



EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT CRISIS UNDER THE POST-COVID-19 PANDEMIC REALITIES IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This research is a study of the situational realities Nigeria has been plunged into in the aftermath of the COVID-19 global pandemic which translate into educational management crisis, following the decline in the surge of the global pandemic. The study investigates the present situation of systemic academic declension caused by the ripple effect of the pandemic in the educational sector. It forelays the ground for a plethora of chain-reaction of endemic crisis of educational management witnessed under the post-COVID-19 pandemic realities in Nigeria. The cyclical crisis that began with the recent nationwide strike action indulged in by the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) together with the organized labour union (Nigerian Labour Congress) over the simultaneous increment in electricity tariff and fuel pump price by the Federal Government, culminated in the 2-week EndSARS protest by the Nigerian youths against police brutality and bad governance. The educational system of Nigeria with its chequered past has seemed to totter under the crushing weight of the post-pandemic lustreless outcome and harsh realities in the aftermath. The totality of the harsh outcome of the realities has been conspicuously expressed in the glaring adversities and hardship with which the economy crouches. Causal research or explanatory research design is applied to determine the causality (cause-and-effect relationships) which essentially observes variation in the variable assumed to cause the change in the other variable(s), and then measure the changes in that other variable(s). The Educational Management theory is used to lay foundation for the theoretical framework of analysis employed. The study bases its sources of data collection partly on specific secondary materials from the National Bureau of Statistics and general statistic (UN Executive Summary) on the area of research which is the Nigerian educational sector in entirety. Regression Analysis is the appropriate statistical analytical tool chosen for measurement, inference and interpretation of causal relationships between the independent variable of the Post-COVID-19 pandemic realities and the dependent variable of Educational Management in Nigeria. Results portray a significant causal relationship between the two variables of research which reflects that a change in the independent variable definitely causes a proportionate change in the dependent variable in turn. Findings reveal the need for a total systematic-overhaul and a more sincere,

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holistic approach towards revamping the educational system by the various levels of government, both at the Federal and State level, with intent towards changing their attitudes positively for the benefit of the educational sector and other sectors.

Keywords: Educational management, educational sector, post-COVID-19 pandemic, systemic crisis, Nigeria.

1.1 Introduction

The closure of the Nursery, Primary, Secondary Schools, Colleges, Polytechnics and Universities by the Federal and State government was for the urgent need of tackling the endemic disease situation prevalent all around the world and recorded in most States in Nigeria. Nigerian Government started taking preventive measures on COVID-19 just after World Health Organization globally announced the Corona Virus Disease as a pandemic in February, 2020. However, the shutdown of all schools in Nigeria during the surge of the pandemic and in the aftermath has its educational backwash still being felt in the academic system of Nigeria today. The six-month COVID-19 lockdown, in which the academic year of all schools in Nigeria was interrupted, has had a tremendous effect on the academic syllabus of schools and academic institutions in the country. At the beginning of the pandemic, many schools were caught up in the struggle to conduct their final exams before the lockdown imposed by the States and Federal Government Authorities ensued. The affected schools and academic institutions had no option than to cancel and postpone their examination dates with indefinite extension for fear of the spread of the virus. The blame could not have been attributed to anybody in particular. It is a worldwide phenomenon. Only constructive questions could be asked concerning the future of the Nigerian educational system, after going through the gamut of the whole pandemic experience. One of the questions has seemed to spur the answers with this research. To what extent is the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic global lockdown on the educational system of Nigeria? The answer triggers endless reactions. It is upon these reactions that the study is poised to critically assess the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on the Educational system of Nigeria.

1.2 Conceptual Review

The concepts reviewed in this study are the constructs that constitute the variables of the research topic. The review of these concepts enables a profound insight into the propensity of the preponderant future academic development of the educational system in Nigeria. It otherwise serves as a simple definition of terms of this study in the periphery. A detailed chronological trace of the origin of each of the concepts gradually follows the definitions in a succinct style. All follow below.

1.2.1 The Concept of COVID-19

COVID-19 is a topical concept all over the world. The Coronavirus Disease called COVID-19 is not endemic to Nigeria and Africa as a whole. It is a global pathogen that its origin and date could be traced to a certain wild animal species, in a meat market at Wuhan, China and in December 2019, respectively (Azzi-Huck & Shmis, 2020). It was the uncontrollable outbreak of this virus that set the earth in the path of destruction with multitudes of human life loss in a very short period of time. Some prominent historians, writers and human health observers have compared the disease outbreak to the die-out experienced years ago through such pandemic as Plague of Athens 430 BC – 426 BC, Plague of Justinian 541 AD – 750 AD, the black death period caused by the Bubonic plague of 1346 – 1353, the Great Plague of London between 1665 – 1666, the Third plague pandemic of 1855 – 1945, the Spanish flu of 1918 – 1920, the influenza pandemic of 1957 – 1958, Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) outbreak between 2002 – 2004 and the Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) 2013 – 2016. The effect of the outbreak of the recent Coronavirus has been considered to be far-reaching on the entire global economy and on the Nigerian oil-based economy in particular (Abubakar Sani, etal. 2020).

