

DISTANCE LEARNING EDUCATION: A PANACEA TO COVID-19 AND INSECURITY IN NIGERIA

***YAKUBU ABDUKQADIR MAIDAURA; *MUHAMMED YAHAI;
& **NASIRU NUHU.G.**

**Foundations Department, School of Education, Aminu Saleh College of Education Azare. **Psychology Department, School of Education, Aminu Saleh College of Education, Azare.*

ABSTRACT

This paper aiming at studying the distance learning education: as a panacea to covid-19 and insecurity in Nigeria. Every society requires education to enable its members fit into their work roles and to also satisfy the labour needs of her country. It is important to note that, engineers, bankers, journalist, medical doctors, lawyers, pharmacists, administrators, PhD holders, our Professors and teachers alike are all products of the educational system. Distance learning education also called distance learning is the education of students which may not always be physically present at a school. Traditionally this usually involved correspondence course which the students corresponded with the school via mail today it is usually involves online education. ([https/en.m.wikipedia](https://en.m.wikipedia)). This study also noted that the best thing about distance

Introduction:

Every society requires education to enable its members fit into their work roles and to also satisfy the labour needs of her country. It is important to note that, engineers, bankers, journalist, medical doctors, lawyers, pharmacists, administrators, PhD holders, our Professors and teachers alike are all products of the educational system. Therefore, education as a means or vehicle for advancement is a right to all citizen of a country, for a society to develop,

learning education is you could learn it from anywhere and at any time, it does not matter in part of the country you are living you can join the course and start learning, in this way, distance learning when use can solve the problem of Covid-19 and insecurity.(Nagralc 2013)

education is sole foundation in fact education is the weapon with which society can use to fight ignorance and create a peaceful co-existence

The national policy on education and major reforms and innovation recently introduced into Nigerian educational system stated that, the overall philosophy of Nigerian education is to:

- (a) Live in unity and harmony as one indivisible, indissoluble, democratic and sovereign nation founded on the principles of freedom, equality and justice.
- (b) Promote inter African solidarity and world peace through understanding.

(N.P.E.) (2013)

Based on the above, Education can only take place in healthy and peaceful environment, an environment which is free from any attack, free from pandemic or endemic. Covid-19, a novel disease became known when it was reported as the causative agent in identified cases of patient with pneumonia admitted in hospital in Wuhan, Chin around December 2019.

This issue and host of other like insecurity in the country cause a set-back to educational programme.

COVID-19 PADEMIC AND INSECURITY

COVID-19 is a novel disease known by people; it was identified as the causative agent in reported cases of patient with pneumonia admitted in hospital in Wuhan, China in December 2019. this disease spread through zoonotic droplet, and people can get infected when in close contact with the cough and sneeze of persons who have symptoms from the virus.

(Artini, 2017). In March, 2020, the WHO officially declared COVID-19 also known as corona virus a pandemic, due to these pandemic, educational institutions in most countries around the world were closed. Coronaviruses (CoV) are a large family of viruses cause illness ranging from the common cold to more severe disease such as Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS-CoV). A novel coronavirus (inCoV) is a new strain that has not been previously identified in humans. (www.google.com/scholar.)

Insecurity means lack of security or uncertainty. Insecurity is the state of being subject to danger: vulnerability. Insecurity in Nigeria becomes worse around April 2015 when the movement of one sect known as Boko Haram started.

Insecurity signifies different meaning such as the absence of safety, danger, hazard, uncertainty, lack of protection and lack of security. Achuba, (2013) de in anticipation of some fined insecurity from two perspectives, first, insecurity is a state of being subject or open to danger or threat of danger, where danger is the condition of being vulnerable to harm or injury, secondry, insecurity is the state of being expose to risk or anxiety, where anxiety is a vague unpleasant emotion that experienced in anticipation of some misfortune.

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Distance learning education is the kind of education in which students may not be always be physical present at a school. In other word, you learn, study and qualify in your chosen subject online without having to attend an exam center, a college building or university campus. (Ryan 1997)

IMPACTS OF COVID-19 ON EDUCATION

Covid-19 pandemic brought unprecedented disruption and uncertainty to Nigerian Education system; Covid-19 affected education socially,

economically, educationally. It forced Education system to make some changes that were long overdue magnifying existing challenges to student's ability to engage with their learning activities in their schools.

Economically, the pandemic has led to the parents, government, individuals, ministries of education at various levels and other personnel to shift in the plans and strategies in order to finance the education of their children and the education system at large. The school calendar was extended, therefore, there is going extract payment at various levels of education. During the lockdown, guidance/parents were forced to buy electronics means such as phones, laptops, television set, and radio to ensure their children move with the new innovative of the online classes at various level of education.(festinger 2016).

