
**Assessment of the Impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic on Educational Administration in
Nigeria: An assessment of Tertiary Institutions in Akwa Ibom State**

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ABSTRACT

This paper examined how the COVID-19 pandemic impacted the educational administration in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. The pandemic has affected higher educational administration throughout the world in the areas of teaching, learning, research and the provision of administrative support services. This paper used survey data and in-depth interview transcripts to describe how selections of administrative and professional staff from Akwa Ibom Tertiary Institutions are affected. The survey targeted members of the administrative and professional which is made up of non-teaching Senior Members of the public institutions. However, it was discovered that the work of school's administrators in Akwa Ibom State was mainly office based with little or no virtual working schedules or platforms. It was therefore, recommended that there is a drastic shift from office-based working to blended-working schedules among educational administrations in the post- COVID-19 era.

KEYWORDS: CODVID-19, pandemic, Educational administration, Tertiary Institutions, Impact, Akwa Ibom State

Introduction

Higher Education refers to the Post-Secondary Section of the National education system, which is given of Universities, Polytechnics and Colleges of Technology including courses as are given by the Colleges of Education, Advanced Teachers Training colleges, Correspondence Colleges and such institutions as may be allied to them (FRN, 2004). According to Adeyemi, (2001), Higher Education refers to a system which embraces much of the country's research capacity and reproduces majority of the skilled professionals that are required in the labour market. Views on higher education thus, "Higher Education is taken to embody all organized learning and training activities at the tertiary level". This includes conventional universities, those with the conventional arts, humanities and science faculties as well as specialized universities like institutions specializing in agriculture, engineering, science, and technology. It also includes post-secondary institutions such as the polytechnics and colleges of education.

Institution of the military, the police, nurses, agriculture, forestry, veterinary workers, catering services, tourism, secretarial services and other possible combinations of programmes. Even this wide spectrum does not exhaust the possibilities of forms of Higher Education..... such as non formal higher education. Indeed, any situations in which mature persons are organized for building up their knowledge and skills, is to apply knowledge to the analysis and search for solutions to life problems.” The objectives of Higher education in Nigeria include the following:

- the acquisition, development and inculcation of the proper value orientation for the survival of the individual and societies;
- the development of the intellectual capacities of individuals to understand and appreciate environment;
- the acquisition of both physical and intellectual skills which will enable individuals to develop into useful members of the community;
- the acquisition of an overview of the local and external environments (FRN, 2004).

The National Policy on Education stated that higher educational institutions should pursue these goals through: Teaching, Research, the dissemination of existing and new information, the pursuit of service to the community; and by being a store- house knowledge (FRN, 2004). The Nigeria higher education system comprised of universities, polytechnics, and colleges offering programmes in teacher education and agriculture. Higher education is a community of scholars, free to pursue knowledge without undue interference from anywhere.

There is need to make research the centre of institutional activity, taking into account the social; cultural; and political problems that Nigeria now faces. Financial and administrative limitations and lack of resources; intellectual stimulation; and incentives demand that we find new strategies to advance this ambition. There is a diminishing scope of mentoring junior researchers by seasoned and senior researchers due to brain drain. Roseline (2012) said that universities support knowledge driven economic growth strategies and poverty reduction by generating new knowledge, building the capacity to access existing stores of global knowledge and to adapt that knowledge to local use. Technical innovations and their diffusion lead to higher productivity and most innovations are products of basic and applied research undertaken in the universities. Progress in agriculture, health, environmental sectors, science, engineering and technology is heavily dependent on the application of such innovations. According to Roseline, (2012) the federal government makes little investments in research and development, particularly in high priority areas such as agriculture, natural sciences, applied sciences, health sciences, engineering and technology. The inadequate funding has affected the activities in science laboratories, which lack most basic facilities, at the University of Benin (Osagie, 2012).