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Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is a pandemic that arose as a result of a novel severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). Although, the novel Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and the Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS) were known in 2002 and 2012 in respectively, both of them were viruses analogous to SARS-CoV-2. Nevertheless, SARS-CoV-2 has a higher range more the earlier information related to viruses and as a result the obscurity in the cure and management of COVID-19 (Zhong *et al.*, 2020). According to therapeutic diagnosis and findings, people infected with COVID-19 can show symptoms or no symptoms in the premature stages of the virus. This, according to them will depend on the each person's immune system. Some of the signs of the infection are usually dry cough, fever, tiredness, shortness of breath, headache and general body weakness caused by increase of supplementary pains in the body (Zhong *et al.*, 2020). The newness of SARS-CoV-2 and its obscure hereditary scenery added pep to the complexity in the management of COVID-19 pandemic and difficulty in the improvement of defensive vaccines across the globe. The uncontrollable complexity and the outbreak have gone further to affect different sectors of the global economy of which the educational management sector is among the adversely affected.

Moreover, the UIS recorded that even for those children in school, learning was far from guaranteed. Some 387 million or 56 percent of Primary School age children worldwide were estimated to lack basic reading skills. From the financing point of view, the challenge was already daunting before COVID-19 (UNESCO 2020b).

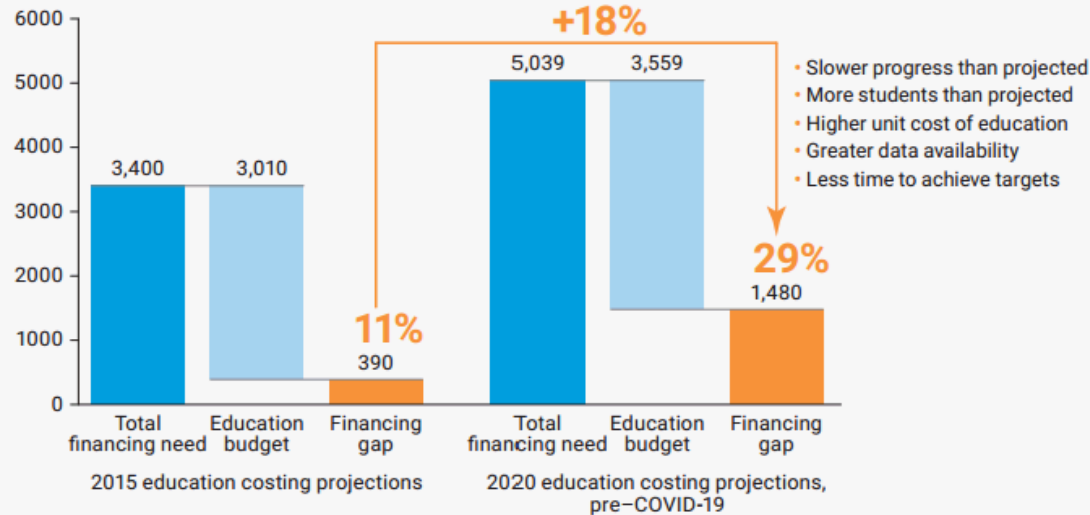
According to the UN Statistics, the early 2020 estimate of the financing gap to reach Sustainable Development Goal 4 – quality education – in low and lower-middle-income countries was staggering \$148 billion annually. It is therefore estimated that the COVID-19 crisis will increase this financing gap by up to one-third.

Below is a chart showing the financing gap in global education budget by the 2030-UNESCO Education Project prepared before the COVID-19 outbreak (Pre-COVID-19) in preparation to reach the SDG 4 – (Sustainable Development Goal – 4) which will ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. This project could not fly in the face of the challenging realities of the COVID-19 pandemic.