Most of the private schools could not pay salaries to their staff during the lockdown period because, students are not in school, some have not paid the school levies before the pandemic leading to school proprietors not having access to inflow of income for the welfare of their staff, in fact there is a fear of whether the private schools will be able to survive after pandemic lockdown or not. During the lockdown, the government at some level still ensured the prompt payment of staff in schools, ministries, knowing that they are not working for their earning during the lockdown. The expenses of workers payment during the lockdown period are mere gift but not for work done, this will surely have effect on the future educational finance. (Dunnu, 2019).

According to Dare, (2012) the pandemic affect education socially because, human being cannot live in isolation one has mixed with peers in a way of interaction, in a classroom situation students do come together and learn at the same time, as a result of this pandemic, students were made to seat separately in the name of "social distancing".

Educationally, pandemic has caused delay in students' graduation and moving from one level to another. Students in terminal classes both in higher and lower level of education has been held in spot, they were unable to graduate or move to the next level in their academic pursuit, this has led to the great set back in educational sector in Nigeria Anuporo, (2019) point

out that, what makes education fruitful and beautiful is the progress in terms of moving from one level to another, graduating and becoming useful, capable, full and acceptable member of the society.

The students experience major lectures/classes interruption in the final year of their studies which led to the extension of their graduation and caused automatic additional of a session.

Suspension of examination is also an effect cause by the pandemic Mahuta, (2019) maintain that, many institution of learning had started their examinations before the incidence of Covid-19 pandemic which led to the total shut down of all the educational institutions, ministries, parastertals, and non-governmental agencies.

The closure also coincides with the assessment period and many exams were postponed or cancelled.

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THE EFFECT OF INSECURITY ON EDUCATION IN NIGERIA:

Insecurity has affected educational institutions at all levels. Educational sector has suffered and experienced a great set-back as a result of insecurity in the country. Saratu (2017) the prominent insurgent group in the North East, Boko Haram as it implies, shows no pretenses of its pathological hatred for western education in particular, and all projects western ideals. In some cases, the extremist has attacked, killed and

kidnapped educators and students. The Nigerian Union of Teachers noted in October 2016, that more than 600 teachers have been killed by alleged Boko haram in the northeast, while another 19,000 were displaced. According to UNICEF (2016), more than 1,200 schools have attacked in northeastern Nigeria and hundreds of teachers and students have been killed by bomb blast, raising fears among communities about the safety of resuming education. More than 340,000 students have been affected by the insurgency with death among 314-Adamawa, 33-Yobe, and 263-Borno. The United Nation (2016) asserted that about 611 teachers were killed in Nigeria between 2009 and 2015 in an insurgency that has ravaged the country northeast. The UN National information officer, Oluseyi Soremekun, who made the disclosed in a media adversary, noted that about 910 schools were destroyed, while at least 1,500 others were forced to close down.

Abduction of students in school has become very rampant, this issue started around 2015/2016 where students from government girls' secondary school chubok were abducted, and the problem spread and covered the entire northeastern part of the country, to date the problem affected almost all states in the north east and northwest respectably. Students were attack and abducted for ransom, not only the boarding schools but even the day schools are not excluded.

The role of distance learning education in covid-19 and insecurity:

Distance learning education also called distance learning is the education of students which may not always be physically present at a school. Traditionally this usually involved correspondence course which the students corresponded with the school via mail today it is usually involves online education. (<https://en.m.wikipedia>). Distance education is the kind of education in which students may not always be physical present at a school. In other word, you learn, study, and qualify in your chosen subject online without having to attend an exam center, a college building, or university campus. According to Ryan(1997), the majority of distance learning education today takes place using the internet, now readily

accessible for the vast majority of students whether in their own homes or at facilities such as local libraries. These electronic means are used to distribute the learning material, keep students in touch with teachers, and provide access to communication between students, of course distance learning can use other technological formats as well including television, DVDs, teleconferencing, and printable materials, but the immediacy and functionality of Web learning has made it a first choice for many distance learners. Online programs often take advantage of a number of emerging technologies to make keeping in touch and effectively communicating ideas easier and more efficient than ever before and students may find themselves using interactive videos, e-mail, and discussion boards to complete their lessons (Velasenko & Bozhok, 2014). According to Mehrotra, Hollister, and McGahey (2001), distance learning or distance education, is not a future possibility for which higher education must prepare, it is a current reality creating opportunities and challenges for educational institutions; a reality offering students expanded choices in where when, how, and from whom they learn; a reality making education accessible to ever larger numbers of persons. The facts that the number of universities offering distance education programs have increased, that the courses have become more varied and that the number of students applying these programs is rising, raise the question of whether the given education is as efficient as it could

