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The Influence of COVID-19 on Nigeria's Education System; Spot-Light on Secondary Schools in Enugu State, Nigeria.

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Abstract

The world is experiencing one of its hard times; the outbreak of Covid-19 which has become a pandemic. It has also halted economies leading to hardship and other negative influences. This paper examined the influence covid-19 on Nigeria education with particular reference to secondary education in Enugu state Nigeria. The study was guided by three research questions. It

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adopted the descriptive survey design. Area of study for this research is Enugu state. Population of the study therefore comprises a total of 10826 education staff at the Post Primary school service commission in the six education zones in Enugu state as at May, 2019. A multi stage approach was adopted to arrive at the sample for the study. Firstly, the researcher identified with the six education zones in the state. From the six zones, the researcher through simple random sampling, selected 15 education staff, making a total of 180 education staff selected as sample which later reduced to 152 after retrieving the questionnaire. The instrument used for the study was an 18 item questionnaire drafted by the researchers. The questionnaire has sections A, B and C. section A has 5 items which took a look at the prevalence of covid-19 in Enugu State. Section B has 6 items which focused on influence of covid-19 on secondary education in Enugu State while section C has 7 items and focused on solutions to curb the negative influences caused by covid-19 on secondary education in Enugu state. The instrument was validated by three experts. The reliability coefficient was determined using Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient technique which gave coefficient of 0.76, 0.71, and 0.75 for the three clusters amounting to a total of 0.74. Simple percentage and arithmetic mean were used as tools for analysis while t-test was used to test the hypothesis at .05 level of significance. Findings reveal that there is prevalence of covid-19 in Enugu state. This has impacted negatively on secondary education in Enugu State which includes: disruption of secondary school academic calendar, halting of examinations and disruption of learning and halting of physical education. The research suggested that fumigation of schools, provision of more classrooms to depopulate overpopulated classrooms, erection of health centers in schools to manage cases of covid-19 as well as provision of hand sanitizers should be implemented in schools as remedies. The research further recommended

among all that government should step up action in the provision of palliatives for schools to help curb the menace of covid-19 among secondary schools that our students may be safe.

Introduction

The evolution of education in Nigeria has passed through phases of innovation to this present time. Historically, from the ancient societies to modern nations, education as a tool has proven most potent in the struggle for survival, growth and development. Akinfolarin (2017) affirmed that education is a transformational tool in every society and should be held in high esteem. It is the acquisition of knowledge and skills required to sustain individual, groups, and organizational advancement at all levels and spheres of life. In Nigeria, Education is compartmentalized into primary, secondary and tertiary levels. The primary level often called primary education is meant for children between age 6-11 years. Ahmet and Izzet (2013) defined primary school education as an educational institution where children receive their education prior to their entry into secondary school. While primary education is formally recognized as the first level, secondary education is the second level. Chinelo (2011) asserted that education received at the primary level was insufficient for a child to acquire permanent literacy, communicative and numeracy skills expected of him/her at the end of the training, hence the need for secondary education. Tertiary education follows after the completion of secondary education. Currently, the outbreak of the covid-19 has really dealt with education systems in the world, Nigeria inclusive.

Little wonder people are scared about this pandemic because it has also

crippled economies. Wang, Shi, Jiang, Zhang, Wang and Tong (2013) report that coronavirus disease 19 (COVID-19) is a highly transmittable and pathogenic viral infection caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). Muhammad, Suliman, Abeer and Nadia (2020) reported that Coronaviruses belong to the Coronaviridae family in the Nidovirales order. Corona represented crown-like spikes on the outer surface of the virus; thus, it was named as a coronavirus. UNICEF(2020) defined covid-19 as a disease caused by a new strain of corona virus. 'CO' stands for Corona, 'VI' for Virus, and 'D' for disease. Formerly, this disease was referred to as '2019' novel coronavirus or '2019-nCov.' The Covid-19 virus is a new virus linked to the same family of viruses as Severe Acute respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and some types of common cold.

Coronaviruses are minute in size (65–125 nm in diameter) and contain a single-stranded RNA as a nucleic material, size ranging from 26 to 32kbs in length. The subgroups of coronaviruses family are alpha (a), beta (b), gamma (C) and delta (d) coronavirus. The severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus (SARS-CoV), H5N1 influenza A, H1N1 2009 and Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV) cause acute lung injury (ALI) and acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS) which leads to pulmonary failure and result in fatality. These viruses were thought to infect only animals until the world witnessed a severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) outbreak caused by SARS-CoV, 2002 in Guangdong, China (Zhong, Zheng, Li, Poon, Xie and Chan, 2003). Only a decade later, another pathogenic coronavirus, known as Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV) caused an endemic in Middle Eastern

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countries (Wang, Shi, Jiang, Zhang, Wang and Tong, 2013).