Nigerian higher institutions have not been doing well in research. Research programme of higher institutions have not being given maximum attention and the programme have not be stable due to many internal crises. The Federal Ministry of Education in Nigeria has directed all educational institutions in Nigeria to shut down and allow students to go home as cases of reported COVID-19 increased to 13. The Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Education, Sonny Echono, told reporters on 19 March that the directive was part of the country’s overall strategy to contain the spread of the virus. Nigeria joins the growing list of countries in Africa which have closed schools and universities. The directives include all the higher institutions in Nigeria and in Abuja the capital of Nigeria. Many higher

institutions in Abuja since the directive have shut down all academic activities in their various institutions. The Covid-19 pandemic schools close down will definitely affects all the schools programme especially the research programmes. This paper is aim to examines the impact of Covid-19 pandemic school close down on research programme of higher institutions in Abuja, Nigeria.

Literature Review

According to World Health Organization (WHO, 2020), corona viruses are a family of viruses that cause illnesses ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) and the Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS). These viruses were originally transmitted from animals to people. SARS, for instance, was transmitted from civet cats to humans while MERS moved to humans from a type of camel. Several known corona viruses are circulating in animals that have not yet infected humans. The name corona virus comes from the Latin word corona, meaning crown or halo. Under an electron microscope, they look like it is surrounded by a solar corona. The novel corona virus, identified by Chinese authorities on January 7 and since named SARS-CoV-2, is a new strain that had not been previously identified in humans. Little is known about it, although human-to-human transmission has been confirmed (Ajazeera, 2020).

According to WHO, signs of infection include fever, cough, shortness of breath and breathing difficulties. In more severe cases, it can lead to pneumonia, multiple organ failure and even death. Current estimates of the incubation period - the time between infection and the onset of symptoms - range from one to 14 days. Most infected people show symptoms within five to six days. However, infected patients can also be asymptomatic, meaning they do not display any symptoms despite having the virus in their systems (Ajazeera, 2020).

On 27 February, Nigeria confirmed its first case in Lagos State, an Italian citizen who works in Nigeria had returned on 25 February from Milan, Italy through the Murtala Muhammed International Airport, fell ill on 26 February and was transferred to Lagos State Biosecurity Facilities for isolation and testing. Presently, Nigeria is having 199 Covid-19 cases, two deaths and twenty recovered. In order to contain the spread of the virus in Nigeria, the Federal Ministry of Education has directed all educational institutions in Nigeria to shut down and allow students to go home as cases of reported COVID-19 increased to 13 (Wikipedia, 2020).

From February 27 till May 10, the virus has infected over 434 people, spread to 34 out of 36 states of federation. Over 600 have recovered from the Covid-19 and the fatalities rate is 95. Submits that eighty-three thousand to 190 000 people in Africa could die of COVID-19 and 29 million to 44 million could get infected in the first year of the pandemic if containment measures fail, a new study by the World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Office for Africa finds (WHO, 2020). The research, which is based on prediction modelling, looks at 47 countries in the WHO African Region with a total population of one billion. The new estimates are based on modifying the risk of transmission and disease severity by variables specific to each country in order to adjust for the unique nature of the region. The model predicts the observed slower rate of transmission, lower age of people with severe disease and lower mortality rates compared to what is seen in the most affected countries in the rest of the world. This is largely driven by social and environmental factors slowing the transmission, and a younger population that has benefitted from the control of communicable diseases such as HIV and tuberculosis to reduce possible vulnerabilities. The lower rate of transmission, however, suggests a more prolonged outbreak over a few years, according to

the study which also revealed that smaller African countries alongside Algeria, South Africa and Cameroon were at a high risk if containment measures are not prioritized.

The outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic all over the world has disturbed the political, social, economic, religious and financial structures of the whole world. World's topmost economies such as the US, China, UK, Germany, France, Italy, Japan and many others are at the verge of collapse (Irfan, 2020). Besides, Stock Markets around the world have been pounded and oil prices have fallen off a cliff. In just a week 3.3 million Americans applied for unemployment and a week later another 6.6 million people started searching for jobs. Also, many experts on economic and financial matters have warned about the worsening condition of global economic and financial structure. Kristalina Georgieva, Managing Director of International Monetary Fund (IMF), explained that "a recession at least as bad as during the Global Financial Crisis or worse". Moreover, Covid-19 is harming the global economy because the world has been experiencing the most difficult economic situation since World War-II.

