

Management of Pre-Primary Education in Ibadan North East Local Government Area, Oyo State Nigeria during Covid-19 Pandemic Lockdown: Activities, Challenges and Effects

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Abstract

The impact of Covid 19 pandemic can never be undermined in the society and this compelled government to declare lockdown either fully or partially among other measures to prevent the further spread of the virus. The effects of this on educational institutions cannot be overemphasized as Pre-primary school owners and adopted various strategies in managing the phenomenon. It is therefore expedient to investigate the management of these schools during the lockdown in Nigeria. The study adopted the phenomenological approach for the qualitative data because the researchers tend to establish the experiences of pre-school owners in running the learning activities during the lockdown. The population for the study was pre-school owners in Oyo State. Simple random technique was used to select 150 participants. The Qualitative Data were collected with a self-design “Management of Pre-primary School Keynote Interview” and audio recording. In order to ensure that the effectiveness of the instrument, it was shown to the experts for the face validity. The qualitative data obtained were transcribed and summarized to provide basis for interpretation and thematically analysed. Results of the study revealed that some schools organized online teaching while others did not. Based on the results, it was concluded that government at all levels should be holistic in their approach when dealing with education especially pre-primary education as wrong decision(s) could mar destinies of these children and the nation at large. Finally, it was recommended that School owners should organize training for the caregivers on how to use digital learning platforms, and many others.

Keywords: Management, Pre-primary Education, Pandemic, Children.

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Introduction

Nigeria is not excluded from the cold hand of Covid-19 as it spread like wildfire all over the world. The first case of covid-19 was recorded late February and since then it has been on the increase. One of the effort to curtail wide spread of the virus in the country was the immediately closure of formal education sector, which ranged from preschool to higher institution. This single move of the government made teaching and learning static as academic calendar was disrupted. The disruption made private school owners and government owned school adopts various ways to make learning activities continue even as the children or learners sat at home, thus, the work of school administrators changed from conventional to online learning or no learning during the lockdown period. Therefore this study seeks to investigate school activities, challenges and effect of covid-19 on the pre-primary education with the aim of providing empirical evidence as well suggest recommendations that will help school administrators, parents and educational policy makers in future occurrence.

Coronavirus in Nigeria: the Story so far

The entire universe is in mishap owing to the emergence of Corona Virus also known as COVID-19. The early cases of the pandemic could be traced to Wuhan, Hubei Province, China on 31 December 2019 when a cluster of Viral Pneumonia cases were reported (World Health Organization, 2020). The prevalence of the pandemic shifted focus from China to the rest of the world, especially Nigeria which had witnessed increase in covid-19 cases (Nigeria Centre for Diseases Control, 2020). For instance the arithmetic increase value from 21st of February, 2020 to 11th of September, 2020 has been confirmed to be 56, 017 with 35, 536 and 20, 481 for male and female confirmed cases respectively (Nigeria Centre for Diseases Control, 2020). The percentage of children tested for this virus stands at 10% (The Punch, 2020) with total increase fatalities at 1, 076 (Nigeria Centre for Diseases Control, 2020). As part of dealing with the widespread of Covid-19, many countries declared total lockdown which affected almost all sectors of the nation. One of the adversely affected sector in Nigeria is education which became redundant as many schools were closed down or shifted their activities to different online platforms.

The continuous rise in number of reported cases in Nigeria from the first date of reported case on 21st of February till the period of this writing prompted government at different levels to adopt different measures to curtail further spread of the Virus and its effects on society. For instance, the Federal Government declared total lockdown in Lagos, Abuja and Ogun states while other state government declared partial lockdown with enforcement of other preventive measures which include, the use of facial mask,

maintenance of social distancing, washing of hands with soap and water or sanitizer regularly among others (World Health Organization, 2020).