Cui, Li and Shi (2019), Lai, Shih, Ko, Tang and Hsueh (2020) and World Health Orhanization (2020) reported recently that at the end of 2019, Wuhan an emerging business hub of China experienced an outbreak of a novel coronavirus that killed more than eighteen hundred and infected over seventy thousand individuals within the first fifty days of the epidemic. This virus was reported to be a member of the group of coronaviruses. The novel virus was named as Wuhan coronavirus or 2019 novel coronavirus (2019-nCov) by the Chinese researchers. The International Committee on Taxonomy of Viruses (ICTV) named the virus as SARS-CoV-2 and the disease as COVID-19.

Different authorities had aired their views about the influence of covid-19 on education. Obiakor and Adeniran (2020) reports that many Nigerian students had missed learning, lost access to vital school provided services such as free school meal and health services and that most students are now left behind. UNESCO (2020) has it that covid-19 has led to the closure of schools across the world, resulting to over one billion students staying at home. Niyi (2020) reveal that corona virus stopped all academic preparations in schools and restricted academic activities of senior secondary school students who should have taken their exams. Though Aiyedun (2020) opined that closure of schools colleges and universities by the federal and state government was an urgent need of the current situation which prevailed in most states in Nigeria, lamented that the shutdown of schools interrupted this academic year. Schools concentrated on scheduling their final exams before lockdown commencement. Their schedules had to be canceled or rescheduled exam dates and other school activities leading to backward

of the system and crippling of active learning among students.

Based on the above scholarly observations, there are indications that the current pandemic, Covid-19 has a great influence in Nigeria education. The researcher is yet unsatisfied because she is yet to ascertain the influence of Covid-19 on secondary education especially as it concerns Enugu state. The researcher is also unsatisfied because she has not come across any scholarly article that addressed this issue as it concerns secondary school education in Enugu state. For this single reason, the researcher felt the need to embark on a study to examine the influence of Covid-19 on Nigeria education with particular reference to secondary schools in Enugu state.

Statement of the Problem

The prevalence of covid-19 across the globe has left economies in total shutdown. Transportation, education, trade etc partially came to a halt while the health and medical sector staggering to contend the unfortunate outbreak. It's a truism that various media houses have been used to make learning available for students, one doubt the possibility of all students learning from this medium since certain factors such as epileptic power supply, absent of radio in some homes, home errands, and the radio approach to education which some consider teacher centered may benefit students. Be that as it may, the fact remains that, corona virus (covid-19) has become a pandemic and has affected world economies. The researcher observed that sectors of the economy were shut down including education. The problem the researcher is interested now is to examine the influence covid-19 has on secondary education as it concerns Enugu state as a whole. This problem is what this research is concerned with.

Research questions

The following research questions guided the study

1. What is the prevalence of covid-19 in Enugu state?
2. What are the influences of covid-19 on secondary education in Enugu state?
3. What are the solutions to curb the influence of Covid-19 among secondary schools in Enugu State

Research hypothesis

There is no significant difference in the mean and percentile scores of male and female staff of PPSSC on the influence of covid-19 on secondary education in Enugu state.

Research Method

The study was guided by three research questions. It adopted the descriptive survey design. Area of study for this research is Enugu state. Population of the study therefore comprises a total of 10826 education staff at the Post Primary school service commission in the six education zones in Enugu state as at May, 2019. Since secondary schools were not on session, the researcher deemed it fit to use staff of Post Primary School Management Board, Enugu state for this study. The multi stage approach was used to arrive at the sample for the study. Firstly, the researcher identified with the six education zones in the state. From the six zones, the researcher through simple random sampling technique selected 15 staff of Post Primary School Management Board from each of the 6 education zones, making a total of 90 respondents. The instrument used for the study was an 18 item questionnaire drafted by the researcher. The questionnaire has sections A B and C. section A has 5 items which took a look at the prevalence of covid-19 in Enugu State. Section B has 6 items which focused on influence of covid-19 on secondary education in Enugu State while section C has 7 items and focused on solutions to curb the negative influences caused by covid-

19 on secondary education in Enugu state. The instrument was validated by three experts. The reliability coefficient were determined using Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient technique which gave coefficient of 0.76, 0.71, and 0.75 for the three clusters amounting to a total of 0.74. Simple percentage and arithmetic mean were used as tools for data analysis while t-test was used to test the hypothesis at .05 level of significance.

Presentation of Results

Research Question One: What is the prevalence of covid-19 in Enugu state?

Table One: Prevalence of Covid-19 in Enugu state

S/N	ITEMS	NO	YES	%(YES)	%(NO)	TOTAL
1	Covid-19 is in Enugu State	62	28	68	32	100
2	Enugu state government has recorded cases of covid-19	58	32	64	26	100
3	You have seen a covid-19 patience on media	70	20	77	13	100
4	Your ministry of health has confirmed	85	15	94	6	100

	that covid-19 is real in Enugu State					
5	Your state has recorded deaths of some patients with Covid-19	70	20	77	13	100

Analysis in table 1 indicates that the respondents believe on the prevalence of covid-19 in Enugu state. But did Enugu state has not recorded any death.

Research Question Two: What are the influences of covid-19 on secondary education in Enugu state?

