
Covid-19 Education Damage ‘Guardians’ Remedial Strategies to Regain Children Loss in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area in Rivers State

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ABSTRACT

Corona virus broke out sometime in 2020 evidently sector of human life, education inclusive governments and concerned authorities, realizing the critical place of education, scheme of things in the begun measures to remedy the damage cause by the chronic outbreak. This study examined the steps that have been taken by parents and other concern authorities to make their school children regain what they loss as a result of the pandemic outbreak. The study adopted the documentary survey design, using the qualitative descriptive methods of data documentary. The study raised three research questions. The target population consist of parents of both primary and secondary schools children in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area. The data documentary tool was the document of primary Health Care covid-19 in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area. The obtained data was descriptively analyzed.

The findings revealed that the Corona pandemic brought about lockdown, caused school closures, the resort to remote learning loss of instructional time and much more on public education severely affected the realization of the aims and objective of Nigeria's National policy on Education as evidenced by a marked normal deficiency in the students' social mental, moral, spiritual and psychological development. The study recommended, among others, that Nigerian Government, through its educational authorities, should ensure that the heads and teachers of their educational institutions to realize the damage regarding the realization of the aims and objective of the National policy on education that has been done and makes determined efforts to remedy the abnormally, and the Nigeria Ministries of Education should ensure that instructional time pupils and students' at all levels of the education system is increases or doubled to make up for compensate for the loss already incurred.

Key Words: *Impact, Covid-19, Aims, Objectives, National Policy on Education, Realization.*

INTRODUCTION

It is an incontestable fact that the Corona pandemic has severely affected Nigeria's educational development, resulting in the inability of the nation to realize the lofty goals and ideals of the nation's national policy on education as well as the societal expectations of those formally benefiting from the teaching and learning process.

Because of the long periods of lockdown imposed by the government, policies which provide that learners and educational institutions in Nigeria, spend six years in the primary school, three years in the junior secondary school, three years in the senior secondary and

four years in the university, was very badly affected. (Aiyedun, 2020), Kept out of their schools, Nigerian pupils and students, like their counterpart of other countries, have been grossly denied access to teaching and learning and to take the examinations that test their cognitive abilities for a given school period.

It is evident that this unfortunately development has not only markedly reduced students' passion for studying but it has also made them perform less impressively academically--which is as a result of their spending very little time for studies. Instead of doing this, they spend long hours in playing or engaging in less important activities.

There is no gainsaying the fact that the Corona virus which allegedly a Wuhan biological laboratory broke in China sometime in 2019 has had profound corrosive negative impact on the Nigeria educational system. As a matter of fact all levels of the system--nursery, primary secondary and tertiary have already had profound and conspicuous setbacks as the various authorities concerned as well as parents and guardians live in the constant fear that this highly infectious diseases may easily afflict their citizens or children. Indeed across the world, the Corona pandemic has generated tremendous fear, which has led to the introduction and swift imposition of the lockdown phenomenon.

By Bob Train (2020), the widespread fear created by the Corona virus all over the world is confirmed by Train (2020), when he observes that "the USA is preparing itself for a tsunami of Corona virus cases as the global pandemic descends on the country...with between 100,000 and 200,000 deaths as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic".

Dairy (2006), cited Train (2020), also notes that "several states have already ordered businesses, schools and work places to close and enforce social distancing by limiting public gathering".

According to UNFPA, (2010), the disease has caused tremendous economic and physical destruction, which has held the world in the grip of palpable fear.

Considering the damage done to different sectors of the human society, education inclusive, it is expedient and inarguable to carry out a study of this nature.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- I. How did covid-19 affect Nigeria's educational system?
- II. What strategies did parents/ guardians employ to remedy their children educational loss during the period?
- III. How successful were the strategies utilized?

LITERATURE REVIEW

A number of scholars and writers across the world have paid considerable attention to how the ravaging Corona pandemic has severely affected the world's educational system and progress.

