

Strength and Weaknesses of African Education Systems in the Management of Covid-19

Fadekemi Funke FALUSI
drfadeomirin@gmail.com

Department of Educational Management
Osun State University, Osogbo Nigeria
Ipetu-Ijesa Campus

Abstract

The study examined strength and weaknesses of African Education systems in the Management of COVID-19. The study adopted a non experimental design involving descriptive research of the survey type in which 300 secondary school teachers were purposively selected from twenty (20) secondary schools in south-west, Nigeria. The instrument for data collection was a self-developed questionnaire divided into four sections with 29 items based on the research topic. Four research questions were raised and answered using frequency count, percentages, means and standard deviation as statistical tools. The study revealed that confusion and stress for teachers, parents and unpreparedness for distance and home schooling, among others are the impacts of COVID-19 outbreak on African Education systems. The study also revealed that, there is need to prepare, cope, and plan for recovery in order to strengthen African Education systems. The study also showed that, poor budgetary allocation, corruption and unpreparedness; and course content unable to satisfy the student needs due to certain flaws are the major weaknesses of African Education systems in the management of COVID-19. The study further revealed that printed take-home materials for students, online digital platform, provision of soap, sanitizers and masks are the possible solutions to weaknesses of African Education systems in the management of COVID-19. Based on these findings, the following recommendations among others were made: Education sector should ensure a safe return to quality learning for students, teachers and school community.

Keywords: Strength, weaknesses, African education systems, management, covid-19

Introduction

Globally, the world is faced with the covid-19 pandemic which has held the economy into ransom not exempting the educational sector. This pandemic has brought about recent changes and disruptions in the educational sector which serves as a catalyst for the development of any nation (Adeoye, Adanikin & Adanikin, 2020). The corona virus which is popularly known as covid-19 has disrupted the global educational system as most countries around the world have resulted in temporarily closure of all educational

institutions in an attempt to curtail the spread of the pandemic. According to the report by UNESCO (2020), the closure of educational institution has impacted over 91% of the world's student population. The ripple effect of this pandemic has been felt by both the educators and students in primary, secondary, colleges and universities as academic sessions were disrupted after the corona virus was declare a public health emergency. This has left many students and educators in a rude shock as some of these institutions were at the point of preparing for examination, admitting of freshmen, beginning of a new semester, amongst others. The **covid-19 pandemic** has affected educational systems worldwide, leading to the near-total closures of schools, universities and colleges (UNESCO, 2020). Many educational institutions around the world including Africa have resulted in looking for ways to cope and adapt to academic changes as a result of this pandemic.

Africa has taken the corona virus pandemic seriously only in the last few months, following the confirmation of its several cases reported around the world. As a result, initial responses included the closure of schools beginning in mid-March (Tamrat & Teferra, 2020). For example, in developing country like Nigeria, the closure of schools, colleges, and universities by the Federal and State government was an urgent need of the current situation which prevailed in most States. Nigerian government started taking preventive decisions on COVID-19 just after WHO recognized it as a pandemic disease. However, the shutdown of most schools and colleges in Lagos, Kano and FCT, in which the academic year was interrupted, has tremendous effect on the academic syllabus. Schools had to concentrate on scheduling their final examinations before the lockdown commencement. For example, the West Africa Secondary School Certificate Examinations (WASSCE) has been suspended across Anglophone West African countries due to the threat of the corona virus.

In East Africa, Tanzania and other countries in the region have postponed all national examinations earlier scheduled to begin on the 4th of May 2020 (Mustapha, 2020). The South Africa Department of Basic Education also postponed indefinitely examinations earlier scheduled for the 26th of March this year (Mustapha, 2020). In Nigeria, the Federal government announced the indefinite postponement of the 2020 West African Examination Council and the National Examinations Council (NECO) due to the covid-19 pandemic (Mustapha, 2020). 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 have access to the internet, and poor connectivity, exorbitant costs and frequent power interruptions are serious challenges.

