

ISSN: 978-2701

ABSU JOURNAL OF EDUCATIONAL STUDIES

—♦— VOL. 8 (3) July, 2021 —♦—



**EVALUATION OF TEACHING AND LEARNING DURING COVID-19
LOCKDOWN. A LOOK AT PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN IKA NORTH
EAST LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, DELTA STATE**

By

OKOKOYO, ISABELLA EZINWA (Ph.D)

Department of Educational Foundation

Faculty of Education,

University of Delta, Agbor, Delta State

08066383942 Email: isaokokoyo@gmail.com

&

ALORDIAH, CAROLINE OCHUKO (Ph.D)

Department of Educational Foundation

Faculty of Education,

University of Delta, Agbor, Delta State

08035504867 Email: carolinealordiah@gmail.com

Abstract

The study investigated how private secondary schools in Delta State provided knowledge during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown. The purpose of the study was to critically evaluate and analyse the challenges to teaching and learning during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown. The researchers used in-depth analysis to collect both qualitative and quantitative data. Using a purposive sampling method, eight private secondary schools out of the 45 listed in Ika North East Local Government Area participating in online teaching and learning during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown were listed. The population of the eight schools was 187 teachers. Fifty-six (56) teachers were randomly selected from the eight schools. Frequency, percentage and thematic analysis were used to answer the research questions. Findings revealed that; the online platform used for online teaching and learning were WhatsApp, Google Classroom and Zoom, with WhatsApp having the largest percentage. Findings further revealed that most of the private secondary schools were not prepared for exclusive online teaching. The study also revealed the challenges the teachers encountered during online teaching and learning to include unstable internet data services, poor electricity supply, and teachers' lack of technical skills. The study recommends that blended teaching and learning should be introduced into the secondary school system. Government and school proprietors should provide well-equipped ICT centres with internet access and adequate internet bandwidth in schools to power online learning. Virtual learning and knowledge of different learning platforms should be part of teacher education, and online learning, part of the secondary school curriculum.

Keywords: covid-19, pandemic, lockdown, online teaching and learning.

Introduction

Education is a vital tool for the growth and development of all nations. The educational programmes and activities of different countries, including Nigeria, were going on normally until the outbreak of Corona Virus Disease, also known as Covid-19. The Corona Virus Disease made its first appearance in Wuhan, China, in

December 2019 and less than three months, it had spread worldwide, becoming a global pandemic. It wreaked havoc on the worldwide educational system, with most nations temporarily shutting down all educational institutions in an attempt to contain the pandemic's spread to a manageable level. Research has shown that every event that affects lives has unintended consequences. Throughout the last few months, the world has been coping with the effects of Covid -19. Significant stagnation has occurred in the educational system. Schools worldwide have been a force to close down, and Nigeria is not left out. Can we determine the degree to which the Covid-19 epidemic has impacted education? Are the estimated 49 million pupils in Nigeria who are compelled to stay home still learning? (Henry and Agbadi 2020). The Corona Virus Pandemic generated changes in the teaching/learning process in schools and has influenced the interaction between teachers and students.

According to UNESCO (2020), most of the world's school students has been impacted by educational institution closures. Teachers and students in Primary, Secondary, Colleges and Universities have been affected by the pandemic's ripple effects. Academic sessions were halted after the Corona Virus was declared a global health crisis. Many learners and teachers have been shocked by this, as several of these schools were preparing for exams, admitting new students, and starting a new term, among other things (Obododike). Some advanced countries were able to continue training their students through online teaching and learning, but was it so in Nigeria? Where the schools and Government prepared for the exclusive online teaching and learning? The Covid-19 shutdown in Nigeria has exposed the nation to the realities and weaknesses in our response to novel situations. However, schooling, teaching and learning must go in the face of these changes and the looming presence of Covid-19. How can this be achieved? It is due to this that this research is being conducted.

