high god) have called” (231-232). This submission finds an echo in Hvidt who averred that, “nabi” is the most common designation for “prophet,” which originally meant “one who is called” and came to mean “speaker, spokesman (of God),” or “proclaimer” (40). From the above etymology, one easily deduces that the prophet is called or chosen and not a voluntary exercise. The prophetic function flows or inheres from the encounter or experience with the caller who is God. In the Old Testament, Moses is regarded as the primary and a model of prophet on account of his personal experience of God which shaped his prophetic ministry. “The prophet is someone who, out of his encounter with God, speaks the Word of God to his contemporaries,” Hvidt concludes (36). This underscores the place of divine encounter in the office of the prophet.

The mechanics of prophecy raises serious philosophical concerns given that it is largely extraneous to normal operations of human faculties. Whether the divine message is communicated through direct inspiration, vision or psychic, the fact remains that the will and the mind suffer external and supernatural inducement and compulsion. Hvidt, on this note, affirms that, “the prophet is compelled to deliver his message” (54). This is said to be a manifestation of the Holy Spirit, indeed a gift. No doubt, the mind and will could still be functioning in their proper order without observable changes but at the same time, the element of volition is highly vitiated.

Is prophecy synonymous with prediction? To the above question, Brigit Curtin Frein responds that, “Prophecy is not simply synonymous with prediction; nevertheless, the ability to foretell the future is and was closely associated with prophecy (22). Today, the concept of prediction could be said to have more to do with conscious human action than a supernaturally induced act. Accordingly, “everybody uses his or her brain to make predictions about future events” states Karl Popper (xliii). Indeed one does not need to be a theologian to know that, “Christian prophecy is about much more than

prediction” (Hvidt 57). Here, one is tempted to ask whether what obtains among the Nigerian pastors or men of God can be properly called prophecy or prediction.

The phenomenon of false prophecy has always been a major problem bedeviling the exercise of prophetic ministry from the time of the Old Testament. “Prophecy is constantly challenged by false prophecy, which always represented the greatest threat to the true prophetic gift” (Ratzinger ix). From time immemorial different prophets have had to reel out contradictory prophecies. David Hume submits that many instances of forged miracles, prophecies, and supernatural events which have been exposed at different periods in history not only buttress human propensity to the extraordinary and the marvelous but also raises doubt about authenticity of such phenomena (Hume 85). Unfortunately, both true and false prophets claim to have been sent by God. This is why one has to be careful in dealing with prophets and their prophecies.

The COVID-19 Infodemic of Discordant Prophecies

The phenomenon of false and contradictory prophecies is not new in Nigerian society as an avalanche of such is harvested especially during campaigns for political elections and at the dawn of each New Year. This is when most men of God reel out cacophony of prophecies. Indeed many people have expressed reservations about the so called prophecies, arguing that they are mere predictions. The Nobel Prize winner, Wole Soyinka devoted one of his seminal works, *The Trials of Brother Jero* to satirize the ugly socio-religious malady of false prophecy. The world at large and Nigeria in particular have recently had to contend not only with the COVID-19 pandemic but also with a more devastating plague of misinformation including false prophecies. According to Merriam-Webster, the neologism ‘infodemic’ was coined in a 2003 Washington Post column by David Rothkopf. It states:

Infodemic is a blend of "information" and "epidemic" that typically refers to a rapid and far-reaching spread of both accurate and inaccurate information about something, such as a disease. As facts, rumors, and fears mix and disperse, it

becomes difficult to learn essential information about an issue. **Infodemic** was coined in 2003, and has seen renewed usage in the time of COVID-19. (Merriam-Webster)

The World Health Organization (WHO), as reported by the UN Department of Global Communication, “explains that **infodemics** are an excessive amount of information about a problem, which makes it difficult to identify a solution. They can spread misinformation, disinformation and rumours during a health emergency.” It further states that, “**Infodemics** can hamper an effective public health response and create confusion and distrust among people. Similarly, António Guterres the United Nations’ Secretary General twitted: “Our common enemy is#COVID19, but our enemy is also an “infodemic” of misinformation. To overcome the#coronavirus, we need to urgently promote facts & science, hope & solidarity over despair & division” (@antonioguterres). An aspect of the COVID-19 infodemic or conspiracy theory that is yet to be given adequate attention is the cacophony of prophecies that reverberate literally every nook and cranny of Nigeria.

At the heat of the pandemic, notwithstanding, the lockdowns to which a good number of the pastors were reluctant to adhere, the propaganda of prayer and fasting as the sole panacea for the dreaded disease became widely disseminated via the social media. Damilola Banjo, captures this conspiracy theory in BBC Pidgin Service: “Of course, sabi pipo [experts] don tok say na only social distancing and to dey wash hands fit help reduce di spread of COVID-19 but some prophets tok say dem believe prayer and fasting fit work wonders”(Banjo). The contradiction here is apparent.

The most devastating of all the prophetic conspiracy theories was the claim as to non-existence of the COVID-19 disease. Some interpreted it as a charade by politicians and government officials. While the city of Yaounde in Cameroon was mourning the death of Frankline Ndifo, a popular Cameroon prophet, who flagrantly flouted the basic guide of COVID-19 and died of same ailment, as reported by Edwin Kindzeka (VOA), “anoda prophet, Apostle Suleman Johnson, wey be President of Omega Fire Ministries Worldwide, dey beg goment to allow dem go isolation wit corona virus patients” (Banjo). One of the pastors preposterously stipulated the date for the end of the pandemic but failed woefully. What then is the fate of uncountable number of people who have been misled by false prophecy?

The phenomenon of COVID-19 prophecies and similar conspiracy theories are not peculiar to Nigerian. In the US, a popular evangelical pastor, Ralph Drollinger, who leads a Bible study for Trump's cabinet members, is reported to have proffered that the LGBTQ People, environmentalists and atheists are the reason why God exerted his wrath on the people. The COVID-19 infodemic of prophecies is therefore a case of *alii alia dicunt* (some say this, others say that) thus giving rise to discordant prophecies. The obvious truth is that the above the submissions from the so called men of God pass for nothing but conspiracy theories which impede authentic efforts to solve the problem at hand.

Causes and Effects of the Proliferation of Prophecies

The propensity of the human mind to prognosticate into the unknown must be acknowledged. In the first book of his *Metaphysics*, Aristotle remarks that, “all men by nature desire to know” (Aristotle). This natural quest manifests in human effort to discover the root cause of any ailment that afflicts man and sometimes compels people to explore even the spiritual realm. David Hume avers that, “the many instances of forged miracles, prophecies, and supernatural events, prove sufficiently the strong propensity of mankind to the extraordinary and the marvelous (85). The human mind continues to

explore and probe intellectual and spiritual boundaries. One perceives in the prophetic adventure, the effort or attempt to satisfy the natural urge to prognosticate into the unknown.

Secondly, it is undeniable that the resilient African concept of sickness has dual but inter-related, corporal and spiritual aspects. Clark Jawanza observes that, “the African concept of person comprises of material and spiritual realities all working harmoniously” (75). Clark further states that, “the chief means through which the ancestors communicate with the living is through divination, dreams, spirit possession, and bodily affliction, or causing disease or sickness” (96). The above background and understanding in a way predisposes for prophetic or spiritual approach to healing. Accordingly, the African is not only incurably religious, as Parrinder wrote (9), but also perceives religion as a tool for solving existential life problems. The diagnosis and cure of sickness come under this spectrum. This is utilitarian or pragmatic approach to religion. The local tutelary deities are expected to be ‘powerful’ enough as to effectively protect the people against all enemies and ward off all forms of infirmities. Meanwhile, the deity should not only have the ability to foresee any impending danger but also alert the people through its ministers. The process of divination through which such alarm could be raised or discerned is part and parcel of African life-experience. Moreover, the dominant means of diagnosis by traditional healers or native doctors is through divination. This traditional practice finds a resonance in prophecy within the context of Christian religion.

On a more serious note, with the upsurge in proliferation of churches and Pentecostal spirituality in the twentieth century, came rapid commodification of miracles and prophecies. Prophetic bazaars became the order of the day especially during the New Year celebration, political elections and sports competitions especially football. Men of God prognosticate into the future to tell the people what will happen next: who will win the election and which football team will loose or win the match. No doubt this approach trivializes the sacred office of prophecy.

Finally, given the hard economic condition and glaring absence of health facilities, people resort to seeking miraculous healing as an alternative. The so called men of God catch on this precarious situation to exploit the vulnerable poor by merchandising anointing oils, holy water, etc as substitute for medication. Above all, prophecy becomes an alternative tool for medical diagnosis and cure. Like every other product or commodity, prophetic healings are aggressively advertised on the main and social media in order to attract more ‘customers.’

Effects of the Infodemic of Prophecies on COVID-19 Pandemic and the Society in General

The first obvious effect of the infodemic of incongruous prophecies is that it misinforms the people about the true nature of the problem. The prophet Hosea could have been right to lament that, “my people perish for lack of knowledge” (Hosea 4:6). Given that the prophecies come from acclaimed pastors, most people fallaciously take what they say as authentic. Some adherents become fanatical about what their pastors say. Similarly, the infodemic brings about social divisions with its divergence of opinions. False prophecies have been the bane of many families and kindred. Several families that have been once peaceful are now torn apart, pitching the members against each other.

It leads to stigmatization. Those who do not accept the conspiracy theories being peddled by the so called prophets and their adherents, in the name of prophecy, are often regarded as faithless or lacking the Holy Spirit. The proponents are also well known to be as dogmatic and fanatical as not to welcome any reasonable criticism.

The discordant prophecies distract from the authentic efforts towards finding proper solution to the problem at hand. In other words, they militate against scientific or systematic approach to solving the problem.

The above demerits notwithstanding, there is positive side of the phenomenon. Prophetic healing ministries contribute immensely to religious or spiritual tourism in Nigeria. Some prominent religious arenas where the prophetic healing ministries are organized have become sort of pilgrimage centers where Nigerians and other foreign nationals flock. It is often taunted that religion has become one of the major items Nigeria exports to the outside world. Such programs as New Year Passover Night, Prayer Crusades, Deliverance Nights, et cetera, attract mammoth crowd and a lot of economic activities. Politicians too are not left out as they do patronize the prophetic centers especially when elections are imminent. They subtly campaign for votes and consult with the prophets in order to discover what the future holds.

COVID-19 Pandemic and Infodemic of Discordant Prophecies: Critical Considerations

The mechanics of prophecy is largely supernatural or otherworldly. The prophet becomes merely an *instrumentum loquens* (a talking instrument). The approach defies empirical analysis. The inherent compulsion and extraneous influence on the human will and intellect simply vitiates or impairs sense of responsibility and systematic approach in problem solving. In other words, the prophetic approach cannot adequately serve as a veritable tool to systematically unravel the root cause of such a problem as COVID-19 disease or similar problems. Unlike sweeping prophetic assertions, scientific theories, according to Karl Popper, can be tested by their practical consequences; this is what distinguishes the scientist from the false

prophets (447). Since science, according to Aristotle and Aquinas, is knowledge of things from their root cause, scientific approach seems more plausible in dealing with problems than blind faith in sweeping prophetic assertions.

Similarly, the discordant prophecies grossly deviate from the *raison d'être* of Christian prophecy which is to draw the people to God. The so called prophets speak when God has not spoken! They operate out of personal interest. The consequence is that false prophecies are churned out and fed to the people. The COVID-19 pandemic becomes a litmus test for the phenomenon of New Year Prophecies that is now a tradition in Nigeria. Despite the purported claim to foresee the future, none of the 2020 New Year prophecies was able to capture the greatest event that shaped the year 2020! This casts a slur on the phenomenon of the New Year prophecy. The watch word should be: *caveat emptor!*

Although WHO, governments and health workers mount robust counter attack against COVID-19 infodemic via the mass and social media such as google, facebook, twitter, TikTok etc. The services of “mythbusters” and anti-conspiracy crusaders are equally employed to aggressively counter the violent attacks of infodemic; much however still needs to be done in terms of equipping the people with the intellectual kit to guard against the contagion or infodemic of virulent false and discordant prophecies that spread with infectious rapidity with. The present paper therefore recommends that such prophecies be *quarantined* and be taken with a pinch of salt. The concept of quarantine derives from the field of public health. Here people and animals coming from elsewhere are placed in exclusion and monitored for a determined period of time. They are finally accepted in the host country only when every doubt has been cleared. Given that false prophecies are often masked as truth and the symptomatic of falsehood hidden, there is need for a time lag or an interval to be given so as to clear the doubt and unmask the false prophecy for what it is. This calls for conceptual quarantining of the prophecy. The conceptual tool of quarantine becomes a readily available kit for *do-it-yourself* in dealing with discordant prophecies and other misinformation. This skeptic approach is also in consonance with the biblical and Pauline

admonition: Be Cautious about Prophets (1 Corinthians 14). The process of methodic doubt is moreover not new in the field of philosophy. Rene Descartes had employed it. The present paper merely points to the fact that it could be used in dealing with prophecies.

Conclusion

The present paper has examined the phenomenon of proliferation of prophecies in Nigeria as it relates to the COVID-19 pandemic. It briefly x-rayed the essence and mechanics of the biblical prophecy. The possible causes and effects of the infodemic of incongruent prophecies are also considered. African understanding about sickness and religion predispose for such prophetic escapades. The alarming upsurge in commodification of miracles and prophecies contributes to the escalation of prophetic profligacy. Above all, extreme economic hardship and lack of health facilities conglomerate to foster the proliferation of prophecies. The infodemic of prophecies deviates from the essence of prophecy. It misleads the people and creates social division. Above all, the prophetic exercise is otherworldly and extraneous to the operations of human will and intellect as such cannot be employed for systematic investigation of a given problem. Borrowing the concept of quarantine from the field of public health, the paper suggests that the prophecies and similar misinformation should be quarantined and monitored. This is a clarion call to be skeptical with the prophecies reeled out by the so called men of God. In this way the hazardous effects of the discordant prophecies would be curbed.

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MANAGEMENT OF THE DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION AND THEIR PRAGMATIC IMPLICATIONS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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Abstract

The ability to manage the dissemination of apt information devoid of all forms of ambiguity, misinterpretation and vagueness is one of the first steps to overcome the Covid-19 pandemic. Information is power and this is majorly made possible through the use of language. As such, what goes into circulation ought to be properly situated to eliminate all forms of social unrest and this deals largely with the choice of appropriate pragmatic devices employed while passing information about the virus and their socio-economic, political as well as religious implications. Using Mey's (2001) pragmatic act theory as the theoretical framework and President Muhammadu Buhari's March 29th, 2020 address on Covid-19 pandemic as primary data, this study attempts a pragmatic evaluation of the ways language has been deployed by African leaders to enlighten, educate and instruct the people on the spread of the Covid-19 disease. It also highlights how the mismanagement of information necessitated by the wrong choice of expressions has hindered absolute cooperation, loss of trust for the government of the day and breakdown of laws and order during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Keywords: *Africa, Pragmatic act theory, PMB, Language, Covid-19, Jacob Mey*

Introduction

Over the years, nations of the world have experienced one disaster or the other, outbreaks, insurgencies and wars. While some of these outbreaks have affected countries or are dominant in specific continents, never have there been an outbreak that affected the whole world at the same time causing countries with political and economic power to crumble so devastatingly that they had to go months with no economic, educational, religious as political activities. The Coronal virus or Covid-19 disease has been described by many as one of the worst pandemics the human history has ever experienced. In Africa and specifically Nigeria, the novel Coronal virus has disrupted the normal functioning of all sectors. This is in line with Yiaga Africa's (2020) position that, "The novel Coronavirus is wreaking havoc on all facets of human existence, and nation-states are mobilizing diverse resources to provide medical, political, economic, and legal solutions" (p. 4). The number of confirmed cases has continued to rise despite many preventive and precautionary measures the government has put in place since it entered Nigeria on the 27th February, 2020. The number of confirmed cases at present outweighs the dilapidated Nigerian hospitals, hence, orientation camps, stadia, schools and hotels have been converted to isolation centres. The government has remained relentless in proffering a lasting solution to the spread of this virus but up to date, no vaccine or cure have been discovered. Government has equally advised that everyone abide strictly by the Covid-19 rules and regulation to reduce the spread and restore normalcy in the land. But, one of the first steps to curbing this virus is by ensuring that information going to the public is appropriately and accurately disseminated to avoid misinterpretation and undue tension in the land. With this in mind, this study will attempt an analytical study of how information about the covid19 disease are disseminated to the Nigerian people and how language has been pragmatically selected to ensure that information passed to the masses are devoid of undue tension, fear and anxiety.

Pragmatic Act Theory (PAT)

This concept was introduced by Mey (2001) in his book entitled *Pragmatics: An introduction* as an extension of and/or a deviation from Austin's (1962) and Searle's (1969) theory of speech act. Pragmatic act theory draws our attention to "an examination of the conditions that make language use and in particular, a certain language use possible" (Mey, 2010b, p.444). That is, "what is affordable" in that situated interaction at that point in time (Mey, 2001, 219). Pragmatic acts are an important and far-reaching meaning making techniques because, meaning emanates from the interplay of language with the situation that produces it as against being merely represented in semantic units and administered by way of syntactic rules (Mey, 2001 as cited in Kurson, 2016, p. 226).

Mey (2010) calls PAT "the general situational prototypes of acts that are capable of being executed in a particular situation or clusters of situation" (p.2884). This general situational prototypes, he terms *pragmeme* and particular instantiations he calls *practs* or *Ipras*. Pragmatic act theory aptly captures an era where sentential componential analysis driving towards meaning, otherwise regarded as formal linguistic studies are no longer sufficient to shelter both legitimate and orphan constructions in any language. According to Osisanwo (2017), "a pragmatic act is an instance of adapting oneself to a context, as well as adapting the context to oneself" (P.301). Here, we begin to look beyond the levels of linguistic analysis, that is, the phonological, grammatical and semantic aspects of linguistics and place context, affordances and situations in focus in order to derive a complete and intended meaning of social actions. Hence, our interest is not driven by sentential components but utterances and the situations surrounding them. According to Mey (2016), "all pragmatic acts are situation-bound and depends on, as well as, define the context" (p.133).

PAT can be realized as a pragmeme; "...a general situational prototype capable of being executed in a situation," (Mey, 2001, p. 221). Capone (2005) asserts that a pragmeme is:

"an utterance whose goal is to bring about effects that modify a situation and change the roles of participants

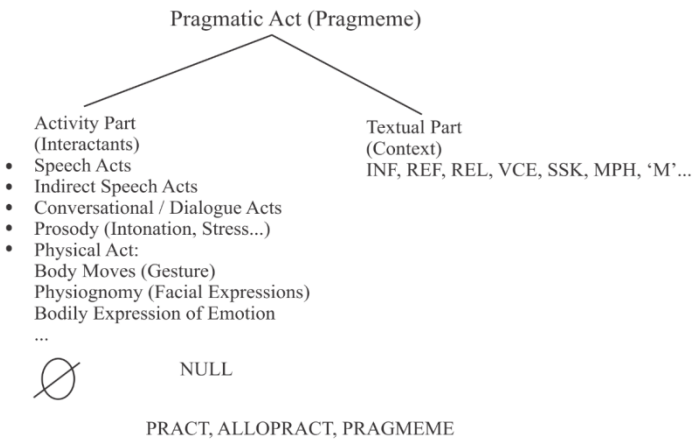
within it or to bring about other types of effect, such as exchanging/assessing information, producing social gratification or, otherwise, rights/obligations and social bonds” (p. 1357).

PAT can also be a pract; an instantiated pragmatic act. A pragemme and/or pract can be realized as allopract. An allopract is the variant realizations of a particular pract or pragemme. Mey (2001) introduced the PAT as an extension of speech act theory of Austin (1962) and Searle (1969).

Branches of the Pragmatic Act

Figure 1.

Mey (2001) presented a diagrammatic representation of components of practs:



Interpretation of the Branches of Pragmatic Acts

According to Mey (2001), “the column to the left list the various choices that the language user has at his or her disposal in communicating” (p.222). This means that during the process of performing a communicative act, there are linguistic choices open to an interactant, where he choose whichever he deems appropriate and this is what Mey (2001) calls “activity part.” To achieve communication purposes, language users have various choices available to them which when combined with different co(n)text-

dependent strategies produces desired pragmatic interpretation. The activity part imbeds the very many possible acts ranging from direct to indirect speech acts, dialogue acts and physical acts to body movements, gestures, facial expression of emotions and even to the possibility of no perceived act whatsoever (Ming-Yu Tseng, 2010, p.1985). In the absence of speech acts, body movements and gestures can be used. Albeit, there are some cases where none of these pragmatic acts will be present. In such instance, the null (\emptyset) schema which indicates silence may surface. However, we can also find two or more pragmatic acts playing up in discourses unlike speech acts that is focused basically on verbal utterances.