On the other hand, extended interrupted education that disengages students from the learning process has the potential cost of reversing gains in learning results. An even

higher cost comes from the disengagement of students with learning challenges (academic, socio-economic, students with special/diverse educational needs or persons with disabilities) who may not effectively cope with remote learning strategies or cannot access the information. Where school feeding is the norm, closed schools might preclude students getting school meals unless alternative arrangements are in place. In secondary schools, longer school closures could result in an increased risk of dropout for youth, particularly from lower income groups. School closings also impact labor supply as they increase the burden on parents, who need to stay home or find new arrangements if children have to stay at home (even worse if playground and children centers are closed) (UNESCO, 2020).

The affected schools and institutions had to cancel, postpone or reschedule exam dates, and other school activities, so as to curtail the spread of the virus (Aiyedun, 2020). Increasingly, many educational institutions across the continent are setting up institution-wide task forces to mitigate the impact of the pandemic. Some are striving to participate in high-end research towards finding a cure for the virus. Many are attempting to shift to online teaching and learning through institutional, national, continental and international initiatives (Tamrat & Teferra, 2020). Most plans are only at their initial stages of implementation and call for ramping up current efforts, forging wider cooperation and sharing experiences and resources across the whole continent. Two major issues that hold serious implications in the fight against the pandemic are online teaching, which is now championed as an alternative form of educational delivery, and the economic impact of the pandemic on African higher education (Tamrat & Teferra, 2020).

The COVID-19 pandemic is revolutionizing digital and online education globally but students in rural and underserved communities in African country like Nigeria and many others are being left behind as they are not equipped to adapt or transition to the new methods of learning (Amorighoye, 2020). Poor budgetary allocation, corruption and unpreparedness are contributing factors to the inability of many institutions to embrace continuous teaching and learning during the global COVID-19 pandemic in Nigeria and Africa at large (Adeoye, Adanikin & Adanikin, 2020).

The attempt at the management of the Covid-19 pandemic is disrupting global education. The closure of schools and universities across 184 countries have sent home 1.5 billion students, representing more than 90% of the world's students (UNESCO, 2020). Since the pandemic began, a large proportion of African schools and universities have closed their doors. However, these closures do not mean that teaching activities have come to a complete cessation. Whether public, private or supported by associations, all institutions are trying to do their best to provide transitional solutions so that pupils can continue their schooling and so that the precious learning time is not lost for good (UNESCO, 2020). In countries such as Nigeria, education should be viewed as a high government priority.

Help in increasing awareness of the pressing need for the country's children to be educated, especially those from low-income families, will benefit the country's economy in years to come. Aid provided in this direction can be viewed as an investment in human capital; the more educated a country is, the more productive. Of all sustainable missions surely the most pressing is to improve lives, and there's no better way to do so than proper and sound education for all.

However, the COVID-19 pandemic ravaging the world has taken its effects on many sectors of the economy especially in African countries. This effect is also evident in African countries educational sector for example Nigeria where the academic session has been halted by the Federal Ministry of Education in order to curtail the spread of this virus in educational institutions (Adeoye, Adanikin & Adanikin, 2020). Although, this decision came as a shock to many educational institutes as many of these institutions were not prepared for the sudden disruption, others have seen it as a step in the right direction. African countries are returning to the drawing board to develop strategies to rescue their education sector which is being damaged by the deadly virus. It is against this backdrop this study seeks to examine strength and weaknesses of African Education systems in the Management of COVID-19.

COVID-19 pandemic has resulted to total closure of schools in about 192 countries all over the world with 91.4% of the total number of enrolled learners in these countries temporarily forced out of school (UNESCO, 2020). It is reported that over 1.6 billion learners across the world are currently compelled to stay out of schools as social distancing is being enforced locally and regionally around the world in order to contain the spread of Corona virus disease. Report shows that lockdown of schools is more prominent in some continents such as Africa, South America and in some parts of Europe (UNESCO, 2020). It can be visualized that Africa and South America are the continents which educational systems have been mostly affected by the pandemic as more than 98% of teaching and learning cannot be conducted due to country-wide lockdown in these continents. The closure of schools in North America, Australia and Northern Europe is relatively lower when compared to other parts of the world and this can be attributed to the fact that lockdown of schools is only effective in localized areas where the spread of the disease is more prevalent. Besides pharmaceutical interventions and other preventive measures, social distancing has been the most effective way of minimizing the spread of COVID-19. The effective implementation of social distancing demands that schools be closed for as long as each government is certain that the pandemic has been curtailed enough for the safety of learners and teachers.

