PREVENTIVE MEASURES/STRATEGIES FOR COVID-19 PANDEMIC; A CASE OF LIBRARY SYSTEM IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

Nigeria had her first confirmed case of COVID-19 on February 27, 2020. The index case and several other Nigerians who had travel history upset the environment, with the case of COVID-19 which nearly rose beyond control. This led to the continuous closure of schools, right from its lowest certificate to the highest, due to the fear of the known fact that these children were unable to maintain the standards put in place by the World Health Organization (WHO), as regards, especially the matter of distancing, which could skyrocket, in terms of an increasing number of the SARS-COV-2 virus, leading to great loss in the future (young generation) of the country. Although, the schools were opened without comprehensive preventive measures/strategies put in place to control the COVID-19 pandemic, to avert making a dull out of these boys and girls since they are not knowledgeable enough to control themselves in terms of their ideology, especially when using the library where these students meet to read. Taking into consideration that even before COVID-19, the library system had been cared for, in terms of spacing and infrastructures. Now at COVID-19/POST-COVID-19, in which a lot of controls have to come in, there must be proper preventive strategies for the system to allow for disapproval of the pandemic in relation to the students using the library. This paper looks into COVID-19 pandemic preventive strategies and the library system in terms of meeting the preventive standard against the spread of SARS-COV-2 among students.

Keywords: COVID-19 Pandemic, Preventive, Measures, Skyrocket, Library, Infrastructures

Introduction

The world has experienced several pandemic breakouts that have threatened public health globally. This includes the 2019 coronavirus case, popularly known as COVID-19. This COVID-19 is a pandemic that was caused by a virus called Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome-Coronavirus-2 (SARS-COV-2), whose outbreak was triggered in December 2019 in Wuhan city in Hubei province of China. Nigeria had her first confirmed case of COVID-19 on February 27, 2020, following the return of an Italian to Lagos State in February 2020, who fell ill in Ogun State (Obiakor & Adediran, 2020).

The index case and severalother Nigerians who had travel history upset the environment, with the case of COVID-19 gradually rising beyond control. This pandemic became uncontrollable in Nigeria and caused a toll of hardship to the people and downtime to both the public and private organizations. This is not unconnected with the weak frontiers that were ineffective in responding to the pandemic and the lack of social welfare programs that would have catered for the poor masses and hence, bring good strategies for recovering from the pandemic.

Some of these public and private organizations witnessed a high level of annihilation. One of such sector is the education sector, the impact of which has been largely felt by students. A national clampdown on schools was announced which disrupted learning and access to vital school-provided services for a record number of students in Nigeria, for the fear of the known fact that these students will not be able to maintain the standards put in place by the world body, the World Health Organization (WHO), as regards, especially the matter of distancing. At that time, almost 40 million learners were affected by the nationwide school closures in Nigeria, of which over 91 percent are primary and secondary school learners. In a short time, COVID-19 disrupted the landscape of learning in Nigeria by limiting how students can access learning across the country (Obiakor and Adediran, 2020).

The schools were re-opened at a point when the incidental rise in COVID-19 would have been put under proper control, to avert making a dull out of these boys and girls. At this point, the educational institution system, which cannot be put aside under any serious nation ought to have been put to proper standards to meet the effect of this pandemic, especially at the library level. Taking into consideration that even before COVID-19, the library system had been cared for, in terms of spacing and infrastructures, now at COVID-19/POST-COVID-19, in which a lot of

controls have to come in, there must be proper preventive strategies for the system to allow for disapproval of the pandemic concerning the students using the library. This paper looks into COVID-19 pandemic preventive strategies and the library system in terms of meeting the preventive standard against the spread of SARS-COV-2 among students.

Literature Review

Historically, COVID-19 was a pandemic that has its origin in Wuhan city, an arena in the Hubei province of China in December 2019. The pandemic which was caused by a virus called Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome-Coronavirus-2 (SARS-COV-2) has caused a global set-up serious upset, ranging from the loss of lives, and closure of schools and other vital systems, leading to economic downtime e.t.c. The first known patient of Coronavirus started experiencing symptoms in Wuhan, China on 1 December 2019 (Ozili, 2020).

COVID-19 disrupted the landscape of learning in Nigeria within the shortest possible time by limiting how students can access learning across the country. For an already fragile education system, the COVID-19 pandemic poses unprecedented challenges to the government, students, and parents that will highlight and could amplify some of the cracks in the system. One of these is its effect on the education system, which will require support to support the students against COVID-19.