Pre-primary Education before and during the Lockdown

The role of pre-school education can never be undermined in building a functional, conducive and veritable society to live in for present and future generations. The onus of delivering qualitative education and promoting holistic development of children lies in the hands of pre-schools. The ability of a child to realize his potentials depends on the stimulation, support and encouragement the child receives (Akinbote, Oduolowu & Lawal, 2001 as cited by Ojo & Osunjimi, 2015) and learning process he/she is exposed to. The term “Pre-school Education” and “Pre-primary education” are often used by scholars interchangeably but both are still strongly associated with early childhood education which has been defined by various scholars. One of the scholars, Oduolowu (2011) views it as the branch of knowledge and an essential component of all family programme arrangement for young children from birth to the statutory school age of six. Pre-primary Education is the One-year Education given to children aged 5 prior to their entering primary school (NPE revised edition, 2014). It is thus expedient for pre-school to provide a good environment for holistic development for effective integration to become a full member of the society among other unending benefits.

Since pre-primary schools are characterized with various developmental and learning activities, these activities depend on the programmes/models/curriculum approaches adopted which must also be age appropriate. The identified activities include small group and large group activities, indoor and outdoor activities, Montessori activities (practical life, sensory, academic and cultural/artistic activities), sleep and quiet activities, Nappy changing and toileting, Meal and snacks, Language and story activities among others (Oduolowu, 2011). Some notable children’s activities in Nigeria include gross motor activities as climbing, jumping, chasing; fine motor activities as squeezing of materials, playing with beads, learning to manipulate crayons, cutting out and drawing among others; manipulative activities include playing with sand, water, construction with sands and bricks; rule-governed activities like playing of puzzle, cards etc; verbal play activities like riddles and jokes, folklores, rhymes-traditional, teasing rhymes and basic cognitive skills like basic mathematical operations-addition, subtraction, matching, division and multiplication among others. In 2019, Greenspring schools Lagos, Nigeria identified preschool activities as practical life activities, sensorial education activities, language and mathematical skills, sporting activities, social skills, music and performing arts.

Preschool management entails various tasks such as establishing and maintaining relationships with preschool children and their families, collaborating with others,

planning and implementing curriculum, and evaluating program quality. Preschool management involves all activities put together for the achievement of preschool education aim and objectives. These activities include planning, budgeting and financing, organizing, directing, coordinating, staffing among other (Shakir, 2014; Sarker, 2013; Poudyal, 2013; Aman et al., 2012).

Since effective management of pre-primary schools is the basis for conducive learning environment for learning to take place. Thus, effective management of pre-primary education centres will go a long way to achieve the stated objectives of Pre-primary Education in Nigeria as enshrined in 2013 revised edition of National Policy on Education which include:

- a. Provide adequate care, supervision and security for the children while their parents are at work;
- b. Inculcate social, moral norms and values
- c. Inculcate in the Child the spirit of enquiry and creativity through the exploration of nature, the environment, art, music and the use of toys, etc;
- d. Develop a sense of co-operation and team-spirit;
- e. Stimulate in the child good habits, including good health habits; and
- f. Teach the rudiments of numbers; letters, colours, shapes, forms, etc through play.

Other benefit of preschool management include fostering of relationship among relevant stakeholders like pre-schoolers, caregivers, administrators, parents, communities, government among others. This will definitely help in developing a total child and an ideal society to live in.

Prior before the manifestation of pandemic in Nigeria, pre-school education was under different administrative and managerial approaches characterized with multiple challenges which inhibits the level of education from achieving the stated objectives. The challenges range from paucity of fund, problem of professionalism, supervision and monitoring, attitudinal problems, deficit in infrastructural facilities, pedagogical deficiencies, nutritional deficiencies, and problems with implementation of policies among others. Ojo and Osunjimi (2015) identified lack of fund, lack of human resources, non-implementation of the programme in some higher institutions, lack of awareness and publicity about the programme, non-compliance of school owners with government regulations, unemployment. Shoaga (2019) identified socio-economic factors, cultural practices, financial limitations, insufficient teaching learning resources, high teacher-child ratio, and poor remunerations among others.

Oby and Bisayo (2020) provided the responses of educational stakeholders to the pandemic in Nigeria using 30 states. The online survey captured responses from 626 parents revealed that 83% of the respondents assumed the roles of teachers/caregivers by supporting their children virtually which include low-tech platforms such as radio and television and high-platforms such as whatsapp, Google classroom, Zoom, facebook, telegram and virtual conferencing. The remaining respondents cited reasons for not supporting their children's learning and these include lack of job vitality, busy schedules and inability to afford the cost of learning among others (high cost of internet data, fuelling of generator etc). 67% of the parents whose children were virtually active reported that they encouraged their children to read books and participate in online classes. 46% reported that they read with them and 19% reported to have engaged another teacher in guiding their children.