Long periods of learning would be lost for as long as the closures lasted. Kekić et al. (2016) reports that schools losing long periods of learning due to disease outbreak can result to both temporal and permanent damage on educational system. The temporal

damage include disruption of curriculum which could take a long time to be recovered while the permanent damage include the fact that some learners may never return to school even when the disease outbreak is ended. Though the confirmed cases of COVID-19 and related deaths in African countries have been low compared to other continents, it is envisaged that the education of an African child would be the most affected post COVID-19 era due to economic and technological backwardness of most African countries (UNESCO, 2020).

Over 209 million students in Africa have been affected by COVID-19 pandemic (UNESCO, 2020). African continent is therefore the second most affected continent in the world after Asia that has over 590 million affected children. Country-wide lockdown was implemented in South Africa on the midnight of Thursday 26 March 2020 and has resulted to over 14 million learners in the country being temporarily out of school. It is reported that over 13 million learners who are enrolled in schools from pre-primary to high school are affected while over 1.1 million students enrolled in tertiary institutions have been affected (UNESCO, 2020). Schools in Nigeria and other African countries were already on holiday by the time lockdown became effective in the country but however, the department of education had previously designed academic intervention programmes to be implemented during the holiday. Such programmes were usually planned such that classes would be conducted in schools during school holidays and even on weekends. The rules and regulation for social distancing therefore cannot allow the Department of Education implement the pre-designed holiday school programmes as schools are mandatorily closed. Due to the uncertainties surrounding the containment of COVID-19 in Nigeria and other African Countries and across the world, it is envisaged that social distancing could still be implemented beyond January 2021. Previously conducted research on recovery after outbreaks suggests that such practices as social distancing during outbreaks tend to continue even after the outbreak (Kekić & Miladinović, 2016). Social cohesion post outbreak era takes time to become normal. Therefore, social cohesion would still affect teaching and learning post COVID-19 era. Teachers and learners would not dispel off social distancing immediately and fear would definitely prevent students from interacting with each other. This situation would have negative impact on immediate curriculum recovery.

Without a doubt, the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic has adversely affected all aspects of human lives around the world, with education being one of the hardest hit sectors. The pandemic has to date caused the disruption of learning to over a billion students globally. Most schools have been closed due to the pandemic. Although, while schools are closed, many Africa countries have turned to distance learning as a means of mitigating for lost time in continuing education services but due to inaccessibility to the internet, poor connectivity, exorbitant costs and frequent power interruptions are serious challenges weaken the African educational system in the management of COVID-19. However, the situation is depressing as the closure of schools has now further compounded the situation

with remarkable impacts on students, teachers, families and far-reaching economic and social consequences. It is against this backdrop this study seeks to examine strength and weaknesses of African education systems in the management of COVID-19.

Research Questions

1. What is the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on African Education systems?
2. What is the strength of African Education systems in the management of COVID-19?
3. Are there any weaknesses in African Education systems in the management of COVID-19?
4. What are the possible solutions to the weaknesses in African Education systems in the management of COVID-19.