Statement of the Problem

Due to the pandemic and subsequent lockdown, all forms of learning activities been halted. Therefore, most school children were idling and not learning. During this pandemic, some advanced countries could continue training their school children through online teaching and learning, but not so in most schools in Nigeria. Many private and public schools do not have an alternative to normal in-school learning. Therefore, this study is carried out to determine how teaching was conducted during the lockdown, the challenges teachers encounter, and innovative strategies to make learning an uninterrupted process in our school system for national growth and development. The theoretical framework for the study is online collaborative learning (OCL). The pandemic has brought the need to identify educational tools to better the effect of the pandemic through online Collaborative Learning with an emphasis on active learning, student-focused, critical thinking and problem-solving approaches. The OCL is a sort of constructivist instruction that takes the form of an instructor-led group. It evolved from a notion initially referred to as computer-mediated communication or network education (Harasim, 2012). The theory recognises three phases of knowledge construction through discussion in a group (i) idea-generating, (ii) idea organising and (iii) Intellectual convergence. According to the theory, the teacher is crucial to the group's knowledge building by supporting the process, offering resources, and ensuring that the subject domain's key concepts

and practices are thoroughly incorporated. Online Collaborative learning offers a great resource for both researchers and instructors. Given the essential role the teacher plays in students learning, the OCL focuses on supporting teachers effectiveness through (i) teacher resilience, (ii) instructional (iii) technology.

Objectives of the Research

It will critically evaluate and analyse the challenges to teaching and learning due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The specific objectives are to:

1. Determine how teaching and learning was carried out during the COVID 19 pandemic lockdown
2. Determine the level of teachers skilled and preparedness for online learning.
3. Examine the challenges the teachers encountered during the Covid-19 Pandemic learning.
4. Look at the innovative strategies essential for effective preparation of teachers for future emergency learning.

Research Questions

The study provides answers to the four research questions below:

1. How was teaching carried out during the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown?
2. Were the teachers adequately skilled and prepared for the pandemic online learning?
3. What were the challenges the teachers encountered during the Covid-19 pandemic learning?
4. What were the innovative strategies that can be put in place for future emergency learning?

Methods

This research looks at how secondary schools in Ika North East Local Government Area in Delta State used online teaching and learning during the COVID 19 pandemic lockdown. To collect both qualitative and quantitative data, we used in-depth analysis. Using a purposive sampling method, we listed the eight private secondary schools in Ika North East Local Government Area that participated in online teaching and learning during the COVID 19 pandemic lockdown. The population of teachers in the eight schools was about 187 teaching staff. In Delta State's public secondary schools, there was no online teaching and learning. In the Ika North East Local Government Area, there are 45 private secondary schools. Our sample consisted of eight private secondary schools. We randomly selected 56 teachers from the eight schools, with seven teachers representing each of the eight private secondary schools. Three schools refused to participate in the research. The study's sample was limited to 35 teachers. However, with an 80% answer rate, the sample size was reduced to 28. A total of 8 (28.5%), 5 (17.9%), 7 (25%), 4 (14.3%), and 4 (14.3%) teachers from school A, B, C, D, and E, respectively, were included in the study. There are 17 males (60.7%) and 11 females (39.3%) in the study. NCE, B.ED/B.SC/B.A M.ED/MA/M.SC, and Ph.D. were also the highest qualifications of 6 (21.4%), 14 (50%), 5 (17.9%), and 3 (10.7%) of teachers, respectively. Furthermore, 6 (21.4%) of the teachers had less than five years of teaching experience, while 22 (78.6%) of the teachers had five years or more of teaching experience.

The mixed questionnaire consisted of a two-section. Section A was structured in nature and included the teachers' personal information as well as some information

about online teaching and learning. Sex, highest qualification, teaching experience, ICT literacy, online teaching and learning platform, and so on were all factors considered in section A. Three open-ended questions make up Section B. The questions were required to evoke the teachers' impressions of online teaching and learning during the COVID 19 pandemic lockdown. It was also needed to elicit the teachers' perception of the innovative strategies that can be put in place for future emergency online teaching, learning, and assessment. The teachers were given the unstructured questionnaire by the researchers and one qualified research assistant. We formally told the school principals before the administration of the questionnaire. The teachers' permission was requested and granted.