UNICEF Nigeria (2020) also reported that Nigeria Education Sector maintains a Response Monitoring Tool named 5W Matrix (Who is doing What, Where, When and for Whom). This is advanced through Adedokun (2020) who reported that Nigeria opted for radio-television means of communicating learners. Others include the use of social-media platforms like facebook incorporations, Zoom, Whatsapp, Google classroom, Telegram etc. Learning channels were launched on networks though many homes could not afford the cost of procuring and maintaining ICT gadgets. This is corroborated by Samuelsson, Wagner and Odegaard (2020) who provided an overview of responses of 3 countries (Sweden, Norway and USA) to management of pre-schools during pandemic. In Sweden, educational institutions like high school and universities transitioned to on-line instructions but preschools were still open with slight modifications in routine. Attentions were given to cleanliness in school environment and other health related practices like sneezing into one's sleeve, frequent hand washing and social distancing among others. Parents and teachers shared the responsibilities of managing schools as parents collaborates with teachers to plan implement daily activities and supervision of children's activities. These activities were reviewed every two weeks and they include building time to talk to children about the pandemic, organize staff meetings etc.

Norway put forward stricter policies though preschools were only allowed to serve children of front-liners such as those in hospitals, food supply chain, and public transportation among others. Pre-school children were divided into small groups with reduced adult-child ratio. There were limited body contacts with children and staff during meetings and breaks, schools opted for video conferencing in lieu of physical meetings with colleagues. Other Crisis Management Plans include transmitting videos of activities like singing and reading of stories, organize meetings between preschool teachers and administrators, training of teachers on how to use digital platform staff handbook, various online platforms and applications etc.

In United State of America, preschools offered 3 hours of real-time, on-line programming per day for children between 2 and 5 years of age, in accordance with the children's usual attendance patterns (2, 3 or 5 days per week). The consistent daily routine includes music and movement, story time, gross motor activities, free-choice time, and teacher-directed literacy, science and mathematics activities to address the preschool's developmental and academic goals. Teachers email detailed information about virtual classroom activities and anticipated learning outcomes. Teachers have also created a private *You Tube* channel where they present language, dramatic play arts, STEM and social science activities for parents to use with their children to augment their experiences in the virtual classroom. This is in contrary to report of Bhatkande (2020) that Mumbai parents of pre-schoolers explore home-bound, activity-based learning during Covid-19 lockdown.

It is worthy of note that educational institutions are greatly affected owing to the prevalence and magnitude of the pandemic (Human Right Watch, 2020). Meanwhile Pre-school Education is also not left behind in the gross implication of the pandemic as this prompted various Pre-schools to adopt and implement different measures so as to keep the children on the track of academics and their development. It is therefore expedient to carry out holistic investigation on pre-schools activities as they can either make or mar potentials of pre-school children in all aspects of life as there is paucity of literature that examine the quality, effectiveness, approaches, significance and challenges faced in the developmental and academic management of pre-schools during 2020 Covid-19 pandemic lockdown.

Theoretical Background: Administrative Management Theory

The administrative theory was formulated by Henry Fayol (1916) as one of the proponents of the theory. Other contributors are Luther Gulick and Max Weber. Administrative management theory is among the theoretical frameworks of management and administration in social organizations (schools). Fayol opined that all managers including school administrators perform five basic statutory responsibilities like planning, organizing, commanding, coordination and controlling. Apart from these functions, he also identified additional principles of management like division of labour, authority, discipline, unity of command, unity of direction, and subordination of individual interest, centralization, scalar chain, order, equity, stability of personnel and initiative (Yazidu and Majiyd, 2017). These responsibilities were also corroborated by Max Weber.

Luther Gulick thus, coined the term PODSCORB that refers to functions of management. These include planning, organizing, staffing, directing, coordination, reporting and budgeting. These principles of management have impacted administrative activities in all kinds of sectors including social organization such as schools (Shakir,

2014; Sarker, 2013; Poudyal, 2013; Aman et al., 2012; Rahman, 2012; Schimmoeller, 2012; Wren, Bedein and Breeze, 2002; Rodrigues, 2001; Breeze, 1995).