Methodology

The study adopted non experimental design involving descriptive research of the survey type for the study. The study was based on quantitative data which were statistically analyzed. The population of the study is made up of all secondary school teachers in south-west, Nigeria. A sum of three hundred (300) secondary school teachers was purposively selected from twenty (20) secondary schools in south-west Nigeria. Among the twenty schools, four (4) secondary schools were randomly selected from five (5) states in south-west Nigeria. Fifteen (15) teachers each were randomly selected from twenty (20) secondary schools in south-west Nigeria. The instrument used for data collection is a self-developed questionnaire titled "Strength, Weaknesses, African Education Systems and Management of COVID-19 Questionnaire (SWAFEMCQ)." The instrument is made up of four sections consisting twenty-seven (29) items designed in line with the title of this study. Section A of the questionnaire was on bio-data information such as, respondent's gender, age, and academic qualification. Responses was based four-point scale, of "Strongly Agree" (SA=4), "Agree" (A=3), "Disagree" (D=2) and "Strongly Disagree" (D=1). The instrument was given to three experienced secondary school teachers to assess the validity before it was administer to twenty teachers of the population sample who were not involved in the real study. Their responses were analyzed and a reliability coefficient of 0.81 was obtained. The instrument for the study was distributed to the respondents. The instrument was retrieved immediately after they have been correctly filled by the respondents. Data were analyzed using frequency count, percentage, mean, standard deviation.

Results

Table 1:

Analysis of the **impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on African education systems**

| S/N | Items | SA | A | D | SD | Mean | XD |
|-----|---|-------------|--------------|------------|-------------|------|------|
| 1. | Confusion and stress for teachers | 68 34.0% | 115 57.5% | 2 1.0% | 15 7.5% | 3.18 | .788 |
| 2. | Parents unprepared for distance and home schooling | 60 30.0 | 119 59.5% | 10 5.0% | 11 5.5% | 3.14 | .744 |
| 3. | Challenges creating, maintaining, And improving distance learning | 68 34.0% | 110 55.0% | 9 4.5% | 13 6.5% | 3.17 | .788 |
| 4. | Interrupted learning | 92 46.0% | 87 43.5% | 7 3.5% | 14 7.0% | 3.29 | .835 |
| 5. | Unintended strain on health-care systems | 82 41.0% | 90 45.0% | 7 3.5% | 21 10.5% | 3.17 | .918 |
| 6 | Calendared assessments and examinations that determine admission or advancement to new education levels are thrown into Disarray when schools close | 69 34.5% | 110 55.0% | 13 6.5% | 8 4.0% | 3.20 | .730 |
| 7 | Rise in dropout rates | 77 38.7% | 109 54.5% | 11 5.5% | 3 1.5% | 3.30 | .642 |
| 8 | Children and youth are deprived opportunities for growth and Development | 70 35.0% | 106 53.0% | 14 7.0% | 10 .0% | 3.18 | .768 |

Table 1 shows the analysis of the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on African Education systems. Majority of the respondents agreed that; it brought confusion and stress for teachers (91.5%), that parents were unprepared for distance and home schooling (89.5%), that it created challenges, maintaining, and improving distance learning(89.0%), that learning were interrupted(89.5%), that COVID-19 brought unintended strain on health-care systems (86.0%), calendared assessments and examinations that determine admission or advancement to new education levels are thrown into disarray when schools closed (89.5%),that COVID-19 brought rise in dropout rates (93.2%), that children and youth are deprived opportunities for growth and development(88.0%).

Table 2:
 Analysis on the strength of African education systems in the management of COVID-19

| S/N | Items | SA | A | D | SD | Mean | XD |
|-----|---|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----------|
| 1. | Education interventions can support prevention and recovery of public health while mitigating the impact On students and learning. | 122 | 104 | 12 | 62 | 2.951 | .129 |
| | | 40.7% | 34.7% | 4.0% | 20.7% | 3.07 | .686 |
| 2. | Enhancing preparedness while keeping schools open using the education system's infrastructure and human resources to address the spread of infections in communities | 68 | 197 | 22 | 13 | | |
| | | 22.7% | 65.7% | 7.3% | 4.3% | | |
| 3. | Limiting physical contact by reducing social and extra-curricular activities | 87 | 138 | 63 | 12 | 3.00 | .814 |
| | | 29.0% | 46.0% | 21.0% | 4.0% | | |
| 4. | Selective closing of schools by choosing to isolate treatment areas | 99 | 154 | 24 | 23 | 3.09 | .842 |
| | | 33.0% | 51.3% | 8.0% | 7.7% | | |
| 5. | Using remote learning and education resources to mitigate loss of learning | 99 | 161 | 13 | 27 | 3.11 | .851 |
| | | 33.0% | 53.7% | 4.3% | 9.0% | | |
| 6 | Educational administrators and policy makers can use this COVID-19 pandemic as an opportunity to introduce new learning modes that can reach everyone, to prepare for emergencies, and to make the Education System more resilient. | | 73 | 132 | 56 | 39 | 2.79 .954 |
| | | | 24.3% | 44.0% | 18.7% | 13.0% | |