Observes that the COVID-19 pandemic and the measures put in place to contain its diffusion are taking a heavy toll on the tourism sector (Pamela, 2020). According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), COVID-19 pandemic will result in a contraction of the tourism sector by 20% to 30% in 2020. Observes that "No matter where in the world or in which sector, the crisis is having a dramatic impact on the world's workforce", ILO said in its latest report. "Policy responses need to focus on providing immediate relief to workers and enterprises in order to protect livelihoods and economically viable businesses, particularly in hard-hit sectors and developing countries (ILO, 2020)." An additional concern is the fact that in low and middle-income countries, the worst-hit industries and services have a high proportion of low-wage workers in informal employment, with limited access to health services and State welfare safety nets. "Without appropriate policy measures, workers face a high risk of falling into poverty and will experience greater challenges in regaining their livelihoods during the recovery period", ILO said in its latest report on the situation.

A study was conducted by Ogunode, (2020) to find out the effects of COVID-19 Schools Close Down on the Senior Secondary School Academic Programme. A survey research design was adopted for this study. This research work was carried out in Abaji area council of FCT, Abuja, Nigeria. There are a total number of eight (8) secondary schools in the area of study. Out of the entire teacher population in the area council, (80) teachers were sampled because of the school close down problem. A structured questionnaire, titled the 'Effects of COVID-19 Schools Close Down on the Senior Secondary School Academic Programme Questionnaire' (ECSCDSSAPQ) was used for obtaining information for the study. Simple random techniques were used to select the sample size. The reliability of the instrument was determined through the test re-test method. Data collected were analyzed using simple percentage. Result collected revealed that 80 (100%) of the respondents strongly agreed that COVID-19 Schools close down would affect the academic programme of Senior Secondary Schools; 80 (100%) of the respondents strongly agreed that COVID-19 schools close down has led to suspension of internal and external examinations reduction in investment on education; 80 (100%) of the respondents strongly agreed that COVID-19 schools close down has led to suspension of teaching and learning in Schools; 80 (100%) of the respondents strongly agreed that COVID-19 schools close down has affected the academic calendar of senior secondary schools and 80 (100%) of the respondents strongly agreed that COVID-19 schools close down has led to the suspension of all extra-curriculum activities in Senior Secondary Schools. The paper recommends that the Minister of education should direct all

Senior Secondary Schools administrators to come up with strategies to cover up the one month teaching and learning gap created as result of the COVID-19 schools closed down.

Ogunode, Abigeal, & Lydia (2020) wrote an article in which they identified the following as the impact of COVID-19 on higher institutions: reduction of international education, disruption of academic calendar of higher institutions, cancellation of local and international conferences, creating teaching and learning gap, loss of man power in the educational institutions, and cut in budget of higher education. The article suggests that the government should take the following measure; increase the funding of higher institutions to enable the institutions manages the damages caused by the COVID-19 pandemic school close down. According to UNESCO (2020), 9.8 million African students are experiencing disruption in their studies due to the closure of higher education institutions. The danger of contamination has triggered institutions to move their courses online. However, going online is not that simple on a continent where only 24% of the population has access to the internet, and poor connectivity, exorbitant costs and frequent power interruptions are serious challenges.

Purpose of the Study

From the above reviewed literature, it is clear that researchers have not actually look at the impact of Covid-19 pandemic on educational administration of tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibom State. Based on this research gap, this paper seeks to find out the impact of Covid-19 pandemic on the educational administration in Nigeria: An assessment of tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibom State.

Research Questions

The following research questions were developed for the study.

1. Does Covid-19 pandemic have impact on educational Administration of Tertiary Institutions in Akwa Ibom State?
2. Would Covid-19 pandemic affect the flow of educational grants into higher institutions in Akwa Ibom State?
3. Would Covid-19 pandemic affect government funding in tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibom State?
4. What are the educational administrators of tertiary institutions doing to contain the spread of Covid-19 Akwa Ibom State?