In the study conducted by (Yazidu and Majiyd, 2017), the results which classified fourteen principles into structural, process and purpose principles revealed that structural principles were considered the most important followed by the process principle and placing purpose as the least important. The structural principles include scalar chain, authority and responsibility, centralization, unity of direction and division of labour (Aman et al., 2012). Process principles give direction to the school management through support from stakeholders, equity, remuneration, unity of command and discipline. Purpose principles provide explanation to the fundamental objectives and goals of organization through initiative, tenure of stability and order in the management of schools.

Thus, this theory and utilization of its principles plays significant roles in effective management and organization of pre-primary schools during covid-19 pandemic lockdown as this could either make or mar the purpose of preschool education in Nigeria. This makes the theory relevant to the study as the essential features are critical in the study under consideration.

Objectives

The main aim of this study is to explore the management of pre-primary school centres during Covid 19, while the specific objectives are to:

- i. Investigate the activities of pre-primary schools during the lockdown
- ii. Investigate constraints facing pre-primary education during lockdown
- iii. To enquire the effects of covid-19 on caregivers, preschool children, parents, society and the preschool centre.
- iv. To explore the mitigation strategies by the proprietors and heads of schools?

Research Questions

The following questions will be answered in the study:

- i. What are the pre-primary schools management strategies during lockdown :
 - a. School activities
 - b. Parents, Caregivers and pupils reaction to the activities
 - c. Week of the activities
 - d. Medium of activities
- ii. What are the constraints faced during lockdown??

- iii. What are the effects of pandemic on caregivers, pre-primary school children, parents, society and the centre system?
- iv. What and how are the proprietors mitigating covid-19 for their effectiveness during lockdown?

Methodology

The study adopted the phenomenological approach for the qualitative data because the researchers tend to establish the experience of school administrators in running the learning activities during the lockdown. Phenomenological approach is the strategy which allows researchers to identify the essence of human or schools administrator experience about certain phenomenon as described by participants in a study (Creswell, 2013). The population for the study was school proprietors; who ran learning activities during pandemic in Oyo State. Simple random technique was used, the reason for this technique was that all the participants have equal chance to be selected, and therefore, 150 participants were selected. The Qualitative Data were collected using self-design “Management of Pre-primary Education Keynote Interview” and audio recording. The kII was divided into four sections and each section contained five questions each. In order to ensure that the effectiveness of the instrument, it was shown to the experts for the face validity. The qualitative data obtained were transcribed and summarized to provide basis for interpretation and thematically analysed. To respect research ethic, researchers drafted letter of introduction which explained what the researchers meant to do with the research and the said letters were shown to the participants. Many participant gave their consent to the letter and after the whole process, it was only 50 participants that agreed to be part of the study as opposed the proposed 150 participants and the whole process lasted for two weeks.

Result

The thematic approach of qualitative data analysis is adopted to present the findings from the interviews conducted during the study.

Theme 1: School management during Covid-19 Lockdown

School management during covid-19 lockdown needed to ensure that learning activities continue the lockdown, which made learners/children to stay at home. The activities of the school management were discussed under the following: school activities; parents and pupils reactions, weeks of the activities and the medium

Sub-theme 1: School Activities during Covid-19 Lockdown

School activities were disrupted as the result of covid-19 emergence in Nigeria due to pronouncement of lockdown by Nigerian government, in order to ensure that children learning were not totally stopped, some schools embarked on online learning while most schools did not. According to the administrator of School A: she submitted that

There was no activity, because we did not have the capacity to organize, the closure came suddenly and also I felt the lockdown would be for few days but I was disappointed as the lockdown continue the state government cancelled the third terminal in Oyo State. I was not happy because we could have organized learning activities for our children had it been government gave us enough time to prepare for the closure.

In the word of School C administrator:

As a public school administrator, I do not have the capacity to organize any learning activities during the lockdown unless Oyo State Universal Basic Education gave directive, therefore no learning activities until the State government organized online radio teaching program for the primary six pupils. I can say I did not organize any learning activities for the children in the pre-primary section because the government did not plan for them.

