

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

COVID-19: Challenges, School Shift System and Social Distancing in Nigerian Education

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Abstract

COVID-19 pandemic is a terrible pandemic that has created lots of fear since it came into Nigeria during the first quarter of 2020, considering the high mortality and morbidity rate all over the world. To contain the spread of this virus, the Minister of education called for immediate closure of academic institutions in Nigeria including primary education. This singular action of closing up schools crumbled quality and functional education and undermined the purpose of primary education which is a basic foundation for formal education in Nigeria. Thereafter, the Nigeria Center for Disease Control (NCDC) came up with a number of protective measures to contain the spread which include, social distancing. Presently, the quest to reopen schools has raised some challenges for the government and to school authorities. This is because most Nigeria classes are overcrowded with inadequate learning facilities. These deficiencies will make it difficult for young learners to observe the social distancing post COVID-19 rule, also capable of endangering the lives of these young learners, by extension their families and the society at large. Thus, the focus of this paper is to critically analyze COVID-19 pandemic in Nigeria, challenges, School shift system and social distancing in Nigerian education. The author recommends that the government should embark on school shift system as a way to contain the spread of the virus and education continued. The government and school authorities to employ more teachers and class assistance who will assist young learners cultivate good social habits. Also, strict penalty must be put in place for defaulters of post-COVID-19 regulations.

Keywords: COVID-19 Pandemic, Challenges, School Shift System, Social Distancing and Primary Education.

Introduction

COVID-19 is a terrible pandemic that came into Nigeria since the first quarter of this year, 2020. It was first discovered in Nigeria on the 27th of February 2020 and was brought in by the Italian man who came into Lagos from Europe that tested positive after a few days of his arrival in Lagos. Another case was discovered in Ogun state by someone who came in contact with the first confirmed case, and so the reduplication continued (Oyekanmi, 2020). There was rapid increase in

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index cases as the pandemic relentlessly continued to spread to the nooks and cranny of almost all 36 states of Nigeria with about 14, 554 cases confirmed as at 12th June 2020 (Oyekanmi, 2020). Thereafter in a bid to control the spread of the virus, the Nigeria education minister called for immediate closure of all academic institution across the country. The supposed temporary closure of schools gradually, snowballed into weeks and weeks into months interrupting all academic activities of an entire nation and consequently, obstructing knowledge acquisition as well as encouraging brain rust. This academic set back may continue for a longer time if the government and school authorities are unable to come up with effective strategies to overcome this enormous challenge.

Social distancing among other measures introduced by the National Center for Disease Control (NCDC) in Nigeria, to reduce the spread of the coronavirus is an effective way to avoid spreading the virus so as to protect the lives and well-being of all Nigerian citizens including its' students. The social distancing entails that everybody must stay six feet away from each other so as to avoid the unconscious consumption or inhaling of droplets from infected persons. This is because not every carrier will manifest signs or symptoms of coronavirus, as some are asymptomatic. This underscores the importance of observing meticulously all stipulated rules lay down by NCDC which includes regular hand washing with soap and water, and the use of alcoholic based sanitizers, as well as the use of face mask and staying 6feet apart from anyone (NCDC, 2020).

Nigerian schools class sizes are not large enough and do not possess adequate or basic infrastructures for learning, such as physical environment that is comfortable, furniture, well ventilated and illuminated classrooms, electrical power supply, large playgrounds, sports field and large classrooms as well as other learning facilities necessary for healthy learning. Classrooms are usually over-crowded and such over-population can make it challenging for the students and the teachers to realistically observe the social distancing goal of six meters away from anyone (Kukogho, 2015). As an effective teaching strategy, teachers are supposed to walk round the class while teaching to maintain eye contact and ensure quality management control. Unfortunately, with the over population and inadequate infrastructure, both teacher and pupils are at risk of contacting the coronavirus.

Primary education is the foundation of learning in Nigeria as it is the first stage of teaching and learning a child experiences in a formal setting. The purpose is to continuously help these young learners, learn how to read, write and learn simple arithmetic, but for the presence of COVID-19 the purpose of primary education is being defeated. Reason being that these pupils who have commenced learning for a period of time had to stop learning automatically for over three months period, is an error that is capable of making them forget all they have learned in the past. The time wasted already has exceeded their normal school break periods and so not healthy for quality learning experience.