Methodology

This study examined the impact of Covid-19 pandemic school close down on the educational administrations of tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. The study used descriptive survey design. The population of the study constituted all the tertiary higher institutions in Abuja. Out of this, 120 researchers within the four sampled institutions. Random sampling technique was used select the respondents. The reason for the choice of the researchers is that they handle the research programme in the institutions. Four research questions were developed for the study. The instrument for data collection was a 6 item questionnaire adapted by the researchers titled 'Impact of Covid-19 Pandemic on the Educational Administrations of Tertiary Institutions Questionnaire (ICPEATIQ)'. The instrument was validated by two researchers. Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient was adopted to determine the internal consistency of the questionnaires items. The reliability

coefficient collected was 0.74 which shows that the questionnaire is reliable for the study. The questionnaire was sent to the researchers through their emails. Their email addresses were collected through their various department. The respondents were contented and they accepted to participant in the research as respondents. The return of answered questionnaire was 100% sent through their email to the researchers. The data collected was analyzed using simple percentage.

Data Analysis and Discussion

Research Question 1: Does Covid-19 pandemic have impact on educational Administration of Tertiary Institutions in Akwa Ibom State?

Table 1: Covid-19 pandemic have impact on educational Administration of Tertiary Institutions in Akwa Ibom State

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	78	61
Agree	42	39
Disagree	0	0
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Total	120	100

To find out if Covid-19 pandemic has impact on educational administration of tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibom State. Result collected from research question one revealed that 61% of the respondents strongly agree that Covid-19 pandemic has impact on educational administration of tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibom State while 39% agreed that Covid-19 pandemic has impact on educational administration of tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibom State. This means that 100% of the respondents agreed that Covid-19 pandemic have impact on educational administration of tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibom State.

Research Question 2: Would Covid-19 pandemic affect the flow of educational grants into tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibom State?

Table 1: Covid-19 pandemic affect the flow of educational grants into tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibom State

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	78	61
Agree	42	39
Disagree	0	0
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Total	120	100

To find out if Covid-19 pandemic will affects the flow educational grants into higher institutions in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. Result collected from research question one revealed that 61% of the respondents strongly agree that Covid-19 pandemic will affects the flow of educational grants into higher institutions in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria while 39% agreed that Covid-19 pandemic will affects the flow of educational grants into higher institutions in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. This means that 100% of the respondents agreed that Covid-19 pandemic will affects the flow of educational grants into higher institutions in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

Research Question 3: Would Covid-19 pandemic affects government funding of tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibom State?

Table 3: Covid-19 pandemic will affect government funding of tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibom State

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	73	68.8
Agree	22	18.33
Disagree	10	8.88
Strongly Disagree	5	4.16
Total	120	100

To find out if Covid-19 pandemic affects government funding of tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibom State. Research from research question three revealed that 68.8% ticked strongly agreed, 18.33% ticked agreed while 8.88% ticked disagreed and 4.16% ticked strongly disagreed that Covid-19 pandemic will affects government funding of tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibom State. The result showed that majorities of the respondents agreed that Covid-19 pandemic will affects government funding of tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibom State.

Research Question 4: What are the educational administrators of tertiary institutions doing to contain the spread of Covid-19 Akwa Ibom State?

Table 4: What are the educational administrators of tertiary institutions doing to contain the spread of Covid-19 Akwa Ibom State

S/N	Educational administrators are doing the following to contain the spread of Covid-19 in Akwa Ibom State	SA	%	SD	%	TOTAL
1	Public awareness to contain the spread of Covid-19	120	100	-	-	120
2	Collaborating with other institutions on the research for Covid-19 vaccine	120	100	-	-	120
3	Provision of facemask	83	69.17	37	30.83	120

The research also wants to know what the educational administrators are doing to contain the spread of Covid-19 in Akwa Ibom State. The result collected showed that in research question four item one, 100% of the respondents agreed that educational administrators of tertiary institutions as part of their community services are create awareness to the general public on prevention of Covid-19. The item two of question four revealed that 100% of the respondents agreed that educational administrators of tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibom State are collaborating with other institutions on the research for Covid-19 vaccine while the item three on research question four showed that 69.16% of the respondents agreed that educational administrators are providing face masks for free distributions for the people to protect them from containing the Covid-19 in Akwa Ibom State while 30.83 of the respondents disagreed.