Table 2 shows the analysis on the strength of African Education systems in the Management of COVID-19. Majority of the respondents agreed that; Education interventions can support prevention and recovery of public health while mitigating the impact on students and learning. (75.4%), enhancing preparedness while keeping schools open using the education system's infrastructure and human resources to address the spread of infections in communities (80.4%), limiting physical contact by reducing social and extra-curricular activities (75%), selective closing of schools by choosing to isolate treatment areas (84.3%), using remote learning and education resources to mitigate loss of learning (86.7%), educational administrators and policy makers can use this COVID-19 pandemic as an opportunity to introduce new learning modes that can reach everyone, to prepare for emergencies, and to make the Education system more resilient(68.3%).

Table 3:
 Analysis of the weaknesses of African education systems in the management of COVID-19

| S/N | Items | SA | A | D | SD | Mean | XD |
|-----|---|-------------|--------------|------------|-------------|------|------|
| 1. | The unhealthy relationship between teachers and students | 86 43.0% | 88 44.5% | 4 2.0% | 21 10.5% | 3.20 | .913 |
| 2. | Lack of extracurricular activities | 63 31.5% | 118 58.0% | 7 3.5% | 12 6.0% | 3.16 | .753 |
| 3. | Incompatibility of course content with the required skill set | 63 31.5% | 117 58.5% | 8 4.0% | 12 6.0% | 3.16 | .758 |
| 4. | Unable to satisfy the student needs due to certain flaws in the course content | 60 30.0% | 124 62.0% | 4 2.0% | 12 6.0% | 3.16 | .733 |
| 5. | inaccessibility to the internet, poor connectivity, exorbitant costs and frequent power interruptions | 61 30.5% | 122 61.0% | 10 5.0% | 7 3.5% | 3.19 | .681 |
| 6 | Poor budgetary allocation | 60 30.0% | 126 63.0% | 10 5.0% | 4 2.0% | 3.21 | .623 |
| 7 | Corruption and unpreparedness | 65 32.5% | 123 61.5% | 2 1.0% | 10 5.0% | 3.22 | .701 |

Table 3 shows the analysis on the weaknesses of African Education systems in the Management of COVID-19. It can be seen from the above table that majority of the respondents agreed that; there is unhealthy relationship between teachers and students (87.5%), lack of extracurricular activities(89.5%), incompatibility of course content with the required skill set (90.0%), unable to satisfy the student needs due to certain flaws in the course contents (92.0%), inaccessibility to the internet, poor connectivity, exorbitant costs and frequent power interruptions (91.5%), poor budgetary allocation(93.0%), corruption and unpreparedness (94.0%), are the weaknesses of African Education systems in the Management of COVID-19.

Table 4:
 Analysis on the possible solutions to weaknesses of African education systems in the management of COVID-19

| S/N | Items | SA | A | D | SD | Mean | XD |
|-----|--|-------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|------|------|
| 1. | Proper school infrastructure in the form of proper toilet facilities and Classrooms | 37 18.5% | 92 46.0% | 50 25.0% | 21 10.5% | 2.73 | .885 |
| 2. | Observance of social distancing inside the classroom and in courtyards | 25 12.5% | 100 50.0% | 56 28.0% | 19 9.5% | 2.66 | .818 |
| 3. | Reduction of class sizes | 27 13.5% | 113 56.5% | 42 21.0% | 18 9.0% | 2.75 | .818 |
| 4. | Provision of soap, sanitizers and masks | 33 16.5% | 112 56.5% | 51 25.5% | 4 2.0% | 2.87 | .697 |
| 5. | Screening of learners, teachers and support personnel | 26 13.0% | 114 57.0% | 55 27.5% | 5 2.5% | 2.81 | .685 |
| 6. | An online digital platform | 35 17.5% | 115 57.5% | 48 24.0% | 2 1.0% | 2.92 | .671 |
| 7. | Strengthening states radio and television education programs | 27 13.5% | 110 55.0% | 60 30.0% | 3 1.5% | 2.81 | .678 |
| 8. | Printed take-home materials for students: activity books, worksheets and assessment cards. | 39 19.5% | 130 65.0% | 20 10.0% | 11 5.5% | 2.98 | .719 |