Also, to Mey (2001) “the right-hand side of the schema symbolizes elements that are present in the textual chain...” (p. 222) and these elements include: INF which stands for ‘inferencing,’ REF stands for ‘establishing referencing,’ SSK ‘shared situational knowledge,’ REL stands for ‘relevance,’ VCE stands for ‘voice,’ MPH ‘metaphor,’ while M represents ‘metapragmatic joker,’ an element that directs our attention to something happening on the metapragmatic plane

Methodology

PMB’s press release on the outbreak of the Covid-19 disease on 29th March, 2020 was purposively selected to serve as a case study. The selection of this address as against others is traceable to the fact that it was the first address giving by the president on Covid-19 and only this address is selected to engender thorough analysis. The data was downloaded from the internet and analyzed to reveal how PMB is able to manage the dissemination of appropriate information to the Nigerian audience. Mey’s (2001) pragmatic act theory was adopted as the theoretical framework in order to subject PMB’s address to a pragmatic interpretation. With the title and closing, the address has just one thousand, five forty two (1542) words. Therefore, for a described analysis, the whole address was subjected to a critical evaluation, whereby, the pragmatic acts or practs found in each sentence was extracted. Also, a quantitative analysis of the address

was done and the frequency counts were converted to percentage for statistical analysis.

Outline of PMB's Press Release on Covid-19 on 29th March, 2020

1. Giving all Nigerians a sense of belonging
2. Describing the preparedness of the Federal Government before Covid-19 entered Nigeria
3. Assuring that the whole instruments of the government have been mobilized to confront the Covid-19 crisis
4. Describing the Covid-19 as a health emergency
5. Describing the Covid-19 to be an economic crisis
6. Informing when Covid-19 was first confirmed in Nigeria
7. Describing the confirmation of the Covid-19 as unfortunate
8. Notifying that the number of confirmed cases have continued to rise
9. Informing the number of confirmed cases of Covid-19 as at March 29th, 2020
10. Informing that Nigeria has recorded her first fatality case on 23rd March, 2020
11. Identifying the first death victim of the Covid-19
12. Condoling with the family of the deceased
13. Praying for the quick recovery of all Covid-19 patients
14. Informing that there is no cure for Covid-19 yet
15. Informing that scientists are working hard to develop a Covid-19 vaccine
16. Informing that Nigeria is in touch with institutions working to get a solution to Covid-19
17. Proposing regular hygienic and sanitary practices as a means to avoid not getting infected
18. Proposing social distancing as a way to avoid contacting the virus
19. Identifying individuals as the greatest weapons to fight the pandemic
20. Describing what needs to be done to fight the Covid-19
21. Assuring that the virus can be contained
22. Stating that the coronal virus was first reported in China

23. Assuring that the Nigerian government has been following up with situations and responses concerning the Covid-19
24. Informing that the director general of the NCDC was one of the ten leaders invited by World Health Organization (WHO)
25. Informing that the essence of the visit of the director general of NCDC was to understudy Chinese response to Covid-19
26. Acknowledging how proud he is that the director general of the NCDC was invited to participate in the meeting
27. Informing that the NCDC has been implementing numerous strategies since the director general returned from China
28. Soliciting support from all Nigerians
29. Stating that Nigeria's implementation programs are tailored to reflect Nigeria's local realities
30. Informing that Nigeria is taking a two-step approach
31. Assuring that Nigeria will protect the lives of fellow Nigerians and residents living in Nigeria
32. Assuring that Nigeria will preserve the livelihoods of workers and business owners
33. Identifying the response mechanisms Nigeria has introduced
34. Promising to continue to introduce more response mechanisms as the situation unfolds
35. Acknowledging that the measures introduced by Nigeria will cause major inconsistencies to many citizens
36. Advising all to make the necessary sacrifices for the greater good of the country
37. Stating that the right reaction is needed by the right agencies and trained experts
38. Promising to rely on the guidance of medical professionals and experts at relevant agencies
39. Urging all citizens to adhere to guidelines released from time to time
40. Acknowledging that Lagos and Abuja have the highest number of confirmed cases in Nigeria
41. Assuring that his government will focus on urgently and drastically containing the virus.

42. Assuring that his government will support other states and region in the best way she can
43. Informing that fifteen billion naira has been provided to support national response to contain and control the virus
44. Informing that a presidential taskforce has been created to develop workable response strategies
45. Informing that the strategy adopted by Nigeria is international best practices and are adopted to suit local circumstance
46. Stating the goal of the federal government to states during the pandemic
47. Informing that hundreds of adhoc staff have been recruited in Abuja and Lagos to man call centres and support tracing of testing efforts
48. Informing that he has requested for the nomination of doctors and nurses by the governor's forum
49. Stating that the nominated doctors and nurses will be trained by the NCDC, Lagos and tactical and operational responses to the virus
50. Stating that the training will include medical representatives from armed forces, paramilitary and security and intelligence agencies
51. Advising that Nigeria's response to Covid-19 should be guided, systematic and professional
52. Stating the need for consistency
53. Assuring that all inconsistencies would be eliminated
54. Restating the number of confirmed cases in Nigeria
55. Informing that majority of the cases are in Lagos and Abuja
56. Assuring that all confirmed cases are getting necessary medical care
57. Assuring that his agencies are working hard to identify cases and people that Covid-19 patients have had contacts with
58. Informing that interstate and intercity movements are restricted
59. Stating his reason for the restriction
60. Ordering that movement in Lagos and FCT should cease for fourteen days with effect from 11pm on Monday, 30th March, 2020

61. Ordering the lockdown of Ogun state
62. Stating his reason for locking down Ogun state
63. Ordering all citizens in Abuja, Lagos and Ogun to stay in their homes
64. Ordering that interstate lockdown be postponed
65. Ordering the closure of businesses and offices within locations under lockdown
66. Informing that the governors and minister of Lagos, Ogun and FCT respectively have been notified
67. Informing that heads of security and intelligence agencies have been briefed
68. Identifying what the government intends to do within the period of the lockdown
69. Assuring that his government will treat confirmed cases and restrict further spread to other states
70. Exempting hospitals, all related medical establishments and organizations in health care related manufacturing and distribution from the lockdown
71. Exempting food processing, distribution and retail companies from the lockdown
72. Exempting petroleum distribution and retail entities from the lockdown
73. Exempting power generation, transmission and distribution companies from the lockdown
74. Exempting private security companies
75. Assuring that access to the exempted firms and companies are restricted and monitored
76. Exempting workers in telecommunication companies
77. Exempting broadcaster
78. Exempting print and electronic media staff
79. Stating his reason for exempting those in telecommunication companies
80. Instructing all seaport to remain operational
81. Informing that he has issued seaport operational guidelines
82. Instructing the screening of drivers and vehicles conveying essential cargoes from seaports

83. Instructing Hon. Minister of health to deploy all port health authority employees stationed in Lagos and Abuja airports to key roads that serve as entry and exit points to the restricted zones
84. Ordering the suspension of movement of all passenger aircrafts
85. Informing that special permit will be issued to passenger aircrafts if the need arises
86. Acknowledging that the measures adopted by the government will cause much hardship and inconveniences to citizens
87. Stating that the pandemic is a matter of life and death
88. Advising Nigerians to see the lockdown as a national and patriotic duty to control and contain the spread of the virus
89. Requesting all affected by the lockdown to put aside personal comfort and safeguard everybody
90. Referring to coronal virus as a common enemy
91. Proposing that all should come together and obey scientific and medical advise
92. Advising all to see obeying the lockdown rules as individual contribution to the war against Covid-19
93. Stating that many other countries have taken stricter measures to control the spread of the virus
94. Promising to deploy relief materials to residents of satellite and commuter town and communities around Lagos and Abuja to ease their pains
95. Promising to sustain the school feeding program
96. Informing that he has directed a three month repayment moratorium for all trademoni, marketmoni and farmmoni loans to be implemented
97. Informing that he has directed a moratorium to be given to all federal government funded loan issued by the bank of industry, bank of agriculture and Nigerian export import bank
98. Informing that he has directed the financial institutions to engage development partners and negotiate concessions to ease the pain of the borrowers
99. Informing that he has directed that the conditional case transfer be paid to the vulnerable in the society for the next two months

100. Assuring that internally displaced persons will also receive the conditional cash transfer
101. Soliciting that Nigerians take personal responsibility to support the vulnerable within their communities
102. Soliciting that Nigerians should help the vulnerable with whatever they need
103. Proposing that Nigerians continue to plan for all possible eventualities while praying for the best possible outcome
104. Giving reasons for ordering the conversion of government stadia, pilgrims camps and other facilities to isolation centres and makeshift hospitals
105. Promising to avail all necessary resources to support the response and recovery
106. Assuring that his government is committed to do whatever it takes to confront Covid-19 in Nigeria
107. Thanking private sectors and individuals for their supports
108. Requesting that all contributions and donations be coordinated and centralized to ensure efficient and impactful pending
109. Stating that the presidential taskforce remains the central coordinating body on the Covid-19 response
110. Assuring that all agencies with a role to play in the outbreak response are working hard to bring the virus under control
111. Stating that every nation in the world is challenged by the virus
112. Prompting a social (action) responsibility for all to help reduce the spread of the virus
113. Thanking all public health workforce, health care workers, port health authorities and other essential staff
114. Acknowledging them to be true heroes
115. Thanking all for listening

Analysis and Discussion

A thorough examination of the management of language in PMB's address on Covid-19 disease reveals that one hundred and fifteen acts, categorized into twenty four pragmatic functions (practs) were performed in the address. In their order of frequency, these practs include informing (twenty five), assuring (sixteen), stating

(fourteen), exempting (eight), ordering (six), describing (five), acknowledging (five), promising (five), advising (4), identifying (four), proposing (three), soliciting (three), instructing (three), thanking (three), requesting (two). Others that occurred just once include giving Nigerians a sense of belonging, condoling, praying, urging, restating, referring, giving reasons, notifying, and prompting. The practs were made up of speech acts, psychological acts, indirect speech acts. More so, the practs were textually marked by the following pragmatic tools: shared situational knowledge, reference, relevance, and inference. The different pract served to achieve five goals which are, to reveal PMB’s and the government’s intentions, to appreciate the efforts all Nigerians were making to fight the virus, to give directives/direction, to give details on issues concerning the covid-19, and to show a feeling of empathy to Nigerians. Below is a tabular representation of the summary of the identified pragmatic acts, the goals, their frequency and percentage of occurrence in the address. The table is represented in Figure 2

Summary of the Pragmatic Acts and Goals

Goal	Frequen cy	Percenta ge	Practs	Frequen cy	Percenta ge
To give directiv es or directio n	49	42.6%	Advising	4	3.4%
			Informing	25	21.7%
			Notifying	1	0.6%
			Instructing	3	2.6%
			Exempting	8	6.9%
			Requesting	2	1.7%
			Ordering	6	5.2%
To reveal intentio n	39	33.9%	Proposing	3	2.6%
			Promising	5	4.3%
			Stating	14	12.1%
			Assuring	16	13.9%
			prompting	1	0.6%
To give details	12	10.4%	Identifying	4	3.4%
			Describing	5	4.3%

			Giving reasons	1	0.6%
			Referring	1	0.6%
			Restating	1	0.6%
To appreciate the effort of all Nigerians	08	6.9%	Thanking	3	2.6%
			Acknowledging	5	4.3%
To show a feeling of empathy	07	6.2%	Soliciting	3	2.6
			Praying	1	0.6%
			Condoling	1	0.6%
			Giving all a sense of belonging	1	0.6%
			Urging	1	0.6%
	115	100	TOTAL	115	100

Goals of the Pragmatic acts

1. To give directives/direction

Informing

The pragmatic act of informing was mainly used in PMB's address/speech on covid-19 pandemic which he delivered on the 29th March, 2020. The preponderance (25 occurrence) of this pract, informing, can favourably pass PMB's March 29th, 2020 address on covid-19 as an address of giving information. The greater occurrence of this pract can be traced to the fact that at the time when information about the virus was very vague and many destructive information were widely circulated, there was a need to release an appropriate information about the covid-19, its causes, means of contracting it as well as protective and/or precautionary measures that the government had put in place to curb the spread of the virus. Also, the Nigeria people needed to be intimated on their individual and collective roles

in the war against the virus. More so, the preponderance use of the pract of informing by PMB was in a bid to calm the tension that already misleading circulated information was causing on Nigerians.

The following extracts are practs of informing Nigeria, unfortunately, confirmed its first case on 27th February 2020. Since then, we have seen the number of confirmed cases rise slowly. (Para. 4)

Regrettably, we also had our first fatality, a former employee of PPMC, who died on 23rd March 2020. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family in this very difficult time. We also pray for quick recovery for those infected and undergoing treatment (Para. 6)

Since his return, the NCDC has been implementing numerous strategies and programs in Nigeria to ensure that the adverse impact of this virus on our country is minimized. We ask all Nigerians to support the work the Federal Ministry of Health and NCDC are doing, led by the Presidential Task Force (Para. 13)

These practs of informing are marked by shared situational knowledge (SSK), relevance (Rel) and reference (Ref). In other words, the presence of the convid-19 pandemic is known to all Nigerians and the essence of informing the audience both on measures of curbing the virus and steps taken by the Nigeria government is to eliminate possible fear, misinformation and risk of contracting the virus. In some other part of the address, PMB informs the Nigerian people that he has set up different measures such as palliatives, repayment of moratorium for all tradmoni, marketmoni and farmermoni among others to help cushion the effect of the lockdown on the masses. For instance, PMB informs that he had directed the transfer of some money to vulnerable:

For the most vulnerable in our society, I have directed that the conditional cash transfers for

the next two months be paid immediately. Our Internally displaced persons will also receive two months of food rations in the coming weeks. (Para. 54)

This piece of information will go a long way to reduce tensions building up already in the minds of the supposed vulnerable who on one hand would have been overshadowed with fear of uncertainty upon the declaration of the interstate and intercity lockdown. The pract of informing is very essential in a time such as this to portray a government with the interest of her people and curtail further spread of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Pract of Exempting

On the goal of giving direction, the pract of exempting comes very close to the pract of informing. Although, not in preponderance but on the fact that it relates to giving information. This pract has eight occurrence (6.9%) in the whole of the address. PMB intimates the Nigeria people some sectors of the government that are not part of the restriction because they provide essential services to the people.

Extracts:

This order does not apply to hospitals and all related medical establishments as well as organizations in health care related manufacturing and distribution (Para. 38)

Furthermore, commercial establishments such as; a. food processing, distribution and retail companies; b. petroleum distribution and retail entities, c. power generation, transmission and distribution companies; and d. private security companies are also exempted (Para. 39)

The pract of exempting which PMB employed in the address is marked by SSK and Rel. He exempts these sectors because he understands the relevance of them and he also believes that the people shared knowledge of the situation the country and the whole world is into. He, however, places some restrictions and surveillance on the

exempted sectors to ensure that they observe the Covid-19 guidelines to engender a reduction in the spread of the virus.

Pract of Ordering

The pract of ordering takes 6% of occurrences in the address and using this pragmatic function, PMB orders that immediate and drastic measures be employed to intensify the war against the Covid-19. This pract is very important as it is appropriately employed by PMB to not just utilize his presidential power but to further compel the Nigerian people to abide by decisions of the government. Pract of ordering sends a message of being in control of the situation. PMB is not merely suggesting or experimenting if locking down affected states will be effective, he sees ordering the lockdown of these states and restrictions as the best possible option to curb the spread of the virus. For instance:

All citizens in these areas are to stay in their homes. Travel to or from other states should be postponed. All businesses and offices within these locations should be fully closed during this period (Para. 35)

Movements of all passenger aircraft, both commercial and private jets, are hereby suspended. Special permits will be issued on a needs basis (Para. 44)

The above extracts are clear cases of ordering. It means that the positions of PMB is non-negotiable. He employs Rel and VCE to help bend the people towards obeying him being aware that the virus is incurable, hence, he also employs the SSK while performing this pract.

Pract of Advising

This practs occurs four times (3.4%) in the whole address but it conveys an important message of solidarity, brotherhood and a sense of belonging. It is an advice that indirectly solicits compliance from all concerned.

we must all see this as our national and patriotic duty to control and contain the spread of this virus. I will therefore ask all of us affected by this order to put aside our personal comfort to safeguard ourselves and fellow human beings. This common enemy can only be controlled if we all come together and obey scientific and medical advice (Para.44)

This advice acts together to compel the Nigerian citizens and others living on the Nigeria soil to accept the guidelines released by the president himself. A deviation from the laid down rules will only escalate the rise in the spread of the covid-19 disease. He also employs the pract of advising to convey Nigerian what role they ought to play in curbing the covid19 disease

Practs of Instructing

Under this pragmatic function, PMB clearly instructs the screening of drivers and vehicles conveying essential cargoes from the seaports after having instructed them to continue with their operations at the seaports. Furthermore, PMB instructs the Hon. Minister of Health deploy all port health authority employees who had been in Lagos and Abuja airports to major roads that sever as entry and exit point to the zones under lockdown. This pract takes 2.6% of the over-all acts performed in the address. PMB's use of the pract of instructing can be regarded as exercising his power as the president of Nigeria whose words should ordinary to be esteemed by all especially when it is to the benefit of the entire country. Having ordered the lockdown of some sectors which he considers non-essential, there is need to not just announce exempted sectors but to include some level of power to his announcements apparent in the following extracts:

All seaports in Lagos shall remain operational in accordance with the guidelines I issued earlier. Vehicles and drivers conveying essential cargoes from these Ports to other parts of the country will be screened thoroughly before departure by the Ports Health Authority (Para. 42)

Accordingly, the Hon. Minister of Health is hereby directed to redeploy all Port Health Authority employees previously stationed in the Lagos and Abuja Airports to key roads that serve as entry and exit points to these restricted zones (Para. 44)

Practs of Requesting

In as much as PMB exerts some level of power and authority on the masses, there is, however, a need to crave their indulgence and not impose certain laws and orders on them. This pract is particularly useful in assuring Nigerians of the respect PMB has for them, albeit, it has only 1.7% preponderance.

At this point, I will ask that all contributions and donations be coordinated and centralized to ensure efficient and impactful spending. The Presidential Task Force remains the central coordinating body on the COVID-19 response (Para. 60)

PMB uses SSK in requesting that all payments should be coordinated and centralized. More so, he uses the REL to state the reason behind his request.

Pract of Notifying

Notifying is an act of giving an official information about something. In PMB's address, this pract has a 0.6% occurrence. PMB employs this pract to report the unfortunate intrusion of the covid19 disease in Nigeria and it is closely related to the pract of informing

Nigeria, unfortunately, confirmed its first case on 27th February 2020. Since then, we have seen the number of confirmed cases rise slowly (Para. 4)

To Reveal Intention

Pract of Assuring

In a society clouded with uncertainty and gross fear for the dreaded incurable covid19 disease, the need to assure the masses that the government is on top of the matter and that all possible actions would be taken to reduce if not eliminating completely the spread of the virus cannot be overemphasized. Many Nigerians are already are trembling from information they got from affected countries and most especially by its fast spread without cure. More so, Nigerians need to know how much they can trust the government of the day to restore stability and orderliness in the land. Consequently, the pract of assuring has 13.9% preponderance, that is, it occurred sixteen times in the address and this goes a long way to eliminate the doubt of many who may see the exercise as another political looting strategy by the political leaders. For instance, in the following extract, PMB assures Nigerians that his agencies are working very hard to identify those who have either contracted the disease or have had contacts with people who tested positive to the Covid-19 disease:

Our agencies are currently working hard to identify cases and people these patients have been in contact with (Para. 31)

This extracts assures Nigerians that PMB is committed to the search against the cpvid19 disease. Through this pract, he also employs the psychological act to speak directly to the emotions of the Nigerian people, thereby, restoring some level of tranquility in their distressed minds. In the address, there are assurances of eliminating inconsistencies in the federal and state agencies; he also assures internally displaced persons of his effort to make sure they are not starved during the pandemic. Because the above extract is personally voiced- VCE by PMB, there is a high degree of tension necessitated by the covid19 disease and this pract is relevant-REL to the topic of discussion.