School B Administrator:

I was making arrangement and preparation towards reopening of school, which doesn't afford me the opportunity to organize any online activities for the children

However, some school administrators organized online teachings and learning for the children. According to the School D Administrator:

In our effort to ensure children keep on learning, we devised plans on how to bring children together and after that we organized online learning for the children through various modes. Some of the activities caregivers taught children during the lockdown were; rhymes, songs, numeracy and literacy.

School E Administrator: *Online learning*

Sub-theme 2: Reactions to the school activities during Lockdown

During the lockdown school activities there were many reactions to the school activities as pupils, caregivers and parents either welcome or reject the idea of school activities.

Pupils

As School D administrator rightly said:

Pupils were happy to be online with their classmates

Parents

The school administrators agreed that parents reactions to the activities was negative because it was tedious and expensive. As reported by the School E administrator:

It wasn't easy for parents owing to financial implications such as buying of data, getting new phones etc. some were happy and others were not.

While School D administrator collaborate the submission of School E:

Some of the parents were complaining that they were not buoyant enough to buy data subscription. Also, not all parents can operate smart phones

School B:

Parents had nonchalant attitudes toward the school activities as many of them see it as avenue to spend above budget, therefore, they didn't believe in the quality of education their wards/children will receive.

Caregivers

Due to the lockdown many pre-primary caregivers do not collect salary, that is, many of them grabbed the opportunity to engage on online activities due to the availability of stipend. As the School G Administrator put it:

Caregivers were eager to return for the online activities because I ensured that little stipend was made available for any caregiver that is willing to participate and I am happy to tell you that many of the caregivers' participated during the program

School H:

Caregivers were happy to engage their children during the lockdown via online activities. I can see the joy in the heart when I told them about the plan for the online activities. I think one of the reasons for the eagerness is the love for the children and little stipend available for them.

Sub-theme 3: Weeks of the activities

This aspect deals with the number of weeks some of the school that engaged in online teaching used to teaching the children during the lockdown. It is important to note that the least number of week spend was 3 weeks.

School B: 8 weeks

School D: May to June

School E: 3 weeks

School F: 5 weeks

Sub-theme 4: The medium

Many of the schools that engaged on online learning activities used either Zoom or WhatsApp to engage their children.

School F: *Zoom*

School G: *WhatsApp*

School H: *Zoom*

School D: *WhatsApp and Zoom*

Theme 2: Constraint faced during School Lockdown

The new unfamiliar terrain was created during the lockdown for the schools administrator, that is, it becomes urgent for the school administrators to plan learning activities that will ensure their children continue to learn despite being at home. This new terrain faced many challenges and the challenges are discussed under the following sub-theme: constraint to the programme, constraint from the parents, pupils and caregivers, constraints parents and children faced the program and challenges of medium

Sub-theme 1: Constraint to the programme

Lockdown forced all schools to either end the academic session or adjust mode of teaching. While some schools moved their learning activities to online, many schools ended the session. However, it is important to note that there is no school in Oyo State that did not encounter challenges during the lockdown. Some of the challenges are lack of fund, epileptic power supply, pupil's attitude. According to the School F:

Yes, the lockdown brought financial constraints, because I were unable to pay staff salary, provide and improve on the basic amenities in the school and when we

decided to move to online learning epileptic power supply become order of the day, low internet connectivity, technical knowhow on the part of our staff .

School A: *Inability to pay staff salaries and meet up with other provisions*

School D: *Yes, inability to pay teachers' salaries and lack of income*

Sub-theme 2: Constraint from the Stakeholders

Stakeholders here means the parents, pupils and caregivers, therefore, this aspect deals with the challenges posed to the school administrators.

Parents

The school administrators are faced with the problem from the parents, because parents have the right to make their children available for any program the school organized during the lockdown. Thus, many parents did not allowed their children to be part of learning teaching due to high cost, power supply and poor internet connectivity. This excerpts from interview:

School C: *Some parents were not supportive as they were not ready to release their phones for use*

School F: *Parents didn't pay for the service*

School G: *Many parents complained about the high cost of the internet connection because the rate of consumption increased as the result of children using the phones for classes. Therefore, many of them refused to make their phone available*

Pupils

On the part of the pupils, the school administrators find it difficult to engage the pupils through online because pupils were easily distracted. Below the excerpts from the interview:

School E: *Low response from the pupils*

School H: *Pupils have forgotten most things they were taught before pandemic*

School C: *Children were unable to interact physically as all activities were visual*