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FIGURE 1: PRE-COVID-19 FINANCING GAP TO REACH SDG 4
(millions of dollars)



1.2.2 The Concept of Educational Management in Nigeria

No gainsaying that the history of Educational Management in Nigeria had remained chequered with strikes and deadlocks before the recent crisis. Past governments had tried in different ways to sanitize, standardize and stabilize the educational sector. From time to time, politicians, academics and opinion leaders either called for the declaration of a “state of emergency” in the education sector or lamented what they consider as decline and decay in the education sector. While some affirm that 70 per cent of university graduates in Nigeria are unemployable because of their poor quality, others focus on the country’s slow progress towards meeting the development needs of the country. The current government has also toed the progressive path, but this time, the complexity of the unintended prevailing circumstances brought about by the Coronavirus disease crumbled government efforts and affected educational policies to a great extent. It is this challenging complexity in managing the situation of outbreak of the Coronavirus Disease of 2019 (COVID-19) that necessitated the application of the total lockdown strategy that specifically affected the academic sector and all the sectors of the global economy in general (World Bank Blog, 18 March 2020). Already, the Nigerian educational sector had been belaboured with incessant strike actions and deadlock before the COVID-19 total lockdown was finally declared. A nationwide strike by the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) had earlier ensued over the refusal by the Federal Government to pay university lecturers the sum of thirty billion naira earned academic allowances together with the non-release of the twenty billion naira meant for the revitalization of the education sector by the Federal Government. The strike had eventually lasted for seven months, counting from March 23, 2020 to October 15, 2020, before ASUU finally reached agreements with the Federal Government on their above listed demands. The lecturers had already resolved to resume back to lecture rooms tentatively on October 21, 2020 before the turbulent EndSARS youth protest got the whole system rebooted from a fresh start.

The EndSARS youths protest began with a seething mass of peaceful youth demonstrators thronging the streets of cities in Nigeria demanding the Federal Government of President Buhari, to dismantle the notorious branch of the Nigerian Police Force under the State Criminal Investigation and Intelligence

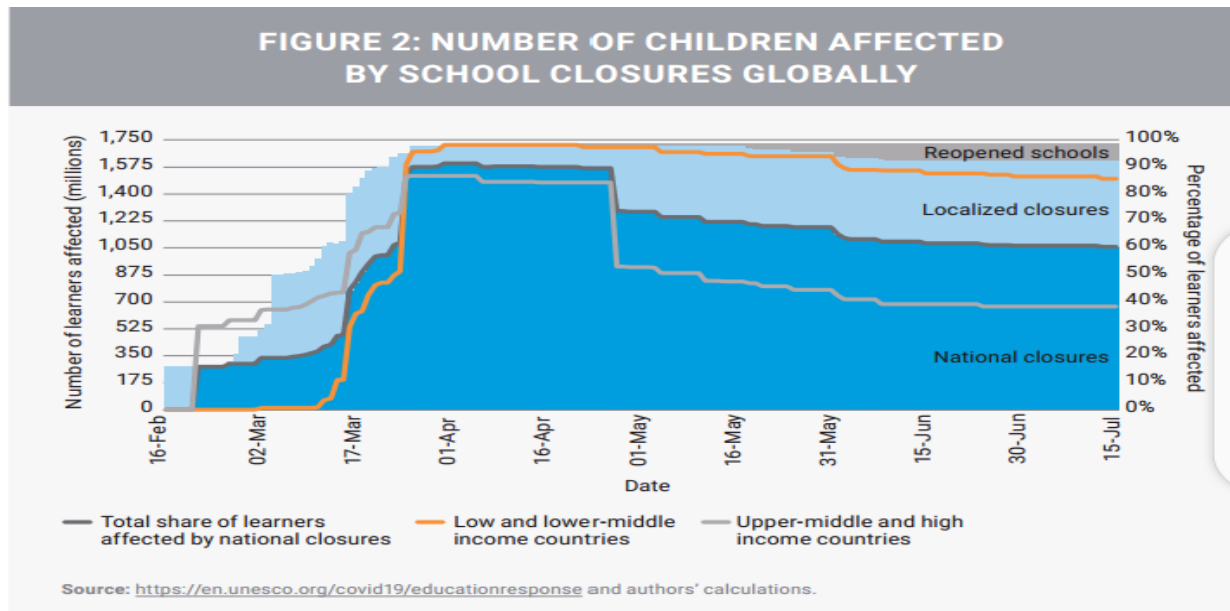
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Department (SCIID) called Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) created in late 1992 to deal with crimes associated with robbery, motor vehicle theft, kidnapping, cattle rustling and firearms. The protest was literally against all excesses of bad governance in Nigeria as it extended and eventually degenerated into a violent clash with Nigerian Soldiers and mix-ups with hoodlums rooting and carting away people's properties amidst the turbulence.

Tackling the educational management crisis in Nigeria is therefore dependent upon government policies which lie wholly on the outcome and strength of the economic twist, following the post-COVID-19 realities (Thelma, & Adedeji 2020).

Below is the chart portraying the number of schoolchildren affected globally by school closure during the COVID-19 total lockdown.