Pract of Stating

Under this pragmatic function, PMB clearly states how the covid19 disease is a threat to all sectors of the Nigerian economy; some of the measures applicable worldwide; revealing his reasons for either locking some sectors in Nigeria or some states up and exempting others. Stating takes 12.1% of the one hundred and fifteen acts performed in address and with this pract, PMB makes definite statements. For instance, he states the presidential task force remains the central coordinating body on the covid19 response; that Nigeria is not the only nation challenged by the virus and that these nations have taken stricter measures to control the spread of the covid19 disease. He further states his reasons for restricting interstate and intercity movement. This he does with the sake of transparency and ensure that there exist mutual understanding between government's decisions and the masses response. For instance, PMB decides to restrict movements to contain the spread of the disease:

We are therefore working to ensure such interstate and intercity movements are restricted to prevent further spread (Para. 33)

Pract of Promising

Pract of promising occurs in PMB's address on covid19 disease outbreak as a way of assuring Nigerians that his government is committed to the war against the spread of the disease. Promising has 4.3% preponderance (five times) in the address and by becoming committal, PMB tells the people what they expect to hear, that it, that he is determined to defeat the disease. It is a shared situational knowledge (SSK) that most Nigerian hospitals are in their dilapidated states and majority of Nigerians live below the poverty line but PMB assures the people that he will ensure that the fatality rate is not high despite the poor health conditions. Therefore, he promises to ease the pain those living in places under lockdown:

For residents of satellite and commuter towns and communities around Lagos and Abuja whose livelihoods will surely be affected by some of these restrictive measures, we shall

deploy relief materials to ease their pains in the coming weeks (Para. 49)

PMB uses the REL pragmatic tool to achieve this pragmatic function. Acknowledging the fact that there will be hardship necessitated by the restrictions and lockdowns, he commits himself to the people and pledges that none will starve during this period. He also understands the relevance of food as one of the basic necessities of life and, hence, he promises to make it available to all.

Pract of Proposing

This is another important pract employed by PMB in his address on covid19 disease. It occurs three times (2.6%) and it showcases the intentions of the Nigerian government in tackling the recent scourge that has become a worldwide pandemic. PMB proposes that Nigerians should come together and embrace scientific and medical advice. This call is suggestively performed PMB respects the freedom of movement, association, worship and he knows that ordering will not yield positive outcome. Thus, he propose that more plans be put in place even as we continue to pray to God for his intervention.

As we all pray for the best possible outcome,
we shall continue planning for all eventualities
(Para. 56)

From the above extract, PMB employs the REL tool to highlight the need to stick together if we must defeat the covid19 disease.

Pract of Prompting Social Action

The pract of prompting occurs just once in the address and it serves as a means of motivation and encouragement for all not to lose hope in the government of the day. Prompting pract is not always explicitly stated during conversations but can be deduced from their context of use. This is in line with Haugh (2016) assertion that “prompting social action involves one participant inviting another participant to initiate some kind of social action sequence, thereby, avoiding accountability for having launched the social action in question” (p.167).

Every nation in the world is challenged at this time. But we have seen countries where citizens have come together to reduce the spread of the virus (Para. 62)

PMB uses the REF tool to relate that citizens in other countries hit by this disease have equally come together to fight, by way of cooperating with the guidelines and taking responsibility to help, and encourage others. By making reference to the fact that other countries of the world have united within themselves to fight the Covid19 disease, PMB charges Nigerians to do same.

To Appreciate the Effort of Nigerians

Pract of Acknowledging

The pract of acknowledging takes 4.3% of the address. Although, it sometimes corresponds with the pract of thanking, it goes a long way to show how familiar PMB is with not only the situation that the country is presently facing but also the effort of well-meaning Nigerians to rid the country of the covid19 disease. It is, however, a shared situational knowledge (SSK) that the country will experience hardship and pain as a result of the restrictions and lockdown and this is a psychological act euphemistically stated in order to give the people a feeling of being cared for:

We are fully aware that such measures will cause much hardship and inconvenience to many citizens. But this is a matter of life and death, if we look at the dreadful daily toll of deaths in Italy, France and Spain (Para. 46)

PMB uses INF to draw a conclusion that the measures will result to hardship and even inconvenience for many especially, those below the poverty line. But these measures are relevant (REL) with reference (REF) to the daily death tolls recorded in Italy, France and Spain.

Accordingly, he acknowledges the effort of those in the health sector and regard them as living heroes; acknowledges how proud he is with the director general of Nigerian Centre for Disease Control

(NCDC) who was invited by the World Health Organization (WHO) to understudy the Chinese response to the covid19 disease.

Pract of Thanking

Thanking is a means of showing appreciation for a service rendered by someone to you and often times overlaps with acknowledging. This pract is useful because individuals being thanked feel obliged to do more. PMB employs this pract to appeal to the psychological minds of Nigerians who have in one way or the other being supportive in the fight to eradicate the covid19 disease. He does not introduce this pract in the beginning of his address but includes them in the middle and end. He appreciates the private sectors and individuals for their support; thank all public health work force, health care workers, port health authorities and other essential staff:

I will take this opportunity to thank all our public health workforce, health care workers, port health authorities and other essential staff on the frontlines of the response for their dedication and commitment. You are true heroes (Para. 64)

He also finds it appropriate (REL) to thank Nigerians as a whole for granting him audience:

I thank you all for listening. May God continue to bless and protect us all (Para 65)

To Give Details

Pract of Describing

The pract of describing is used to give details or clearer explanation of someone or something. In PMB's March 29th, 2020 address on the outbreak of the covid19 disease, PMB describes the covid19 disease as a health emergency and an economic crisis which ought to be tackled head-on. In the second paragraph of PMB's address, he describes the preparedness of the federal government before the covid19 entered Nigeria:

From the first signs that Coronavirus, or COVID-19 was turning into an epidemic and was officially declared a world-wide emergency, the Federal Government started planning preventive, containment and curative measures in the event the disease hits Nigeria (Para. 2)

He equally described the measures that need to be taken to fight the disease stating the REL of adhering to the instructions of the NCDC:

As individuals, we remain the greatest weapon to fight this pandemic. By washing our hands regularly with clean water and soap, disinfecting frequently used surfaces and areas, coughing into a tissue or elbow and strictly adhering to infection prevention control measures in health facilities, we can contain this virus (Para. 10)

Pract of Identifying

pract of identifying establishes as well as indicates individuals or things involved in an event. In PMB's address, this pract takes 3.4% of the total acts performed in the address and it functions to shield more light on the covid19 disease, means of contracting it, spreading it and measures that can be taken to curb it. PMB sees the need to pinpoint what the government intend to do during the lockdown which he considers relevant (REL):

We will use this containment period to identify, trace and isolate all individuals that have come into contact with confirmed cases. We will ensure the treatment of confirmed cases while restricting further spread to other States (Para.37)

Furthermore, PMB identifies individuals as the greatest weapon to fight the disease and even the first death case the country recorded and the deceased portfolio bearing in mind that Nigerians already have an SSK that there has been one death occurrence.

Practs of Giving Reasons, Referring and Restating

Each of these practs occurred once and is used either to give a clearer explanation of PMB's actions as in the case where PMB explains why he decides to convert government stadia, pilgrim camps, and other facilities to an isolation centre.

In pract of referring, PMB refers to the covid19 disease as a common enemy that must be collectively fought against.

For the sake of emphasis, PMB employs this pract to reiterate the number of confirmed cases Nigeria had as at the release of the address and their locations:

As I mentioned earlier, as at this morning we had ninety-seven confirmed cases. Majority of these are in Lagos and Abuja. All the confirmed cases are getting the necessary medical care (Para. 30)

To Show a Feeling of Empathy

Pract of Soliciting

This pract occupy 2.6% occurance from the one hundred and fifteen acts performed by PMB. PMB pleadingly requests the full support and cooperation of Nigerians in the fight against the deadly disease:

...we ask all Nigerians to support the work the Federal Ministry of Health and NCDC are doing, led by the Presidential Task Force (Para. 13)

Also, he solicit them to take personal responsibility to support the vulnerable with whatever they have. This pract is REL because, if this plead is executed by all, the hardship and pain the people, especially the vulnerable will feel would be greatly reduced.

Practs of Praying, Condoling, Giving all a Sense of Belonging and Urging

Having identified the first fatality case in Nigeria caused by the covid19 disease, PMB finds it necessary to pray for the soul of the

deceased, console the deceased family and pray for the quick recovery of those still undergoing treatment:

Regrettably, we also had our first fatality, a former employee of PPMC, who died on 23rd March 2020. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family in this very difficult time. We also pray for quick recovery for those infected and undergoing treatment (Para. 6)

He urges all to abide by the guidelines that are released from time to time in order to prevent another of such occurrences:

I therefore urge all citizens to adhere to their guidelines as they are released from time to time (Para. 21)

Most importantly, PMB begins his address by acknowledging that he does not own Nigeria alone by using the practice of giving all a sense of belonging when he said: Fellow Nigerians! (Para. 1)

Conclusion

Language is a powerful political tool that can transform as well as destroy a society if not well managed. This is because of the fact that individual cohabiting in a particular speech community share diversified socio-political, religious, cultural, educational and ideological stance. Hence, to effectively disseminate information such as the address on the outbreak of the deadly coronavirus disease requires a lot of care. This PMB successfully performed with the help of pragmatics, especially the pragmatic act theory of Mey (2001).

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MODALITIES FOR EFFECTIVE ADMINISTRATION OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN THE FACE OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC IN ONDO STATE

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Abstract

The shock of the coronavirus disease known with code, COVID-19 pandemic on education has been unprecedented. It has set the clock back on the attainment of education goals as instrument for national development. The scale of the COVID-19 pandemic impact's on education sector, ranging from students learning, wellbeing and day to day school administration in alarming. This truly is a global crisis which is preventing citizens in every country, including Nigeria, from fulfilling their right to quality, safe and inclusive education. This study was carried out to ascertain the modalities for effective administration of secondary school in the face of the covid-19 pandemic in Ondo state. Two research questions guided the study. The study adopted a descriptive survey research. A sample of 300 participants made up of 80 principals and 220 teachers was used for the study. The instrument used for data collection was a questionnaire. The research questions were answered using mean and standard deviations. The findings of the study revealed that the outbreak of the Covid-19 Pandemic

poses serious challenges on secondary school administration in Ondo state, Nigeria, principals' level of preparedness against the Covid-19 Pandemic in the day to day administration of schools was reported low, among others. Based on the findings, the researchers recommended that Government should employ more competent teachers, erect more classrooms in order to maintain social distancing and minimize number of students per teacher, and make provision for safety materials for promotion of better hygiene culture. Also, that there should be encouragement of sustainable e-learning platform by creating e-libraries and adopting e-teaching softwares such as zoom, that can be use for holding meetings and delivering lectures with no or less physical contact in the schools.

Keywords: *Education, Secondary School, Administration, Covid-19 Pandemic*

Introduction

The outbreak of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) has been declared a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) and the virus has now spread to many countries and territories. The Coronavirus disease known with code, COVID-19 pandemic is an infection which is as a result of a novel severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). Infection for example, the novel severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) and the Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS) was known in 2002 and 2012 in that order were as a result of viruses analogous to SARS-CoV-2. Covid-19 was first discovered in Wuhan, China with general signs of dry cough, fever, tiredness, shortness of breath, headache and general body weakness owned to the incentive of supplementary pains in the body. According to African News (2020) therapeutic diagnosis and findings have revealed that people tainted with covid- 19 can be symptomatic or asymptomatic; the premature stages of the virus depending on each person immune system.

Nevertheless, SARS-CoV-2 has a higher range more than earlier information related to viruses and as a result the obscurity in the cure and management of COVID-19 (Zhonget *al.*, 2020). The spread of the coronavirus initially spared Nigeria, like many other African countries, with zero recorded case as of January 2020. This luck, however, did not last. By the 28th of February, Nigeria reported its first case; a Nigerian UK returnee. Nearly two months, 343 confirmed cases, 91 recoveries and 10 deaths Nigeria has a pressing cause for concern. The Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) has no doubt adversely affected the global economy. It has forced many businesses to temporarily shut down and governments across the world to place a restriction on movement while exempting providers of essential services who are to strictly observe social distancing rules while providing services as a way to contain the spread of the virus. The pandemic may have pushed the world into the deepest global recession in living memory which will have lasting effects on economies and public finances. No doubt, the Coronavirus pandemic has adversely affected all aspects of our lives including education sector.

Education is the veritable instrument for academic advancement, social mobilization, political survival and effective national development of any country. According to Federal Republic of Nigeria (2013), in order to realize the goals of education in Nigeria for sustainable development, government would take necessary measures to ensure that such education is learner-centered for maximum self- development and fulfillment at all level including secondary school. Secondary education is the education given in an institution of learning to prepare students for higher education (FRN, 2013). This implies that secondary education is the basic and fundamental education the child received in preparation for higher education which deserves effective administration. School administration may be seen as all activities on how to influence or engineer resources in order to achieve the objectives of teaching and learning in the school (Ajayi & Ayodele, 2012). It is the process of skillfully arranging the human and material resources and programme

available for education and carefully using them for achieving educational objectives.

Unfortunately, the educational sector including secondary school is a part of the receiving end of the coronavirus disease known with code, COVID-19 pandemic. The scale of the COVID-19 pandemic impact's on educational sector, ranging from students learning, wellbeing and day to day school administration is alarming. This truly is a global crisis which is preventing citizens in every country, including Nigeria, from fulfilling their right to quality, safe and inclusive education. According to UNESCO, an estimated 1.725 billion learners have been affected as a result of school closures, representing about 99.9% of the world's student population as of April 13th, 2020. It has set the clock back on the attainment of education goals as instrument for national development. The coronavirus diseases known with code, 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 including Nigeria by extension Ondo state which led to closure of schools. Closures of schools and other learning spaces have impacted 94 per cent of the world's students' 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, deny youth'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 due to the pandemic's economic impact alone. No wonder, Mr Borhene Chakroun, Director of the Division of Policies and Lifelong Learning Systems at UNESCO, recalled that prolonged school closures have major implications for learning, assessments, credentials and school administration.

Similarly, the education disruption has had, and will continue to have, substantial effects beyond education but also school

administration. Closures of educational institutions hamper the provision of essential services to children and communities, including access to nutritious food, affect the ability of many parents to work. Recent guidance from the United States Center for Disease Control (US-CDC) suggests that school closures do serve a purpose, in particular if COVID-19 cases are school-based, to allow for decontamination and contact tracing. It also recognizes its importance as a tool to increase social distance. The reports note that a closure of 4 to 8 weeks might be required in case of substantial community spread. On the other hand, extended interrupted education that disengages students from the learning process has the potential cost of reversing gains in learning results set back in school administration. Before the pandemic, the world was already facing formidable challenges in fulfilling the promise of education as a basic human right, so the covid-19 worsen the situation and there is the need for the way out by adopting innovative administration such the use of ICT platforms, devices as alternative means of school administration.

However, the scale of the COVID-19 pandemic impact's on educational sector, ranging from students learning, wellbeing and day to day school administration in alarming. This truly is a global crisis which is preventing citizens in every country, including Nigeria and Ondo state by extension, from fulfilling their right to quality, safe and inclusive education. Ordinarily, when issue such as the covid-19 occurs, school supposed to switch over to an alternative means of learning and administration, but is very unfortunate, no such alternatives in Nigeria education institutions. This study was carried out to ascertain modalities for effective administration of secondary school in the face of the covid-19 pandemic in Ondo state.

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of the study is to ascertain modalities for effective administration of secondary school in the face of the covid-19 pandemic in Ondo state. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. identify challenges covid-19 pandemic pose on secondary school administration in Ondo State;

2. ascertain ways for effectively administered secondary schools in the face of covid-19 pandemic in Ondo state.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study.

1. What are the challenges covid-19 pandemic pose on secondary school administration in Ondo State?
2. What are the ways secondary schools can be effectively administered in the face of covid-19 pandemic in Ondo state?

Methodology

The design of this study was descriptive survey design. According to Nworgu (2015), descriptive survey is a type of study which aims at collecting data, and describing in a systematic manner, the characteristic features or facts about a given population. The study was carried out in Ondo state. A sample of 300 participants made up of 80 principals and 220 teachers was drawn for the study through simple random technique. The instrument used for data collection was a questionnaire. The instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled: Modalities for Administering Secondary School in the Face of Covid-19 Pandemic Questionnaire (MASCQ). The instrument (MASCQ) was subjected to face validation by three experts, two in Educational Administration and Planning and one in Measurement and Evaluation, all from the faculty of education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka. Twenty five (20) copies of the questionnaire were trial tested on 6 principals and 14 teachers in Ekiti State, which is outside the area of this study. The Cronbach Alpha method was used to determine the internal consistency and overall reliability coefficient of 0.93 was obtained. The direct delivery and retrieved method was used in the administration of the instrument. The data collected for the study was analyzed using mean and standard deviation for answering the research questions.

Results and Discussion of the Findings

Research Question One: What are the challenges covid-19 pandemic pose on secondary school administration in Ondo State? The data for answering the above research question are presented on Table 1 below:

Table 1: Mean responses of principals and teachers on the challenges covid-19 pandemic pose on secondary Teachers administration in Ondo State.

S/N	ITEMS	Principals			teachers		
		\bar{X}	SD	Rmk	\bar{X}	SD	Rmk
1	Interruption of the school calendar year	2.72	.86	A	2.56	.92	A
2	The outbreak of the covid-19 prevented meeting attendance in the school	2.65	1.38	A	3.11	1.29	A
3	Interruption of the school programmes	2.52	.62	A	2.55	.55	A
4	The outbreak of the covid-19 led to school closure	2.20	1.08	D	2.11	1.32	D
5	The outbreak of the covid-19 hampered quick decision making in the school	2.79	.59	A	2.89	.86	A
6	The outbreak of the covid-19 prevented communication	2.25	.80	D	2.17	.63	D

feedback which is crucial in the implementation of the plans and programmes

7	Scarce financial resources for maintenance of existing disaster response structures and to ensure effective emergency response	2.78	.59	A	2.88	.86	A
8	Denied school authorities school-community partnership in school finance	2.65	1.38	A	3.11	1.29	A
9	lack of social protection mechanisms in the school due to the outbreak of the covid-19	2.52	.62	A	2.55	.55	A
Cluster mean		2.76	.06	A	2.88	.07	A

The above Table presents the mean opinions of principal and teachers on challenges covid-19 pandemic pose on secondary school administration in Ondo State. From the data presented on the table it is observable that the principal rated items 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 8 and 9 2.72, 2.62, 2.52, 2.79, 2.78 3.11 and 2.52 with overall mean of 2.76 while teachers rated the same items 2.56, 3.11, 2.55, 2.89, 2.88, 3.11 and 2.55 with overall mean of 2.88 respectively. This means that the principals and teachers share the same view on challenges covid-19

pandemic pose on secondary school administration. These are indications that majority of the items in this cluster are challenges covid-19 pandemic pose on secondary school administration in Ondo State.

The results obtained from research question 1 revealed that covid-19 pandemic pose challenges to the administration of secondary schools in Ondo state. This findings is inline with Thelma (2020) who cited UNESCO, that about 359 million primary and secondary school learners are currently out-of school as a result of the school closures. According to Olaitan, Abdullahi, Tolorunju, Akinjo & Oluwafemi (2020), the covid-19 pandemic span into Nigeria society, at the very crucial moment, when schools at all level including secondary schools are in section where most schools are preparing for examination. The result corroborates Olaitan (2020), who reported that the COVID-19 pandemic has had far-reaching consequences on education systems all over the world, with Nigeria not being an exception. This has resulted in a nationwide lockdown by Governments, which is greatly impacting not only school closures but also physical/social distancing and change from normal routines of people.

Research Question Two: What are the ways secondary schools can be effectively administered in the face of covid-19 pandemic in Ondo state?

The data for answering the above research question are presented on Table 2 below:

Table2: Mean responses of principals and teachers on the ways secondary schools can be effectively administered in the face of covid-19 pandemic in Ondo state.

S/N	ITEMS	Principals			Teachers		
		\bar{X}	SD	Rmk	\bar{X}	SD	Rmk
10	Enhancing preparedness while keeping schools open	2.62	.68	A	2.60	1.44	A
11	Regular use of online/ e-learning strategies for meeting	3.44	.37	A	3.40	.68	A
12	Use of education resources to support the general response	2.55	1.16	A	2.68	.77	A
13	Communication campaigns and information sharing	2.72	.98	A	2.80	.61	A
14	Train teachers how to instruct and engage all students through distance learning tools.	2.30	1.37	D	2.11	1.36	D
15	Keep time and track of student engagement, possibly through	1.60	1.24	D	1.90	1.45	D

	WhatsApp groups or zoom							
16	Engage in agreements with telecoms to eliminate cost of accessing resources for MoE sites.	2.33	1.37	D	2.12	1.36	D	
17	Create support communities among teachers and students to cross-reference questions and solutions.	2.55	1.16	A	2.68	.77	A	
18	Partnering with some private sector providers to provide content already developed is a useful option to explore.	3.44	.37	A	3.40	.68	A	
Cluster mean		2.56	1.02	A	2.50	1.05	A	

From Table 2, the mean scores for items 10, 11, 12, 13, 17 and 18 exceeded 2.50 the critical mean scores. This indicated the items proved that modalities identify here are some of the ways secondary schools can be effectively administered in the face of covid-19 pandemic. These further proved from the cluster means 2.56(for principals) and 2.50 (for teachers) it means that the principals and teachers share the same view on how modalities identified here are viable ways secondary schools can be effectively administered in the face of covid-19 pandemic in Ondo State.

