

INFLUENCE OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON SOCIAL SCIENCE EDUCATION; IMPLICATION FOR SUSTAINABLE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT BY

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Abstract

Corona Virus disease 2019 (COVID-19) which is originated in human, China in December, 2019 was declared as a pandemic by World Health Organization (WHO) on 11th of March, 2020 after it has spread to other parts of the world including Nigeria. It has also caused more than 171 countries of the world to close their educational institutions for several months in the year 2020. The impact of Covid-19 pandemic on institutions around the world is unprecedented, its scope and economic dimensions also means that it poses a major treats towards achieving the Nigeria sustainable goals (SDGs). This article therefore discusses the impact of Covid-19 on Social Science education system, its influence on sustainable development goals and their implementations, provided the four (4) ways social science education could ensure sustainability. The article concluded by sending a caution warning about the need to continue to put an emphasis on the four ways social science can, ensure sustainable development in Nigeria.

Keywords: *Social Science Education, Covid-19, Sustainable Development.*

Introduction

Social Studies education like any other discipline has its challenges, the COVID-19 Pandemic is one of the challenges. Covid-19 disease (2019) which is originated in Wuhan, China, in December, 2019, was declared a Pandemic by World Health Organization (WHO) on 11th of March, 2020 after it has spread to other parts of the world including Nigeria. Agbele and Oyelade (2020) conceptualize Covid-19 as viral pneumonia with symptoms such as dry cough, fever, sore throat, dyspnea, body pain and diarrhea. This disease emerged in late December 2019 in Wuhan, in Hubei province of China, and within three months, it had spread globally, prompting the World Health Organization (WHO) to declare Covid-19 a threat world health.

Covid-19 affects individuals of all ages, greater severity and mortality occur more among the aged population, that have other comorbidities such as hypertension, and other cardiovascular disease, or diabetics, cancer and other immune-compromising diseases (Jordan, 2020). It has also been observed that Covid-19 seems to affect males more than female (Jordan, 2020). Meanwhile children tend to exhibit milder symptoms of Covid-19. However, the reasons for this are not yet clear (Okuy, Sahin, Aguinada & Tasdogan, 2020).

The severe from Covid-19 occurs in three phases – viral, pulmonary and hyper-inflammatory phase, which can lead to severe Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome (ARDS), impaired cardiac function, and death. Thrombosis and coagulopathy is reported to complicate Covid-19 (Anyanwu, Festus, Nwobi, Jaja & Ogutta, 2020). Patients suffering from a severe form of Covid-19 often need to be incubated and place under a ventilator. The chance of survival following SARS-COV-2 infection for people > 69 years is – 95 percent in the absence of comorbid conditions, but this chance decreases considerably if the patient has underlying health conditions (Anyanwu, et al, 2020).

The economic and welfare of the people was suppose to be the primary purpose of government unfortunately, government on this constitutional responsibility has failed to provide food and safe environment for lives, properties and the conduct of business and economic activities during the pandemic. The alarming level of poverty in Nigeria has fuelled the crime rate and terrorists attacks in different parts of the country, leaving unpalatable consequences for the nation's economy and its growth to address the threat to national development and combat the increasing waves of poverty, the Federal Government in the 2013 budget made a huge allocation to economic development and the national assembly passed the sustainable bill in 2011 (Ewetan, 2013). Despite these efforts, the level of poverty in the country is still high, and confirmation of this is the low ranking of Nigeria in the Global market index (GPL, 2012). Despite the plethora of economic measures taken to address the daunting challenges of economic development in Nigeria, government efforts have not produced the desired positive result. It is against this background that this paper examines social studies education amidst Covid-19 Pandemic and sustainable national development in Nigeria.