Caregivers

Some caregivers refused to be part of the online activities because it was not compulsory, inability to write on the whiteboard among others. The excerpt from the interview is present below:

School D: *Some complaints of writing lesson notes*

School G: *Lack of participation and punctuality from the caregivers*

School F: *It wasn't convenient to teach online without board also it was difficult for teachers to evaluate pupils*

Sub-theme 4: Challenges of Medium

School administrators who engaged in online activities reported that they faced challenges such as epileptic power supply, high cost of internet among other. The excerpts from the interview is presented below:

School D: *Epileptic power supply and high cost of maintaining internet facilities*

School E: *Lack of proper monitoring of children's activities and the school initially had issues with funds and teachers' commitment*

School F: *Network problem; No board for learning and Learning materials were not used effectively*

Theme 3: The Effect of Lockdown on School, Parents, Children and Caregivers

The effect of lockdown was enormous on the school, parents, children and caregivers. These effects are discussed under the following sub-theme: school, parents, children and caregivers.

Sub-theme 1: School

The school being the major recipient of the effect as the well planned academic session was disrupted, the schools were under locked for a longer time, the loss of income, inability to pay staff salary among others. It is highly important to note that schools were strong hit when the lockdown was pronounced by the government. The excerpt from the interview shows that the school administrators discussed as the effect:

School C: *Reduction in school enrolment and it also affected school Internal Generated Revenue as the parents refused to pay the outstanding debt, to the extent that many refuse to pay for the online services render*

School A: *Loss of income*

School E: *The school was unable to pay staff their full salaries*

School F: *Extra cost for the school, I was forced to make internet subscription for all the staff involved in the online learning in order to encourage them.*

Sub-theme 2: Parents

Another important stakeholder in education, one of the objective of pre-primary education is to be safe haven for children while their parents are at work. However, parents are saddled with the responsibility of involved in their children learning as the result of the lockdown. The responsibility was strange to some parents because before the lockdown they hardly have time to engage their children in the learning process. As stated by School A administrator:

It affected parents because they cannot go out to earn living due to the limitation of their activity. They incurred extra cost in enrolling their children for e-learning

School B: *Parents spend extra cost in securing service of caregivers*

School D: *It disrupted social, work and other activities of the parents' and limited movement*

Sub-theme 3: Children/Pupils

Pupils are used to physical and social interaction in their schools because they usually have opportunity to play with each other both within and outside the classrooms, interact with their colleagues and caregivers. However, during the lockdown children were denied with the benefits of physical interaction while some of engage and see their classmates on Zoom or WhatsApp, some did not. Some of the excerpts is presented below:

School A: *Laziness among pupils*

School B: *Children had forgotten what they've learnt before pandemic*

School C: *Affected interaction with the teacher and group learning*

School E: *Peer group influence, spending a lot of time watching movies at home.*

Caregivers

Also, it is important to examine the effect of lockdown of the caregivers, as many caregivers went throughout the lockdown with halves salary or no salary due to the fact

that schools cannot afford to pay salary. All the participants agreed that caregivers were affected financially. Some of the excerpts is presented below:

School G: *Teachers were unable to earn full salaries*

School I: *Teachers were affected financially*

School H: *Affected caregivers' income*

Theme 4: How the school administrator solve challenge during lockdown

One of the important skills of a School administrator is problem solving skill. Though the lockdown posed new challenge yet it is expected of school administrator to work around it. The excerpts from the interview is presented below: School A: Proprietor made it known to staff to bear with him as he is unable to pay salaries and others.

School D: *Encouraged parents to pay up charged fees, make their devices available for use and buying of data*

School H: *By encouraging staff and pupils to practice safety measures in their abode.*

Discussion of Finding

The result from the above revealed that most schools in Oyo State did not embarked on online teaching or activities which is quite sadden. The absence of online activities make children or pupils to lose touch with the learning. Though many schools that can afford to organize online teaching/activities did it but most schools were left out. The low or no school activities during the period could be traced to many things not limited to the following: high cost of online platform, high cost of data usage, unpreparedness of the school management for lockdown and lack technical know-how of many school administrator. Also it is important to note that many schools that embarked on online activities were limited in the activities compared to physical classroom settings, as many of the activities focussed on intellectual development rather than holistic development of the children.

