



Effects of Covid-19 on Students' Academic Performance in Nigerian Secondary Schools: A Review Study

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ABSTRACT

This global pandemic, which has forced everyone into unprepared self-isolation, has had a negative impact on students' work and preparation for their examination. This study evaluated the extent COVID-19 affects the academic performance of students in Secondary Schools. The study looked at the major effects impacted by the COVID-19 Pandemic on student's academic performance in Nigerian secondary schools. The study was carried out as a desk review. The results were based on previous review. However, the study discovered four major effect of COVID-19 pandemic on student academic performance in our secondary schools in Nigeria; Poor academic achievement; Closure of Schools; Inadequate technology for E-learning and Uneven access to education opportunities. Based on the above findings, the study posited among others that government should immediately embark on the integration of all secondary schools into online education.

Keywords: COVID-19, Student's academic performance and Secondary schools

Introduction

At some point in 2019, a viral disease (Coronavirus: COVID-19) broke out in Wuhan, China. This virus has lately mutated into a terrible pandemic, posing a huge threat to global public health and forcing major cities around the world, including Nigeria, to go into lockdown (Lin et al., 2020). Schools have been ordered to close early due to the fear of getting infected by this awful virus, and individuals have been told to keep their distance and keep their distance (Sintema, 2020). Through a news briefing by Nigeria's Minister of Health, all institutions, including primary, secondary, and postsecondary universities, were told to end the current academic session by the end of March 2020, on the 27th to be exact. In Nigerian schools, summative assessments are the most popular method of evaluation, in which teachers educate students and then conduct exams and examinations to determine what they have learnt (Oyinloye & Imenda, 2019).

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), coronaviruses are a family of viruses that cause illnesses ranging from the common cold to more serious problems such as severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) and Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS). Humans are infected with several coronaviruses that have not yet infected people. The word corona comes from the Latin word corona, which means crown or halo. Under an electron microscope, the seems to be enveloped by a solar corona. The novel coronavirus, discovered on January 7 by Chinese authorities and named SARS-CoV-2 since then, is a new strain that has never been observed in humans. Despite the fact that human-to-human transmission has been proven, nothing is known about it (Ajazeera, 2020). According to the WHO, fever, cough, shortness of breath, and breathing difficulties are all signs of infection. In more serious cases, it can lead to pneumonia, multiple organ failure, and even death. The incubation period, or the interval between infection and symptom emergence, is currently considered to be between one and fourteen days. The majority of infected patients exhibit symptoms within five to six days. Patients who are infected, on the other hand, can be asymptomatic, meaning they have no symptoms while the virus is there (Ajazeera, 2020).

The government has taken a variety of initiatives to reduce the risk of disease spreading. These measures include travel restrictions, forced travel quarantines, social distance, public gathering bans, school and university closures, business closures, self-isolation, ordering people to work from home, curfews, and lockdown (Bedford et al., 2020; Gostin and Wiley, 2020). As a precaution against the virus's rapid spread, authorities in a number of countries have instituted a lockdown or curfew (Paital, Das and Parida, 2020). These policies have a negative influence on international trade, education, health, and tourism (Pragholapati, 2020). The majority of Nigerian schools have just completed their second continuous assessment test, and due to the spread of COVID-19, they would be unable to write their second term examination before the obligatory closure.

Few research on the influence of COVID-19 on students' educational success in Nigeria have been undertaken until yet. Although there is data in the literature directly related to medical sciences and practices. Unfortunately, COVID-19 will have a large impact on education, and the disease's impact should be included in educational studies so that governments at all levels can make appropriate accommodations for students and instructors all across the world (Sintema, 2020). The government's decision to close schools is a welcome gesture to protect pupils from the virus, which is on the rise due to the daily increase in the number of confirmed cases across the country. The pandemic in Nigeria's secondary schools, on the other hand, is wreaking

havoc on the economies of several low- and middle-income countries. Each session is broken down into three terms, with each term lasting up to 13-14 weeks of active teaching and learning. Because of the COVID-19 crisis, Nigerian secondary schools were under lock and key at the time. Another study by Badmus and Omosewo (2018) found that pupils have been performing poorly in national tests in recent years, particularly in science courses (Biology, Chemistry and Physics).