The personal details of the respondents were summed up using frequency and percentage. Thematic analysis was used to examine the second part of the questionnaire. The researchers read the qualitative materials many times and coded the terms and sentences while considering the current literature and the research questions. How teaching and learning were carried out, obstacles faced, and creative ways to address the challenges were described as themes. The principals of the schools requested that their schools' names not be included in the research. As a result, we have labelled the five schools as school A, school B, school C, school D, and school E in this report. Teachers in school A were identified by acronyms such as A1, A2, A3, etc. Teachers in school B were identified by the labels B1, B2, B3, and so on. School C, D, and E follow the same procedure.

Results

Research Question one

How was teaching carried out during the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown?

Table 1: The online platform used for the online teaching and learning

School	WhatsApp		Google Classroom & Zoom		WhatsApp & Zoom	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
A	7	87.5	-	-	1	12.5
B	5	100	-	-	-	-
C	-	-	7	100	-	-
D	2	50	-	-	2	50
E	2	50	-	-	2	50
Total	16	57.1	7	25	5	17.9

Table 1 showed that the online platform used by the five secondary schools was WhatsApp, google classroom and zoom. School A teachers made use of WhatsApp and zoom; 7 (87.5%) of them made use of only WhatsApp, while one of the teachers claimed that he used WhatsApp and zoom. All the teachers in school C made use of WhatsApp. The teachers in school C made use of google classroom and zoom. For school D, two teachers made use of WhatsApp while two teachers made use of WhatsApp and zoom. The same situation in school D also applies to school E. In all, 16(57.1%), 7(25%), and 5(17.9%) of the teachers made use of WhatsApp, google classroom, and WhatsApp and zoom, respectively. From the qualitative data, the teachers mentioned that they prepared their lesson by writing down their notes, recording them, or/and making videos, and send them to the online platform for the students to read, listen to, and watch; life teaching was done with zoom. Classwork, assignment, test, and examination were given. They were marked, and feedback was given in some of the schools. Here are some of the comments of the teachers:

"For each of the classes, we built a WhatsApp group. We were able to reach the students through their parents' smartphones. Lessons were sent in the audio-visual form, and we asked the students to copy the lesson's content into their notebook. The notebook should be submitted at resumption." A8

"The teaching was recorded and sent to the students through WhatsApp. Snapshot of our lesson note, especially those with diagram, were also sent to them. I gave the students time to go through or listen to the lesson. After that, I ask them questions and wait for their answers." B5

"Teaching was done via google classroom. The powerpoint was shared with or without voice note and posted bit-by-bit. My students were able to ask me questions, and they contributed during discussion time. Classwork and worksheets were posted via google classroom, marked, and feedback was given via google classroom." C6

"The school collected the email of the students, gave them ID/code through their email. It was with the ID/code that they gained access to the google classroom. I used zoom for teaching practical subject areas and google classroom for teaching theory areas and also for assessment and feedback." C1

"We used to zoom and WhatsApp to teach, but the assessment was mainly done in zoom." D4

Research Question Two

Were the teachers adequately skilled and prepared for the pandemic online learning?

Table 2: Level of ICT literacy

School	Yes		To an extent		No	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
A	4	50	4	50	-	-
B	5	100	-	-	-	-
C	7	100	-	-	-	-
D	1	25	3	75	-	-
E	-	-	3	75	1	25
Total	17	60.7	10	35.7	1	3.6

Table 2 revealed that all the teachers from school C and D said they have the ICT knowledge needed for online teaching and learning. In school A, four of the teachers were ICT literate, while the remaining had ICT knowledge to an extent. In school D, only one of the teachers was ICT literate; the remaining three had some level of ICT knowledge. In school E, none of the teachers claimed they were ICT literate. Three of them had some level of ICT knowledge, while one said he is ICT illiterate. Generally, 17(60.7%), 10(35.7%), and 1(3.6%) of the teachers were ICT literate, ICT literate to an extent, and ICT illiterate, respectively.