Table 4 shows the analysis on the possible solutions to weaknesses of African Education systems in the Management of COVID-19. Majority of the respondents agreed that; proper school infrastructure in the form of proper toilet facilities and classrooms is the possible solutions to weaknesses of African Education systems in the Management of COVID-19 (64.5%), observance of social distancing inside the classroom and in courtyards (62.5%), reduction of class sizes (70.0%), provision of soap, sanitizers and masks (73.0%), screening of learners, teachers and support personnel (70.0%), provision of online digital platform (75.0%) and strengthening states radio and television education programmes (68.5%) printed take-home materials for students: activity books, worksheets and assessment cards (84.5%).

Discussion

The study revealed that confusion and stress for teachers, parents unpreparedness for distance and home schooling, challenges of creating, maintaining, and improving distance learning, interrupted learning, unintended strain on health-care systems, more so, calendared assessments and examinations that determine admission or advancement to new education levels are thrown into disarray when schools close, rise in dropout rates, children and youth are deprived opportunities for growth and development are the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on African Education systems. The finding is in agreement with UNESCO, (2020) visualized that Africa and South America are the continents which educational systems have been mostly affected by the pandemic as more than 98% of teaching and learning cannot be conducted due to country-wide lockdown in these continents. These findings also corroborated with Kekić and Miladinović (2016) reported that schools losing long periods of learning due to disease outbreak can result to both temporal and permanent damage on educational system

The study also revealed that majority of the respondents agreed that to manage the impact of COVID-19, there is need to prepare, cope, and plan for recovery in order to strengthen African Education systems. This finding is in conformity with UNESCO, (2020) which stated that public, private or supported associations, and all institutions needs to do their best to provide transitional solutions so that pupils can continue their schooling and so that the precious learning time is not lost for good in order to strengthening African Education systems in the management of COVID-19.

The study also showed that majority of the respondents confirmed that unhealthy relationship between teachers and students and lack of extracurricular activities, incompatibility of course content with the required skill set, being unable to satisfy the student needs due to certain flaws in the course content, inaccessibility to the internet, poor connectivity, exorbitant costs and frequent power interruptions, poor budgetary allocation corruption and unpreparedness are the weaknesses of African Education systems in the Management of COVID-19. Similar result was reported by Adeoye, Adanikin and Adanikin, (2020) that poor budgetary allocation, corruption and unpreparedness are contributing factors to the inability of many institutions to embrace continuous teaching and learning during the global COVID-19 pandemic in Nigeria and Africa at large

The study further revealed that majority of the respondents posited that proper school infrastructure in the form of proper toilet facilities and classrooms is the possible solutions to weaknesses of African Education systems in the management of COVID-19, observance of social distancing inside the classroom and in courtyards, reduction of class sizes, provision of soap, running water, sanitizers and masks, screening of learners, teachers and support personnel, an online digital platform, and strengthening states radio

and television education programmes, also printed take-home materials for students such as activity books, worksheets and assessment cards are the possible solutions to weaknesses of African Education systems in the management of COVID-19. The result obtained also lend support to the works of Mahaye, (2020) who observed that blended learning enhanced learning regardless of distance and can be effectively implemented during disease outbreak such as corona virus pandemic and that the African Education system can only be effectively implemented in a digitally developed society.