Younger learners are more vulnerable victims because of their age, ignorance and lack of knowledge on the present happenings. The sustainability of the social distancing rule is almost unattainable because they are young in age and understanding so they are in school to learn healthy social habits. To help them cultivate these social habits, they need close supervision by a class

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assistant. Even among adult, educated Nigerians have been fooled by their religious leaders to view it as a conspiracy to ignore the stipulated protective rules but depend on praying and relying on the power of their religion while others fast and relate as closely as they wish that they are “covered with the blood of Jesus” (Sahara Reporters, 2020) .

Class shift school system could be an effective tool that the government can adopt in order to reopen schools. Class shift school system is the process of dividing the students in each class into two or more groups (Bray, 2000). This will make it easy for schools; students and teachers, to achieve the social distancing goal. In a situation where there are 50/60 pupils in a class, they will be divided into three sections; morning, afternoon, evening to enable the management of the limited learning facilities available. The process of class shift school system is an effective tool to achieving social distancing but there are number of responsibilities that comes with it to encourage commitment and job satisfaction as well as smooth implementation of quality teaching and learning among which includes the employment of more teaching personnel, more class assistance to help pupils with the social habits to contain the spread of the virus, reorientation of the teachers and students respectively for quality delivery (Bray, 2000). This paper therefore, focuses on COVID-19 pandemic, challenges, school shift system and social distancing in Nigerian education.

COVID-19 Pandemic

COVID-19 pandemic was first confirmed in Nigeria during the first quarters of this year, 2020. According to the World Health Organization, (2020) COVID-19 is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus that does not have any treatment. Infected persons will usually experience abnormal respiratory disorder. According to Tesini (2020) it is a large family of respiratory viruses that can cause illness in people and animal and can easily spread from one person to another as was the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS-CoV) and Middle-East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS-CoV). It is usually very fatal among the elderly ones or individuals with underlying health conditions like diabetes, cardiovascular disease, cancer amongst others. The world health organizations has outlined different ways the pandemic could be transmitted which includes saliva droplets of an infected person. Through nose discharge that comes out during coughing or sneezing. It can also be contracted by touching infected surfaces. These are indications that reveal that it is a deadly virus that can easily be transmitted from person to person whether they have symptoms or are asymptomatic. The peculiarity of this infection was what warranted the World Health Organization (2019) adopting the following strategies in order to contain the spread of the pandemic.

1. Regular and thoroughly cleaning your hands with running water or alcoholic based sanitizers
2. To Maintain at least 1/ 2-meter (6/3feet) distance between oneself and others
3. Avoid going to crowded places as people are more likely to come in contact with infected individuals.
4. Avoid touching of eyes, nose and mouth as one might have touched some infected surfaces that might have contaminated their hands
5. Stay home and self-isolate even with minor symptoms
6. To call or visit any medical facility for proper check-up and treatment if need be

COVID-19 Outbreak in Nigeria

After the first index case of COVID-19 in Nigeria, the Nigerian government mobilized its preparedness and strengthening exercise to combat the spread of the epidemic. The first case was confirmed on the 27th of February 2020 when an Italian man who came into Lagos from Europe tested positive after a few days of his arrival into Lagos. After a couple of weeks, another case was confirmed in Ewekoro, in Ogun State on March 9th 2020 by someone who had come in contact with the first carrier (Maclean & Delhir 2020). The Nigerian Government through the Federal Ministry of Health kick-started strengthening measures to ensure they are able to contain and control the outbreak in Nigeria.

Then the multi-sectional Coronavirus Preparedness Group led by the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) activated its national emergency operation Centre (NCDC, 2020). Sadly, dozens of Medical practitioners who are supposed to play active roles in fighting and assisting infected ones began contracting the infection (Maclean, 2020). This is to describe how fast the COVID-19 virus can spread. In an attempt to beef up preparedness capabilities, the Federal government of Nigeria quickly called for national lockdown of flights, restriction to public gatherings, like churches, Mosques, suspension of sports events, and orientation of National Youth Service Corps. Thereafter, the Federal Minister of Education ordered for the closure of all schools in Nigeria including the 104 unity schools, on the 26th March 2020 and all higher institutions to close down that weekend being 20th Friday to 22nd of March 2020 (Olisah, 2020). According to Oliseh, as at the period the order was given, there were already 12 confirmed cases in Nigeria. This new development crumbled all aspect of the Nigerian economy of which education is the bed rock.