Table 3: Level of teacher’s preparedness for the online teaching and learning

School	Yes		To an extent		No	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
A	3	37.5	1	12.5	4	50
B	5	100	-	-	-	-
C	4	57.1	2	28.6	1	14.3
D	-	0	4	100	-	-
F	-	0	1	25	3	75
Total	12	42.9	8	28.6	8	28.6

From table 3, about 3(37.5%), 1(12.5%), and 4(50%) of the teachers in school A were prepared, prepared to an extent, and not prepared for the online teaching and learning, respectively. About 4(28.6%) and 1(14.3%) of the teachers in school C were prepared, prepared to an extent, and not prepared for the online teaching and learning, respectively. In school D, all the teachers who took part in the study were prepared for online teaching and learning. For school E, all the teachers were not prepared for the online teaching and learning except one who was prepared to an extent. Generally, only12(42.9%) of the teachers were prepared for the online teaching and learning during the COVID 19 pandemic lockdown. Findings from the qualitative data showed that some of the teachers claimed they were not trained. Some of the schools trained their staff for online teaching and learning. Below are some of the teachers’ comments:

"The teachers were trained on the use of WhatsApp and zoom for online teaching and learning at the announcement of school closure. It was done to enable us to keep the students busy even when schools were closed. Surprisingly, some teachers did not participate in the training yet went ahead to teach online." A5

"We were not prepared, we never thought the lockdown would get to that level, but having the students in mind, we decided to engage them through online teaching and learning," E2

"I was prepared because the school provided a training programme on the use of WhatsApp for teaching and learning. It made me be able to teach as if we were in a face-to-face classroom." B2

"The school foresaw that the holiday might exceed the duration time, so emails were set up for all students. The school authority was able to reach out to both the teachers and the students. They were trained on how to use google classroom and zoom for teaching and learning. Also, many teachers had earlier taken courses on online teaching and learning because the school has been engaged in online teaching and learning years before the COVID 19 pandemic lockdown." C5

Research Question Three

What were the challenges the teachers encountered during the Covid-19 pandemic learning?

Some teachers said the data was not enough even though their school provided data for the teachers. Internet connectivity was unstable, and poor electricity supply prevented them from having their phones regularly charged. The teachers claimed that some of their students could not participate in online teaching and learning

because there was no network, and some could not access a smartphone or laptop. The following are some of the comments of the teachers:

"The online learning was ok but for network issues, data consumption, and uncharged phones." B3

"When the internet is not stable, the lessons were disrupted. At times we had to reschedule the whole lessons for another day. Also, for the zoom platform, we had an audio problem several times. Sometimes the students could not hear what the teacher was saying. There were times the teacher could not hear the students." D2

Another challenge the teachers faced was that the students were not committed to the online classes. There were instances of truancy, lateness to class, distractions, and lack of parental monitoring. Here are some teachers' views:

"The students could not keep to time because the teachers and students were not in the same location. Lack of interest from the students and difficulty in managing their deviant behaviour were issues that affected the online teaching." D1

"Parents/guidance were not available to monitor or control the distractions behind the screen." C1

The teachers said that there was a gap between the teachers and students during instructions. The interaction was low. It was also difficult to log into the online learning platform, and teaching practical lessons was difficult. Here are the comments from four teachers:

"Students had difficulty logging into the google classroom. Google classroom has more of a chatroom features. So, it elongates the lesson because the teacher had to move up and down the chat now and then." C4

"It was difficult to teach practical lessons on the WhatsApp platform." E2

"Students could not ask questions because they can only listen to their teachers through the voice recording. Interactions were not there. It was obvious that not all questions were asked both on the part of the teacher and students. We did not use to teaching our students without seeing them." A4

"The zoom is a good place for interaction, but some of the students turned off their camera because they want to save their data; others deliberately refused to turn on their camera." D2

