

IMPACT OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

Covid-19 Pandemic is one of the contemporary challenges that the world is facing today and indeed Nigeria. It is a highly infectious disease with different symptoms and mode of transmission is either through direct or indirect contact. Although the corona virus crisis has brought to the fore the critical importance of water, sanitation and hygiene for protecting human health, it has and is doing more harm owing to the fact that it has negatively affected all segment of the human lives, society, and economic development in Nigeria. The pandemic has led to closure of schools, borders, cities and towns, causes educational inequality and economic crises, impacted children's learning, performance and education, affected consumption, investment and export, increases government expenditure on fiscal policy and health care, affected health, tourism, religion, gig economy among others. It is concluded that the pandemic is affecting the populace either directly or indirectly. It is recommended that people should adhere to the general preventive measures directed by the national, state, health providers and national centre for Disease control to curb the pandemic for sustainable national development.

Keywords: Covid-19 Pandemic, Socio-economic development.

Introduction

Covid-19 pandemic is one of the contemporary challenges that the world is facing and indeed, Nigeria. We are now operating in a new world with greater uncertainties about future. It is a viral disease caused by an emerging virus strain, otherwise known as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 (SARS-COV-2). It is a pandemic as declared by the World Health Organization. The World Health Organization on February 11th, 2020 named this new virus as Covid-19. It is caused by new corona viruses which are a large family of viruses that are common in people and many different species of animals including camels, cattle, cats and birds and spread between people such as with SARS COV 2. The spread started in China where the pandemic was introduced as pneumonia of unknown causes before the laboratory investigations and a series of reports have recognised the attackers as a different strain of coronaviruses. Today, while the spread started to decrease in China simultaneously and the pandemic seems to be almost in control, the number of new cases has dramatically increased in some countries such as Iran, South Korea, Italy, and Nigeria among others (Charles, 2021).

The rapid spread emphasises the need for an aggressive response and improved efforts to contain the infection and protect citizen in all countries. Unfortunately, the disease continues to spread worldwide at an alarming rate, impacting the national development, demanding decisive and stringent actions to curb the scourge.

The virus according to Neminebor (2021) has spread at unprecedented speeds across borders, ultimately affecting 84.5 million people and contributing over 1.84 million deaths and still counting. Unfortunately, those hardest hit have been the most elderly population, frontline healthcare workers, and person with underlying diseases such as hypertension, heart diseases, diabetes, just to mention a few.

Although many people are aware of the existence of the Covid-19 pandemic, but not all are aware of some issues related to it. It is against this background that the article is written to examine some issues such as symptoms, mode of transmission, impacts of the pandemic on socio-economic development, general preventive measures and recommendation. Before the pandemic, the Nigeria Government had been grappling with weak recovery from the 2014 oil price shock among others. These constraining factors will aggravate the economic impact of the Covid-19 outbreak and make it more difficult for the government to weather the crisis. This means that Covid-19 has affected all spheres of live in Nigeria.

Global pandemic and their impacts

According to Anjorin, (2020) the world has experienced several epidemics posing serious threat to global public health, including 2002 severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) epidemic that caused 800 death out of about 8000 cases, the 2012 middle east respiratory (MERS) epidemic that caused 800 deaths out of 2500 cases, the 2014 Ebola outbreak with 28616 cases and 11310 deaths, and the current corona virus disease (Covid-19) pandemic with more than 35000 death out of over 730000 confirmed cases till now. Emerging infectious diseases continues to infect and reduce human populations. It has spread to more than 14 countries before it was officially declared as a pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO) on the 11th March, 2020. It have caused havoc among societies. Emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases are now occurring at unprecedented speed. The covid-19 pandemic has created the largest disruption on education systems in human history affecting nearly 1.6 billion learners in more than 200 countries. Closure of schools among others. According to Pokhrel and Chhetri (2021), mental health deteriorated in many countries.

Pandemic and Economic and social impacts

The economic and social impacts include social distancing, self-isolation and travel restrictions have led to a reduced workforce across all economic sectors and caused many jobs to be lost. Schools have closed down and the need for commodities and manufactured products have decreased. In contrast, the need for medical supplies has significantly increased. The pandemic triggered a health and fiscal response unprecedented in terms of speed and magnitude. It has affected the world Gross Domestic Products GDP growth massively (google 2022). It has clearly affected all areas of social and economic activity, both governments and non-governmental. Many experienced loss of earnings, reduction of working hours, closure of workplace and job loss, reduction in income and multidimensional child poverty in some places.