POLICY BRIEF: EDUCATION DURING COVID-19 AND BEYOND

2.1 Theoretical Framework

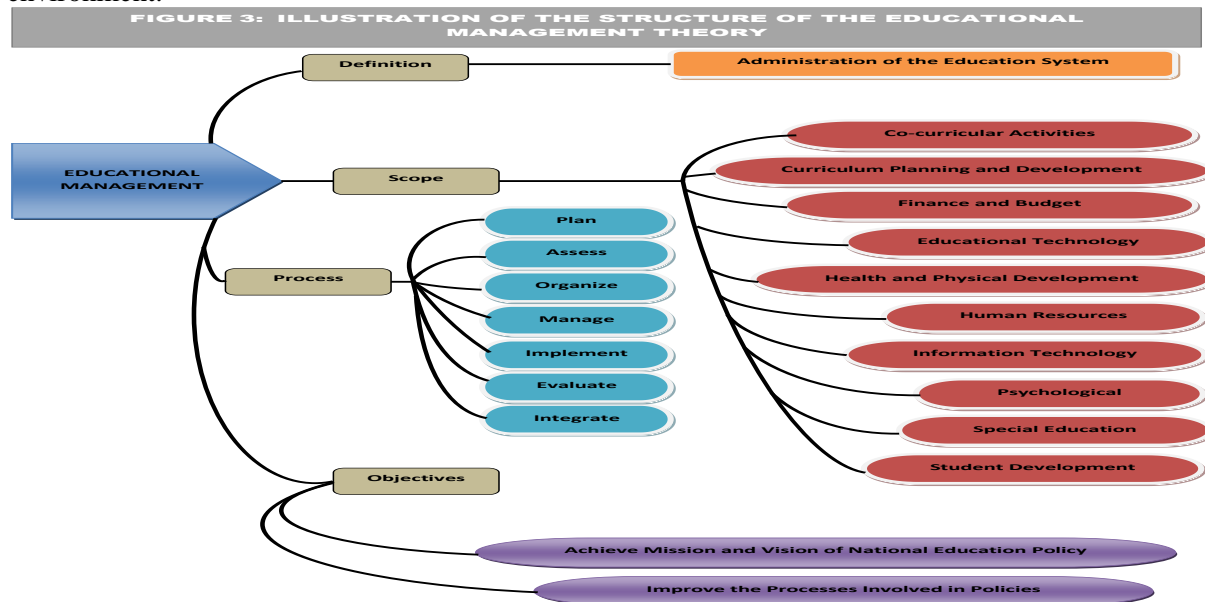
The theory of Educational Management is adopted for the theoretical framework of analysis of this research. Educational management refers to the administration of the education system in which a group or academic community combines human and material resources to supervise, plan, strategize, and implement structures to execute the workings of a systemic operation in an education environment. Education refers to the process of equipping of knowledge, skills, values, beliefs, habits, and attitudes whether conventional or nonconventional, with learning experiences. The education system is an ecosystem of professionals in educational institutions, such as government ministries, unions, statutory boards, agencies, and schools. The education system consists of political heads, principals, teaching staff, non-teaching staff, administrative personnel and other educational professionals working together to enrich and enhance the operations of the system (Bindu D, 2019).

The Educational Management theory purports that at all levels of the educational ecosystem, management is required. Management in the education system involves the planning, organizing, implementation, review, evaluation, and integration of the educational institution. The Educational Management theory is a theory that sprouts from the Henri Fayol's Management theory built

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on the Fourteen Principles of Management. Henri Fayol (1841-1925) was a French economist, entrepreneur, mining engineer, director of mines and modern management theoretician who developed a general theory of business administration that is often called Fayolism, independent of scientific management. The administrative theory of the Fourteen Principles of Management by Henri Fayol in a practical way includes: (i) Division of Labour, (ii) Authority and Responsibility, (iii) Discipline (iv) Unity of Command (v) Unity of Direction (vi) Subordination of Individual Interest, (vii) Remuneration (viii) The Degree of Centralization (ix) Line of Authority/Scalar Chain (x) Order (xi) Equity (xii) Stability of Tenure of Personnel (xiii) Initiative and (xiv) Esprit de Corps. Educational Management therefore, stemming forth from Fayolism as a powerful management tool, is a goal oriented activity. It involves group efforts and an organized work and performance towards the attainment of certain pre-determined goals in an educational environment.



Applying the Educational Management theory to the situational realities of this research, it therefore implies that handling the crisis situation in the Nigerian educational system requires active coordinated effort to achieve the goals of the educational institution, by effectively and efficiently utilizing the material and human resources within and outside the educational environment.