Concept of Social Distancing

Social distancing, good respiratory hygiene regular hand washing are measures considered to reduce the spread of COVID-19 pandemic (Zoppi, 2020). The center for Disease Control (NCDC), (2020) described social distancing as set of methods for reducing the frequency and closeness of contact between people in order to decrease the risk of transmission of the virus (NCDC, 2020). It is a public health practice that is aimed to prevent the closeness of infected person in order to reduce the transmission of the pandemic. In another sense, NCDC revised the definition as the remaining out of congregate settings, avoiding mass gatherings, and maintaining distance approximately six feet or two meters from others when possible (Nania, 2020). In a nutshell, social distancing is making all efforts to avoid close very contacts with anyone considering the fact that one cannot identify carriers only by sighting anybody as some might be asymptomatic.

Social distancing is an effective measure for protection against the coronavirus pandemic in Nigeria but has raised a lot of controversy on how much distance should be kept. Kelland (2020) asserted that the social distancing of more than one meter reduces the risk of COVID-19 infection by more than 80% in both healthcare and everyday life. During religious activities when people sing together it is possible that there will be a large number of droplets unless they are two distance away, will they not contract the infection if an infected person is in that midst. In social distancing, the number of persons in a particular place matters because of the availability of ventilators irrespective of how loud or quiet they speak. Despite these controversies, a distance must be observed be it one-meter

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distance or 2meters. The world Health organization proposed that individuals should keep a distance of at least one meter to reduce the risk of spreading the virus in small droplets that people spray out when they sneeze, cough or talk while, Kelland (2020) insist that physical distance of at least 1 meter lowers the risk of COVID-19 transmission, but that 2meter could be more effective.

- A. Social distancing discourages large number of persons in particular place
- B. It encourages that persons stay at least one meter apart from anyone
- C. It discourages meeting with people without the use of nose mask
- D. It discourages indiscriminately, touching of eye, nose, mouth or surfaces. Distance must be kept consciously

Primary Education in Nigeria

Primary education in Nigeria is the basics of education that deals with the fundamental transmission of knowledge to young learners. It is the foundation of formal education and a means by which learners cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains are stimulated and developed for the acquisition of higher knowledge prior to their advancement to secondary education. In this level of learning, pupils will be drilled on how to read and write their letters of alphabet and the joining of letters to form words and also, they are taught simple arithmetic that will qualify them for secondary education in Nigeria. Odigie (2012) explains that primary education is a programme of studies that provides learners with the genuine learning opportunities to children between the ages of 0-5 years. Lawali, (2008) describes it as the education an individual request at his earliest years of life. Undoubtedly, he agrees with Anero who opined that primary education is early child education. According to the Federal Government of Nigeria in 2004 outlined the goal of this program which includes to

1. Inculcate permanent literacy and numeracy and ability to communicate effectively;
2. Lay a sound basis for scientific and reflective thinking;
3. Give citizenship education as a basis for effective participation in and contribution to the life of the society;
4. Mold the character and develop sound attitude and morals in thee child;
5. Develop in the child the ability to adapt to the child's changing environment;
6. Give the child opportunities for developing manipulative skills that will enable the child function effectively in the society within the limits of the child's capacity; and
7. Provide the child with basic tools for further educational advancement, including preparation for trades and crafts of the locality.

Early child's education in Nigeria is basically tied to primary education which is presently under attack by the COVID-19 pandemic in Nigeria.

COVID-19: Attack on the Foundation of Education in Nigeria

Presently in Nigeria, primary education is the foundation of learning/education as it is the educational programme that is first introduced to a child outside the home environment after birth. Etor, Mbon & Ekanem (2013) opined that it is universally the foundation laying level of education in all nations of the world that provides mini-structural framework on which the quality of other levels of education is anchored. Primary education as described above is simply early child education that should be continuous until the child's advancement to secondary education. In the

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past three months, early child educations have been bedeviled, and therefore the foundation of education is being interrupted owing to the national lockdown as a result of COVID-19 pandemic in Nigeria. The peculiar structure of this foundation of education at primary school level is a structure that should not be interrupted for whatsoever reason but for the mortality rate of this pandemic there was need for national lockdown.

Young children in the case of COVID-19 are most vulnerable because of their ignorance and insensitivity cannot protect themselves unless under close supervision of an adult because they hardly know how to sneeze safely, cough safely, eject saliva safely or eat safely to mention a few (Gray, 2020; American Academic for Pediatricians, 2008). Their level of understanding as children makes it difficult for them to keep to these safety rules which social distance is inclusive unless, they are under stiff supervision by adult classrooms assistance. The end result of this educational interruption, is that learners will be bound to suffer brain rust in that, they may not be able to read and write nor do their simple arithmetic as have been taught. Obviously, any process of knowledge acquisition, where pupils are taught to learn how to read and write from the basic, should be a continuous exercise that nothing should punctuate or break-up.