In their works they have made it clear that the disease has very dealt a devastating blow to the development and growth of education the world over, particularly in Nigeria.

The Economist news magazine of 13th-20th April, 2020 rightly captured this unfortunate and highly disturbing development when it reports that "Education is a most important concept

that has been extensively discussed by scholars and writers. This conviction makes Ayayi-Dopenu (1994), to simply describe education as the light of the mind.

Nwokocha (2006) sees it as the process through which an individual is admitted into the society by being taught what is worthwhile in order that the individual might play her part in the society.

To Fafunwa (1997), “Education is the aggregate of all the processes by which the child or young adult develops the abilities, attitude and other forms of behavior which are of positive value to the society in which he lives.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF NIGERIA’S EDUCATION

The Nigerian state runs an educational system which is based on the country’s overriding philosophy of education (Adeyeoye, 2006).

According to him, the aims and objectives of Nigerian education are contained in National Policy on Education (2003), and they are as follows:

1. The development of the individual into a sound and effective citizen.
 2. Full integration of the community.
 3. The provision of equal access to educational opportunities for all citizens of the country at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels. Others outlined in sub-section 7 of section 1 are; the inculcation of national consciousness and national unity.
 4. The inculcation of the right type of values and attitudes.
 5. The training of the mind in the understanding of the world around.
- Acquisition of the appropriate skill and the development of mental physical and social abilities... Furthermore, National Educational Policy (2003), provides in its section 1 subsection 8 that the nation’s education should achieve.
- Respect for the worth and dignity of the individual.
 - Faith in man’s ability to make rational decisions.
 - Moral and spiritual principles in inter-personal and human relations.
 - Share responsibility for the common good of the society.
 - Promotion of the physical, emotional and psychological.

Speaking of the provisions and essence of the Nigeria’s National Policy of Education, Adeoye (2006), points out that the document... “Specified that education in Nigeria has to be geared towards self-realization, better human relationship, individual and national efficiency, effective citizenship, national consciousness, national unity as well as towards social, cultural, economic, political, scientific and technological progress for the Nigerian state”.

Osokoya (2008) writes that the aims, objectives and goals of Nigeria’s educational system are centered on the motor development, social development, emotional development, spiritual development as well as the intellectual development of young children who are ultimately expected to be given the desired personality through educational processes or the instrumentality of education.

She adds that the kind of personality a good education seeks to achieve in young children is dynamic one—one which entails self-actualization.

The foregoing agrees with the 1944 Education cited in Souper (1976). According to the act... “Local authorities should provide for the spiritual, moral, mental and physical development of children”.

That the Corona pandemic has widely and severely affected the educational system the world over, it is acknowledged by Osman(2020), citing a recent UNESCO report, he notes that... “More than 1.5 billion students in about 105 countries have been affected by the lockdown of schools and campuses. As a result, schools, colleges and universities were forced to shift in some way or another to online learning as a replacement for the onsite delivery”.

This submission makes it very clear that the corona virus has since it broke out not quite long ago, has done a great deal of damage to the human community. Still describing the adverse effect of COVID-19 on education, another UNESCO report notes that “most governments around have temporally closed educational institutions in an attempt to contain the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic”. These closures are impacting hundreds of millions of students”.

Schlecher (2010), reports that “While the long-term impact of the Corona virus crisis is uncertain, the pandemic may affect public spending on education as funds are diverted into the health sector and the economy”.

Continuing on, he notes that “some countries have introduced short term support measures supply of digital learning devices, financial support and schools funds for safety and cleaning equipment”. Writing further Schleicher (2020), notes that the disease has affected continuity of learning, safety and legal status of internal students, student’s perception of the value of studying abroad for degrees as well as created the problem of loss of instructional time.

Thus, Schleicher believes that the Corona pandemic has evidently done substantial harm to efforts aimed at achieving the general objectives and goals of education most affected. The organization, through the research, identified such learning challenges as children receiving no teaching, children learning less through distance education, mental health consequences, and education not being free limited, access to technologies and the need for literacy education.