3.1 Methods

The research methodology assesses accessible information on subjects relating to the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on education in Nigeria. Most of the data generated for the research came majorly from secondary sources of data collection. Search for pertinent literature in databases like Google Scholar, Researchgate and African Education Journal was conducted with accompanying references and bibliographies gotten from the list of references on the paper. Data collection was based on the already generated data from the statistic of the Executive Summary of the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), 2019 Report on Poverty and Inequality in Nigeria.

The Nigerian Living Standards Survey (NLSS) is the official survey that is the basis for measuring poverty and living standards. Between September of 2018 and October of 2019, the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) conducted the latest round of the NLSS after a decade. It is representative at the state level with a sample size of 22,110 households, focusing on increasing the understanding of living conditions of the Nigerian population. The survey collected data on household and individual demographics (age, gender, marital status, among others), access to education, health and basic services, employment, assets, and

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income. The survey is used to measure prevalence of poverty and to estimate a wide range of socio-economic indicators including benchmarking of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Regression analysis served as appropriate data analytical tool employed for the analysis. The result of the analysis and the findings of the research reveal that the research problems are peculiar to the environment or area of research. The situational realities on ground in Nigerian educational sector which is the area of research largely influenced the outcome. Hence the causal research design which was applied, adopted an all-encompassing methodology adapted to the situational realities of the aftershocks in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic eruption in the area of research.

3.2 The Situational Realities

The COVID-19 pandemic total lockdown exposed Nigeria to multiplicities of socio-economic challenges and with so much harsh realities to face at the ebbing end of the receding surge of the pandemic trend (Adotey, 2020). Unexpected distortion of the academic calendar and education divide has taken over the country's educational sector. Every aspect of the educational sector has suffered some turbulence. It is deemed the onus of the government to meticulously figure out a way to diligently tackle the situation without allowing it to escalate beyond control.

Starting with the Nursery, Primary and Secondary schools, many schoolchildren in rural and farthest communities in Nigeria began suffering from the unplanned, halfway disruption of the school academic calendar right from the declaration of the COVID lockdown. Unlike some western countries where technological innovations ushered the educational sector into more advanced methods of learning, the learning experience in most African countries including Nigeria was nothing to write home about (Africa News, 2020). Most young learners and beginners were left behind, in the lurch, alongside their tertiary counterparts. The situation was aggravated since there were not equipped educational machineries or transition to new methods of learning to adapt them to the situation of learning during the COVID period. There were no matching governmental strategies designed in the national curriculum which would help to combat the middle-way challenge in the educational system in Nigeria. International governmental and non-governmental agencies published their reports to this effect (Policy Brief: Impact of COVID-19 in Africa, 2020).

Although, different struggles were going on, prior to COVID-19 to ensure young children stay in school and have access to proper education, as Nigeria contributes approximately 20% of the total global out-of-school population but these struggles were all doused by the storm of the COVID-19 pandemic turbulence. For instance, on 19 March 2020, the Federal Ministry of Education approved school closures as a response to the pandemic. States in the Federation contextualized this. An example was the Lagos State Ministry of Education that released a schedule of radio and TV lessons for students in public schools, followed by a few other states. However, for families that earned below \$1 per day and faced harsh economic realities due to the four-week lockdown in the state, the purchase of radios or TV was a trade-off that could not be preferable at that moment in time. It was that terrible at the grassroots.

4.1 Data Presentation and Analysis

The statistical data analytical tool employed for this work is regression analysis. Regression analysis is a set of statistical methods used for the estimation of relationships between a dependent variable and one or more independent variables. It can be utilized to access the strength of the relationship between variables and for modeling the future relationship between them. An independent variable is an input, assumption, or driver that is changed in order to assess its impact on a dependent variable. In the instant research, the independent variable is considered to be the COVID-19 pandemic crisis which changed the dependent variable of educational management in order to assess its impact on the education system in Nigeria.

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4.1.1 Data Presentation

Below are the charts, maps and tabular presentation of secondary data generated from the statistic of the Executive Summary of the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), 2019 Report on Poverty and Inequality in Nigeria with effect to the relative impact on the education system under the COVID-19 pandemic realities.