Conclusion

The study which examined strength and weaknesses of African Education systems in the management of COVID-19 has found that confusion and stress for teachers, parents unpreparedness for distance and home schooling, challenges of creating, maintaining, and improving distance learning, interrupted learning, unintended strain on health-care systems, calendar assessments and examinations that determine admission or advancement to new education levels are thrown into disarray when schools close, rise in dropout rates, children and youth are deprived opportunities for growth and development are the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on African Education systems. The study also revealed that, to manage the impact of COVID-19, there is need to prepare, cope, and plan for recovery in order to strengthen African Education systems. The study also showed that unhealthy relationship between teachers and students and lack of extracurricular activities, incompatibility of course content with the required skill set, unable to satisfy the student needs due to certain flaws in the course content, inaccessibility to the internet, poor connectivity, exorbitant costs and frequent power interruptions, poor budgetary allocation corruption and unpreparedness are the weaknesses of African Education systems in the management of COVID-19. The study further posited that proper school infrastructure in the form of proper toilet facilities and classrooms is the possible solutions to weaknesses of African Education systems in the management of COVID-19, observance of social distancing inside the classroom and in courtyards, reduction of class sizes, provision of soap, sanitizers and masks, screening of learners, teachers and support personnel, provision of online digital platform, and strengthening states radio and television education programmes, also printed take-home materials for students: activity books, worksheets and assessment cards are the possible solutions to weaknesses of African Education systems in the management of COVID-19.

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made

1. Digital equipment need to be installed in all public schools to ensure equitable accessibility of technology-based learning by all students
2. Education sector actors should ensure a safe return to quality learning for learners, teachers and school community through preparedness activities as back to school campaign, school kit distribution and classroom rehabilitation.

3. There is need for self-learning and family/community-based education which are considered key elements in confronting the constraints that have arisen due to the impact of the COVID19
4. Education sector partners should implement programmes in almost all accessible LGAs in North East.
5. Children in rural and underserved communities should be equipped with digital learning tools to adapt to new methods of learning.

References

- Adeoye, I. A., Adanikin, A. F., & Adanikin, A. (2020). Covid-19 and e-learning: Nigeria tertiary education system experience. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Applied Science (IJRIAS)*, 5(5), 28-31.
- Aiyedun, G. T. (2020). Effect of covid-19 on educational system in Nigeria. Retrieved on May 5th 2020 from https://www.Researchgate.Net/Publication/341549578_Effect_Of_Covid-19_On_Educational_System_In_Nigeria
- Amorighoye, T. (2020). Covid-19 has exposed the education divide in Nigeria. This is how we can close it. Retrieved on June 2nd 2020 from <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/06/education-nigeria-covid19-digital-divide/>
- Bester, G., & Brand, L., (2013). The effect of technology on learner attention and achievement in the classroom. *South African Journal of Education*, 33(2), 1-15.
- Goldberg E., (2020). "Parents are struggling to cope as coronavirus worries shut down schools, leaving kids scared and confused". *Business Insider*. Retrieved 9 March 2020 from <https://www.pulse.com.gh/bi/tech/parents-are-struggling-to-cope-as-coronavirus-worries-shut-down-schools-leaving-kids/y51hq7z>
- Kekić, D. & Miladinović, S., (2016). Functioning of educational system during an outbreak of acute infectious diseases. Retrieved from: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/309728224>.
- Mahaye N. E., (2020). The impact of Covid-19 pandemic on education: navigating forward the pedagogy of blended learning. Retrieved April 2020 from <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/340899662>

Mustapha, T. (2020). Effects of covid-19 on the education system. Retrieved on May 4th 2020 from: <https://www.von.gov.ng/effects-of-covid-19-on-the-education-system/>

Tamrat W. & Teferra D., (2020). Covid-19 poses a serious threat to higher education. Retrieved April 9th 2020 from <https://www.universityworldnews.com/post.php?story=20200409103755715>

UN News. (2020). Coronavirus update: 290 million students now stuck at home Retrieved 7 March 2020 from <https://news.un.org/en/story/2020/03/1058791>

UNESCO (2020) Covid-19 educational disruption and response". Retrieved 2020-03-17 From <https://en.unesco.org/covid19/educationresponse>

UNESCO (2020). Informations de l'<https://en.unesco.org/news/unesco-launches-codethecurve-hackathon-develop-digital-solutions-response-covid-19>