The response frame work in Nigeria

Overall, Nigeria response strategies were aimed at suppressing the transmission of Covid-19 by testing all suspected cases, isolating all suspected cases, they determine the extent of the outbreak, in addition, the emergence of a strengthened Nigeria Centre for Disease Control

(NCDC) has enhanced diagnostic and surveillance capacity in the country (Dan-Nwafor, Ochu and Ihekweazu, 2020).

The symptoms of Covid-19

The symptoms appear within 2 – 14 days after exposure to the virus according to National Primary Health Care Development Agency (2021), but the average incubation period is 5days. The major symptoms are fever, cough, sore throat and tiredness. Some individuals may experience other symptoms like malaria, difficulty in breathing, aches, pains, nasal congestion, diarrhoea, Nausea, loss of smell and taste. Some other symptoms include muscle aches, chills, runny nose, pink eye, vomiting or rash. Some may present without symptoms.

Mode of transmission

The Covid-19 is a highly infectious disease. Those infected and are showing sign and symptoms mentioned above are major sources for spreading the virus. However, people who have been infected but are not showing symptoms of the disease can also transmit the virus. Charles (2021) and Centre for Disease Control (2019), viewed that the route of transmission is either directly from person to person or through human to human transmission or indirectly from infected materials to humans. This occurs when persons touch susceptible mucosal surface such as their eyes, nose or mouth with the same hand.

The virus is very large and transmission is through droplets. When an infected person coughs or sneezes, a person in close contact with such a person can inhale the virus in the droplets. The droplets can also fall and contaminate objects which an uninfected person can pick on his or hand when she or he touches them.

Effects of Covid-19 pandemic on socio-economic development

Today, the coronavirus crisis has brought to the fore the critical importance of water, sanitation and hygiene for protecting human health. It has affected all segments of the human life, society, personal lives, our lives and people's lives or the nation at large negatively.

- a. **The pandemic has led to school close down:** The Federal Ministry of Education in Nigeria shutdown and allow students to go home. Although the school closure varies from place to place, persons to persons, the impact may be positive or negative.
 - ✓ The Covid-19 pandemic has affected education throughout the world including Nigeria causing schools, colleges and universities to close. It affected revenue generation in higher institutions.
 - ✓ Affected literacy foundation: it has affected literacy foundation and causes disruptions to education across Nigeria.
 - ✓ Educational Inequality: Educational inequality was a pre-existing condition in Nigeria which was worsened by school closures. In Nigeria, school opportunity is correlated to income level and public schools differ from private schools in the populations they serve. While private schools are doing online classes, government schools do not. Therefore, kids in rural and undeserved communities are placed at disadvantage.
 - ✓ It has impacted children's education: this is because children were not going to school and receiving teaching during the school closure. On the part of the teachers, it negatively influences student's satisfaction.
 - ✓ It has impacted student's performances: It has impacted on education because the calendars of events have been disrupted as well as the performance of students. The recent pandemic in 2020 has affected senior secondary students performance in science

education in Nigeria and veterinary medical students. The impact was more severe for disadvantaged children and their families.

- ✓ Impacted learning: majority of student will not be learning which has exposed students to a declined standard of education.

b. Lock down: the lock down has caused economic crises and idleness

- ✓ It has affect the component of aggregate demand such as:
- ✓ Declining consumption through: restrictions of movement such as social distancing, poor expectation of future income for gig economy and informal sector, erosion of wealth due to fall in the value of assets such as stocks.
- ✓ Declining investment: uncertainty discourages forward looking decisions and poor expectations of future profitability of investment spending.
- ✓ Increasing government expenditure: the government expenditure has increased through expansionary fiscal policy and increases in health care expenditure.
- ✓ Declining total exports: the pandemic has cause disruption in supply chain for exports, border closure to nonessential trade and limited markets for exports due to fall in global demand.
- ✓ It has impacted business, causes food system and poverty
- ✓ It has disrupted lives, daily lives and caused economic insecurity.
- ✓ It has negatively affected public, religious, and households activities or programmes.
- ✓ Affected health: It has affected health because most people infected will experience mild to moderate respiratory illness
- ✓ Economic consequence: it has affected income due to premature deaths, workspace, absenteeism, reduction in productivity and income.
- ✓ Affected women and girls: (Neminebor, 2021) observed that women and girls are being hit hard by the Covid- 19 pandemic because, women are likely to take on most additional work owing to the closure of schools and day-care centres. They are also on the front-lines in fighting the coronavirus since women account for nearly 70% of health and social workers globally.
- ✓ The impact of the pandemic on accounting profession has manifested different perspectives ranging from successes, failures, opportunities and threats which put huge responsibility on professionals.
- ✓ Lost by the tourism and hospitality sectors as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic not only in Nigeria, but worldwide. Over 770, 000 jobs according to Punch (2021) were lost in the sector in Nigeria alone and women accounted for 54% of all jobs in travel and tourism.
- ✓ The effect of Covid-19 pandemic has been so destabilizing that they threaten to halt or ever reverse progress toward other goals. Shuaibu (2021) opined that it has caused abrupt profound changes thereby slowing the economy further. It is hurting for workers in informal employment, the self-employed, daily wage earners and workers in sectors at the highest risk of disruption.