The results from research question 2 revealed that modalities identified here are viable ways secondary schools can be effectively administered in the face of covid-19 pandemic in Ondo State. This finding is consistent with the findings of Obiakor and Adeniran (2020) who enumerated the mitigating strategies that would be great aid in cushioning the effects of global pandemic in the educational institutions as follow distance learning through low cost technology, Selective, closing of schools, adoption of ICT platforms etc. It corroborates The African News (2020) who highlighted some strategies that would aid in cushioning the effect covid-19 pandemic in various secondary schools in many countries such as enhancing preparedness while keeping school open, using remote learning and education resources to enhance learning, improved education finance, tapping into global resources and establishment of electronic devises in all secondary Schools.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Government should employ more competent teachers, erect more classrooms in order to maintain social distancing and minimize number of students per teacher.
2. Government should make provision for safety materials for promotion of better hygiene culture in secondary school in the state.
3. There should be encouragement of sustainable e-learning platform by creating e-libraries and adopting e-teaching softwares such as zoom, that can be used for holding meetings and delivering lectures with no or less physical contact in the schools.
4. There is need for school-community partnership for effective school administration in the face of the covid-19 pandemic.

Conclusion

This study ascertains ascertain modalities for effective administration of secondary school in the face of the covid-19 pandemic in Ondo state. However, based on the findings, the study concludes that covid-19 pandemic pose challenges on secondary school administration in Ondo State. The findings of the study also concluded that modalities identify here are some of the ways secondary schools can be effectively administered in the face of covid-19 pandemic in Ondo state.

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REINFORCING SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN TECHNICAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (TVET): IMPERATIVE FOR EFFECTIVE RESPONSE TOWARDS COVID-19 CRISIS

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Abstract

This study focused on reinforcing science and technology in Technical vocational Education and Training (TVET) of federal university in Enugu State Nigeria. Two research questions and one hypothesis guided the study. The study made use of survey research design and was carried out in Enugu State, Nigeria. The population was 89 TVET lecturers which comprises of 46 men and 43 female TVET lecturers of (2019/2020) academic session) from the federal university in Enugu State. The only federal University in Enugu State is the University of Nigeria Nsukka. There was no sampling since the population is of manageable size. Structured Questionnaire was used as the instrument for data collection. The instrument was validated by three experts. Cronbach Alpha reliability

method was used and an overall reliability coefficient of .85 was obtained. The data was collected by the researchers. Out of 89 copies of the questionnaire administered, only 85 copies were retrieved giving a 96% return rate. Data generated were analysed using mean, standard deviation and t-test. The study found out among other things that there is urgent need for reinforcement of science and technology especially in Technical vocational Education and Training (TVET) for effective response toward Covid-19 crisis and its kind in Nigeria and the world at large. The paper recommended among other things that TVET stakeholders should collectively join hands in reinforcing science and technology in TVET in federal university in Enugu state for effective mitigation and management of covid-19 crisis in Nigeria.

Keywords: *COVID-19, Science and Technology, Technical vocational Education and Training (TVET).*

Introduction

The coronavirus disease 2019 otherwise known as Covid-19 is a global health crisis that has created devastation in the world at-large as seen in academic, social, economic, political life among others. Covid-19 is described as an illness caused by a novel virus called coronavirus with symptoms projecting a severe acute respiratory syndrome (Unesco 2020). The coronavirus disease was first identified amid an outbreak of respiratory illness cases in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China. It is said to be transmitted through contact with respiratory fluid. Covid-19 brought with it shocks, health crisis, loss of life and loss of livelihood thus causing risk to families which leads to violence, forced marriage, rape, exploitation among others. The International Labour Organization (ILO) in Unesco, 2020 indicated that Covid-19 has created unscrupulous impacts globally with no hope of knowing when global normality will return to the world at-large. Efforts to stem the spread of Covid-

19 through preventive measures led to social-distancing, self-isolation and other preventive measures among individuals.

African countries in response to prevent the spread of Covid-19 have taken steps ranging from closing their borders to closing schools, training centers and public sectors (Unesco 2020). Closures of schools and many public places according to *Bao, Hang, Zhang, Hogan, Tiffany, (2020)* and *linzon (2020)* have created unscrupulous impact not only on students, teachers, and families but also have far-reaching economic and societal consequences. The impact is more severe to the disadvantaged children and their families, which has led to interrupted learning, compromised nutrition and childcare problems with consequences leading to loss of jobs, unemployment, poverty, lack of health care services and insecurity evidenced in Africa and the world at large, (Unesco 2020).

In response to these alarming issues, the world health organisation (WHO) noted that government and other organisational bodies have tried to manage the impact of Covid-19 but more effort is needed to address the critical social and economic impacts on people. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), stressed that consideration should not only be on the management of Covid-19 now but for preventions against similar pandemic from recurring in future. Unesco in their effort to reduce the impact of Covid-19 in education setting recommended the use of distance learning programs and open educational applications and platforms for schools and teachers to reach learners and limit the disruption of education. This has not favoured the kids in rural and underdeveloped communities as they are not equipped with digital tools. Government of different states also adopted local media channels such as radio programmes to reach out to students in remote communities. These efforts have not yielded much as the challenge to educate children where they are, within the infrastructure and setting they are, has not being easily attended especially to the disadvantaged children. Students of technical vocational education and training (TVET) also in their effort to manage Covid-19 crisis in several African countries have shown their inventiveness through a number of initiatives ranging from the production of reusable masks to the

creation of foot-operated hand washing pumps and the production of visors and disinfection booths among others. These efforts of TVET students if strengthened will go a long way in managing crisis now and even in the future.

Technical vocational education and training (TVET) according to Nwobasi, (2011) is defined as that aspect of education that involves the acquisition of techniques and application of the knowledge of science for the improvement of man's surrounding. Uwaifo, (2009) described TVET as that aspect of education that deals with manpower training in professional areas such as engineering, agriculture, business, home and economics to improve the economy of a country. The Federal Government of Nigeria (FRN) 2004, in its educational policy captures the role of TVET as human capital development that leads to the acquisition of applied and practical skills for useful living within the society. The role of TVET as captured by the policy include: to enhance the productivity of the country, to reduce poverty, to develop human and social capital, promote skills acquisition, provide for expertise needed for more sustainable societies and economy of a country among others. Technical vocational education and training can only perform these roles if their science and technology is reinforced projecting in the availability of instructional resources to the TVET programme. Edokpolor, (2018) noted that the reason for the most social problems encounter in society today is because of the lack and inadequate physical facilities and instructional resources for effective teaching and learning in TVET education.

The weakness of technical vocation education and training TVET in performance of their roles is mostly revealed during Covid-19 crisis hence the need for urgent reinforcement of science and technology in technical and vocational training for crisis management. Science is the study of the natural world based on the fact learned through experiments and observation while technology is the use of science in industry, engineering, etc. to invent useful things or to solve problems. Reinforcement of science and technology of TVET in this study simply mean strengthening of the production, supply and utilization of the physical facilities and instructional resources for

effective teaching and learning in TVET education in federal university in Enugu state. The reinforcement should be in inform of the digitization of classrooms, the development of emergency plans to ensure continuity of training in the event of a crisis, the creation or updating of training curricula adapted to the needs and context of the African countries, and support for the empowerment of young learners who can provide innovative, sustainable solutions in the health field among others.

Reinforcement of science and technology in TVET will provide students with insight into how different processes of knowledge are initiated and progressed, and how innovative technological processes are developed, employed and utilized. Isah, (2013) maintained that reinforcement of science and technology of TVET education will take into account the principals and standards in TVET education, the socio-economic conditions, the informal sector needs of the society and labour market demands among others. The reinforcement of science and technology of TVET in federal university in Enugu state should come inform of financial support by stakeholder, making TVET products to be relevance to the labour market, making the physical facilities to be accessible for trainees and having quality standard delivery to mention but a few. There is need therefor to reinforce the science and technology of TVET for greater innovations, creativity and sustainability for effective responses towards covid-19 crisis.

Problem of the study

The global social and economic sustainability is now leading to a new conviction that TVET human potentials are the major agent for sustainability in the growth of any nation even in crisis management. In fact, an effective TVET system is considered as a critical pillar of successful social and economy development for sustainability within a country. The expectation of TVET to maintain sustainability even in crisis was not achieved during Covid- 19 pandemic hence there is hunger, health crisis, loss of life, loss of jobs, poverty, insecurity to mention but a few throughout the world. This situation could be attributed to the insufficiency of the science and

technology of TVET in federal universities to address the Covid-19 crisis. It then becomes imperative that the science and technology of TVET should be reinforced for effective responses towards Covid-19 crisis and its kind.

Purpose of the study

The general purpose of the study is to decide reinforcing science and technology of TVET as imperative for effective response towards Covid-19 crisis specifically the study determined:

1. The need for reinforcing science and technology of TVET for effective response towards Covid-19 crisis.
2. The way of reinforcing science and technology of TVET for effective response towards Covid-19 crisis.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the need for reinforcing science and technology of TVET for effective response towards Covid-19 crisis?
2. What are the ways of reinforcing science and technology of TVET for effective response towards Covid-19 crisis?

Hypothesis

1. There is no significant different between the mean response of TVET lecturers (male and female) on the need for reinforcing science and technology of TVET for effective response towards Covid-19 crisis

Methodology

This study focused on reinforcing science and technology of TVET for effective response towards Covid-19 crisis. The study made use of survey research design and was carried out in Enugu State, Nigeria. Two research questions and one hypothesis guided the study. The population was 89 TVET lecturers which comprises of 46 men and 43 female TVET lecturers of (2019/2020) academic session) from the federal university in Enugu State. Questionnaire was used for data collection. Out of 89 copies of the questionnaire administered, only 85

copies were retrieved giving a 96% return rate. The instrument was validated by three experts. Cronbach Alpha reliability method was used and an overall reliability coefficient of .85 was obtained. Data generated were analysed using mean and standard deviation while t-test was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significant. Any mean value that is greater than or equal to 2.50 was accepted while mean values less than 2.50 were rejected. However, the null hypothesis was accepted if the p-value is greater than t-value (0.05 level) but the null hypotheses was rejected if the p-value is less than t-value (0.05 level).

Results

Table 1

Mean, standard deviation and hypothesis of the response of TVET lecturers (male and female) on the need for reinforcing science and technology of TVET for effective response towards Covid-19 crisis.

S/N	Item Statements	Mean	S.D	p-value	Remarks	Sign
1	Reinforcing science and technology of TVET will enhance high productivity of the country.	2.84	0.74	0.14	Agree	NS
2	Reinforcing science and technology of TVET will make its recipients to be saved from poverty and sustains their security during crisis years.	2.62	0.66	0.08	Agree	NS
3	Reinforcing science and technology of TVET will reduce inequality, filling income gaps that would otherwise exist between the rich and poor.	2.76	0.76	0.18	Agree	NS

S/N	Item Statements	Mean	S.D	p-value	Remarks	Sign
4	Reinforcing science and technology of TVET will reduce crimes across the country especially during crisis.	2.62	0.78	0.51	Agree	NS
5	Reinforcing science and technology of TVET will decrease migration that causes the spread of covid-19.	2.86	0.79	0.47	Agree	NS
6	Reinforcing science and technology of TVET will enhance the need of the urban society.	2.45	0.65	0.06	disagree	NS
7	Reinforcing science and technology of TVET will reduce vulnerability of children in Nigeria during crisis.	2.58	0.75	0.08	Agree	NS
8	Reinforcing science and technology of TVET will enhance distance learning programme and open educational application.	2.66	0.77	0.09	Agree	NS
9	Reinforcing science and technology of TVET will enhance the inventive spirit in TVET students.	2.70	0.82	0.17	Agree	NS
10	Reinforcing science and technology of TVET will enhance the creativity interest in TVET student	2.64	0.85	0.16	Agree	NS

S/N	Item Statements	Mean	S.D	p-value	Remarks	Sign
11	Reinforcing science and technology of TVET will enhance high living conditions for the families in Nigeria.	2.64	0.85	0.17	Agree	NS
12	Reinforcing science and technology of TVET will enhance the need of the rural society	2.47	0.62	0.08	Disagree	NS
13	Reinforcing science and technology of TVET will enhance development of human and social capital.	2.87	0.84	0.16	Agree	NS
14	Reinforcing science and technology of TVET will enhance promotion of necessary skills, knowledge and expertise needed for more sustainable society during crisis.	2.77	0.80	0.16	Agree	NS
15	Reinforcing science and technology of TVET will enhance different beliefs of the people	2.49	0.63	0.08	Disagree	NS
Grand Mean		2.70	0.75	0.16	Agree	NS

Keys: SD- Standard deviation; REM-Remark; P-value-hypothesis value, NS-Not significant.

Data in table 1 showed that 12 items out of 15 items listed had their mean values above the cut-off point of 2.50. This indicated that the 12 items were agreed by the TVET lecturers while the remaining 3

items were rejected as the need for reinforcement of science and technology of TVET for effective response towards Covid-19 crisis. More so the standard deviation values of all the 15 items ranges from 0.62-0.85, showing that the respondents were not far from one another in their responses. The hypothesis showed also indicated that all the 15 items in table 1 have their p-values greater than 0.05 level of significance which indicated that the null hypothesis was accepted therefor, there is no significance difference in the mean responses of the TVET lecturers (male and female) on the need for reinforcing science and technology of TVET for effective response towards Covid-19 crisis.

Table 2

Mean and standard deviation of the response of TVET lecturers (male and female) on the ways of reinforcing science and technology of TVET for effective response towards Covid-19 crisis in Nigeria.

S/N	Item Statements	Mean	S.D	Remarks
1	Science and technology of TVET can be reinforced for effective response towards Covid-19 crisis through availability and accessibilities of resource facilities to trainees.	2.87	0.71	Agree
2	Science and technology of TVET can be reinforced for effective response towards Covid-19 crisis by assuring quality and standard delivery of facilities to TVET Education.	2.67	0.66	Agree
3	Science and technology of TVET can be reinforced for effective response towards Covid-19 crisis by assuring uninterrupted funding to	2.96	0.75	Agree

4	<p>TVET Education.</p> <p>Science and technology of TVET can be reinforced for effective response towards Covid-19 crisis by assuring that the TVET principle and standard is be maintained.</p>	2.79	0.77	Agree
5	<p>Science and technology of TVET can be reinforced for effective response towards Covid-19 crisis through training the trainers</p>	2.38	0.65	Disagree
6	<p>Science and technology of T.VET can be reinforce for effective response towards Covid-19 crisis by assuring that the product of TVET is made relevance to the labour market</p>	2.80	0.79	Agree
7	<p>Science and technology of TVET can be reinforced for effective response towards Covid-19 crisis by considering the socio-economic condition of the citizens.</p>	2.57	0.74	Agree
8	<p>Science and technology of TVET can be reinforce for effective response towards Covid-19 crisis by assuring that the informal sector need of the country is considered.</p>	2.57	0.76	Agree
9	<p>Science and technology of TVET can be reinforced for effective response towards Covid-19 crisis through</p>	2.42	0.60	Disagree

10	effective supervision. Science and technology of TVET can be reinforced for effective response towards Covid-19 crisis by assuring that the culture and belief of the people is considered.	2.67	0.83	Agree
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Grand mean	2.70	0.73	Agree
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Keys: SD- Standard deviation; REM-Remark.

Data in table 2 showed that 8 items out of the 10 items had their mean values above the cut-off point of 2.50. The 8 items were accepted while the remaining 2 items were not accepted by the TVET lecturers (male and female) as the ways of reinforcing science and technology of TVET for effective response towards Covid-19 crisis in Nigeria. More so the standard deviation values of all the 10 items ranges from 0.60-0.83, showing that the respondents were not far from one another in their responses.

Discussions

The finding of the study in Table 1 which is in respect to the research question 1 revealed the needs for reinforcing science and technology of TVET for effective response towards Covid-19 crisis. The finding shows that reinforcing science and technology of TVET will enhance high productivity of the country, save TVET practitioners from poverty and sustains their security during crisis; reduce inequality among people of the country, filling income gaps that would otherwise exist between the rich and poor among others. This is in line with Nwobasi, (2011) who defined technical vocational education and training (TVET) as that aspect of education that involves the acquisition of techniques and application of the knowledge of science for the improvement and sustainability of man and his surrounding even in crisis. The findings also is in line with Uwaifo, (2009) who described TVET as that aspect of education that deals with manpower training in professional areas such as

engineering, agriculture, business, home and economics to improve the economy of a country for sustainability.

The finding of the study in Table 2 which is in respect with research question 2 revealed the ways of reinforcing science and technology of TVET for effective response towards Covid-19 crisis in Nigeria. The finding shows that Science and technology of TVET can be reinforced for effective response towards Covid-19 crisis through availability and accessibilities of resource facilities to trainees, assuring quality and standard delivery of facilities to TVET education, assuring uninterrupted funding to TVET education, assuring that the TVET principle and standard should be maintained among others. This in agreement with Edokpolor, 2018 who noted that the reasons for the alarming rates of these social problems in Nigeria is because the physical facilities and instructional resources for effective teaching and learning processes in TVET education are inadequately provided and rarely utilized, which in turn, affect students' skills acquisition required to gain and sustain employment after graduation. Hence, there is need for reinforcing science and technology of TVET for effective response towards Covid-19 crisis.

Conclusion

Technical vocation education and training (TVET) is considered as a critical pillar for successful social and economy development of any country. Covid-19 crisis brought about disruption in the health, education, social and economic development of many countries including Nigeria. It has been observed that the Government, organisation and individual including TVET students have in one way or the other made efforts in mitigating the impact of Covid-19 crisis. These efforts especially that of TVET students should be strengthened through reinforcement of science and technology in TVET to ensure sustainability in any country especially in time of crisis. There is therefor need to reinforce the science and technology of technical vocation education and training (TVET) for effective response towards Covid-19 crisis in Nigeria.

Recommendation

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. TVET stakeholders should collectively join hands in reinforcing science and technology in TVET education in federal university in Enugu state.
2. There should be availability and accessibilities of resource facilities to trainees.
3. There should be quality and standard delivery of facilities to TVET Education.
4. There should be uninterrupted funding to TVET Education and
5. The TVET principle and standard should be maintained.

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SCHOOL CALENDAR AND ELECTRONIC LEARNING IN NIGERIA: AN ANALYSIS

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Abstract

The onset of corona virus COVID-19 sent waves of panic across Nigeria, like in every other country. Coronaviruses are a family of viruses that cause illnesses ranging from common cold to more severe diseases such as severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) and the middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS). As a result, many countries are suggesting various levels of containment in order to prevent its spread. With these worries, schools and universities are closing down and moving abruptly to online (e – learning) platforms and remote education. But no one knows whether the move to online learning could be the catalyst to create a new, more effective method of educating students. The knowledge of e-learning will expose both lecturers and students to the reality of the world outside the classroom since the world is a global web. The article made use of newspapers, internet materials , textbooks , reputable journals etc. While the methods adopted were critical analysis and expository methods.

Keywords: COVID-19, E -learning, School Calendar, Nigeria.

Introduction

Globally, the world is faced with the Covid-19 pandemic which has held the economy at ransom not exempting the educational sector. It has brought about recent changes and disruptions in the educational

sector which serves as a catalyst for the development of any nation. Initially, the spread of the Coronavirus through the globe from China initially spared Nigeria like many other African countries with zero recorded case as at January 2020. By 28 February however, Nigeria reported their first case, a Nigerian UK returnee. Nearly two months later, there are 373 confirmed cases, 99 recoveries and 11 deaths. So, many countries are suggesting various levels of containment in order to prevent the spread of coronavirus, or Covid-19.

On 19 March 2020, the Federal Ministry of Education announced the temporary shut-down of all schools in Nigeria, effective 23 March in a bid to contain the spread of the Coronavirus. (<https://worldliteracyfoundation.org>). That is to say that all learning facilities were closed in order to safeguard the health and general wellbeing of our children, youths, teachers, and educational personnel. The school closure measure means learners previously in school are no longer going to school. The temporary school closures mean educators, funders and policy makers are rethinking the way learning is delivered and accessed. And children being out of school has long been the reality in Nigeria education sector with about 13.2 million school-age out of school, the highest in the world. On the global scale, more than 1.5 billion children and young people have been affected by school and university closures. In Nigeria, the nationwide school closures have disrupted learning and access to vital school – provided services for a record number of students. Almost 40 million learners have been affected, of which over 91% are primary and secondary school learners. This is similar with the experience of Sierra Leone where the Ebola crisis led to school closures for about 9 months. According to the report by UNESCO (2020), the closure of educational institution has impacted over 91% of the world's student population and it comes with high social and economic costs with severe impact on children from disadvantaged background.