One great point in the education system is the library, which has the aim of bringing the students together from all spheres of the department in terms of collecting, repackaging, and disseminating information for societal development. A proper guide must be put in place to avert the spread of the pandemic at all levels. Terhile & Anthanisus (2013) affirmed that the library environment is known as a social area that motivates the reading habit of the learners most especially users and lecturers in the academic environment, further, said that the library environment needs to make provision for relevant materials in print and non-print form needed by the library users by creating awareness through posters, library exhibition, displaying of newly acquired materials that have been purchased and processed in the library which also provide for informal learning and research in an academic environment.

The library has the aim of collecting, repackaging, and disseminating information for societal development. The increase in the application of computers, the internet, electronic resources, mobile devices, database, and the world wide web in all aspects of human activities and especially educational sectors have made library systems greater access for teaching, learning, and research. The library is a service delivery institution, a custodian of knowledge, and a center for information dissemination (Ajegbomogun & Ajegbomogun, 2015). According to Obajemo (2002), a good library is indispensable if academic excellence is to be achieved. Knowledge preservation and dissemination have rapidly changed the way people seek and use information. The development of information and communication technologies (ICTs) has not only changed the way of being informed but has become essential tools for teaching, learning, and research.

Lambado & Cordic (2001) stated that the library must be a comfortable place, especially at this point of the COVID-19 pandemic if not, users can be harmed with a virus.

Method and Materials

The methods used to carry out this research are thematicin nature. These involve the collection of materials through journals, publications, and internet searches.

Body Structure

COVID-19 versus Library System

The library system is a crucial component of the educational setting. It is a structure that houses a collection of books, newspapers, periodicals, tapes, computers, e-libraries, or e-learning materials that can be loaned or read for personal or public use. The act of individual learning outside of the classroom is made possible by embedded systems in education. Barr & Taga (1995) proposed that it might be used for problem-solving through the supply of information infrastructure and active participation in any given program's learning process. In the process of transforming any society for national development, library education must be given the greatest priority and the environment of such a

system must be conducive to allow for learning through teaching and learning. In this case, the library as part of the learning environment must be given considerable acknowledgement since it is the basis of learning in that structure.
COVID-19, in its place, is a pandemic which emanated in China and has spread all over the world, causing economic downtime, which many nations are still battling till date, viz-a-viz the school system due to its effect. The library system must be made capable of meeting the standard that will help curtail the spread of COVID-19 in the use of the library. It is well known that the nation is gradually throwing to the backyard the idea of any preventive measures/strategies for the COVID-19 pandemic, due to the belief that the pandemic is now a thing of the past, as announced by the government of the day, but it is never so. This pandemic is still around the corner and the preventive strategies must not be over-emphasized viz-a-viz the library system in educational institutions. Some of these measures have been neglected, which are:

No testing

Before the pandemic arrival, the need for students and/or workers in the library facility to be tested is of zero fundamentals.

No hand washing
The practice of hand washing was never relevant, since no suspicion of such disease.

No sanitizer
The need for sanitizer at pre-pandemic was a mirage, since it did not exist.

Muddling
This entails arranging the students in a manner that sees them sitting side by side; a condition that makes the students associate freely with one another in the library in pre-COVID-19 without any form of distancing.

No facemask

The use of facemask was not necessary before the advent of COVID-19, but today, it is of paramount need, irrespective of the distance between the pairs in the integral system.

Distancing

This is an act of keeping away from one another, say, 1 m, to avoid contracting the dreaded disease, SARS-CoV-2.

Preventive Measures and the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Library System in Nigeria

In order to curtail the effect which, the library system is likely to have when used during the COVID-19/post-COVID-19, the following issues which were raised to be observed by the World Health Organization (WHO) must be taken as paramount (WHO, 2020). This is due to the fact that some basic precautions must be taken in the use of the library to lower the chances of these students/users being infected. These are:

Testing

Since COVID-19 is rampaging, the users of the library, which mostly are the students, must be tested to see their condition in relation to the pandemic. Any student found wanting should not be allowed into the facility but rather be recommended for treatment. Once the students are tested okay (negative) and allowed in, they should be tested periodically and at random inside the library. Since having tested okay at the entrance of the library facility, at transient, i.e., going into the library or sitting in the library, the body structure could change, making the student or user test positive.