TABLE 1: MAP OF POVERTY GAP INDEX IN NIGERIA

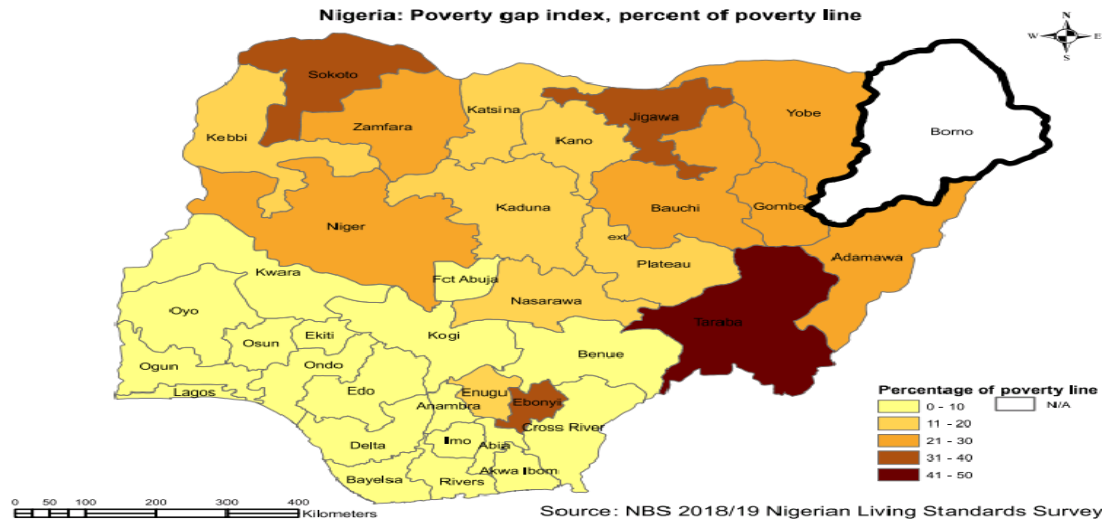


TABLE 2: RURAL AND URBAN EDUCATIONAL LEVEL IN NIGERIA

	EDUCATIONAL LEVEL	RURAL	URBAN	TOTAL
1.	No Education/ Less than Prim. Education	109.99	67.80	177.79
2.	Primary Education	83.07	38.51	121.58
3.	Secondary Education	54.83	24.17	79
4.	Post-secondary Education	41.35	12.28	53.63
	TOTAL	289.24	142.76	432

4.2 Data Analysis

The following is the statistical computation of the extent of the causal relationship existing between the two variables of COVID-19 and Educational Management, using Regression Analysis as the appropriate inferential statistical data analytical tool. Data from (Table 9 above) the sampling gathered across rural and urban areas from the Executive Summary of the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), 2019 Report on Poverty and Inequality in Nigeria was used to reflect the true position of education before the outbreak of the pandemic in the area of research. An equivalent data provided on educational levels of individuals slashed down by 94 percent was deduced through the report given by the Executive Summary of the United Nations 2020 Policy Brief on Education During COVID-19 and Beyond.

The United Nations Executive Summary maintained that the COVID-19 pandemic has caused the largest disruption of education in history, having already had near universal impact on learners and teachers around the world, from Pre-primary, Primary to Secondary schools, Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) institutions, Universities, Adult Learning, and skills development establishments. According to the report, by mid-April 2020, 94 percent of learners worldwide were affected by the pandemic, representing 1.58 billion children and youth, from primary to higher education, in 200 countries.

The bottom line of the UN report therefore implies that the already dwindling total number of the educational level of individual learners worldwide as it were before the COVID-19 pandemic was further degenerated during and in the continuing ravaging trend of the pandemic (World Economic Forum

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[WEF],2020). The extent of the degenerating effect, by 94 percent, is what the data analysis portrays below using Regression Analysis.

The Executive Summary of the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), 2019 Report on Poverty and Inequality in Nigeria and the Executive Summary of the United Nations 2020 Policy Brief on Education During COVID-19 and Beyond, are sourced and combined to generate the data below.

TABLE 3: PERCENTAGE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUAL EDUCATIONAL LEVELS BEFORE AND DURING COVID-19 PERIOD IN NIGERIA

	EDUCATIONAL LEVEL	TOTAL BEFORE	94% OF THE TOTAL BEFORE	94% LESS TOTAL DURING COVID
1.	No Education/ Less than Prim. Edu.	177.79	167.1226	10.6674
2.	Primary Education	121.58	144.2852	7.2948
3.	Secondary Education	79	74.2600	4.7400
4.	Post-secondary Education	53.63	50.4122	3.2178
	TOTAL	432	406.08	25.92

Linear Regression equation (Slope Formula) is explained and applied: Linear regression is a way to model the relationship between two variables. The equation has the form: $y = \hat{a} + \hat{b}x$, where y is the dependent variable (that is, the variable that goes on the y -axis), x is the independent variable (that is, it is plotted on the x -axis), \hat{b} is the slope of the line and \hat{a} is the y -intercept, while n is the sample size of the give table. The predictions that follow after the computation with the formula are only as accurate as the strength of the linear regression and that is given by the coefficient of correlation.