However, Covid-19 disrupted the school calendar and also changed the method of teaching and learning. The developing countries evidence from the Nigeria experience are posed with the challenge of shifting from the traditional teaching method to e-learning during the pandemic. This prompted a set of questions: Do

households have the facilities to engage their children in remote learning? Do teachers have the skills and facilities to deliver live lesson or record massive open online course (MOOC) styled lessons? (www.soas.ac.uk) The answer is yes and no. for instance, in America, universities such as Harvard University have embraced e-learning platforms but in most African countries such as Nigeria, traditional forms (physical contact) of learning has been the norm.

Meaning of coronavirus

Coronaviruses are a family of viruses that cause illnesses ranging from common cold to more severe diseases such as severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) and the Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS). Covid-19 is an acronym: CO stands for Coronavirus, VI stands for virus, D stands for disease, 19 stands for the year it was discovered 2019. Covid-19 symptoms includes fever, breathing difficulties, cough etc and it can lead to pneumonia, multiple organ failure and even death in severe cases. The first human cases of Covid-19, the disease caused by the novel coronavirus causing Covid-19 subsequently named SARS – Cov-2 were first reported by official in Wuhan City, China, in December, 2019. Retrospective investigations by Chinese authorities have identified human cases with onset of symptoms in early December, 2019. While some of the earliest known cases had a link to a wholesale food market in Wuhan, some did not. Many of the initial patients were either stall owners, market employees, or regular visitors to this market. Environmental samples taken from the market in December, 2019 tested positive of SARS-Cov-2, further suggesting that the market in Wuhan city was the source of this outbreak or played a role in the initial amplification of the outbreak. Then, the market was closed on 1 January, 2020. (20200423-sitrep-94-covid-19-1)

The name coronavirus coined in 1968, is derived from the “Corona” like or grown like morphology observed for these viruses in the electronic microscope. In 1975, the corona-viridae family was established by the international committee on the Taxonomy of Viruses. Recently, at the 10th International Nidovirus symposium in Colofado springs, Colo, in June 2005, it was proposed that the

coronaviridae family be divided into two subfamilies, the coronaviruses and the toro-viruses, the latter of which cause enteric diseases in cattle and possibly in humans. The coronaviridae family, along with the Arteriviridae and Roniviridae families, formed the Nidovirales order. The Arteriviridae family includes swine and equine pathogens and the Roniviridae family is composed of invertebrate viruses. (www.ijidonline.com/article)

Coronavirus crisis

The Covid-19 pandemic poses an enormous risk to the health and safety of learners, teachers, parents, school administrators, education practitioners and the wider community. It may not be the last crises that will threaten school continuity in Nigeria, given the increase in the number of infectious diseases worldwide or the conflict in the Northeast. The crisis has pointed to a number of fundamental action steps, two of which are crucial now and beyond (1) the imperative need to embed appropriate technology into learning and (2) the urgency to bridge educational divides that currently exist, and could further be exacerbated with a shift in education approaches. However, opportunities to learn within the homes are also limited, given that a parents ability to produce education support to their children will be shaped by their own level of educational attainment, general literacy level, and other commitments. (<https://media.africaportal.org>)

The novel Coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) which originated in Wuhan City of China has spread rapidly around the world, sending billions of people into lockdown. The coronavirus disease of 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic gripped the world with a shock, thereby overwhelming the health system of most nations. The pandemic has caused global social disruption by limiting global social relations. In the views of Amzat and Razum (2018) The idea of “social distancing” negates regular social interaction, which is the bedrock of international society. For most people, Covid-19 infection will cause mild illness, however, it can make some people very ill and in some people, it can be fatal. The vulnerable citizens face the hunger-virus amidst the coronavirus lockdown. As of 3 September,

2020 more than 20 million cases of Covid-19 have been reported in more than 188 countries and territories, resulting in more than 863,000 deaths, more than 17.2 million people have recovered. (*Covid-19 Dashboard by the centre for systems Science and Engineering (CSSE) at John Hopkins University (JHU). Retrieved 3 September, 2020*).

The coronavirus pandemic (Covid-19) has no doubt adversely affected the global economy. It has forced many business to temporarily shut down and governments across the world to place a restriction on movement while exempting providers of essential services who are to strictly observe social distancing rules while providing services as a way to contain the spread of the virus. (nairametrics.com). In the education sector, it has disrupted the landscape of learning. It has magnified the education inequality in Nigeria such only those with access to digital learning resources will keep learning in the comfort of their homes while those without access with the majority are left behind. This learning crisis is widening the social gaps instead of narrowing them. In the future, this gap will show up as weak skills in the workforce, thereby making it less likely for this category of young people to get well paid and satisfying jobs. When this happens, these young people will become nuisances in the society, championing courses that aren't noble, just to make ends meet. This reminds me of the saying by Late Chief Obafemi Awolowo which goes thus: "The children of the poor you failed to train will never let your children have peace". (nairametrics.com/2020/04/i8/covid-19-is-exacerbating-the-problem-of-educational-inequity-in-nigeria).

Electronic learning

The word "e" should refer to "everything, everyone, engaging and easy" in addition to "electronic". (*Parks, E. (2013) what's the "e" in e-learning? Askinternational.com*). The term e-learning connotes electronic method of learning which is associated with computerized learning in an interactive interface at the convenience of both the learners and lecturers. E-learning education in the views of Eze et al (2018) is concerned with the wholistic incorporation of modern telecommunication equipment and ICT resources into the education

system. Several e-learning platforms have been adopted by universities and they include zoom, Microsoft teams, google hangout (met), skype, google classroom, Adobe Captivate, Elucidat, video lessons, massive open online courses (MOOCs) and broadcast through radio and television. The success of these recommendations hinges on the use of high technology or low-technology solutions which are based on the reliability of local power supply, internet connectivity and digital skills of teachers, parents and caretakers. (*nairametrics.com*)

Why Electronic Learning

Education sector globally is seen to be shifting towards e-learning in order to cushion the effect of this pandemic. Virtual interactions are increasingly adopted to replace face-to-face engagements and limit the total disruption to many sectors. Although this decision came as a shock to many educational institutes as many of these institutions were not prepared for the sudden disruption, others have seen it as a step in the right direction. Electronic learning brought distance learning through adopting multiple learning modalities such as television, radio and SMS-based mobile platform. Introducing innovative technology into classrooms could help in improving learning outcomes across the board. With over 80% of the adult population having access to radios and phones it would be possible to reach most children left behind with targeted instructions via these mediums.

Other benefits of the e-learning in the views of Adeboye et al include better context delivery, interactivity, quality content delivery and confidence of both learners and lecturers in the educational sector. According to them, the e-learning system will completely reduce the issues of insufficient classrooms for lectures, as students can easily take the lectures online without any disruption at their convenience. It provides a platform for students to interact with themselves through the discussion forum which eliminates the barrier of participation. The knowledge of e-learning will expose both lecturers and students to the reality of the world outside the classroom since the world is a global web.

Akorful and Abaidoo (2014) discovered that the cost benefit of e-learning in training students is lesser than that of physical (face-to-face) contact. Almost all the private universities have also embraced the e-learning platform to continue with the academic calendar due to the financial commitment to their workforce as shutting down will bring about difficulty in revenue generation. (www.rsisinternational.org). Also, it is important to note that learning online can be more effective in a number of ways especially for those who do have access to the right technology. (www.weforum.org)

Electronic learning problems

The electronic learning platform has various problems associated with them even though it was the only option during the Covid-19 era. The Covid-19 pandemic is revolutionizing digital and online education globally but kids in rural and underserved communities in Lagos State, Nigeria are being left behind as they are not equipped to adapt to the new methods of learning. (www.weforum.org). While several private schools have begun to initiate distance learning programs and taking advantage of the myriad of ICT learning opportunities provided by the international community, the government limited by funds and persistent deficiencies in planning, is yet to announce any official plans for providing distance learning opportunities especially for public schools. The implication being that these students in public schools currently have no formal learning plans and could be missing learning altogether. For Nigeria, the reality is simple – while the school closures are necessary to curtail the spread of the covid-19 virus, until the ban on movement is lifted and schools are reopened, majority of students will not be learning.

Therefore, the adoption of e-learning during the Covid-19 pandemic has exposed a lot of lapses and gaps to be filled in the Nigerian educational system. Other challenges include the varying degree of preparedness of the institutions, lack of infrastructures, paucity of funds, poor budgetary allocation, corruption and unpreparedness are contributing factors to the inability of many public

tertiary institutions to embrace e-learning during the global covid-19 pandemic in Nigeria.

The constraint in the full actualization and utilization of this e-learning platform is due to the dynamic Nigeria environment. The unstable poor power supply has caused a major setback for technological advancement of many universities in Nigeria. Most rural areas in Nigeria where some students are resident are not even connected to the national grid and as such, this student will experience difficulty in utilizing the e-learning platform effectively. Also shortage in power supply have brought difficulty in powering of educational gadgets such as smartphones, laptops and desktop computers needed for learning. In some cases, – the internet service required to connect to this e-learning platform sometimes requires a lot of data. The cost of purchasing the data bundle in the views of Adeboye et al is so high which might be difficult for both students and lecturers. Furthermore, poor Internet connectivity has resulted in low attendance of students during the online classes. This low online class attendance has also been linked to the poverty situation in the country as some families and students might not be able to afford basic needs such as food and clean water let alone the expensive gadgets or resources to sustain them for online learning.

Coronavirus and education

The Coronavirus pandemic has exposed the huge socio-economic inequalities in the Nigeria education system. One major issue that may stem from this inequality is that these kids who currently cannot keep up with their peers because of inaccessibility to digital tools may never catch up and will continue to fill the effect of this gap, long after the pandemic is over. This lured many wealthy families in Nigeria send their children to private schools given the poor resources and facilities in public schools. While learners from vulnerable and disadvantaged communities without access to computers and other devices outside school will were left struggling. Inevitably, this digital divide will exacerbate learning disparities among these children.

In Nigeria, some state governments made a lot of efforts to ensure learning continuity. For instance, Kwara and Lagos state use local media channels such as radio programmes to reach out to learners in remote communities. An estimated 80 million children, youth and adult learners in the system are deprived access to schools and have very limited alternative learning facilities during the pandemic. Enhance, it brought further deterioration in facilities and capacities for the delivery of quality education. The ugly situation is that if there is no effective response, the impact of Covid-19 will further aggravate the already weakened Nigerian education sector which lacks required resilience. Of all sustainable missions surely the most pressing is to improve lives and there is no better way to do so than proper and sound education for all. The ripple effect of this pandemic has been felt by both the educators and students in primary, secondary, colleges and universities as academic sessions were disrupted after the coronavirus was declared a public health emergency. This has left many students and educators in a rude shock as some of this institutions were at the point of preparing for examination, admitting of freshmen, beginning of a new semester, amongst others. (UNESCO 2020).

Way forward

Having seen the effects of the disruption of the school calendar by the Covid-19 pandemic and pros and cons of the electronic learning platforms, the article recommends the following as the way forward.

- ❖ Government needs to be more firm in their handling of public universities administration and help prepare them for the adoption of ICT and e-learning in Nigerian institutions.
- ❖ UNESCO has recommended the use of distance learning programs, open educational applications and platforms by schools and teacher to reach learners remotely.
- ❖ To curb the widening of the existing education inequalities, there is an onus on the Nigerian government to put in place measures to ensure continuity inclusion and equity for all learners during this pandemic. In China for instance governments provide computers to students in low income

households and offer students mobile data packages and telecommunication subsidies. In France, efforts are being made to lend devices to learners who do not have access to computers. Similarly, Portugal is partnering with the post office to deliver worksheets to students who do not have access to internet at home.

- ❖ The government could further mitigate the negative impact of covid-19 on education by investing in the provision of solar-powered education gadgets, preloaded with offline academic resources to learners in disadvantaged and vulnerable communities.
- ❖ The government should also partner with telecommunication companies to offer free or subsidised mobile data packages for learners.
- ❖ It is important that all learners participate in an inclusive arrangement, irrespective of their locations, access to internet and socio economic background. (*Covid-19 Guideline Safe Reopening*)
- ❖ PPPs (Public-Private Partnerships) can do much to improve the quality of and increase access to education for poor children in underserved communities.
- ❖ Help in increasing awareness of the pressing need for the country's children to be educated especially those from low income families, will benefit the country's economy in years to come.
- ❖ Government should create holistic contingency plan that goes beyond addressing school based safety measures, but also identify ways to ensure learning continuity and provide support for both students and teachers during times of crisis.
- ❖ Conscious effort is also required to bridge the digital divide by ensuring that the cost of technology adoption is low.

Conclusion

The electronic learning platforms have the simplest answer to the problems associated with the disruption of the school calendar by the covid-19 pandemic. Hence, the government should infuse more

monetary resources in Nigeria's educational sector so that its institutions can compete globally.

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COVID-19 PANDEMIC: CHALLENGES AND THE WAY FORWARD IN NIGERIA SECONDARY EDUCATION

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Abstract

The eruption of the coronavirus disease known with code, Covid-19 Pandemic affected every sphere of human life such as: businesses, carrier advancement, religious gathering, education and other social activities globally including Nigeria. This study examines covid -19 pandemic: Challenges and way forward in Nigerian secondary education. However, of all the sectors of governance, the educational sector was highly affected because of the ill preparation due to inadequate funding, despite the 24% UNESCO recommendation to the sector especially the primary and secondary school levels. The covid-19 pandemic out break hits badly on school programmes which made it impossible for students to attend classes, accessed school library materials and write examinations. These make it imperative to seek for measures to cushion the effect of the pandemic on

secondary school programmes. Base on the findings, the researchers recommended among others that the Nigerian government should encourage the learners (students) to participate vehemently in distance learning through adopting multiple learning modalities such as television, radio and SMS-based mobile platform like zoom. Federal government should through the ministry of Education initiate innovative strategies that would help to enhance the effective use of electronic library in secondary schools for access to current information and studying materials.

Keywords: *Education, Secondary Education, Covid-19 Pandemic, Electronic Library*

Introduction

The eruption of the coronavirus disease known with code, Covid-19 Pandemic, affected every sphere of human life; ranging from businesses, carrier advancement, religious gathering, education, and other social activities globally including Nigeria. Education remains the veritable instrument for academic advancement, social mobilization, political survival and effective national development of any country. Education is the bedrock for capacity building and national development. More so, education can be regarded as the key that unlock the development of personal and national potentials that ensures viable sustainability of nations economic resources which invariably is to ensure overall societal goal. According to Ayolugbe, Ishiwand Ugodinamba (2019) cited Offorma (2015), education is something more than schooling because people are schooled to be accepted in the society. In view of this, Nwangwu(2007) it makes recipient to function and be relevant not only to themselves but to their society irrespective of place, time and circumstances. Federal Republic of Nigeria FRN (2013) in her National Policy of Education affirmed that education is an instrument per-excellence. Similarly, the National Policy on Education (2013) stated the specific goals of education in Nigeria it includes promoting functional education for skill acquisition, job creation and poverty reduction. The same

National policy on education stated that in order to realize these goals of education in Nigeria and gain from its contribution to the national economic growth and sustainability, government would take necessary measures to ensure that such education is learner-centered for maximum self- development and fulfillment at all level including secondary school.

Secondary education is the education given in an institution of learning to prepare students for higher education (FRN, 2013). According to Ogbonaya (2010) defined secondary education as the form of education which children receive automatically after they have received primary school education. It constitutes post primary education and sometimes serves as a link between primary and tertiary education. According to Ayolugbe, Ikuelogbon & Odo (2020) cited Ochorma (2011), secondary education is the foundation and the chief corner stone of all types of education. This implies that secondary education is the basic and fundamental education the child received in preparation for higher education. The same National Policy on Education (2013) stated the aim of secondary education which is the prepare the individual for useful living with the society, inspire students with a desire for self-improvement and achievement and achievement of excellence, 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 broad national goals and live good citizen. Therefore, such education supposed be given desired attention no matter the circumstances even with the outbreak of the coronavirus disease known as Covid-19 Pandemic.

Covid-19 Pandemic

The Coronavirus disease known with code, COVID-19 is an infection which is as a result of a novel severe acuterespiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). Infection for example, the novel severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) and the Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS) was known in 2002 and 2012 in that order were as a result of viruses analogous to SARS-CoV-2. Covid-19 was first discovered in Wuhan, China with general signs of dry cough,

fever, tiredness, shortness of breath, headache and general body weakness owned to the incentive of supplementary pains in the body. According to African News (2020) therapeutic diagnosis and findings have revealed that people tainted with Covid- 19 can be symptomatic or asymptomatic; the premature stages of the virus depending on each person immune system.

Nevertheless, SARS-CoV-2 has a higher range more than earlier information related to viruses and as a result the obscurity in the cure and management of COVID-19 (Zhong *et al.*, 2020). The spread of the coronavirus initially spared Nigeria, like many other African countries, with zero recorded case as of January 2020. This luck, however, did not last. By the 28th of February, Nigeria reported its first case; a Nigerian UK returnee. Nearly two months, 343 confirmed cases, 91 recoveries and 10 deaths Nigeria has a pressing cause for concern. The Federal Ministry of Education announced the temporary close-down of all schools in Nigeria, effective March 23rd, in a bid to contain the spread of the coronavirus. How long do we will need to close school?.. Unlike other countries, the Nigerian Federal Ministry of Education's school-closure directive did not come with any clear-cut policy measures on how to mitigate learning disruptions for children or how to address the digital divide. As emphasised by UNESCO, temporary school closures come with high social and economic costs, with severe impact on children from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Covid -19 Pandemic: Challenges in Nigerian secondary Education

Research made us understand that there are prevalent challenges of Nigerian secondary education that emanated through covid-19 pandemic. Thelma and Adedeji (2020), streamline some of the covid-19 challenges on education as:

Missed Learning for the Majority of Pre-pandemic in School-Students: According to Thelma (2020) cited UNESCO, that about 359 million primary and secondary school learners are currently out-of school as a result of the school closures. For primary schools, this number totals approximately 25.6 million students of which about 87

percent (23.5 million) are students enrolled in public schools. The numbers are just as stark for secondary school learners. This implies that roughly 10.3 million secondary school students who are out of school as a result of closures, proximately 81 percent (8.4 million) of them are public school students.

Loss of Access to Vital School Provided Services: Beyond the missed learning opportunities students in Nigeria are also losing access to the daily meals made available by the federally-funded school feeding programs. Nigeria has one of the largest school feeding programs in the world, with the world food programs. In the world, with the world food programme estimating that in 2019, Nigeria's homegrown schools feeding initiative provided access to daily meals over 9 million children in over 40,000 public schools. However, the benefits of school feeding programs extend beyond the immediate education benefits of the meals provided such as encouraging enrollment in schools and boasting learning. School-feeding programs yield larger socio-economic benefits for children, their families and society at large, two of which are especially pertinent to children of low socio-economic groups: boasting health and notation, and providing social protection and safety nets.

Leaving More Students Behind: A longer-term impact of these school closures should be deepened educational inequality. While some international development partners (UNESCO, for example) have put together and provided access to ice-based resources to foster learning; uptake will depend legacy on the level and quality of digital and internet access and language accessibility (as most programs are available in English or other non-native Nigerian languages).

Health and Notation: For some students, especially those from disadvantaged and vulnerable backgrounds, the daily meals provided at schools are their primary source of healthy and nutritious meals with schools close, over 9 million public school students are currently being deprived of this benefit. Beyond feeding, Nigeria's feeding program also offers health services, including deworming and

immunization for students in public schools across it state. The closure would unfortunately also affect access to some basic health services for poorer children.