Because many colleges and institutions have suspended classroom education, a transition to online instruction for undergraduate and graduate students has become effective [reviewed in (Sahu, 2020; Yamin, 2020)]. This type of instruction allows you to reduce or eliminate student-to-student or student-to-lecturer interaction (Pragholapati, 2020). However, due to the economic and digital divide, many students are unable to attend online education due to a lack of resources or technology (UNESCO 2020). As a result, little has been spoken concerning COVID-19's potential impact on Nigeria's educational sector, notably on senior secondary school students' performance. The current situation demands rapid intervention because these are important topics required for admission to tertiary institutions. As a result, the purpose of this research is to see how COVID-19 affects students' scientific achievement. This study therefore, evaluate the extent COVID-19 affects the academic performance of students in Senior Secondary Schools.

Conceptual Framework

This global pandemic, which has forced everyone into a state of unprepared self-isolation, has had a bad impact on students' work and exam preparation. In Nigeria, there is currently no well-developed e-learning infrastructure for schools that can alleviate the detrimental impacts of lost learning hours. The impact of this outbreak will be felt most acutely by SS3 candidates whose national test is due later this year as a result of the loss of contact hours (Sintema & Phiri, 2018). According to data from a study conducted by Sakiyo and Badau, there was an unfavorable trend in the performance of students in Nigeria who took WASSCE in Physics, Chemistry, and Biology from 2008 to 2012. In addition to an increased failure rate in Biology and Chemistry, their average performance was 56.01 percent in Physics, 46.30 percent in Chemistry, and 37.27 percent in Biology (Sakiyo & Badau, 2015).

As the world gets more interconnected, the threats faced are increasing. COVID-19 has escaped the reach of national borders. People of various countries, educational levels, income levels, and genders have been affected. However, the consequences, which have disproportionately touched the most disadvantaged, cannot be said. Education is no exception.

Earlier researchers have also mentioned a lack of access (Francis & Pegg, 2020; Obiakor & Adeniran, 2020). This could be due to a lack of money, low competency on the side of students and teachers, insufficient resources, and access to educational materials as learning became strictly online (Habibu, Abdullah-Al-Mamun, & Clement, 2012), particularly in developing nations like Nigeria.

The majority of COVID-19 patients appear to be in a good mood. According to data from China's National Health Commission (2020) and recent research (Guan et al, 2019 and Yang et al, 2019), the prevalence of severe cases among all COVID-19 patients in China was roughly 15% to 25%. The majority of patients had a fever and a dry cough, with some also having shortness of breath, tiredness, and other uncommon symptoms such muscle discomfort, disorientation, headache, sore throat, and others (Chen et al, 2020). The most prevalent patterns seen on chest computed tomography (CT) were ground-glass opacity and bilateral patchy shadows (Guan et al, 2020). Around one-fourth to one-third of hospitalized patients in Wuhan suffered major problems such acute respiratory distress syndrome, arrhythmia, and shock, and were moved to the intensive care unit (Chen et al 2020). The presence of underlying co-morbidities (e.g., diabetes, hypertension, and cardiovascular disease) was related with a worse outcome in general (Wang et al, 2020).

Effect of COVID-19 pandemic on Student's Academic Performance

Ground-glass opacity and bilateral patchy shadows were the most common patterns found on chest computed tomography (CT) (Guan et al, 2020). A quarter to a third of hospitalized patients in Wuhan had serious complications such acute respiratory distress syndrome, arrhythmia, or shock, and were transferred to the intensive care unit (Chen et al 2020). The prevalence of underlying co-morbidities (such as diabetes, hypertension, or cardiovascular disease) was linked to a poorer overall result (Wang et al, 2020).

Poor academic achievement

Since e-learning has been evaluated as a very bad form of teaching for Nigerian primary and secondary school students (Oboh, Igihiyisi, & Oboh, 2020), it is likely that most pupils will not use it effectively. Those who use online learning, on the other hand, rarely believe that they have acquired everything they need to know because the continuous assessment is ineffective (Oboh, Igihiyisi & Oboh, 2020). This issue has brought to light a number of flaws and inequities in our educational institutions, ranging from the lack of access to broadband and computers essential for online learning to the lack of supportive environments required for concentration.

Closure of Schools

The shutdown of schools during the COVID-19 pandemic, according to Burzynska and Contreras (2020), will widen the gender gap by allowing girls to be abused and neglected. Furthermore, Francis and Pegg (2020) stated that school closures have resulted in the halting of school nutritional programs in some Nigerian communities. COVID-19, according to Van Lancker and Parolin (2020), is a social problem that has resulted in school closures, a condition that affects the education of nearly 80% of school-age children internationally.