The report further explains that children living in rural areas, those with disabilities and those living in extreme poverty have had to experience more learning difficulties.

The human Rights Watch (2020), has also recognized the huge damage the COVID-19 pandemic has done to the world’s educational system, especially Africans. The result of an extensive research conducted across some African countries shows that school closures caused by the pandemic exacerbated previously existing inequalities and children who were already most at risk of being excluded from a quality education.

According to Aigedun (2020), the shutdown of most schools and colleges in Lagos, Kano and the Federal capital Territory—in which the academic year was interrupted—has tremendous effect on the academic syllabus. The report further found out that the pandemic has created an unprecedented description of Nigeria’s education system making the country unable to achieve most of its laudable, national objectives and goals of the afore-mentioned challenges.

Aigedun (2020), posits that “a lot of sacrifices have to be made by the stakeholders concerned, so as to remedy the huge damage already done”. Nbaah (2020), argues that the long closure of schools and colleges experienced worldwide has inarguably robbed pupils and students of the required instruction and teacher guidance—a unfortunate development that

has led to the production of a great number of academically and morally poorer pupils and students”.

He posits that in keeping the learners out of formal learning situations, the pandemic worked against the realization of the aims and objectives of the Nigeria’s national policy on education.

Theoretical framework

This study is hinged on the social action theory which Epeyong (1993), describes as multi-functional. According to him, the theory is concerned with new ideas and inventions, war, competition, and the like, societal realities which can remarkably influence the course of history, bringing about some social change. The social action theory also implies an event or development that suddenly plunge a society into profound turmoil’s from which it is hard to be free. This theory is pertinent to this study because the devastating and deadly role the Corona pandemic has played in our world today.

Methodology

Research design

The study employed the qualitative methods in obtaining information from the official gazette document.

The survey approach was utilized to gather documentary data in a sample population, while oral checklist were used to illicit their views on the same aspects of the subject matter.

Target population

The population of the study consisted of primary and secondary teachers with select educational institutions living in Obia/Akpor Local Government Area, in Rivers State

Sample/Sampling technique:

The purposive sampling techniques were used to draw 200 respondents from the population. Fifty respondents were selected from Obia/Akpor Local Government areas. The responses they made available were used for the documentary analysis. Level of education, social or official position, public affairs experience, among others, was some of the characteristics sought for from the respondents.

Data collection tool

The instrument used for data collection was checklist

Data collection method

For the purpose of the study, primary data was collected from covid-19 HMO office in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area and used.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

RESEARCH QUESTION 1: How did covid-19 affect Nigeria's educational system?

How did covid-19 significantly hamper Nigeria's efforts at achieving the aims and objectives set out in the national policy on education? To elate answer to research question one, respondents a number of open ended question. First, do you think that covid-19 severely affected the realization of the aims and goals of the national policy on education in Nigeria? Out of 200 respondents, 75% held a similar view. They were of the opinion that covid-19 evidently hampered the realization of the aims and objectives of the national policy on education in Nigeria.

According to them, the resulting shutdowns, leading to school closures, robbed the pupils and students of several valuable things, such as school instructions, School moral influence well as the rich benefits of being in a school community. 25% of them did not totally agree with above position, advancing the argument that did not last long enough to cause substantial education also explained that serious pupils or students from responsible would make every possible sacrifice for the sustenance of the of their educational progress. When asked to specifically mention the developments and realities of the pandemic which brought about the non-realization of 'these aims and objectives 60% them identified lack of access or non-availability of adequate school instruction, during the period, absence of teachers' moral compass and support as general school discipline 20% of them said the economic hardship created by the pandemic and parents' sudden loss of hope as being the chief cause. Another 20% believed that the pervasive fear of the new dreaded disease is the principal cause. From the responses above it is clear that covid-19 significantly hampered the realization of most of the aims and objectives of the National Policy on Education.