$\hat{a} = \frac{(\Sigma y)(\Sigma x^2) - (\Sigma x)(\Sigma xy)}{n(\Sigma x^2) - (\Sigma x)^2}$, $\hat{b} = \frac{n(\Sigma xy) - (\Sigma x)(\Sigma y)}{n(\Sigma x^2) - n(\Sigma x)^2}$, $n = 4$ (sample size from the table of linear regression analysis below), $r = \left(\frac{s_x}{s_y}\right) \hat{a}$ = (the coefficient of correlation).

TABLE 4: LINEAR REGRESSION ANALYSIS

S/N	X	Y	x^2	y^2	XY
1.	177.79	10.6674	31609.2841	113.79342276	18965570.46
2.	121.58	7.2948	14781.6964	53.21419704	886.901784
3.	79	4.7400	6241	22.4676	374.46
4.	53.63	3.2178	2876.1769	10.35423684	172.570614
$\Sigma =$	432	25.92	55508.1574	199.82945664	18967176.963

From the above table, $\Sigma x = 432.00$, $\Sigma y = 25.92$, $\Sigma x^2 = 55508.16$, $\Sigma y^2 = 199.83$, $\Sigma xy = 3330.49$, and $n = 4$. Then the computed data has to be filled in the equations below to arrive at the desirable answers.

NB: All answers are provided in the summary table of Regression Analysis below.

$$\hat{a} = \frac{(\Sigma y)(\Sigma x^2) - (\Sigma x)(\Sigma xy)}{n(\Sigma x^2) - (\Sigma x)^2} \quad \text{and} \quad \hat{b} = \frac{n(\Sigma xy) - (\Sigma x)(\Sigma y)}{n(\Sigma x^2) - n(\Sigma x)^2}$$

As aforesaid, the predictions are only as accurate as the strength of the linear regression and that is given by the coefficient of correlation. In order to find the coefficient of correlation (r) of the above regression equation, the following has to be done:

Standard deviation for the sample of the x -values divided by the standard deviation of the y -values: $r = \left(\frac{s_x}{s_y}\right) \hat{a}$

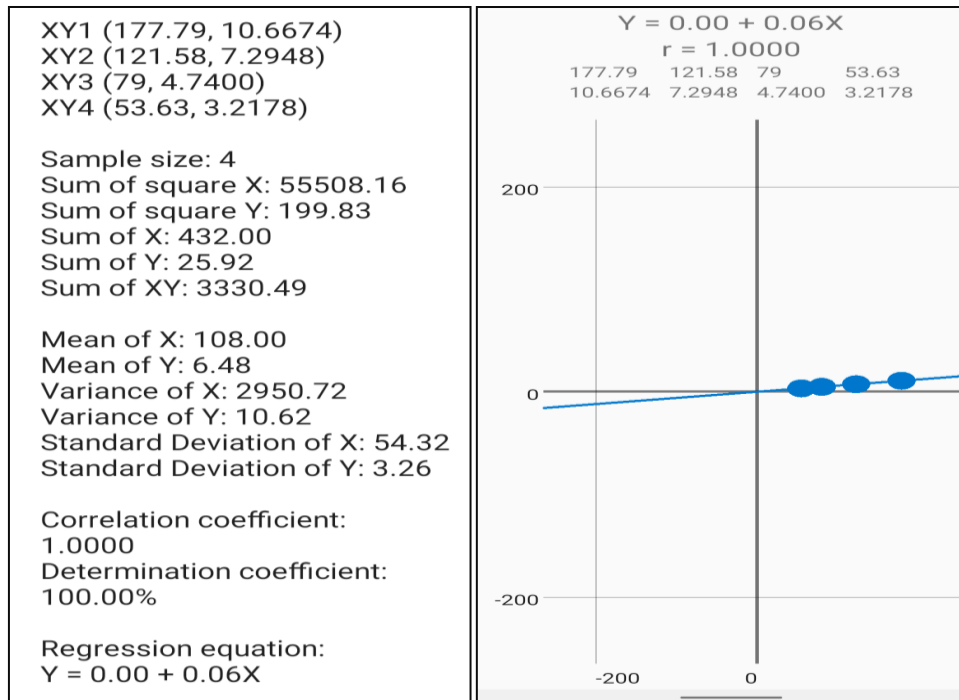
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$$S_x = \sqrt{\frac{\Sigma(x-\bar{x})^2}{n-1}} = \sqrt{\frac{\Sigma x^2 - \frac{1}{n}(\Sigma x)^2}{n-1}} \text{ divided by } S_y = \sqrt{\frac{\Sigma(y-\bar{y})^2}{n-1}} = \sqrt{\frac{\Sigma y^2 - \frac{1}{n}(\Sigma y)^2}{n-1}} \text{ times } \hat{a}.$$