Class Shift and Benefits

Another word for shift in the context of Nigerian present education is segmentation which means to divide or separate into different sub-section or sub-group. This was what Arieetz (2020) asserts to be a process of dividing. Class shift is either single or multiple class shift and single class shift is a system of education where all learners observe a specific duration of time of learning while multiple shift as proposed by the government is a system of education where learners are grouped in sections to attend classes either in the morning or afternoon. The single shift is a system the Nigerians have been practicing over the years which is a system of attending school precisely in the morning hours 8am to afternoon hours, 2.00pm respectively. Usman (2015) views multiple class shifts as an educational system which provides education for two different categories of the school age population at different sections; morning and afternoon of the school day especially where finance of education is not adequate. Its strategy policy makers can adopt in order that school can use an existing and very scare educational facility such as classrooms, textbooks, libraries to cater for more pupils by instituting different teaching sections. Macwilliam (2000) posits that school shift as a system of education where there is a way of increasing the supply of school places by using existing resources efficiently.

Bray, (2000) mentioned six reasons why the multiple class shifts can be very effective.

1. Increase supply of school places while avoiding serious strains on budget
2. To broaden access and hence, achieve social equity
3. To use scarce human resources better where there is shortage of teachers, staff may be encouraged to teach in more than one session
4. To increase salaries of teachers by giving them opportunity to work in two sessions
5. To reduce opportunity cost for pupils by catering for those who have to work during the day
6. To reduce overcrowded, class size and alleviate pressure on sports facilities libraries, schools' canteens.

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Class shift in this context is to enable learners to properly observe the social distancing rule to contain the spread of the COVID-19 infection since the present education system is yet to build up strengthening preparedness facility to run an infectious-free learning system that can protect learners if crowded as usual. The pandemic has attacked education and the attack has led to change and there should be more change as change is the most constant facet of life (Smith, 2019).

COVID-19: Plans to Re-opening of Schools in Nigeria

The outbreak of COVID-19 in Nigeria has posed lots of challenges to the government and school owners as to when will education ever resumes its normal activities. Presently as at 14th of June, 2020 coronavirus confirmed cases have risen to 16,085, with 5,220 discharge and 420 deaths. With the ongoing increase of the COVID-19 pandemic the government is confused, brainstorming on what must be done for education to resume and schools be re-opened either by running class shift system of learning that will allow them maintain social distance apart from each other. To confirm this government proposal, Okonji, Ifejeh, Alekhuogie, Ajimotokan & Ezigbo (2020) opined that the Federal government has disclosed that it would soon unveil the policy for safe reopening of schools, saying it was weighing on running two classes in the morning or afternoon to enable students' makeup with the set-backs. While private school owners continue to agitate for the reopening of schools despite the uncertainties of the COVID-19 pandemic, the government is skeptical about the reopening of schools. This is because of what happened to the Israeli's and some other countries who reopened schools and two weeks and later they began closing down schools following the rise in the coronavirus pandemic with 347 pupils testing positive and 127 teachers testing positive such that, number of individuals in quarantine centers rose to 16,000 to almost 17,500 in little more than 12 hours (Atueyi, 2020). According to Alo (2020) the Nigerian government came up some guideline to reopen schools and they include:

1. Certificate examination classes to resume for their examination Junior and senior secondary respectively to round up their examination
2. That pupils will not be allowed to go to school on daily basis as usual especially schools with large gatherings so they can spread them across schools
3. The commissioner of education Kano objected the decision to reopen schools immediately
4. Good Respiratory Hygiene
5. Rivers state have gone resume classes through radio and television basic 10 and SS3 to prepare them for examination

No doubt, there are fears as most parents in Nigeria raise concerns over school resumption and the fears for their children not to eventually become victims to the virus. Other parents reasonably conclude that, even though there is a delay in the school academic calendar, rushing to reopen school may lead to trading lives with knowledge Ewuzie, (2020). Fear as parents imagine how their younger children will independently observe the social distancing by avoiding touching their eyes, nose or mouth, regularly washing their hands and religiously using their face mask (Ewuzie, 2020).