Inadequate technology for E-learning

Despite the government's praise for the use of technology such as phones, television, and radio for online learning during the school closure period, the participants in this study highlighted the lack of or unavailability of supporting technologies for learners in primary and secondary schools and their parents. Furthermore, the majority of households with school-aged children cannot afford this technology.

Uneven access to education opportunities

During COVID-19, poor/unequal access to educational opportunities was also acknowledged as a serious impediment to education and learning. Education was unavailable owing to a lack of infrastructure, including technical devices, electricity, and network troubles, which are all too common in Nigeria.

During the epidemic, the majority of pupils was poorly connected or had limited access to learning opportunities, according to these findings. Students from rich households who are encouraged to learn by their parents may be able to find alternate learning opportunities through closed school doors. When schools closed, students from low-income households were disproportionately affected.

METHODOLOGY

This study was an evaluation of available materials on COVID-19 on academic performance of secondary schools in Nigeria. Journals, policy documents, conventions, and statutes were the primary sources used in the document search.

The current investigation was conducted as a descriptive desk review. The review is supported mainly by accessing some leading journals, and some research papers by some scholars around the world. The purpose of the desk study was to identify the extent the recent pandemic affected the academic performance in Nigerian secondary schools. The descriptive desk review is an important part of the evaluation; it includes analyzing literature.

Conclusion

The government has taken a variety of initiatives to reduce the risk of disease spreading. These measures include travel restrictions, forced travel quarantines, social distance, public gathering bans, school and university closures, business closures, self-isolation, ordering people to work from home, curfews, and lockdown.

These policies have a negative influence on the global economy, education, health, and tourism. The majority of Nigerian schools have just completed their second continuous assessment test, and due to the spread of COVID-19, they would be unable to write their second term examination before the obligatory closure.

This global pandemic, which has forced everyone into a state of unprepared self-isolation, has had a bad impact on students' work and exam preparation. In Nigeria, there is currently no well-developed e-learning infrastructure for schools that can alleviate the detrimental impacts of lost learning hours.

The study did, however, uncover four important effects of the COVID-19 epidemic on student academic achievement in Nigerian secondary schools:

Poor academic performance: Since e-learning for secondary school students in Nigeria has been rated as a very poor method of teaching, and those who use online learning rarely agree that they have learned everything they need to know because the assessment has not been effective, those who use online learning rarely agree that they have learned everything they need to know.

School Disbandment: COVID-19 is a societal catastrophe that has resulted in school closures, affecting the education of about 80% of school-age children around the world. Because of the school closures caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the gender gap will worsen due to girl-child maltreatment and neglect. Furthermore, in some Nigerian communities, school closures have resulted in the suspension of school nutrition programs.

Inadequate E-learning technology: Despite the government's praise for the use of technology such as phones, television, and radio for online learning during the school shutdown period, the participants in this study highlighted the absence of or unavailability of enabling technologies for secondary school students and their parents. Furthermore, the majority of households with school-aged children cannot afford these technologies.

Inequitable educational opportunities: During COVID-19, poor access to educational opportunities was also noted as a serious impediment to education and learning. Education was unavailable owing to a lack of infrastructure, including technical devices, electricity, and network troubles, which are all too common in Nigeria.

During the epidemic, the majority of pupils was poorly connected or had limited access to learning opportunities, according to these findings. Students from rich households who are encouraged to learn by their parents may be able to find alternate learning opportunities through closed school doors. When schools closed, students from low-income households were disproportionately affected.

Recommendations:

The study made the following recommendations based on the above findings and recommendations.

- i. In next year's budget, the government should enhance secondary school funds to help them to manage all of the harms created by the closure of COVID-19.
- ii. The government should begin integrating all secondary schools into online education as soon as possible.
- iii. The Nigerian government should order all secondary schools to expand physical teaching, undertake online teaching, and work together to solve any new difficulties that develop during the teaching process.
- iv. To avoid learning and teaching disruptions, the state's government and other educational stakeholders should provide sufficient capital, learning materials, and human resources to secondary schools in the state. These resources should be distributed to schools in a timely manner, based on each school's student population.

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