Table two: Influences of Covid-19 on secondary education

S/N	ITEMS	N	$\bar{X}$	Decision
1	Secondary schools are no more in session as a result of covid-19	90	2.73	Accept
2	The fear of covid-19 is the reason secondary schools was shutdown	90	2.98	Reject
3	Examination in secondary schools were halted due to covid-19 pandemic	90	3.21	Reject
4	Physical education where denied of students due to fear of contracting covid-	90	3.01	Accept

	19			
5	Covid-19 results to students paying less attention to books at home	90	3.14	Accept
6	The calendar of secondary education has been shattered due to menace of covid-19	90	2.94	Accept

Analysis in table 2 above shows that the mean scores from item 1-6 were 2.73, 2.98, 3.21, 3.01, 3.14 and 2.94 respectively.

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Research Question Three: What are the solutions to curb the influence of Covid-19 among secondary schools in Enugu State.

Table three: Solutions to curb the influence of Covif-19 among secondary schools

S/N	ITEMS	N	$\bar{X}$	Decision
1	State government should fumigate schools to make learning environment safe for return of students	90	3.04	Accept
2	More classrooms should be erected to depopulate overpopulated classrooms	90	2.58	Accept
3	State government should provide schools with hand sanitizers	90	3.10	Accept
4	Government should erect health centers in secondary schools to cater for covid-19 incidents	90	2.90	Accept
5	Teachers should be rained on the management of Covid-19 facilities	90	3.00	Accept
6	Students should be split into morning, afternoon and evening cluster	90	2.16	Reject
7	Teachers should serve as health officials to	90	1.09	Reject

educate students on covid-19 precautionary measures

Analysis in table 3 above shows that the mean scores from item 1-7 were 3.04, 2.58, 3.10, 2.90, 3.00, 2.16 and 1.09 respectively. Items 6 and 7 were rejected because their mean score is below 2.50. Other items were accepted because their mean score were 2.50 and above.**Testing of Hypothesis**

There is no significant influence of covid-19 on secondary education in Enugu state.

Table 4

Respondents	**N**	**SD**	**X**	**t-cal**	**Df**	**α**	**T-crit**	**Decision**
Female	64	0.62	0.63	1.25	33	.05	2.034	Accept Null Hypothesis
Male	26	0.47	0.39					

On the table 3 above, t-cal (1.25) is less than t-crit (2.034). The null hypothesis is accepted.

Discussion

Table one sought the prevalence of covid-19 in Enugu state. Findings reveal that covid-19 is in Enugu State and that cases of

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covid-19 have been recorded in the state. The respondents have seen covid-19 patience on media and the state ministry of health has confirmed the advent of covid-19 in the state. Abdulazeez (2020) in his findings discovered the prevalence of covid-19 not only in all entities in Nigeria, but in Africa. This agrees with World Health Organization and UNICEF (2020) which admitted that corona virus has become a pandemic, meaning that almost every country is experiencing it. Table two sought the influence of covid-19 in secondary education in Enugu State. Findings show that with the outcome of covid-19, secondary education in the state are not in session, secondary schools are shutdown, examination and physical education halted, students now pay less attention on books as calendar of secondary education in the state shattered all due to covid-19. Related to these findings is UNESCO (2020) that over one billion students have been asked to stay at home due to the corona virus pandemic. Commenting on academic programs of school, Niyi (2020) lamented the shutdown of schools which has resulted to disruption of academic activities in schools leading to delays and postponement of examinations, indefinitely. This situation he argued had forced students to remain at home thus becoming less academic. In the findings of Obiakor and Adeniran (2020), more students have been left behind especially those whose parents were not able to provide Ict facilities for online learning.

Analysis in table three sought solutions to curb the influence of covid-19. Findings suggest that the state government fumigate schools, erect more classrooms, provide hand sanitizers, erect health centers and trained teachers on the management of covid-19 facilities.

Abdulazeez (2020) emphasized on constant hand washing to prevent further spread and

social distancing method. Related to Abdulazeez's view is UNICEF(2020) suggested cleaning and disinfecting school buildings, classrooms and especially water and sanitation facilities at least once a day. Particular surfaces that are touched by many people (railings, lunch tables, sports equipment, door and window handles, toys, teaching and learning aids etc) UNICEF also suggested the implementation of social distancing as measures to manage pandemic.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the researchers recommended the following;

1. That both federal and state government should brace up in providing palliatives to secondary schools to help manage this pandemic.
2. Strict measures should be taken by schools to ensure that classrooms are not overcrowded as social distancing must be applied for the safety of school children
3. Teachers should be re-trained on the management of covid-19 in secondary schools.
4. State ministry of education should consult stakeholders in education o discuss best practices to be adopted that students may return back to school for their exams.
5. Online education should be enshrined in secondary school education curriculum to make students and teachers adapt in this form of learning.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study it was concluded that COVID-19 pandemic exerts a lot of negative influence on secondary education in Enugu State and will continue to do so unless and until the recommendations of this study are implemented.

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