Discussion of the Results

To find out if Covid-19 pandemic has impact on educational administration of tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibom State. Result in table 1 showed that 100% of the respondents agreed that Covid-19 pandemic have impact on educational administration of tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibom State.

To find out if Covid-19 pandemic will affect the flow of educational grants into tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibom State. Table 2 revealed that 100% of the respondents agreed that Covid-19 pandemic will affect the flow of educational grants into tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibom State. This result is contrary to the submission of Francis (2020) who observes that despite the COVID-19 crisis, the European Union (EU) contribution to Africa is not likely to be affected. Even though every state's first response to the pandemic has been to close its borders, "we are completely interdependent – even if a country manages to defeat the virus, it will never be safe until it is defeated everywhere," he said. Palmowski said the EU has directed €3.25 billion (US\$3.5 billion) towards the coronavirus response in Africa. "This is not new money, because EU budgets are set a long time in advance and the EU has limited means to change budgets within budget periods. But it is accelerating funding, also in the hope of attracting further private investment." It said it will secure financial support to partner countries amounting to more than €15.6 billion from existing external action resources. "Together with our partners, we are making sure that the substantial EU funding already allocated to them is targeted to help them deal with the impact of the coronavirus pandemic," it said in a press.

To find out if Covid-19 pandemic affects government funding of tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibom State. Table three disclosed that 68.8% ticked strongly agreed, 18.88% ticked agreed while 8.33% ticked disagreed and 4.16% ticked strongly disagreed that Covid-19 pandemic will affect government funding of tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibom State. The result showed that majorities of the respondents agreed that Covid-19 pandemic will affect government funding of tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibom State. This result is in agreement with Fadokun (2000), who submits that the total amount expended on research annually by the federal government is approximately on average 0.02% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Opines that the inadequate funding for research limits the capacity of the universities to fully contribute to Nigeria's development and integrate themselves to the global knowledge networks Roseline (2012). The implication of this finding is that educational administrators of tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibom State do not yet possess adequate research capabilities and funding needed to make them active beneficiaries of global knowledge, generate, cull or adapt knowledge, innovations and problem solving.

To find out what educational administrators of tertiary institutions are doing to contain the spread of Covid-19. The result collected on this area showed that in research question four item one, 100% of the respondents agreed that educational administrators of tertiary institutions as part of their community services are enlightening the general public on prevention of Covid-19. The item two of question four revealed that 100% of the respondents agreed that tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibom State are collaborating with other institutions on the research for Covid-19 vaccine while the item three on research question four showed that 69.16% of the respondents agreed that tertiary institutions are producing face masks for free distributions for the people to protect them from contacting the Covid-19 in Akwa Ibom State while 30.83 ticked disagreed.

Conclusion

The purpose of this paper was to find out the impact of Covid-19 pandemic on the educational administration in Nigeria: An assessment of tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibom State. Specific objectives include:

- To find out if Covid-19 has impact on the educational administration of tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

- To find out if Covid-19 will affect the flow of educational grant into tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibom State, and to find out what the educational administrators of higher institutions are doing to contain the spread of Covid-19 in Akwa Ibom State.

From the result collected from the study, it can be established that Covid-19 pandemic have impact on educational administration of tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibom State and that Covid-19 pandemic will affects the flow of educational grants into tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibom State. The result also showed that Covid-19 pandemic will affects government funding of tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibom State, and that educational administrators as part of their community services are creating awareness to the general public on prevention of Covid-19. It was gathered that tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibom State are collaborating with other institutions on the research for Covid-19 vaccine while tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibom State are producing face masks for free distributions for the people to protect them from contacting the Covid-19 in Abuja.

Recommendations

Based on this finding, the paper hereby recommends that:

- The government should increase the funding of education in Akwa Ibom State and other higher institutions in the country.
- The international communities and international organizations should support and increase their educational grants in Nigeria tertiary institutions.
- The administrators of tertiary institutions should encourage their academic staff to carry out researches constantly especially on trending areas.
- Higher institutions across the globe should come together and collaborate to research on vaccine for Covid-19.

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