Social Protection and Social Safety Nets: Over 50 percent of students accessing free meals fall into first and second quantities, representing the poorer 40 percent of the population, in a country where over 50 percent of the country live below the poverty line. More so, empirical research has revealed, people living below the poverty line usually spend between half and threequarters of their income on food, representing a significant proportion of a poor house hold income. For each individual meal provides the value can represent up to 10 percent of a family's income; for families with more than one child in school, this small figure can represent significant savings for families. The school feeding program can provide safety nets by boosting income for households. The absence of these daily meals is likely causing posing potential challenges for households, especially at this time where there has been a shut-down/slowdown in economic activities across the country.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had far-reaching consequences on education systems all over the world, with Nigeria not being an exception. This has resulted in a nationwide lockdown by Governments, which is greatly impacting not only school closures but also physical/social distancing and change from normal routines of people. It is estimated that 39,440,016 learners are influenced, among which 48% are females and 26% are learners at secondary school level. Under such circumstance, children and parents/caregivers are working hard to cope with the challenges of home schooling. In this view, UNESCO Abuja Office has transformed the School Meets the Learner Approach (SMLA) by uploading and sharing the lesson content through various channels at free of cost in order to build on and strengthen the strategies of the Ministry of Education to sustain responsiveness and engagement of non-formal education learners at the secondary school level. This explains why e-library platform and

other strategies can never be over emphasized in sustaining continuous access to education.

Covid- 19 Pandemic: The Way Forward in Nigeria Secondary Education.

The African News (2020) highlighted some strategies that would aid in cushioning the effect covid-19 pandemic in various secondary schools in many countries. These include:

Enhancing Preparedness While Keeping School Open

This involves enforcing and supporting preventive actions in schools (Afghanistan); establishing protocols for schools' handling of illnesses and potential cases (Egypt, Russia, Belarus); using the education system's infrastructure and human resources to address the spread of infections in communities (Liberia and Sierra Leone); and limiting physical contact by reducing social and extra-curricular activities (Singapore, Russia).

Using Remote Learning and Education Resources to Enhance Learning

Many countries have turned to distance learning as means of bridging gap in school programmes (fully Online in China, Italy, France, Germany and Saudi Arabia; mobile phone or television in Vietnam, Mongolia). In addition to infrastructure and connectivity, teachers' and administrators' familiarity with the tools and processes are also key factors in providing distance learning. Similarly, in Bulgaria, more than 800,000 account have been created for all teachers and parents, publishers had been mobilized to open the digital textbooks and learning materials for grade 1-10, and two national TV channel would broadcast educational TV. As more countries close schools, more creativity would be needed. For instance, adapting existing platforms for use in smart phones and/or in concordance with telecom companies to eliminate the cost of accessing material from a ministry of education site would be part of the mitigation efforts. It would be possible to reach most children area left behind with targeted instructions via online medium.

Improved Education Finance

The fiscal space to fund education has further shrunk with the shock on government revenue and economic downturn arising from the covid-19 pandemic. Many items in the 2020 education sector appropriation bill will not be implemented due to the drastic financial short fall. Yet, more funding is required to keep learning going or scaled up education support programmes as part of the government palliative measures. For the government, reducing costs would require reprioritizing its plans in light of this new reality; the most urgent need at the moment would be improving teaches motivation, learners preparedness and galvanizing domestic digital and media enterprises. This needs to be complemented with innovative sourcing of learning infrastructure during this period. For instance, reaching children through existing school and home appliances and gadgets would be more cost-effective. Greater involvement of domestic philanthropists and digital entrepreneurs can reduce the financial burden of sustaining learning through the crisis.

Tapping into Global Resources

The World Bank, UALESKO and other development partners have already have rolled out a number of education resources that developing countries can readily deploy. TheEdtech industry in general is as providing free online platform to engage directly with students and to assist school administrators and governments to identify technological solutions that support remote learning. On a large scale, the countries should explore international loans and grants facilities for education as part of mitigation and recovery plans in cushioning the effect of covid-19 pandemic. Modalities require a central planner, as well coordination between all three tiers of government, and the private sector (media platform owners). This is where the role of ministry of education will crucially extend beyond traditional policy making and regulations. The commissioners of education could help in the deployment and use of these tools within states, while the federal government coordinates the state efforts by plugging capacity and finance gaps. The government could draw on

the experience of Sierra Leone where the Ebola crisis led to school closures for about 9 months. To reach the most vulnerable and excluded children, the government of Sierra Leone harnessed radios and televisions to deliver lessons. Whatever strategy the government chooses to incorporate, they must ensure that it is cost effective and easy to use (children and their parents/guardians have some knowledge of it before hand or can easily learn to use them).

Empowering Parents and Reaching the Most Venerable

In order to ensure proper intake of the available resources, the government will also need to ensure that parents are equipped to create a conducive learning and support children in this mode of learning. At this time, parents would be required to act as intermediaries between the school management/government and the children in learning delivery. In some instances, parents would need to take on the role of a teacher in home schooling their children, although relying on guidance from school. Additionally, most of the learning mediums would be shared amongst household members and their responsibility would fall on the parents to determine and allocate usage among family members. Likewise, in keeping the flow of education support programmes, the educational needs of the hard to-reach families could also be met, lessons and home work can go together with physical deliveries of additional education support, while each family develops their homegrown strategy to cover the materials. For instance, Angola, Uganda and Zambia have already embedded this approach in their covid-19 response strategy. The key requirement would be of the conscious and active involvement of school administrations in the various government interventions. Therefore, the same can be brought into Nigeria education sector for continuous educational access.

Establishment of Electronic Library in all Secondary Schools

Electronic library can plays a significant role among learners in stemming the rising crises of covid-19 where social distancing must be observed and nobody know when it will end. So the advantage of e-library would provide students with uninterrupted access to study

materials at any time. Students in school can make use of the innovative tools in ICT to access information that would be helpful in their studies. The advent of e-library creates new opportunities for libraries and librarians to become gateways to global information network which promote new innovative strategies for learning. The current pandemic is an eye opening to ministry of education, school administrators and stakeholders to reposition their mind on the efficacy of E-Library which ultimately help in redesigning services and information products that would enhance learners' ability in research and further studies.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made:

1. The Nigerian government should encourage the learners (students) to participate vehemently in distance learning through adopting multiple learning modalities such as television, radio and SMS-based mobile platform like zoom.
2. Nigerian government also need to ensure that parents/guardians are well equipped to create conducive learning environment, and support children in this new mode of learning.
3. The ministry of education should crucially extend beyond traditional policy making and creating ample avenue for new policy menu that would fame the covid-19 pandemic.
4. The funding from the government is required to keep learning going, or scaled-up education support programmes as part of the government's palliative measures in schools.
5. The federal government should through the ministry of education initiate innovative strategies that would help to established electronic library platform in secondary schools for *access to current information and studying materials*.

Conclusion

The coronavirus disease known with code, covid-19 pandemic has affected every sphere of life and may forever change how we have always lived in our day to day learning scenarios. However, it appears

that the covid-19 pandemic may remain as long as human being leaves. Globally, governments, school administrators, educational stake holders are seeking for punitive measures that would help to take teaching and learning to the next level which invariable is to cushion the effect of the coronavirus pandemic. Therefore, this study examined covid -19 pandemic: Challenges and way forward in Nigerian secondary education.

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AN ASSESSMENT OF PUBLIC RESPONSE TO MEDIA CAMPAIGNS ON COVID-19 PREVENTIVE MEASURES IN SOUTH EAST, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study assesses public responses to media campaigns on preventive measures of covid-19 pandemic in South East, Nigeria as advised by government and other health officials aimed at curtailing the spread of the disease since there is no clinically known vaccine or drugs for the treatment of covid-19. The population of this study was drawn from the South East states of the country with four hundred copies of questionnaire administered to respondents across the five states that make up the geo-political zone. Health belief model was used as the main theoretical framework for the study. The study found that the media campaigns on preventive measures of covid-19 has been successful to some extent. The study also found that majority of the respondents are aware of the various media campaigns to curb the spread of the disease but the level of compliance is poor despite the intensity of these various media campaigns. But it is appalling that majority of the respondents still move about without wearing facemasks, not avoiding crowded places as well as not maintaining social distancing as advised in the various media messages. Thus, this study recommends the use of mixed media strategy in disseminating the messages so

that the different medium will complement each other. Also, the government should enact law that would make it mandatory for people to wear facemasks and also adhere to the covid-19 safety protocols.

Keywords: Public, response, covid-19, health protocol, pandemic and media campaigns.

Background of the Study

The outbreak of covid-19 pandemic has been regarded as a public health problem threatening the lives of many people across the globe, especially in the developing nations with a well-documented history of weak public health care system, shortage of medical staff and poor funding. The outbreak of covid-19 pandemic in 2019 in China and its spread has shown that the disease has no respect for territorial landscape due to the high number of infected cases and deaths reported across the globe.

The covid-19 pandemic is a devastating disease caused by a novel human coronavirus (SARs-Cov-2) formerly referred to as 2019-nCov (WHO, 2019). The index case of the covid-19 pandemic was first reported in December 2019 among people with viral pneumonia symptoms in Wuhan, China (Li, Guan, Wu, Wang, Zhou, Tong, 2020). Available literature about the origin of the virus has it that it was found to be related with the Huanan seafood market in Wuhan, in the Hubei province of China where most non-aquatic animals are also being sold for human consumption before the outbreak of the covid-19 pandemic (Cascella, Rajnik, Cuomo, Dulebohn & DiNapoli, 2020).

There was an exponential rise in the number of covid-19 pandemic related cases within a month when the index case of the virus was first reported in China; the disease spread across countries causing so much panic and deaths. As of August 11, 2020, the total confirmed cases of covid-19 pandemic across the world is 20, 119, 511, while the number of recovered cases stood at 12, 366, 115 with 737, 022 being the total number of deaths recorded. The United States of America has the highest number of confirmed cases in the world with 5, 182, 177, while the figure of recovered cases is 2, 523, 022

and the number of reported deaths is 165, 286 (The New York Times, 2020).

In Nigeria for instance, the first index case was reported in February, 2020 by an Italian who arrived the country and tested positive to coronavirus. This case marked the rise of reported cases of covid-19 pandemic in the country. As of August 11, 2020, available statistics has it that the country has a total confirmed cases of 46, 867 with 33, 346 as the total number of recovered cases while deaths stood at 950 (<https://covid19.ncdc.gov.ng/faq/>). It is instructive to note that more confirmed cases were recorded in Nigeria during the period of the nationwide lockdown announced by President Muhammadu Buhari on March 30, 2020.

Since there is no specifically known cure yet for covid-19, the only option left for countries was to devise strategies of curtailing the spread of the disease. To this effect, different countries mapped out public health protocols to control the spread of the virus, most of these preventive mechanisms focused on social distancing, hand wash, wearing of facemasks, avoiding crowded places and lockdown of cities. The global lockdown raised a lot of reactions among the population based on its multiplier effects on the economy, particularly in developing nations (Deblina, Sarvodaya, Sujita, Nivedita & Sudhir, 2020).

In Nigeria, the Federal Government of Nigeria initiated a Presidential Task Force on COVID-19 to provide high-level strategic national response to the disease in Nigeria. The Federal Ministry of Health also activated the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC)-led national COVID-19 Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) to coordinate the national public health response. At state-level, preparedness and response activities are also been coordinated through Public Health EOCs in each State (<https://covid19.ncdc.gov.ng/faq/>).

The NCDC is an agency under the Federal Ministry of Health established in 2011 in response to the challenges of public health emergencies and to enhance Nigeria's preparedness and response to epidemics through prevention, detection and control of communicable diseases. The NCDC also launched a campaign themed #TakeResponsibility across traditional and new media platforms

aimed at curbing the spread of the disease in the country (<https://covid19.ncdc.gov.ng/faq/>).

There has been a lot of misconceptions about covid-19 disease in Nigeria with citizens describing it as just a mere hoax by government officials in the country to attract foreign grants and support from global agencies and rich countries. To discountenance this erroneous perception, the NCDC and other relevant government agencies embarked on different media campaigns to change the public perception as well as to disseminate information about the mode of transmission of the virus, how to seek medical attention when one contract the virus and other preventive measures to be observed by the citizens to curb the spread of the disease in the country.

On a daily basis, members of the public's mobile phones, social media platforms, television, newspapers and radio stations are inundated with a plethora of messages from the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) and other health organizations on preventive measures to be adopted by members of the public in order to curb the spread of corona virus in the country.

The process of achieving the above health behavioural change or development cannot be achieved without effective communication. This can be attributed to the fact that any social development and behavioural change are people oriented and they can only participate mainly through communication across different media (Anorue & Nwanguma, 2015). Media campaigns are people oriented based on the fact that media functions are mainly to inform, educate and to entertain. Over the years, the mass media have proven to be a powerful tools for the dissemination of information, especially on health related matters such as the outbreak of covid-19 pandemic.

On the impact of media in the society, Wogu, Chukwu, Nwafor, Ugwuoke & Ugwulor-Onyinyechi (2019, p. 1) opine that:

The media is a powerful instrument with which to influence health behaviours linked to viral transmission and infection. Mass media (e.g. television, radio), print media (e.g. magazines and

newspapers) and new media (e.g. the Internet, mobile phones, search engine news sites and other forms of social media) have been used to convey targeted messages about health risks and raise health awareness. Media messages provide information about factors such as disease outbreaks, symptoms, modes of transmission, fatality rates, treatment centres, drugs and prevention methods.

From the above statement, it can be deduced that the media have a critical role to play in the fight against the spread of covid-19 pandemic in the country. Little wonder why the Nigeria Centre of Disease Control (NCDC) comprehensively integrated the media in its various health communication messages aimed at curtailing the spread of the disease right from the date that the first index case in Nigeria was reported.

Since the outbreak of covid-19 pandemic globally and Nigeria in particular, the NCDC and other government agencies such as the National Orientation Agency (NOA), Federal Ministry of Health and media stations have leveraged on the all-pervading influence of the mass media (traditional and new media) to disseminate information, enlighten members of the public and make them conscious of the existence and severity of the covid-19 pandemic in the country. These media campaigns were on both local and national television stations in the country, national newspapers and magazines, the social media platforms such as Facebook, twitter, WhatsApp, Instagram, news blogs, websites etc. were also used to sensitize the populace about the covid-19 pandemic.

Considerable studies have been conducted by scholars in recent times across different fields to ascertain the virology features and medical threats of the covid-19 pandemic; however, not much studies have investigated the success or failure of the various mass media

campaigns on precautionary measures outlined by the World Health Organization (WHO) and other local health officials aimed at curtailing the spread of the disease since there is no clinically approved vaccine or drugs for the treatment of the virus. The level of people's compliance to these health protocols as laid down by health authorities and the NCDC is important in order to flatten the curve of infections and deaths cases recorded since the outbreak of the covid-19 pandemic in Nigeria. Thus, this study tends to assess the level of public response to media campaigns on preventive measures on covid-19 pandemic in South East, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

The outbreak of covid-19 pandemic has caused a lot of panic in the world due to the severity of the virus, high rate of infection cases and deaths recorded. People's fear were also heightened due to the fact that there is no clinically approved vaccine or drug known for the treatment of the disease as at the time of this study. To flatten the rate of infections and deaths, government of different countries including Nigeria came up with a series of media campaigns and advocacies based on the World Health Organizations (WHO) health protocols on preventive and control measures to inform their citizens about the inherent danger posed by covid-19.

In Nigeria for instance, the Presidential Task Force on Covid-19, the Federal Ministry of Health, the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) and other organizations sponsored different media campaign messages on preventive measures across both old and new media platforms to curb the spread of the disease in the country such as constant hand washing under a running tap, use of hand sanitizers, wearing of facemasks, avoiding crowded places, maintaining social distance etc.

The extent of compliance by citizens of the country, especially those from the South eastern states of the country to these media campaigns is still unknown. There is utmost need to ascertain the extent of compliance and success of these media campaigns in the fight against covid-19 pandemic. Thus, this study tends to fill this gap in literature.

Objectives of the study

The specific objectives of this study are as follows:

- a) To ascertain the level of public exposure to media campaigns on preventive measures of covid-19 pandemic in South east, Nigeria.
- b) To determine the level of public awareness to the media campaigns on preventive measures of covid-19 pandemic in South east, Nigeria.
- c) To find out the extent to which the media campaigns have influenced the public towards adhering to the preventive measures of covid-19 pandemic in South east, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The research questions formulated for this study are as follows:

- a) What is the level of public exposure to the media campaigns on Covid-19 preventive measures in South east, Nigeria?
- b) What is the level of public awareness to the media campaigns on Covid-19 preventive measures in South east, Nigeria?
- c) To what extent did the media campaigns influence the public towards adhering to the preventive measures on covid-19 pandemic in South east, Nigeria?

Empirical review of related Literature

Since the outbreak of corona virus in Wuhan city, China in 2019, many scholars have carried out different studies relating to the mode of transmission, awareness, knowledge, perception, etc. in order to contribute to the body of knowledge. Kebebe, Yitayih, Birhanu, Mekanen & Ambelu (2020) conducted a study on knowledge, perception and preventive practices towards covid-19 early in the outbreak among Jimma University medical Center visitors, Southwest Ethiopia. The study used a cross-sectional method to sample 247 visitors of the University. The study found that majority of the respondents are aware of the clinical symptoms of covid-19. The respondents further identified symptoms such as stuffy nose, runny nose and frequent sneezing as some of the common and distinctive features of the virus.

In respect to knowledge of risk factors and prognosis of the covid-9 pandemic, most of the respondents asserted that old people with underlying illness are at risk of developing acute form of covid-19. It is also germane to note that majority of the respondents stated that early detection and treatment have the tendency of increasing the patient's chances of survival despite the fact that there is no medically approved drugs for the treatment of covid-19. The study also found that knowledge level about the main mode of transmission of covid-19 pandemic was very high among the sampled respondents. Also, on the preventive measures to be adopted against the spread of the virus, majority of the respondents enumerated frequent hand washing, not touching face-eye-nose without washing hands as well as ignoring crowded places. Another sterling finding of the study was that there is a vast gap between the magnitude of knowledge of preventive methods and the practices. It was also found that hand washing and avoidance of shaking hands for greeting are the two regularly observed methods of precautionary measures against covid-19 by most of the respondents sampled.

In an attempt to ascertain the level of Chinese government's preparedness on preventive measures of covid-19 pandemic, Huang et al (2020) carried out an internet- based cross-sectional survey on measures undertaken in China to avoid Covid-19 infection. The study found that most of the participants adhered to the recommendations of the Public Health Authority by opening the windows in their houses more frequently than before for more ventilation in the house. Majority of the participants also disclosed that they used facemasks in public places, avoided crowded places, washed their hands frequently and stayed at home.

The study found that gender differences played a major role in the aspect of compliance to the preventive measures advised by the government and health officials because women are more compliant with all the listed preventive measures and hygiene than men. It is also instructive to state that majority of the participants expressed optimism that the covid-19 pandemic would be tackled in China based on the proactive measures put in place by the government as well as the high rate of compliance by people. The study found that WeChat

was the major source of information on the covid-19 pandemic for over 90 per cent of the participants.

The study also found that majority of the respondents played vital role in influencing their families and friends on the need to adhere to the government listed health protocols to prevent the spread of the disease in the country. Furthermore, the study found that the innovative measures supported with traditional strategies adopted by the Chinese government which include active contact tracing of infected people or those who have come in contact with infected people, isolation and quarantine and campaigns for people to maintain social distancing contributed greatly to China's positive response to covid-19 pandemic.

Finally, the study found that the training programme organized by the government on the National Health Commission website for continued education for health officials to share newer information on prevention, diagnosis and treatment of covid-19 pandemic also played a crucial role in curtailing the spread of the virus.

Collinson, Khan & Heffernan (2015) did a study that critically looked at the effects of media reports on disease spread and important public health measurements. The study employed a stochastic agent based model to provide a quantification of mass media reports putting into cognizance the variability of important public health measurements. The study was conducted in Toronto, Canada.

The study found that the report level as well as the rate at which people relax their healthy behavior immensely affect the variability in vital public health measurements based on the fact that when the mass media reporting data are included in the mathematical model used; there is the tendency that two peaks of infection result will be the outcome.

The study disclosed that mathematical models can be used to ascertain the effects of the media during an epidemic or pandemic such as reportage on disease incidence, hospitalization, deaths rate which can also be included as part of the mass media function.

Khasawneh, Humeidan, Alsulaiman, Bloukh, Ramadan, Al-Shatanawi, Awad, Hijazi, Al-Kammash, Obeidat, Saleh and Kheirallah (2020) examined the level of knowledge, attitude and

precautionary measures among medical students during the outbreak of covid-19 pandemic. The study adopted a descriptive cross-sectional study design. The sample of the study was drawn from the six medical schools in Jordan and online questionnaire was used to generate data for the study.

The study found that majority of the medical students relied on online sources to get information including the use of the different social media platforms about the covid-19 pandemic as against relying on local or global news for updates on the outbreak of the disease. The study also found that most of the medical student (95.0%) believed that people with chronic illnesses are highly prone to COVID-19.