Hand washing
Having tested okay, the student/user must wash his/her hand before moving into the library. So, a washing hand component must be made available at the entrance of the facility. This is to destroy viruses that might have being on the hand. It should be of note that should be applied at the entrance when going into/out of the library.

Muddling

The students sitting arrangement should be such as to prevent any form of muddling or reaching one another in the process of using the library.

Sanitizer

An alcoholic-based sanitizer must be provided and put on every table in the library so as to enable hand sanitizing to disinfect the hands occasionally when reading or doing any other work in the facility. This is due to the fact that many tables and other components are touched while reading in the library, so a continuous sanitizing of the hands is necessary to avoid contacting the virus. Touching, putting hands into the nose, mouth, eyes and even ears should be prohibited.

Distancing

This is the process of maintaining a distance of 1 m (3 ft) between one another in order to discourage muddling. This will avert any form of contact with the virus via saliva coming out of any user's mouth during coughing or sneezing. However, if you get too close and the person coughing or sneezing has the disease, it can be dangerous. Aside from having a risk of contracting the virus through this means, it could be harmful to the eyes since it is alcoholic based and can cause damage to the eyes.

Facemask

A facemask or noise and mouth cover should be used. This will help prevent contacting the virus or spreading the virus when sneezing or coughing. This must be washed regularly and made neat, so there must be a financial provision for these students by the government on a monthly basis, especially for the poorest, poorest and poorest among them, to cater for all these. The leaders in government should stop the deceit of the idea of no money; otherwise, the Nigerian system is playing with fire, as said by that adage, "If you think education is expensive, try ignorance"; So this can be related to this that if the leaders in the government think there is no money that can be given to these boys and girls, then let's try the other side and see. If it is to be done, a sincere person should be in charge to avert the downside, as in the case of the palliatives during the lockdown, and also to avert excesses in the financial implications. Orientation must be given to these students to enable them to be aware of the facts and guidelines to follow in using the library facility.

The Role of Government

Since government is of the people, by the people, and for the people, the leaders in government must ensure its effect on the people. They must take proper care of these students since they are the future of this country called Nigeria. Huge financing must be allocated to cater for them. Not as done during the lockdown when the palliatives meant for the people's survival became a mirage. This is of utmost importance and it should be known that any act of jeopardizing this important role may lead to the collapse of the entire nation due to its sensitivity. I mean "Tomorrow Nigeria".

The government should be able to provide funds to cater for the upgrading of the library facility in terms of the following:

- Enlarging the library facility in terms of spacing, textbooks and other library materials, necessary devices and infrastructure to accommodate the same number of students who have been using the facility prior to COVID-19 or an increasing number of students who will also use the facility, based on the fact of distancing. The reason why I said this is that leaders in government should not tamper with the education of these future leaders by promulgating an unnecessary policy/law that will slash intake in education in terms of admission, but rather must pump greater resources into this sector to give these future leaders a leverage of belief and sustainability in the Nigerian context.

- All looting in the treasury must stop. It should be noted that taking this money out of Nigeria to other economies develops that economy, leaving the Nigerian economy in a doomed state. Why then not leave the money here for an impetus to national growth?

The Role of Parents

Some of the crucial roles to be played by parents in order to protect these young ones from the claws of death are:

- As said in those holy books, "I teach you today to observe those ordinances." Do teach these young ones the ordinances of COVID-19 at your various homes before letting them out.
- There should be monitoring of these students in their various schools/campuses once in a while. Remember, they are your tomorrow.
- The parents should be up and talking, especially to the leaders in government to keep them awake to their responsibilities to these notable future leaders, especially in terms of financing to meet the necessary conditions to salvage these young ones and avert unwarranted loot, thereby stopping unnecessary loss or maim of these students/pupils.

The Role of the Students

- As also said by those holy books, "My son, listen to my commandments and put them in your heart." Do listen to your parents, government, and other bodies' directives for salvage.
- Maintain cleanliness in all ramifications.
- Stay wherever your parents put you as related to those at a higher level.

Conclusion

It is a well-known fact that the success of the library system determines the success of any educational institution. In this era of the COVID-19 Pandemic, the library must be well cared for, so that the users, i.e., the students, are safe at all times. The library system must be well structured to meet the required conditions or standards that will enable a good environment for the library facility during and post pandemic. This will give the students, pupils, and users confidence in the use of the library and protect them from the swarming forces of the COVID-19 pandemic. This will also guarantee the students'/pupils'/users' and Nigeria's future reliability.

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