TABLE 5: SUMMARY OF REGRESSION ANALYSIS AND REGRESSION GRAPH



Source: online Basic Statistics Calculator (formulas and resolutions) developed by Heiss Strategic Design © 2016

- iv. The COVID-19 pandemic has caused the largest disruption in global education in history, having already had near universal impact on learners and teachers around the world, from Pre-primary, Primary to Secondary schools, Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) institutions, Universities, Adult Learning, and skills development establishments (UN Executive Summary, 2020).
- v. The negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic backwash can be mitigated through strategic measures centre largely on Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) and government aid to improve the quality of, and increase access to, education for poor children in neglected communities.

5.2 Conclusion

In conclusion, the shock of the COVID-19 crisis on educational management in Nigeria has been unprecedented. The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed the inherent flaws in the educational system. It has set the clock back on the attainment of both national and international education goals, and disproportionately affected the poorer and most vulnerable. And yet, the education community has proved resilient, laying groundwork for the rebound.

Government, well-meaning private individuals and stakeholders in Nigeria will have to learn from other places in the world where standard education models have been adopted and applied in the similar situation, to form a basis for which the Nigerian society can also design its own technologically advanced education model.

Aniobi C. S. et al (2021) observed that governance crisis in Nigeria is an institutional problem that would require structural and reorientational approaches to diagnose in other to enable every sector to work

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efficiently. E-learning should be given the utmost attention and properly implemented to help attain the growth sought for in the education system in Nigeria. Education in Nigeria has suffered setbacks over the years. Now is the time for stakeholders to craft meaningful initiatives and prepare for an era where COVID-19 becomes a part of the realities of the current society. It is obvious that nations that refuse to accept and use technology and for that matter e-learning cannot survive the on-going trend. Therefore there is need to encourage worldwide, one of united goal of inclusive change in education delivery, of unleashing the potentials of individuals, and of collective fulfillment, in all areas of life, through education investment. A lot of unlimited drive and untapped resources are to count on for the restoration, not only of education but of its fundamental aspirations. It is therefore the responsibility of governments and the international community to stay true to principles and conduct reforms, so that, not only will the children and youth regain their promised future, but all education stakeholders find their role in making it a reality.

5.3 Recommendations

Having gone through the gamut of the whole Coronavirus pandemic realities in Nigeria, as researchers and co-researchers in the field, this is our due recommendation:

First is that there are strategic measures that must be taken in order to correct the disruption of the academic system and to help bridge the education divide as the surging trend of the Coronavirus pandemic subsides. These strategic measures centre largely on Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) and government aid. PPP programmes can do much to improve the quality of, and increase access to, education for poor children in neglected communities. With setting up of infrastructure for more schools in neglected rural areas through PPP programmes, government would succeed in reverting the teacher/student ratio which had hit alarming lows of 1:83 at points during the past decade (Pre-COVID era) (UNICEF Statistics, 2019). The result of new schools opening would be a reduced burden on teachers, currently ill-equipped to handle the ever-burgeoning class sizes.

Second is the use of voucher schools. Voucher schools are schools chosen by students and to which the government provides funding; they may be government or non-government providers or both, depending on the system. Voucher schools would aid in rapidly improving the education system in Nigeria as suggested by the World Bank Report 2019. It will help address the need for more information on the private education sector, given that private schools are waxing currently as the lead education provider in the country.

Third, education in Nigeria should be viewed as a high government priority. Creating increasing awareness of the pressing need for the country's children to be properly educated, especially those from low-income families will benefit the country's economy in years to come. Government post-COVID priorities should include the introduction of courses such as coding and robotics which can usher students into the era of the Fourth Industrial Revolution and Fifth Dimensional Computer Technological age that will prepare them for jobs of the future.

There are a number of national and international bodies and organizations that have developed principles, guidelines and benchmarks for quality assurance and the use of technologies to support e-learning. The Institute for Higher Education Policy in the United States of America explains a number of benchmarks that are argued as essential to ensuring quality excellence in Internet-based distance learning. Similarly, in the United Kingdom, the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) proposed a code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in the provision of flexible and distributed learning, including e-learning (Digital Trend, 2020). These same principles can be applied in the Nigerian Education system.

Governmental and non-governmental aids provided in this direction can be viewed as an investment in human capital; the more educated Nigerian citizens will be, the more productive the country will become. Of all sustainable developmental missions, surely the most pressing is to improve lives, and there is no better way to do so than giving proper and sound education for all.

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