The study also found that majority of the respondents believed that an infected patient can transmit the virus to more than four people at each contact if safety measures were not given priority, and that COVID-19, unlike common cold and flu viruses, has the tendency to cause pneumonia in infected individuals. On recovery rate of infected patients, majority of the students sampled stated that infected persons would recover promptly without the need for medical treatment, and the study revealed that majority of the students sampled 75.0% believed that a functional vaccine would curtail the spread of COVID-19 across the globe. Also, majority of students agreed that infected person when identified clinically should be avoided in order to prevent the spread of the virus.

It was also found that frequent washing of hand, observing personal hygiene, and staying indoors were the three most adopted strategies by the students to protect themselves from being infected by the virus. Also, surprisingly, the study found that the student's year of study has a link with the willingness of the students to adhere to precautionary measure of wearing a protective facemasks to prevent corona virus infection.

On the role of media in the fight against the covid-19 pandemic, Mejia, Ticona, Rodriguez-Alarcon, Campos-Urbina, Catay-Medina, Porta-Quinto, Garayar-Peceros, Ignacio-Quinte, Carranza Esteban, Ruiz Mamani, Tovani-Palome (2020) evaluated media informative role in the face of the corona virus disease 2019 and its validation of fear

perception and magnitude of the issue. The study employed survey research method to obtain information from the respondents.

The study observed that exaggeration of the media, generated trepidation and information obtained from health officials, family members and friends are some of the factors that influence people's level of information about the covid-19 pandemic.

The study also found that majority of the respondents sought for information from non-medical sources such as local television stations or other media that are not news oriented. The researchers attributed this to the reasons for generated fear and collective hysteria among people after the outbreak of the corona virus. To reduce the level of fear generated by the mass media about covid-19 pandemic, the study recommended that the mass media should put the present situation into cognizance particularly the situation of the public health emergency that would ensure that the available information originate from reliable sources and provide calm for the people through knowledge.

Supporting the effectiveness of the media in health communication campaigns, Wogu, Chukwu, Nwafor, Ugwuoke & Ugwulor-Onyinyechi (2019) did a study to assess the role of the media in the prevention and control of meningitis in Nigeria. The researchers used documentary method of data gathering and analysis.

The study found that the role of the media in Nigeria during the period of meningitis outbreak was positive and collaborative which led to reduction in the number of cases of those infected by the disease. The study also revealed that the media have the capacity to play an educative, supportive, promotional and complementary roles in the fight against any disease in the world.

The study also found that majority of Nigerian media houses used variety of formats such as causes of the disease, symptoms, number of deaths, preventive measures, treatment, outbreak response strategies and preparedness as well as people's views about the disease to report on meningitis across different parts of the country. It was also discovered that most of the paid form of advertisements and announcements meant to support the media in health promotion

campaigns were affected by limited knowledge level of infectious diseases by politicians and some media sponsors.

Still on the role of media in health communication campaigns, Wogu, Chukwu, Orekyeh, Anorue, Nwokedi & Chukwu (2019) conducted a study on communicating health risk in Southeast Nigeria: The case of media campaigns against viral hepatitis and its implication for health communication. The study employed survey method with 500 respondents selected across the five states in the Southeast zone.

The study found that preponderance of respondents consume media messages but only few of the respondents were aware of viral hepatitis, its symptoms, mode of transmission and treatment methods. The researchers also observed that poor timing, scanty or few scheduling of media health programmes were some of the challenges affecting media campaigns against viral hepatitis in Southeast Nigeria.

Theoretical Framework

Existing literature has it that the Health Belief Model was first developed during the early 1950s in the United States (US) of America by psychologists Godfrey Hochbaum, Irwin Rosenstock and Stephen Regels working in the US public health service (Cummings, Jette & Rosenstock, 1978). The model was postulated by scholars in response to the failure of a free Tuberculosis (TB) health-screening programme.

The HBM has its origin from psychological and behavioral theories with the foundation that the two components of health-related behavior are; the desire to ignore illness, or conversely get well if already ill; and the belief that a certain health action will prevent, or cure, illness. Ultimately, an individual's course of action often depends on the person's perceptions of the benefits and barriers related to health behavior. There are six tenets of the HBM as propounded by scholars. The first four tenets were developed as the main tenets of the HBM. The last two were added after more researchers have stretched the body of knowledge in respect to the HBM (Lamorte, 2019). The six common tenets of the health belief model as listed by (Lamorte, 2019) are as follows:

1. Perceived susceptibility - This has to do with the person's belief of being at risk of contracting an illness or disease such as the covid-19 pandemic. There is a large variation in a person's feelings of personal vulnerability to contracting an illness or disease.
2. Perceived severity - This refers to a person's feelings on the seriousness of contracting an illness or disease (or leaving the illness or disease untreated). There is wide variation in a person's feelings of severity, and often a person considers the medical consequences (e.g., death, disability) and social consequences (e.g., family life, social relationships) when evaluating the severity.
3. Perceived benefits - This refers to a person's perception of the effectiveness of various actions available to reduce the threat of illness or disease (or to cure illness or disease). The course of action a person takes in preventing (or curing) illness or disease relies on consideration and evaluation of both perceived susceptibility and perceived benefit, such that the person would accept the recommended health action if it was perceived as beneficial.
4. Perceived barriers - This refers to a person's feelings on the obstacles to performing a recommended health action. There is wide variation in a person's feelings of barriers, or impediments, which lead to a cost/benefit analysis. The person weighs the effectiveness of the actions against the perceptions that it may be expensive, dangerous (e.g., side effects), unpleasant (e.g., painful), time-consuming, or inconvenient.
5. Cue to action - This is the stimulus needed to trigger the decision-making process to accept a recommended health action. These cues can be internal (e.g., chest pains, wheezing, etc.) or external (e.g., advice from others, illness of family member, newspaper article, etc.).
6. Self-efficacy - This refers to the level of a person's confidence in his or her ability to successfully perform a behavior. This construct was added to the model most recently in mid-1980.

Self-efficacy is a construct in many behavioral theories as it directly relates to whether a person performs the desired behavior. This model holds sway in this study based on its underlying tenets of the health belief model. These media campaigns sponsored by the federal government and other organizations have the capacity to change people's negative behavioural mindset and make them to engage in practices outlined by the various media messages on television, radio, newspaper, magazine and social media platforms on how to curtail the spread of the deadly covid-19 pandemic. This assertion is based on the powerful influence of the mass media in changing negative attitude and behaviour to positive attitude and behaviour as the case maybe for the good of the society.

Methods

Research Design

The survey research method was employed to conduct this study in line with the topic of this work which is an audience-based study.

Population of the study

The population of this study consist of residents of the South East zone of the country. The South-East zone comprise five states namely; Imo, Anambra, Ebonyi, Abia and Enugu states.

Sample size

A size of 400 respondents was drawn from the capital of the five states for this study through the use of Australian calculator.

Sampling technique

This entails the selection of sample for a study. It is necessitated by the impracticability nature of studying the entire population in most cases (Ohaja, 2003 cited in Anorue, Ugboaja & Oknokwo, 2020). The study adopted the purposive sampling method. This method falls under the non-probability sampling technique which requires the researchers to seek certain characteristics needed from the vast majority of the respondents. It therefore helps the researchers to zoom

down on the target population. The researchers purposively selected the State capitals of the five Eastern states listed above.

The sample size of 400 was distributed to each of the State's capital in the South East zone through the adoption of quota sampling technique. A tabular presentation of the selections were as follows:

Table 1. Showing the distribution of respondents across the five state capitals in South-East Zone

State	Capital	Allotted sample
Enugu	Enugu	80
Imo	Owerri	80
Anambra	Awka	80
Abia	Umuahia	80
Ebonyi	Abakaliki	80
Total		400

The questionnaire was used for instrument of data collection. The questionnaire had two sections; the demographic and psychographic sections. The demographic section had five questions while the psychographic section had 10 questions; 8 close ended questions and two open ended questions.

The data collected were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The quantitative analysis tools used for this study were tables of frequencies and percentages.

Discussion of findings

Demographic Analysis

The data showed that 278 (69.5%) of the respondents were male while 122 (30.5%) were female. The age distribution of respondents revealed that those within the age bracket of 18-25 were 78 (19.5%), 26-35 were 130 (32.5%), respondents within the age bracket of 36-45 were 75 (18%) while 46 & above were 120 (30%). The respondents educational qualification shows that those with Senior Secondary Certificate Examination (SSCE) were 79 (20%), OND/HND were 49 (12%), First degree were 216 (54%) while M.Sc. & PhD were 56

(14%). Finally, the marital status of the respondents revealed the following; those single were 92 (23%), married 213 (53%), divorced 65 (16%) while others were 30 (8%).

Research question 1: What is the level of public exposure to the media campaigns on Covid-19 preventive measures in South east, Nigeria?

To find out the level of audience exposure to media campaigns on covid-19 pandemic in South East, Nigeria, the generated data revealed that majority of the respondents sampled are well exposed to the various media campaigns on preventive measures on covid-19 pandemic with 387 (97%), (9 2%) of the respondents said they are not exposed to the various media campaigns while 4 (1%) of the respondents were undecided. The implication of this result is that the vast majority of people still rely on the media for information.

To ascertain the medium or media of exposure to the various media campaigns on covid-19 pandemic, the results showed that majority of the respondents 234(58.5%) were exposed to the different media campaigns on covid-19 pandemic preventive measures through the various social media platforms , This finding is in consonance with the study conducted by Khasawneh, Humeidan, Alsulaiman, Bloukh, Ramadan, Al-Shatanawi, Awad, Hijazi, Al-Kammash, Obeidat, Saleh and Kheirallah (2020), those exposed to the media campaigns through television were 87 (21.75%), it was closely followed by radio with 45 (11.25%), newspaper 21 (5.25%) while other media were 3 (0.75%). The implication of this result is that many people are gradually relying on social media as a source of information based on its attendant influence over the old media.

Research question 2: What is the level of public awareness to the media campaigns on Covid-19 preventive measures in South east, Nigeria?

To ascertain the level of awareness of the media campaigns on covid-19 pandemic preventive measures, the results indicated that a large number of the respondents were aware of the various media campaigns on preventive measures on covid-19 pandemic in South

East, Nigeria with 388 (97%) of the respondents affirming to the question. Still on awareness level, 10 (2.5%) of the respondents said they were not aware of the media campaigns on covid-19 pandemic preventive measures.

To find out if the audience understands the content of the various media campaigns on covid-19 pandemic in South East, Nigeria, the result shows that 356 (89%) of the respondents asserted that they comprehend the content of the media campaign messages, 40 (10%) of the respondents said they did not understand the various media campaign messages aimed at curtailing the spread of the disease in the region while 4 (1%) of the respondents were indifferent in their responses.

In order to ascertain if the respondents know the purpose of the media campaigns on covid-19 preventive measures in the South East geo-political zone, the results showed that 332 (83%) of the respondents stated that the major aim of the media campaigns was to curb the spread of the virus, 37 (9.25%) of the respondents disclosed that the aim of the media campaigns was to sensitize members of the public about the existence of the virus, 23 (5.75%) said the media campaign was basically to provide medical related support to infected victims while 8 (2%) of the respondents opted for other reasons as the main aim of the media campaigns.

Research question 3: To what extent did the media campaigns influenced the public towards adhering to the preventive measures on covid-19 pandemic in South east, Nigeria?

The generated data showed that 349 (87.25%) of the respondents stated that their health behavioural attitude changed after being exposed to the various media campaigns on covid-19 pandemic preventive measures, 46 (11.5%) said their behavioral attitude towards the virus did not change while 5 (1.25%) of the respondents were indifferent in their answers to the question. This particular finding is in consonance with the findings of Anorue & Nwanguwa (2015) and Wogu et al. (2019).

On the influence of the media campaigns on respondents, a vast majority of the respondents stated that the various media campaign messages on preventive measures on covid-19 pandemic had positive influence on them in respect to safety measures with 370 (92.5%), admitting that they were positively influenced; 27 (6.75%) of the respondents said the media messages had negative influence on them while 3 (0.75%) of the respondents were undecided.

To find out respondents most adhering practice towards curtailing the spread of the virus as advocated by the different media campaigns, 199 (49.75%) of the respondents stated that they wash their hands regularly as advised by health officials in the various media messages, 102 (25.5%) stated that they wear facemasks more often, 21 (5.25) opted for improved hygiene, 49 (12.25%) revealed that they maintained social distance after being exposed to the media campaigns, 27 (6.75%) indicated that they avoided crowded places with 2 (0.5%) of the respondents said that they observed other precautionary measures as directed in the various media campaign.

The low infection figure recorded in the South East geo-political zone and Nigeria generally was attributed to these various media campaigns by the respondents with 363 (90.75%), 33 (8.25%) of the respondents who disclosed that the various media campaigns were not responsible for the low rate of covid-19 pandemic infection cases in the zone while 4 (1%) of the respondents were indifferent.

On the challenges of the media campaign messages, most of the respondents stated that the media messages lacks sufficient information about the mode of transmission, symptoms or drugs that can be taken when infected without going to the crowded isolation centres, others complained that majority of the media campaigns messages were in English language which they described has been too difficult for uneducated people in the geo-political zone to understand; they asserted that some of the media messages on covid-19 preventive measures should be in local language for the rural dwellers to understand easily in order to prevent community transmission of the virus and some noted that the regularity of the media campaigns messages across the conventional media is low.

Major Findings

The following are some of the major findings of this study:

1. The study found that majority of the people sampled in the South East geo-political zone of the country are well exposed to the various media campaigns on covid-19 pandemic preventive measures aimed at curtailing the spread of the disease in the zone and the country at large.
2. The study found that majority of the respondents were exposed to the various media campaigns on covid-19 preventive measures through the different social media platforms. This finding is in tandem with the finding of Khasawneh, Humeidan, Alsulaiman, Bloukh, Ramadan, Al-Shatanawi, Awad, Hijazi, Al-Kammash, Obeidat, Saleh and Kheirallah (2020). This finding is a further demonstration of the growing importance of social media as veritable tools for information dissemination as well as its attendant benefits over the conventional media.
3. The study also found that the level of awareness of the media campaigns on covid-19 pandemic preventive measure is very high among the sampled respondents.
4. In addition, the study found that most of the respondents comprehend the content of the various media campaign messages based on its conciseness, short form and simple nature of the various media campaigns.
5. Furthermore, the study discovered that there was a noticeable behavioural change among majority of the respondents after being exposed to the various media campaigns on covid-19 pandemic preventive measures in South East, Nigeria.
6. Finally, the media campaign had a huge influence on the respondents which could be attributed to the low infection rate recorded in the South East zone.

Conclusion

Media campaign messages on covid-19 played significant role in creating awareness about the disease in addition to providing guidelines which helped in shaping the attitude and behaviour of the

people towards the pandemic. Hence, the media remain a major tool in behavioural change communication.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. The use of mixed media intervention strategy for the dissemination of the various media campaigns on covid-19 pandemic so that the different medium will complement each other.
2. The government should enact law that would make it mandatory for people to wear facemasks and also adhere to the covid-19 safety protocols.
3. The media campaign messages should be produced also in local languages and aired regularly on local radio stations or through the mobile town criers in various communities in the Southeast, Nigeria in order to prevent community-transmission of covid-19 pandemic.
4. There should be another version of the media campaigns that will specifically focus on the various mode of transmission of the disease so that members of the public will have sufficient knowledge about the disease in order to prevent it spread.
5. The scheduling of the media campaign messages should be regularly and aired mostly during popular programmes on Television or radio that have huge audience.

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COVID-19, VIOLENCE AND SOCIAL INEQUALITY IN AFRICA: A CALL TO AWAKEN AFRICAN MORAL CONSCIOUSNESS

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Abstract

Covid -19 pandemic is a very harsh experience to the world at large and Africa in particular. The strategies to prevent it are at the same time uncomfortable for all and sundry. This harsh experience and falsehood on the part of some agents to distribute relief materials and support from higher and more advanced countries and wealthy institutions, bodies and individuals have made people in different parts of the continent to demonstrate and destroy lives and properties. Based on this finding, the study advocates for the need for Africans to awaken their moral consciousness the way their forebears did in the distant past. It recommends that African studies that can add value to the moral psyche of upcoming African leaders should be made compulsory in both secondary and tertiary institutions. Religious bodies and few academic departments should not be left alone in course of embarking on house-to-house teachings of moral education especially when the Covid-19 problem must

have gone. The research introduces historical and hermeneutical research method. Data were gotten from both primary and secondary sources. Data generated were analyzed with phenomenological method of data analysis.

Keywords: *Covid-19, Moral Consciousness, Violence, Social, Inequality, Africa*

Introduction

COVID-19 in the world cannot be analyzed in some hesitation or rush. It is a pandemic that feeds all and sundry with direct experience. No one should discuss the menace with doubt. Facts on the ground are for sure direct actions and effects. More so, it is an experience that demands for some relaxation and articulation if one would narrate the herald without omitting the most relevant information on the importance of the lessons from the outburst of COVID-19.

Nevertheless, COVID-19 catastrophic experience had prompted the governments at international, national, state and local levels to support the masses, the world and less privileged individuals in different ways. Agencies, cooperate bodies, richer individuals also threw their supports. These assistance were coming on the ground that there was global lockdown on human activities which necessitated economic incapacitation in the world. Therefore, those who depended heavily on daily businesses to earn their daily living never found it easy to cope with life. In the midst of all these challenges and supports, it was also discovered in this paper that some African countries have failed in considering the plight of their fellow brothers and sisters. Such people saw the supports provided for the Citizens as an opportunity to enrich their treasury. Some saw it as an opportunity to at least hoard/loot enough food for the sustainability of their family's source of feeding. Mrs. Nneka Nwoye Iriemene (personal communication, 17 April, 2020) said that in her community, in Anambra State, some rich persons provided palliatives for the poorer masses in the community, some of who dwell in the rural villages at the movement, but people assigned to share these relief materials

seem to have failed to distribute the palliative equitably. The case here is not that supports given were not shared or disbursed at all. But the issue is that more than half of what was offered to the populace was withheld by people in charge of sharing

In Nigeria, so many were not aware that certain people in political power were given COVID-19 support funds in form of loan to disburse. Members of the National Assembly were said to have received such funds/financial assistance for the citizens of Nigeria in their respective constituencies, but the real poor people were not given that money. Hon. Chijioke Kingsley (personal communication, 11 September, 2020) explained that he was directly called by the House of Representatives' member, representing his Federal Constituency, who is a People Democratic Party member, called him few days back to send his account details so that he can remit COVID-19 loan to him. According to Hon. Chijoke, he said that in less than an hour he sent his account details, he just received ₦500,000 (Five Hundred Thousand Naira) alert. We can see that both politicians and other masses on the streets have lost their moral consciousness. This beneficiary of the ₦500,000 (Five Hundred Thousand naira) Palliative/loan was seriously involved in the P.D.P. (People's Democratic Party) campaign for the election of this House of Representative Member's election in 2019. At this level, it could be observed that politicians used such funds to recognize their party and political allies at the expense of the entire members or electorate of their electoral constituencies. For other individuals, their interest is on securing food and resources for the survival of their immediate families. This act contributed to people's annoyance to embarking on violence. In so many rural settings in Nigeria for example, there were personal and group fights mostly at the point or spot where those palliatives were shared. Mr. Mathew Ilo (personal communication, 14 August, 2020) complains that his share of the COVID19 palliative given to their community by a Philanthropist was taken back from him by leader of the group he sent to share it. According to him Mathew, he fought the leader in charge of the sharing collected part of his share of the palliative shared at the spot, and that he will commit the man to their village deity unless he gives him the remaining part.

African's should be mindful of social inequality in dealing with people. All fingers are not equal. This problem of not recognizing social inequality among Africans has been found in this study as a factor that always trigger violence especially during the upsurge of COVID19 pandemic Civil Society Organization on the response to COVID19 pandemic in Nigeria, 2020: 9) laments that:

The enforcement of the lockdown has led to breakdown of law and social order in some states (especially those on lockdown), as characterized by human rights abuses, extra judicial killings (such as that of the young man, Ifeanyi Arunsi, killed in Ehem Ohafia area of Abia State on 17th April), and assaults (such as that of Ms. Tola Azeez who was beaten at Odo ori market, Osun state on 18th April). Also, there have been reports of extortions and collection of bribes to break the lockdown or curfews, thus endangering people's lives through the continued spread of the disease. The troubling trend armed robbery, gang violence threats and Harassments of people especially in Lagos State and the F.C.T has led some members of different communities to form adhoc vigilante groups as a measure to protect themselves, their families, and members of their community, which, if not controlled, may lead to reprisal attacks, tilting towards more violence.

With what this body is saying here, there are situations and scenes that showed that COVID-19 pandemic caused violence in Africa generally and Nigeria in particular.