Conceptual Clarification

a. Social Science Education

There is no globally accepted definition of the concept of social science among social science educators. The definitions of the discipline arise from the value placed on the concept and the role the social science educator(s) wasn't the concept to play. Some of the definitions in Nigeria are borne out of the desire of the authorities to use social science to address and resolve certain national economic problems and challenges in the society. This explains why the definitions of social science vary greatly between countries and among social educators. Egunjobi (2010) opines that social science is the study of man in his environment. Mezieobi (2011) affirms that it is a way of life, a practice of living effectively within one's immediate cultural environment and the modern world at large. It is the application of relevant knowledge and skills from social sciences for better living (Unimna, Adie & Essien, 2017).

Social Science education is a subject which uses integrated disciplinary approach in its study of man and his environment. Social Science education deals with methodologies, concepts ideas, principles, values, attitudes in other discipline to build up its own content and knowledge centered on man and his environment (Fadaciy, 2010). Fadacity (2010) concludes that social science education center on materials methods and concepts of the subjects which help to present a complete body of knowledge about man and his environment.

b. Sustainable Development

Sustainable development is the development that meets the need of present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. United Nations Assembly), (1987). The concept of Covid-19 pandemic has significantly been affecting societies all over the world at all levels. According to Baland (2015) said apart from the significant disruption of health systems, the high levels of infections and the death toll associated with them the world's economy, Achumba, Igbomereho and Akpa-Roharo (2013) also said that of social problems, these vary income losses due to the closure of many businesses, to problems and conflicts by social isolation.

c. Covid-19 Pandemic

Corona Virus disease 2019 (Covid-19) is illness caused by a novel corona virus now called severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome 2 (SARS-COV-2) formerly called (2019-COVID), which was first cases in Wuhan City Hubei Province China, (Agbele & Oyelad, 2020) it was initially reported to the WHO on December 31, 2019, on January 30, 2020, the WHO declared the Covid-19 outbreak a global health emergency. Oen March 11, 2020. The WHO declared Covid-19 a global pandemic, its first such designation since declaring HINI influenza a pandemic in 2009.

The Impact of Covid-19 on the Social Science Education

The closure of schools, colleges and universities does not only interrupt the teaching and learning around the world, it also coincide with the key assessment periods which many examinations have been postponed or cancelled as a result of Covid-19. However, this long period of school closure have significant consequences on skills acquisition and growth of school children. (Owusu and Hanson 2020). It is worthy to note that schooling provides adequate learning but when school close, children are deprived the opportunities for academic growth and development. The disadvantages of school closure is enormous for especially for under-privileged children who tend to have fewer or no educational opportunities outside school (Barret, 2020).

The impact of the lockdown on the wellbeing of communities through economic recession or job losses should not be overlooked (Nkengasong & Mankoula, 2020). Restricting the movement of people may have effect on the psychological wellbeing (Anyanwu et al., 2020) School closures will impede learning disproportionately in children from disadvantaged communities, leading to teenage pregnancy and gender-based violence in homes (Nkengasong, 2020). Hence, the WHO has outlined guidelines that need to be taken into consideration before

counselling people, as the measure could be counterproductive in the long run (Anyanwu et al, 2020).

While Nigeria took the right decision in shutting down states that constituted epicenters of Covid-19, and closing of borders in some state in its effort to curb the interstates spread of *Covid-19, of concern is the people who live in slums/internally displaced people's camps who often suffer from malnutrition, various non-communicable diseases and infectious disease (including HIV/AIDS) and tuberculosis. These are populations that are at a greater risk of Covid-19. Unfortunately, an estimated 1.9 million people are living with HIV in Nigeria, with 1.4 percent of these among Nigeria's youthful adults aged 15-49 years (Anyanwu et al., 2020), while a latest report showed that incidence of tuberculosis rose in Nigeria from 418,000 cases in 2019 to 429,000 cases in 2018, with tuberculosis treatment coverage stagnant at 24 percent (Adepoju, 2020) data from other respiratory diseases, including pneumococcal pneumonia and pulmonary tuberculosis, showed that people living with HIV with compromised immunity have significantly worse.