RESEARCH QUESTION 2: What strategies did parents/ guardians employ to remedy their children educational loss during the period?

Table 1: Altered school calendar and educational apathy

<i>Options</i>	<i>frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Yes	140	70%
No	60	30%
Total	200	100%

From the above responses, it can be understood that 140 or 70% of the respondents believed that school closures and the altering of the academic calendar generated a great deal of apathy toward formal education among the pupils and students'. Only 60 or 30% of them answered otherwise.

In seeking further reason why the respondents took their respective stand, 100 or 50% of them explained that the pandemic created in them a deep sense of abiding fear that whenever they got to school and interact with their school mates, they would become victims of the disease, 60 or 30% of them said that they would no longer be free school as they used to be prior to Covid-19 the remaining 40 or 20% opined that their apathy was as a result of the seeming hopelessness of the new world or the world today. The responses clearly show that school closure and the sudden altering of the academic calendar, which are consequences of Covid-19, generated a lot of apathy toward Formal Education.

Has Covid-19 adversely affected the realization of the varied human development goals of Nigeria's education systerrv-which are moral, emotional, spiritual, social and intellectual?

RESEARCH QUESTION 3: How successful were the strategies utilized?

<i>Options</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Yes	130	65%
No	70	35%
total	200	100%

In finding answers to research question 3, 150 or 75% of the respondents were of the opinion that the realization of the varied human development goals of Nigeria's National policy on Education have been severely affected.

50% or 25% of them answered No or not significant enough seeking to know why the respondents made their choices, 60% of them explained that the class performances of their pupils, after the initial school closures and students clearly demonstrate this fact. They explained that the students who use perform excellently in several core subjects such as Mathematics and English Language were performing more poorly and unimpressively 40% of them said that the students' classroom and out-of-classroom behaviour which is very indecorous and disrespectful also proved that Covid-19 had hampered the realization of the aims and objectives of the National Education Policy.

From the above responses, it can be deduced that Covid-19 with its attendant lockdowns particularly school closures significantly hampered the realization of such basic educational goals as motor social development, psychological development, intellectual development as well as spiritual development

CONCLUSION

It can be concluded from the study that the Corona pandemic has significantly hampered the realization of the aims and objectives of the Nigeria's National policy on education. The study specifically identified lockdown which led to prolonged school closures, the altering of normal school calendars, remote teaching and learning as well as significant cuts in public education spending as some of the factors that constituted severe hindrances to the realization of aims and objectives of the Nigeria's National Policy on education the findings of the study was found in consonant with the conclusion put forward by Usman (2020) and Human Rights Watch (2020) regarding how the corona pandemic adversely affected the entire Educational system. The finding of the study was found consistent with earlier studies undertaken by Schleicher, A. (2020) and Aiyedun -TG, (2020) which underscore the fact that Covid-19 has had very severe effects on education so much so that it considerably hindered the realization of National Policies in Education, Nigeria's inclusive

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were put forward.

- The Nigerian Government, through its educational authorities, should ensure that the heads and teachers of their educational institutions to realize the damage regarding the realization of the aims and objective of the National policy on education that has been done and makes determined efforts to remedy the abnormally.
- The Nigeria Ministries of Education should ensure that instructional time pupils and students' at

all levels of the education system is increased or doubled to make up for compensate for the loss already incurred.

- The services of guidance and counsellors should be more highly exploited in schools and colleges and be more easily accessible to pupils and students
- The Nigerian mass media, particularly the radio and the television, should be maximally utilized by the government and other educational stakeholders to acquaint pupils and students' more with the basic provisions and essence of the National Policy on Education, particularly pupils and students'.
- More copies of the National Policy on Education should be made schools and colleges available to and if possible, to individual pupils and students at all levels of the educational system in Nigeria so they could more easily access the critical information contained in the publication

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