That is why researchers are continuing to develop and improve online activities (Kör, Erbay, Demir, & Akmeşe, 2016; Reiser & Dempsey, 2012). In addition, individuals who were unable to continue their undergraduate, graduate, or postgraduate education, for whatever reason, may now do so through distance learning. Therefore, distance learning offers equality of opportunity to individuals (Kör, 2013). **One of the reasons that distance education has become and remained so prevalent, in particular for higher education, is that** various studies have validated its practice-revealing no significant differences in learning outcomes between traditional and distance students. **A recent study, published in 2005,**

found this to be the case when comparing students who were delivered the exact same content via one of three setups: in a traditional classroom, via on line course management software, and through a CD-ROM, respectively. The authors measured no significant change in overall student satisfaction between the three groups. A twenty year meta-analysis, released last year, went so far as to argue that in 70 percent of cases students taking courses by distance learning education actually outperformed their students counterparts in traditionally instructed courses. Clearly, distance learning education is here to stay as a form of instruction and its proliferation continues to change the landscape of higher education. (Gunaawardena 2004)

Although there has been a recent explosion of distance education, particularly due to the new technologies available, the origin of distance learning can be traced to over 100 years ago (Birnbau 2001). For a communication to take place, at a bare minimum, there must be a sender, a receiver, and a message. If this message is intended as an instruction, then besides students, teacher, and content, we must consider the environment in which this educational communication occurs. (Moore 1990) sees the success of distance learning to be based on the content of the dialog between teacher and student and the effectiveness of the communication system in an educational process. According to Meyer (2002), in order to help alleviate the demands of travel for faculty and students, institutions began utilizing available technologies, such as audio connections i.e. telephone, videotapes, and television to conduct distance education efforts. These types of delivery method and media continued to be used, as distance education began to grow as a form of education. Early students of distance education consisted largely of students located in rural or remote areas that did not have geographical access to educational institutions. Another major population of distance learning in the United States was members of the military. The number of correspondence courses increased significantly after World War II when many veterans hurried to complete the education they had missed while in the service (Sherron 1999)

Early distance education course employed first and second generation communication technologies. First generation 1850-1950 was predominantly one technology and considered of print, radio and television. As new media emerged such as radio and television, these new technologies were integrated in to distance education delivery methods. Second generation 1960-1985, distance learning courses utilized multiple technologies without computers. The media used to deliver distance education within the second generation include audiocassette, television, videocassette, fax, and print. The establishment of the British open University in 1960 marked a significant development in the delivery of distance education by offering a mixed-media approach to distance learning technologies. Learning materials text, audio and visuals were send to students by mail and supplemented by broadcast radio and television (Mathews, 1999).

BENEFITS OF DISTANCE LEARNING:

Study from anywhere, anytime: The best thing about distance learning education is you could learn it from anywhere and at any time, it does not matter in part of the country you are living you can join the course and start learning, in this way, distance learning when use can solve the problem of Covid-19 and insecurity.(Nagralc 2013)

Saving significant amount of money: According to Bijeesh, (2017) for any given program the fee of a distance learning education course may be much more affordable than the fee of a regular o-campus studies, students who are looking for economically viable options can go for distance learning program. You don't have to live I the same city or country to attend the learning institution of your choice; you can study wherever you have access to computer and internet connection.

Nagrale (2013) stated that I you are opting for a distance learning education, then you do not have to commute in crowded buses or local trains. You need a computer and internet connection in your home. The entire college would be in your bedroom and you do not have to go out.

Flexibility to choose: learners will have to follow a set schedule as per their convenience without following a regular schedule of learning. Even if they are out of touch from learning process, distance learning program offers them flexibility to choose their course of learning. (Brown 2017).

Earn while learning: those who want improve their resume by getting higher education and without breaking their existing job, and then distance learning can be the best option for them. Learners can go for earning their livelihood along with improving their qualification as distance learning will accommodate both learning as well as earning. (Brown, 2017)

RECOMMENDATION AND WAY FORWARD:

Observing the benefit or importance attached to distance learning education, government should establish more national open universities across the country, this will minimize over crowd and threat to insecurity. There is the need for radical reforms in distance learning program and method of teaching; this demands that, government should emphasize the inculcation of knowledge, skills and values, such as team spirits, communication, honesty and other needed to meet the demands of worthy in character asset of condition for the award of higher education degree and diploma.

Distance learning should be given a very serious attention so that it will be recognize and valued by populace.

Distance learning education supportive activities also be improve to help students use their excess time and energy meaningfully

If possible, all government and private boarding schools should be made to day schools, this will reduce insecurity threat thereby making learning accessible and easy.

The ratio of teacher far students should also be adjusted, at all level; the ration should be not mare than teacher far 35-40 students in all cases, this will make the class look like standard class and it will help in avoiding serious infection of any deadly disease.

There also need to inculcate the teaching of mental hygiene in all levels of education so that students can acquire the knowledge of mental hygiene, which will help them to be free from infectious diseases.

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