The assessment was one of the challenges faced by the teachers. It was not easy to assess the students and monitor their progress. The teachers observed that it was not the students doing the assignment. For some schools marking and giving of feedback was not done until after school fully resumed. Setting questions and marking online was difficult. Most students did not submit their assignment. Some of the teacher's comments are captured below:

"Apart from classwork that was immediately marked by google, the assignment was not completed at the stipulated time. It was much easier to cheat during the online test because the students had access to the internet. Also, some of the students deliberately turn off their camera, claiming it was bad." C6

"The teachers could not supervise their students; some of the classwork and assignment was done by their parents or a more mature person. Also, the examination was not properly supervised because the device camera only focuses on one direction. My school used zoom for conducting exams. I

observed that some of the students played a prank by switching off their network anytime they want to take part in malpractice." A7
"Setting questions on google classroom was tasking and time-consuming. Marking essay on the screen was stressful." C4

Research Question Four

What were the innovative strategies that can be put in place for future emergency learning?

The teachers suggested that the government/school owners provide well-equipped ICT centres for all schools. They should provide computers, laptop, and smartphones during future emergency learning. Blended learning should be introduced into the secondary school system. They advocated that training, seminars, and workshops on online teaching and learning should be done regularly for secondary school teachers. Online teaching and learning should be incorporated into teacher education. Some teachers put it these ways:

"A well-equipped ICT centre should be built in all schools from primary and secondary schools. Teachers and students can be trained there. We needed white marker boards, power bank, laptops, internet facilities in our homes during the last online teaching and learning. In case of next time, these things should be provided for the teachers." E2

"Teachers should still be involved in the use of online tools for teaching. We should not just neglect it. The further we use it, the more we will have opportunities to improve on it. We need to find ways of including engaging videos that will serve as a starter for discussion. We should also include a short question and answer session to clarify grey areas." A2

"Seminar and workshop should be organised on the various tools for online teaching and learning. We need training on how to use these online tools. In addition, online teaching and learning should be included in the curriculum of teacher education." B3

The teachers believed that students should have their smartphones for online learning; blended assessment should go on. Peer assessment should be introduced into the school system. Google form can be useful for assessment. Each school should have their learning platform in the form of a website or a youtube channel. Parents/guidance should help to curb the deviant behaviour of the students during online teaching and learning. Two teachers put it these ways:

"Now that we have gone back to face-to-face learning, students should still be given and asked to submit assignments online. My school still engaged in partial online teaching, learning, and assessment. The teachers and students are doing better. The students are more relaxed, and they now submit their assignment at the right time." A3

"There should be a means of contacting parents/guidance for any form of misconduct from their wards. The parents should be informed during parents-teachers association meetings on ways they can curb the deviant behaviour of their children." C4

Discussion of findings

The study's findings regarding research questions one revealed that the online platform used by the private secondary schools was WhatsApp, Google Classroom

and Zoom. However, the most predominant is WhatsApp. It may be accredited because WhatsApp requires less technical skills to operate and more efficient communication technology. According to Martinez, Diaz, Pena, Lopez Carril, Presa (2017), various researchers have found support for using WhatsApp as a discussion group. Similarly, Dorwal, Sachdev, Gautam, Jain, Sharma, Tiwari, Raina (2016) noted that various research found WhatsApp to be an effective communication medium and concluded that it was a valuable tool that could send data quickly. According to Aduba and Mayowa-Adebara's research, WhatsApp and Telegram are platforms utilised by LIS instructors to give online courses during nationwide shutdown (Aduba and Mayowa-Adebara, 2021). The study also revealed that generally, only 42.9% of the teachers were prepared for the online teaching and learning in the COVID-19 Pandemic lockdown. It implies that a larger percentage of teachers were not prepared, lacking the technical skills needed, and their teaching styles improperly adapted to the online environment. The technical skills of teachers can be rated on their ability to use different functions offered by the online platform to be able to adapt their teaching style to the online environment. It is connected to the findings of Coman et al. (2020), who discovered that instructors were unprepared for entirely online teaching and learning. As a result, the advantage of online education emphasised in their research appear to be fading in importance, while the disadvantages become more apparent. The challenges the teachers encountered during the online teaching and learning, as revealed in this study, included unstable internet connectivity, high cost of data, poor electricity supply, network issues, and inability to access smartphones or laptops. Supporting the findings of this study UNESCO (2020) noted that problems had limited online learning; the internet access, poor internet connectivity synchronous lessons and sometimes cellular data may limit students' access to the internet. Similarly, Adeoye, Adanikin and Adanikin (2020) highlighted some of the challenges of e-learning to include (1) Irregular power supply, (2) Poor internet connectivity, (3) High cost of internet data services, (4) Lack of availability of personal computer and/or laptop (5) incapability of teachers to assist learners to develop the skills and training required to make the online platform effective.