All government schools as well as private schools will require fund and human resources to be able to decontaminate the entire school and its immediate environments. Other possible challenges could be providing of hand washing facilities for the entire school community, providing sizable school environment that will allow for social or physical distancing both in playgrounds and classrooms

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as well as the body temperature checking machine to mention a few. The ability of school authorities and the government to exhibit adequate preparedness and quick response for post-COVID-19 quality in the process of reopening schools no doubt, is a challenge especially to those in primary schools. According to Subair & Talabi (2015) there are shortages of teachers in Nigerian schools. If teachers who are the back bone of education are lacking, then class assistance will definitely be lacking. The employment of more teachers and class assistance who will ensure that younger learners are assisted to observe the do's and don'ts of post-COVID-19 is a challenge. Whose duty will include, to help learners put on their face mask regularly, healthily aid them on good toilet manners, assist them with regular hand washing exercise, help them with healthy eating habits and ensure they themselves (class assistants) observe the post-COVID-19 habits and are clean enough to manage such young learners. All learning facilities must be enhanced to suit post COVID-19 needs and so, getting all necessary infrastructures to reopen schools is a task that must be critically considered. Usually in Government schools the services of pediatrics doctors or nurses are not required but in advanced countries such personnel are required to enable learners learn without contracting any infection (American Academy of pediatrics, 2008). Their duties will be to serve as a team member in providing preventive services, early identification of problems, interventions, and referrals to foster quality health condition of learners. In addition, the employment of Post-COVID-19 monitoring team by the government to monitor and enforce government rules and regulations including the stipulated number of students per class considering the pandemic social distancing rules are all challenges that must be met. These challenges are enormous as time, fund and proper coordination is required to reopen schools.

Social Distancing and COVID-19 Pandemic in Nigeria Education

This public health practice aimed to prevent the closeness of infected persons in order to reduce the transmission of the pandemic is being abused and violated by Nigerians even among the educated. Instead of them to avoid mass gatherings, and maintaining distances of approximately six feet or two meters apart from each other they are busy with their daily activities in mass gatherings. Many are being fooled by their religious leaders to congregate together and trust God that as children of God they will not be victims (Sahara Reporters, 2020). Others claim it is targeting the elites, politicians and other rich ones despite all warnings (BBC, 2020). Unfortunately, as observed by Urowayino, (2020) most Nigerians especially those in rural areas, markets, bus stops, motor parks, bank shun the social distancing observation neither are they using nose mask nor do some of them have running water to wash their hands regularly (Urowayino, 2020). Any outright negligence of any post-COVID-19 government rules is an error that defaulters must be penalized for. There should be absolute observance of the laid down rules put down by the COVID-19 regulatory body as well as the NCDC as nobody is above the law. Penalizing defaulters will serve as a protection that will limit the spreading of the virus throughout the length and breadth of the nation, Nigeria. Among these defaulters may be those who are school owners, have been employed or will be employed and are parents. Such act of irresponsibility is capable of frustrating the efforts of the COVID-19 regulatory bodies.

According to Molagun, (2006) the stipulated number of students approved by the ministry of education is on the ratio of one teacher per 35 pupils per, class but Popoola (2006) noticed that the

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teacher pupil ratio in most Nigerian primary schools today is as high as one teacher to 50 pupils. Molagun observed that there is a dramatic expansion in Nigerian education as classrooms are overcrowded, inadequate classroom for others, and this he said, is as a result of free education, that the financial implication made it attractive to parents. Owoeye, and Yara (2011) also confirmed that, one of the major problems of Nigerian education is over populated classrooms. When classes are over-crowded, the purpose for social distancing is defeated as learners will eventually become victims and potential carriers of the pandemic. The only possible way out is calling back the school/class shifts system of learning.

Effectiveness of Class Shift for Social Distancing in Education

The Nigerian Government mentioned that it may introduce running of morning and afternoon in secondary schools to enable student meet up with their setbacks. Adebowale, (2020) also reaffirmed that the government had proposed opening schools in batches. The federal government is working on a model and proposes to publish a post COVID-19 guideline before opening schools (Okonji, Ifejeh, Alekhuogie, Ajimotokan & Ezigbo, 2020).

The class shift will enable the education ministry to come up with strategy to group members of the class into groups either in two or three groups; morning, afternoon or evening respectively. For example classes that contained 50 pupils previously, could be made to contain 20 or fewer pupils per section that is the only way the social distancing observation can be realistic. Some group attends in the morning and others in the afternoon or evening and the school curriculum should be adjusted to contain their post-COVID-19 developments. This is a suggestible way the government can realistically overcome the prolonging of school lockdown in Nigeria. Like the old saying Rome is not built in one day meaning no major achievement can be successfully done at an instance rather it takes a long time, resources and energy to carry-out an admirable and important achievement. The government will not find it funny providing and sourcing for more lands and erecting more structure considering the economic responsibility created by the pandemic already.