In all, the study observes lack of moral consciousness among African as a serious problem combating fairness in the people's lives. It therefore, aims at awaking the African people's moral consciousness for fairness in every facet of their wellbeing. The research adopts historical and hermeneutical research approach primary and secondary sources of data collections were utilized. Data gotten were analyzed with phenomenological method of data analysis. It finally recommends among other things that African studies that can add value to the moral knowledge of the growing African leader should be made mandatory in secondary and tertiary academic institutions.

Conceptualization of Terms

The concepts designed for definitions and explanations are COVID19, Africa, moral consciousness, violence and social inequality. World health organization (2020) admits that COVID–19 is the name given by the world health organization (WHO) on February 11, 2020 for the disease caused by the novel corona virus SARS–COV2. It started in Wuhan, China in late 2019 and has since spread worldwide. COVID-19 is an acronym that stands for corona virus disease of 2019. Historically, according to WHO, on December 31, 2019, a strange new pneumonia of unknown cause was reported to the Chinese WHO country office. A cluster of these cases originally appeared in Wuhan, a city in the Hubei province in China. The infection were found to be caused by new corona virus which assumed the name “2019 novel corona virus” (2019 – COVID). It was later given another name “severe” acute respiratory syndrome corona virus 2” or SARS – COV2 by the International Committee on taxonomy of viruses on February 11, 2020. It was renamed SARS – COV2 because the virus is a genetic cousin of the corona virus which caused the SARS outbreak in the year 2002 (SARS – COV). The unofficial name for the virus is COVID 19 virus. In fact World Health Organization and its embodied International Committee on Taxonomy of virus have provided every information needed in this study to elaborate on the meaning, origin and nature or characteristics of this virus disease.

According to Macdonald, (2019: 1-2) Africa is discussed thus:

The word “Africa” is an evocative one that conjures up different images for different people for some, it’s an irony – tusked elephant standing before the snow – capped peaks of Mount Kilimanjaro: For others, it is a mirage shimmering on the horizon of the Avid Sahara Desert. It’s also a powerful word – one that speaks of adventure and exploration, corruption and poverty, freedom and mystery. For 1.2 billion people, the word “Africa” is also synonymous with the word “home” but where does it come from? No one knows for sure, but in this article, we take a look at a few of the most likely theories.

The major theory that has given classical explanation to the origin of “Africa” is the Roman theory MacDonald (2019:3) continues thus: “some believe that the word “Africa” came from the Romans, who named the land they discovered on the opposite side of the Mediterranean after a Berber tribe living in the cartage area (now modern – day Tunisia).

Different versions from different sources on the origin of Afri and its name. But it is worthy to note that the most popular is Africa. More so, it is thought that the Romans called the region Afri – Terra, meaning “the Land of the Afri”. Later, the idea would have been taken to become contracted to form the single word ”Africa”. In a different version, some historians suggest that the suffix “-ica” could also have been used to mean “the land of the Afri”, In which the same way that the Celtica, which is a Zon of modern or present day France was named after the Celtae or Celts that lived in the territory. Invariably it could also be taken that there is the possibility that the name was at the same time a misinterpretation of the Berber’s own name for the place where they lived. The Berber’s word Afri means of the cave, and could also be referred to as the place of the cave dwellers. The point and fact very glaring here is that the name Africa has been in existence since the Roman era, even though it could initially be referred to as North Africa only.

There are other theories that try to examine the meaning, origin and the people of the continent known today as “Africa”. Historians have propounded the Phoenician Theory, the Weather Theory, the African Theory, and the Geographical Theory. All these theories are targeted towards providing concrete and elaborate information on the people and their geographical setting. The continent is very vast in ethnicity, race, geography, culture and religion.

Moral consciousness on the other side of the coin is a combination of two words which include: morality and consciousness. Morality according to Emmanuel Kant in Agha (2003:39), he posits that:

The autonomy of the will is that property by which will is a law unto itself, independent of any property of the subjects of

volition. He went on to say that the principal of autonomy is: “always so to choose that in the same act of willing the maxims of this choice are formulated as a general law ... It stands to reason therefore that by mere analysis of the concepts of morality we became aware are that the principle of autonomy is the main principle of morals.

The points Agha and Kant are making in this context is that morality involves the principle of autonomy of the will or willing. By this, it means that the actor chooses what he wills. Titus (1957:181) postulates thus: “What actions constitute standard of moral judgment to which human conduct must conform so as to be regarded as right or wrong? In the general sense, the word right implies conformity to custom, law, conscience and some external authority”. The fact that arouses the interest of this paper as it concerns morality is the consideration of human act as it affects right or wrong in conformity with law, custom and most importantly conscience. The major basis of moral judgment is conscience.

Consciousness has been defined by Summers (2001:285) as: “The condition of being awake and able to understand what is happening around you; your mind and your thoughts ...” Summers has more meaning attached to consciousness but the one stated here protects the interest of the study. The idea of what one has in mind and though and the ability to awake and understand what happens around someone summarizes the word consciousness.

It appears that morality is lying inactive in the minds and thoughts of Africans. Therefore, the research finds essence to awaken that moral awareness in Africans’ minds and thoughts.

Violence is another term that requires clarification. Jacquin (2005) defines violence as an act of physical force that cause or is intended to cause harm. The damage inflicted by violence may be physical, psychological or both. Violence may be distinguished from aggression, a more general type of hostile behaviour that may be physical, verbal, or passive in nature. Jacquin gives a very wide coverage of the meaning of violence. Violence in her definition connects to harm and damage/destruction. COVID-19 issues in Africa

caused some injuries and took lives of African people in areas where violence was instigated.

Social inequality according to a sociologist Mr. Eze Wilfred Ugwu (Personal Communication, 14th November, 2019) has to do with the state or condition where everyone in a specific environment or society do not have equal status in terms of knowledge, material wealth, contacts etc. In Africa, people are placed both at higher and low cadres in different spheres of evaluations. The work reflects on the relationships between individuals of unequal status that motivated violence during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Areas of Violence: Causes and Implications among People of Different Social Status in Africa During COVID-19 Pandemic

In Africa, some countries are economically richer than the other. The same inequality is applied to lower units in African continent. Individual human beings are also of similar differences. Ordinarily, it is expected that the mindset of a poor individual in most un-conducive periods in life, generates anger. An adage simply states that a hungry man is an angry man. The rich at the same time is expected to always understand the plight of the poor amongst them in any given society and consider them most during harsh periods. But there seems to be a disconnection in application of this two dimension of understanding among these two groups that always metamorphose into violence. This disconnection was obvious in Africa during COVID-19 menace.

In Lagos there was demonstration by the wives of Lagos State Electric Distribution Company. In Kano State a similar scenario took place. Most of these anti-COVID-19 guide adherents in Nigeria perceived it as a disease for the elite rich and politicians. Nwaubani (2020:2) reflects that: “many Nigerian’s gloat that COVID-19 is mainly targeting the country’s elites, especially politicians, despite warnings that the life- threatening respiratory illness could hit the poor as well. The Nigeria Centre for Disease control has recorded more than 600 cases since end of February, most of them people who had been abroad, and those they had interacted with.” The point here is

that the higher in class who can afford to travel abroad can contact and get affected. Violence against the authority is not a solution.

According to Chiara, et al (2015:1) summarizes social inequality thus:

As distinct from income or wealth inequality is currently poorly understood and at best, unevenly measured. We conceptualize social inequality as the relative position of individuals along a number of dimensions that measure achieved outcomes and, innovatively, expectations about future outcomes. Using data from 12 Central and Eastern European countries, we find that cross national patterns of social inequality differ significantly from patterns derived from income inequality measures. Moreover, our measure of social inequality is much better correlated than income inequality with other country differences such as higher levels of economic performance and human development and stronger political institutions.

What Chiara Binelli, Mathew Loveless and Stephen Whitefield are saying are not far from the view of Mr. Wilfred Ugwu. The specific fact in Chiara B et al is that the social inequality on both current and expected income, human development and political sphere of life should be considered. When these ideas cut across Europe, Africa and so on, they seem to mutually marry.

During the ENDSARS protest in Nigeria, there were increased violence in different parts of Nigeria on the discovering of locked or looted palliatives. Examples are Plateau and Lagos States. In Lagos, Kojo (2020:1) laments thus: “And now a warehouse full of COVID-19 medication and food has joined the list of unfortunate victim of this situation. Some thugs discovered and broke into the warehouse, stealing and making away with all the content in the Monkey Village of Maza Maza Lagos.



Looted COVID-19 palliatives in Lagos State discovered

In Plateau State, Sahara Reporters write that, “Acting on a tip-off, it was learnt that the hoodlums stormed the warehouse said top belonging to the state Emergency/Management Agency and pulled down the doors before carting away the palliatives. The discovering and carting of suspected looted palliatives during the ENDSARS protest was witnessed in other states like Ondo, Kaduna, Cross River etc.



Looted COVID-19 palliatives in Plateau State discovered

In this research, there are factors that are projected as the possible causes of violence between the elites and common masses, the rich, politicians and poor in Africa During COVID-19 pandemic. They include: misconception of migration opportunities influence of immoralities and negligence of human right in the continent, degradation of Africa traditional values, poverty and futuristic anxiety.

Firstly, most Africans misconceive their migration opportunity. Traveling from one part of the world to another appears to be perceived as an opportunity to arrogantly express unnecessary distinction between one another. Some who can travel to Europe, America, Asia e.t.c. feel they have acquired economic, health, and social safety. Those that succeed in gaining political power at a higher ranking use migration opportunities as an avenue to siphon/embezzle public funds and remit them to their independent personal bank account overseas. Those on legitimate enterprises embarking on trade of international commodities or products. Some established pockets of industries abroad. All these negatively affect Africa people's local contents. Okafor (2019: 95) concurs to this when he asserts that:

It is not surprising, that in all these enviable developments, Africans are still negatively affected economically. African countries appear to have failed to take advantage of this migrant interaction. So many aspects of the traditional economy of Africans were discouraged to be developed. European and other countries within America and Asia will come; extract raw materials and go back home for production. Any means of making Africans produce marketable products by Africans are discouraged by both migrants and Africans. Africa has become more interested in trade than production. However, African environment has been prepared as dumping ground irrespective of the scope of any international or world policy on business or commerce.

If majority of African migrants had planned to attract raw material and other resources far and wide, to industrialize African nations, it will go a very long way to make Africans develop interest in building Africa in divergent capacities. When wealth circulates reasonably, foreigners will be interested in Africa. Politicians will be discouraged from looting pieces of wealth or items in their custody. Travelling outside Africa will not be a source of arrogance and so on. But because this migration misconception exists, gains of migration are lost, people continue to mismanage unforeseen situation like that of COVID19 embarking on looting in such condition because they have

international hideouts to hide the looted resources, et cetera. This provokes the anger of independent countries citizens. This anger, unfortunately results to violence between low and high cadre personalities in the continent.

Secondly, influence of immoralities and negligence of human rights in Africa is also a contributory factor. Immoralities are a common place in Africa. There are illegal killings, stealing in indifferent forms, cheating of many kinds etc. Most of these immoral actions involve violation of human right in different African countries for example Okwueze and Kanu (2003 : 28) assert that:

Right to life and security of persons is universally recognized. To this end, section 33 of the 1999 Nigeria constitution states: Every person has right to life, and no one shall be deprived intentionally of his life... The history of deprivation of life in Nigeria started on a large scale with violence in Western Nigeria after 1964 /65 elections. Many people lost their lives at that time. This helped to invite the military on the Nigerian political scene, an act that led to further abuse of rights to life in the country.

We can see that in the world all over, every man has the right to life. Okwueze and Kanu have examined the Nigerian experience. As it is to Nigeria, so it is to other African countries. There are also so many other human rights violated in Africa. These violated are mostly caused by immoralities in the lives of Africans. During the COVID-19 observations and rules, countries like South Africa experience violation of right to life, where a lady was arrested for going to buy drugs for her sick child, in a neighboring pharmaceutical store. In Rivanda, Soldiers on duty raped girls. These are violent acts that could trigger further violence response in Africa during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown, and rules.

Thirdly, degeneration of African traditional values contributes to the menace. Mr. Geoffrey Nwafor Okafor (personal communication, 20 May, 2020) explains that during the COVID-19 lockdown, elders and title holders in his community were met by some government delegates to help and organize the community members for maintenance of order and strict observation of guiding rules against

the spread of the COVID19. The people that came for the sharing were directed on their arrival on how the community addresses the order of primogeniture in doing their things. Those sent decided to do the sharing according to serial number they have in their list. The action according to Mr. Geoffrey Nwafor generated some violence in form of fighting and alterance of abusive statements. Though, the situation according to him was later calmed down. This havoc arose because of the negligence on the traditional values. More so, most of the disobedience and atrocities committed during the pandemic experience were condemned by various African traditional values. But because Africans of nowadays do not to respect traditional values of African state, it ignites affected violence between lower and higher profile individuals of divergent capacities.

Fourthly, poverty is a factor. Among African nations, the rich gets richer, while the poorer lives and gets poorer. Azkukwe (1996: VI) observes that:

Poverty, for instance is said to be operating in a vicious circle. Poverty leads to poor education which in turn limits the employment opportunities to low jobs only. A low job will lead to poor nutrition and poor health which may result in poor output. This poor output may lead to a low social status which in turn may develop into social deviancy and crime. This deviancy may lead to political apathy and low political power. to political apathy and low political power. This low social power minimizes the chances of getting a fair share of the resources in society, which goes to reinforce poverty, and the circle continues.

In fact, Akukwe just summarized every facet of the effects of poverty in any social setting. Because people are poor and hungry, the people are invariably angry, because a hungry man is an angry man. Anger in return encourages violence. Therefore, where people lack reliable resources base, in a circumstance that they were offered something, and attempts were made to deprive them the little made available during the COVID19 lockdown will possibly attract violence

Finally, futuristic anxiety is among the causes of violence experience in the COVID19 pandemic. People did not know when the

virus will disappear. There were information on increases in new cases Some that saw resources, palliatives and other provisions made available for the common men under their control tried to loot them in case the virus last for a long or in case no drug or vaccine will be discovered for immunization or treatment. Some saw certain provisions, and resources within the pandemic as an opportunity to save for the future plans, even though the disease might be tackled soon.

The COVID-19 violence introduces some implications to the lives of African people. Education of the younger generations was jeopardized Mrs. Chika Ewulum (personal communication, 11 October, 2020) asserts that COVID-19 has contradicted academic calendar in Africa generally and Nigeria in particular. She continues that while some parents could afford to bring their wards back to school at the emergence re-opening of schools, others could not due to their involvement in violence at COVID-19 lockdown. According information within the nation, a state like Rivers state has not even re – opened upto the end of October, 2020. Some families in Africa had their members involved in one sort of violence or the other generating from the COVID-19 lockdown and its related rules. At the end of their violent cases, some became totally weak financially, and could not pay for the necessary social amenities.

Violence in the African societies during the incidence of COVID-19 among the people affected people’s health, lives, property, their relationship and social interaction with one another, resource bases and so on.

The Need to Awaken African Moral Consciousness

Most African traditional values promote moral consciousness of the aboriginal mostly on the fundamentals of living together as brothers and sisters in peace and order as one community. But due to modern trends of growth, people became highly individualistic and can get involved in different violent encounters, basically to actualize his or her personal aims or interest no matter how it affects others around him. This manner of living encourages the spirit of separation

and violence as against peace for all and sundry. Adibe (2009:15) states thus:

Traditional Religion was the bedrock of Igbo Communal life. But the Modern pluralistic community orientation with divergent religious world-views devalued the Igbo communal life... they uphold the need for the maintenance of proper links of relationship in human kinship as well as relationship between man, nature and the ancestral spirit. They see goodness primarily as a means of realizing the social morality of the group.

What Adibe is pointing out here is applicable to so many African nations, ethnicity, communities etc. The African religion had remained the strong room for provision of traditional values that enhance order, peace and harmony. It discourages violence at all levels and circumstances. Africans are traditionally at alert to avoid anything capable of motivating immoral consciousness among her sons and daughters. But unfortunately the present pluralistic nature of African societies has become a barrier to the lifespan of African moral consciousness. This paper therefore, call on the need for Africans to arise against those distracters hampering their rise and tenacious adherence to their traditional moral awareness in their psychological beings.

In fact, with compliance to African moral observances and practices, violence on critical conditions like COVID-19 era, would not occur at all. The traditional African society had been peaceful because people avoid all sorts of immoral behaviour as contain in various traditional moral values. Though those traditional African moral conducts are in the people's minds, but it is very weak and dormant. Nevertheless, This African moral consciousness should be awoken to be able to curb, and control violence to the barest minimal state. The violence experienced in this era of COVID-19 and beyond would not have happened.

Recommendations

1. Africans scholars and researchers should devote more time on researches that will trace most possible causes of immoralities in the continent.
2. Trips to typical rural and traditional settings should be equipped by every community in Africa to build at least a viable cultural centre for the young and old.
3. There is need for every community in Africa to have published document(s), in form of constitution where does and don'ts of the people will be listed and implications explained.
4. Traditional worshippers should avoid unnecessary compliance to every tenet of modern development to be able to make African tradition, religion and culture very relevant to the present world.
5. Those penalties for immoral acts, especially those that trigger violence among the populace should be pragmatically enforced with their relevant penalties which could be either spiritual or physical.
6. Relevant academic departments and religious bodies should be doing house to house teaching of African moral values.

Conclusion

It is not doubtful that this period of COVID-19 and its accompanied lockdown and rules really created violent atmosphere throughout Africa. The continent like every other continent has people of both low and high status. The difference in social classes affects the possibility of a class of individuals overweighing powers against one another. In the course of displaying these actions the citizens are left to witness various sorts of violence in various African environments.

The pluralistic nature of the African environment is a factor that incubate the misconception of migration opportunities, futuristic anxiety etc as some of the causes of the violence among the elites and the common or poor masses. The unpleasant scenario has affected the education sector, health etc. Finally, Traditional African moral Consciousness had been too useful in curbing and eradicating violence in the traditional society time immemorial. This moral consciousness

should be awakening by applying the recommendations stated above, and beyond to establish a violence free society in any circumstances for the contemporary Africans.

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Interview

1. Hon. Chijoke Kingsley, Politician, Enugu State, 50 years, 11/9/2020
2. Mrs. Nwoye Nneka Iriemene, Teacher, Anambra State, 48years, 17/4/2020
3. Mr. Mathew Ilo, Driver, Ebonyi State, 33years, 14/8/2020
4. Mr.Eze Wilfred Ugwu, Retrieved Civil Servant, Enugu State, 58years, 14/11/2019
5. Mr. Geoffrey Nwafor Okafor, Civil Servant, Imo State, 7 years, 20/5/2020
6. Mrs. Chika Ewulum, Teacher, Anambra State, 41years, 11-10-2020

the 1990s, the number of people in the world who are undernourished has increased from 600 million to 800 million (FAO 2001). The number of people who are malnourished has also increased from 1.2 billion to 1.5 billion (FAO 2001).

There are a number of reasons for this increase. One of the main reasons is the rapid population growth in the developing world. The world population is expected to reach 8 billion by the year 2025 (UN 2001). This increase in population will put a tremendous strain on the world's food resources. Another reason for the increase in malnutrition is the rapid increase in the number of people who are living in poverty. In 1990, 1.2 billion people were living on less than \$1 per day. By 2000, this number had increased to 1.5 billion (UN 2001). This increase in poverty has led to a decrease in the amount of food that people can afford to buy.

There are a number of ways in which we can reduce the number of people who are malnourished. One of the most important ways is to increase the amount of food that is produced. This can be done by increasing the amount of land that is used for agriculture, by increasing the amount of fertilizer that is used, and by increasing the amount of water that is used for irrigation. Another way to reduce malnutrition is to improve the distribution of food. This can be done by increasing the amount of food that is stored in grain reserves, by increasing the amount of food that is transported to areas where it is needed, and by increasing the amount of food that is distributed to the poor.

There are a number of other ways in which we can reduce malnutrition. One of the most important ways is to improve the health of people. This can be done by increasing the amount of food that people eat, by increasing the amount of water that people drink, and by increasing the amount of medical care that people receive. Another way to reduce malnutrition is to improve the education of people. This can be done by increasing the amount of time that people spend in school, by increasing the amount of money that is spent on education, and by increasing the amount of information that people receive about nutrition.

There are a number of other ways in which we can reduce malnutrition. One of the most important ways is to improve the environment. This can be done by increasing the amount of land that is protected, by increasing the amount of water that is protected, and by increasing the amount of air that is protected. Another way to reduce malnutrition is to improve the economy. This can be done by increasing the amount of money that is spent on infrastructure, by increasing the amount of money that is spent on social services, and by increasing the amount of money that is spent on education.

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