Conclusion

The results and findings of our study identified both practical and theoretical categories of implications: On the practical side, a set of helpful ideas for instructors may be presented to help them improve the quality of the teaching activity in the online space. The study revealed that a larger percentage of the teachers were not properly trained and did not have the necessary technical skills for exclusive online teaching. This study also revealed that online teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown was faced with many challenges; unstable internet connectivity, poor electricity supply, network issues, high cost of internet data services, lack of personal computer and/or laptops.

Recommendations

Based on the above, the following recommendations were made:

1. Blended teaching and learning should be introduced into the secondary school system.

2. Government and school owners should provide well-equipped ICT centres, provide adequate internet bandwidth to power online learning and provide free wifi Zones in communities for students.
3. Online teaching and learning should be incorporated into teacher education.
4. Virtual learning and knowledge of different learning platforms should be part of teacher education and online learning part of the secondary school curriculum.

References

- Adeoye, I. A. Adanikin, A. F. & Adanikin, A. (2020). COVID-19 and E-Learning: Nigeria Tertiary Education System Experience. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Applied Science (IJRIAS)* 5(5), 1-15
- Aduba, D. F and Mayowa-Adebara, O. (2021). Online platforms used for Teaching and Learning during the COVID-19 Era: The case of LIS students in Delta State University, Abraka. *International Information & Library Review*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10572317.2020.1869903>
- Coman, C., Tiru, L. G., Mesesan-Schmilzi, L., Stancili, C. & Bularca, C. M., (2020). Online Teaching and Learning in Higher Education during the Coronavirus Pandemic: Students' Perspective. *Sustainability*, 12(1). <https://doi.org/10.3390/su122410367>
- Dorwal, P., Sachdev, R., Gautam, D., Jain, D., Sharma, P., Tiwari, A. K., Raina (2016). Role of WhatsApp Messenger in the Laboratory Management System: A boon to Communication. *Journal of Medical Systems*, 40(1):14. <http://doi.org/10.1007/s10916-015-0384-2>.
- Harasim, L. (2012). *Learning Theory and Online Technologies*. New York/London: Routledge.
- Henry, G and Agbadi, M. (2020). *Rethinking inclusive Education: COVID-19 realities, post implications on education*. Retrieved 4 April, 2021 from <https://nairametrics.com/2020/05/21/rethinking-inclusive-education-covid-19-realities-post-implications-on-education/>.
- Martinez, B. F., Diaz, E. A., Pena, R. F., Lopez, R. G., Carril, I. F, Presca, C. L. (2017). Social networks engagement and resilience in University Students. *International Journal of Environmental Research*, 14 (12), 13 – 20.
- Obododike, M.P., and Okekeokosisi, J. B., (2020) Challenges of Implementing E-learning in Nigeria Educational System in Covid-19 Pandemic Era. *Social Sciences and Education Research Review*(7) 2, 152-171.
- UNESCO. (2020). COVID-19 Educational Disruption and Response. Retrieved 4 April, 2021 from <https://en.unesco.org/covid19/educationresponse>