Therefore, since social distancing is the act of staying at least one meter apart from anyone, school shift system will enable pupils come back to their classroom again as they will be grouped into sections, some in the morning others in the afternoon or evening, they can still contain the spread and pupils can learn without putting their lives in danger. So with the limited facility made available to the pupils, they can manage these resources effectively and the social distancing will be realistically achieved.

Possible Challenges of Class Shift School System

Nothing comes without challenges only if the advantages out-weigh the disadvantage, a decision is made. The COVID-19 pandemic has given Nigerian no option but to find a way out in order to continue the process of education. One of the challenges according to Nhundu, (2000) is poor implementation of the double school system. That may include, negative attitude from of both the teaching and other staff and the students in questions as well the facility and proper organization of the double school shift. Bray, (2000) also claims that it could contribute to restless youth and delinquency. This is because of the short period learners will have to expend for learning which

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outweighs the period of time spent at school, making it appear that they enjoy too much freedom and time outside school all the time.

The double school system is not what the teachers are used to it will take time to make adjustments. They have to work more hours and expend more energy that may encroach in their own affairs. After their workday exhaustion they may lack the strength to prepare for next lessons, attend to their religious activities, buy their groceries and cook their food and of course playing their role as family heads and wifely responsibility for married ones might be a far cry. Double school shift system does not allow enough time for learners to acquire adequate educational opportunities so that they end up in unhealthy activities such roaming the streets or engaging themselves in menial labours during daytime when they are supposed to be in school, at the expense of their education (Ashong-Katai, 2013). Parent will have longer hours to contend with their children's restlessness and delinquencies after their normal day toil of providing for the entire family. As they spend less time in school, they will spend more at home.

Suggestions

- I. The government should move a motion for school shift system of learning to avoid brain rust and loss of educational hold that brings national development.
- II. The government should not be too quick to reopen schools simply to impress but allow time to seek for workable measures that will contain the spread of the disease
- III. School authorities to employ more teachers and class assistance who will assist younger learners in the observation of the social distancing post-COVID-19 rules
- IV. The governments should continuously organize sensitization exercises that will keep learners' and teachers attuned with the post COVID-19 habits in order to contain the spread of this pandemic.
- V. The government should engage the services of the post COVID-19 monitoring team whose duties will be to go round schools to ensure that they abide by the rule and defaulters brought to book
- VI. School authorities must ensure that they live and abide by the ministry of education guideline on class size such that during the school shift there will be room for social distancing
- VII. The governments and school authorities are to regularly sanitize the school facilities to avoid the contraction of the virus.
- VIII. The government must put and enforce strict penalty measures against defaulters of the Post-COVID-19 regulations
- IX. Government and school authorities are to employ the services of pediatric doctors and nurses whose duties will be to prevent, detect, and administer treatment where necessary.

Conclusion

COVID-19 pandemic in Nigeria has greatly attacked all educational activities in Nigeria. The proposal by the governments and parents' agitation to reopen schools has hardly reached its target reason being that the pandemic is spreading like wild fire in Nigeria. Primary education is the foundation of education, which equips pupils with the ability to read and write as well as tackles simple arithmetic that will help them advance to secondary education. But for the spread of the

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COVID-19 pandemic this process has been hindered for some time. To contain the spread of the pandemic, the NCDC came up with a number of strategies which includes; social distancing, that is, 1/2-meter distance from anyone. The modalities to enforce this practice in Nigerian schools are not visible as most Nigerians even among the educated in the name of religion have continued to violate the social distancing protective. However, the practice of social distancing in Nigerian schools especially in primary schools is only practicable if there are adequate classrooms, instructional materials, teachers and class assistance, regular reorientation exercises organized by government to educate teachers, students and general public on the need to socialize at a distant to avoid spreading the virus. The project of raising more infrastructures for the post COVID-19 educational need in Nigeria is a very broad project that will take funds and time to achieve. The only way out that can accommodate the social distancing learning approach is the adoption of school/class shift system of learning. The school shift system should be effectively utilized in the reopening of schools as this is not to enable the admission of more students into already crowded classrooms but to allow for social distancing learning approach because of government inadequacies in providing for the recent need of education in present Nigeria.

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