Conclusion

Based on the article, Covid-19 pandemic has impacted on sustainable national development. Although the pandemic has encouraged personal hygiene, but affected aggregate of demand and all the segments of the population in Nigeria. Therefore, for sustainable national development to be achieved, all Nigerians should adhere strictly to the general preventive measures emphasised by the World Health Organization (WHO), National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC). Their health provider, their employee, their National Public Health Authority

or their employee for accurate information on pandemic in order to curb the scourge and the negative impact on sustainable development. The public should also know that whether they are in a high or low risk area, or have not been in contact with an infected patient or risk of infection is slow, the pandemic is affecting the populace either directly or indirectly as well as sustainable national development.

General preventive measures

To reduce the risk of spread of Covid-19, all members of the public are advised to adhere to the following preventive measures:

- Wash hands frequently with soap under running water or use an alcohol-based sanitizer if water is not available.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with anyone showing symptoms of respiratory illness. Maintain at least 2 metres distance between yourself and anyone coughing or repeatedly sneezing.
- Cover your nose and mouth properly with tissue paper when sneezing or coughing and dispose tissue properly immediately after use. You may also cough into your elbow if a tissue is not available.
- Obey national and state directive on cancelling, avoid large gathering, stay at home in areas where lockdowns have been directed, social restrictions and self-isolation to break the chain of Covid-19 transmission.
- Regarding the community level, people are required to keep social and physical distancing, avoid swarming places, and delay or cancel the unnecessary trips.
- The respiratory masks are restricted for health workers by World Health Organization; while healthy people are recommended to wear cloth masks when they show up outside or in public places, surgical masks should be used for patient with respiratory symptoms.
- Avoid mingling with people or congregate if you feel unwell with symptoms like fever, cough, sneezing or difficulty in breathing.
- Get vaccinated at the various designated vaccination centres nationwide.
- Clean all frequently touched surfaces such as door knobs, phones and tables with soap and water, diluted bleach or other disinfectants regularly.
- Approved or expected cases should be isolated at home where ventilation and sunlight should be allowed. A mask is required to be worn by the patients and care providers while they are in contact or in the same room with patients and must wash their hands frequently with soap and water or use hand sanitizer at least every 15 – 20 minutes.
- Staying safe by practicing regular hygiene, measuring your temperature, do not panic, stay vigilant, do not paddle rumours, stay informed about latest development on Covid-19, take vitamin C daily to boost your immune systems and ensure that people around you follow good respiratory hygiene as well.
- Stakeholders should continue to encourage all activities that foster environment that would allow women thrive in the work place.
- Operators in tourism and hospitality industry in Nigeria should adopt safe travel and implement protocols that would help travellers feel safe when they travel and its effects across the country. Despite progress, many people still lack basic services, immediate

action should be taken to improve access to water, sanitation and hygiene services is required to prevent infection and curtail the spread of COVID- 19.

- The Covid-19 pandemic is highlighting the urgent need for affordable and reliable energy for hospital and health facilities to treat patients, for communities to pump clean water and access vital information.
- There is also the need for reliable and affordable electricity, safety awareness on Covid-19 and provision of assistance by United Nation International Children's Education Fund (UNICEF).

There should be continuous emphasis on frequent hand hygiene, environmental cleaning and disinfection, maintaining social distance, avoidance of close contact, overcrowded places, self-isolation if you are coming from high risk area or show symptoms of COVID and wearing of face masks.

Wash your hands after using the rest room, after leaving a public place, after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing, after handling your mask, after changing a diaper, after caring for sick one, after touching animals or pets.

Lastly, wear a face mask in public especially indoors or when physical distancing is not possible.

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