The reaction of the parents, pupils and caregivers to the school activities during the lockdown recorded both positive and negative reactions. The many parents reacted negatively to the school activities because it required to drop their mobile phone or computer for their children to use, subscribed to data often which happened to be expensive for most parents, stress and sudden change of status of parents to teachers. The parents' reaction to the activities is not surprising because many parents before lockdown find it difficult to engage in the learning activities of their children, therefore, the new role seems strange to them. On the other hands children reacted positively to the activities

because it afforded them chance to interact with their classmates and caregivers as well have access to their parents' mobile devices as well caregivers saw the activities as an avenue to earn money during the lockdown as the salary was affected and interact with their pupils.

As against thirteen (13) weeks that schools in Oyo State usually used to cover teaching and learning, many schools that engaged pupils through online activities used less week for the activities. For instance the highest number weeks a school used was 8 weeks while some used three weeks. The reduction in the number of weeks could be as the result though not limited to the following: cost of internet, caregivers' remuneration, parents' willingness and attitude to the online activities. It is important to note many used mostly WhatsApp and Zoom as the medium of conducting the online learning activities. It is no surprising that WhatsApp and Zoom were commonly used during the lockdown in Nigeria, due to the high usage of these platform across the world.

Findings from the research question two revealed that schools faced a lot of challenges from all cylinders most especially the schools that engaged on online activities. Many schools though conducted online activities found it difficult to pay staff salary due to inability of parents to make school fees payment, if some parents refused to pay for the online activities because they do not consider it as learning. Low response from the pupils during the activities as the children were easily distracted, lack of cooperation from the parents, teachers found it difficult to adapt the usage of zoom and whatsapp as tools for teaching against whiteboard and also inability to write lesson notes poised challenge for the caregivers' therefore, many opted out from it despite the stipend attached to it. Another challenge is the network instability, high cost of data and epileptic power supply affected the online activities. In order to provide the online activities schools have to provide alternative measures but incurred high cost. For instance, schools do shift from one network provider to another, which makes the school subscribed to more internet data than needed. Since the schools want both the parent and children to have classroom settings, many schools operated on another source on electricity power generation, that is, generator as against provision from the National grid, which happened to become unavailable most times.

The effects of covid-19 lockdown can be seen on all the stakeholders: parents, caregivers and pupils. One of the effect on the parents is the inability to pay their children school fees as well provide necessary facilities to encourage their children participation on the online activities. On the part of the pupils, they become lazy and easily distracted due to the fact they became passive instead of active learners. Caregivers were affected most especially on the financial aspect, as their salary were stopped or cut into half,

despite their participations on the online teaching many do not receive the stipend promised by the school owners.

As expected of the schools owners and the administrators to solve any problem that arise during the school lockdown, the school administrators reached out to the parents, caregivers and pupils accordingly to encourage full participation. It is pertinent to note that, little success were recorded as some parents responded to the call. Also, the schools engaged the parents and caregivers to obey and practice all the safety measures announced by the appropriate quarters.

Conclusion

To combat or reduce the widespread of coronavirus in Nigeria, the federal government announced the closure of educational institutions in the country without considering the effect on the educational sector especially pre-primary level. This single move disrupted the learning activities and it sadden that, the lost duration cannot be retrieved. The researchers concluded that, despite measures adopted by various school owners to mitigate effects of lockdown on academic activities, the management of schools are faced with lots of challenges that require further and prompt attention to prevent further effects of the pandemic on holistic development of children as well as socio-economic impacts on the school, parents, government and other educational stakeholders. Conclusively, Nigerian government across level should think beyond the box while formulating and implementing educational policies as any wrong move could have irreversible and long lasting impact on pre-primary education.

Recommendations

The study had revealed the measures taken by the schools during the lockdown, therefore, the following recommendations were made:

Parents should support all the school activities because their lack support has huge implication on the learning of their children. Schools owners should organize training for the caregivers on how to use zoom and other learning platforms. School owners should encourage the continuous usage of the online platforms as part of learning tools. Government should create and make available low interest rate loan to the school owners to combat the future occurrences. Government should subsidise the cost of online platform for the pre-primary education to encourage wide adoption as the educational tool.

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