Influence of Social Sciences on the Response to COVID-19 Pandemic

- Work by social scientist on the effective acceptable delivery of mass vaccination programmes because they tell the masses the important things about human behaviours, relationship and institutions, social scientist can help deliver these outcomes (Agbel & Oyelade, 2020).
- Social Sciences don't produce much in the way of patentable widgets or indeed life-saving vaccine. (Emeka & Nyeche 2020) However, the analysis and insights they generate can and do underpin better-evidenced decisions and help guide and target insights from the social sciences. (Kin & Bonk 2019), social sciences can help policy makers like social development goals (SDGs) and colleagues solutions that people are able and crucially and willing to follow.
- *Covid-19 pandemic has devastated communities and economics around the world and profoundly changed the ways in which we live and work (Sambo, Oyelade & Abraham (2020) many of those effects will no doubt prove to be temporally but the pandemic has also created opportunities for to build back better society, once the immediate threat recedes.
- While medical science has been front and center of response to the virus itself, social science education have a powerful role to play in our recovery from it.
- Jordan, (2020), social sciences have an urgent role to play in ensuring that the voices of communities affected by an issue are represented in discussions of it, and that stakeholders are able to be involved in decisions that affect them. The impact of social science demonstrate the importance of having local knowledge which the social sciences can provide.
- a better post-recovery world will undoubtedly also benefit from the well-documented contribution that social sciences make in areas such as improving the resilience of our democratic and financial systems, exposing and addressing social and economic inequalities and promoting good mental health and more sustainable ways of living (Oyelade & Lateel, 2019).

Four (4) ways to sustainability

1. Collaboration: To fully realize these potential benefits, this may be a good time for social science to get their house in order by reducing some of the major barrier to impact. Rachael Middlemas (2016) thought about ways to increase support for collaboration with industries, communities and third sector organizations, as well as with policy makers. These diverse stakeholders have different timetables and are interested in output. An effective response from these stakeholders will also entail collaboration between and within academic disciplines, Social Development Goals (SDGs) colleagues. This support should be maintained and increased where appropriate to continue to leverage the insight that cross-disciplinary work yield. Rachael (2016), maintained that if we want communities, business and policy makers to recognize the contributions that social science make, we need to improve our visibility.

2. Visibility: The social science could further want to work to improve their visibility accessibility. Doing so might help increase activity on the demand side of the impact equation that is in terms of impact equation that is in terms of external partners coming to them for help. Nkengasong (2020) said however that it's especially problematic for social scientist because most people don't really know who they are or what they do. If we want communities, business and policy makers to recognize the contributions that social sciences make, we need to improve our visibility. An important step in that direction is the social sciences, humanities and arts for people and economy (SHAPE) launched recently by the British Academy is a way to level up the visibility of the society.

3. Credibility: We might further think about ways to maximize the credibility of social scientist in effort to sustainable development have taken a pounding in the last decades or so. Rachael (2016) said part of rehabilitating social science expertise is getting, better at tracking evaluating and describing the impact of social science research. It is typically hard to draw even correlative, let alone casual links between specific impact and specific social science research, making it hard to prove the native and value of the contribution that research makes. Ngumbi (2020) also affirm that getting better evaluating and communicating the benefits sustainability even when that cant be counted in pounds, shilling and pence,.

4. Incentives: Finally, it's time to think hard about how social scientist incentivize and reward busy communities to participate in all of these. The reputational and potential financial incentives are clear. For individual, though taking time away form to participate in knowledge exchange and impact often seems like a luxury they can ill afford proper provision of time expertise and resource to support their effort, and sincere celebration of their success determine the extent of social science participation in recovery. This can be expensive but it is an investment worth making for a better and more evidence base future.

Conclusion

The Covid-19 pandemic should remind us why we need the insights from the social and behavioural sciences to help alien human behaviours with the advice of experts, since we have become aware of the pandemic and social complex phenomena. Divestment from the social sciences at this precarious moment in time is remarkably short-sighted. Though science has been central to informing policies in the response to *Covid-19 pandemic, ensuring, successful implementations of these policies and the direction of a long term recovery is the role of social science.

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