
Impact of COVID-19 on PUBLIC Universities Cardinal Programme in North Central Nigeria

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Abstract: The objectives of this study are to find out the impact of COVID-19 on universities cardinal programmes in North-central Nigeria. This study was carried out in North-Central Nigeria. We adopted survey research design for the study. The population of the study consisted of 300 hundred academic staff of public universities in North central Nigeria. The sample for the study was drawn from three public universities randomly comprising 100 each from each university. Questionnaire was used as instruments for the study which was titled (Impact of COVID-19 on Universities Cardinal Programmes Questionnaire). The research instrument was validated by four lecturers from Kogi State University. Reliability of items in the questionnaire of the respondents was established at 0.83 and 0.88 respectively using the Kinder Richardson Formula. Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to answer the research questions and t-test statistical tool was used to test the hypotheses. The study concluded that COVID-19 pandemic that led to shutdown of public universities in Nigeria affected the teaching, research and community service programme of the public universities in North-central, Nigeria. The study hereby recommended that the government should provide adequate funds to the public universities to enable them acquire ICT facilities that will enable the universities conduct their activities virtually in case of future pandemic.

Keywords: Academic staff, COVID-19, Public universities.

Introduction

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), corona viruses are a family of viruses that cause illnesses ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) and the Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS). These viruses were originally transmitted from animals to people. SARS, for instance, was transmitted from civet cats to humans while MERS moved to humans from a type of camel. Several known corona viruses are circulating in animals that have not yet infected humans. The name corona virus comes from the Latin word corona, meaning crown or halo. Under an electron microscope, it looks like it is surrounded by a solar corona. The novel corona virus, identified by Chinese authorities on January 7 and since named SARS-CoV-2, is a new strain that had not been previously identified in humans (1) and (21).

On 27 February, Nigeria confirmed its first case in Lagos State, an Italian citizen who works in Nigeria had returned on 25 February from Milan, Italy through the Murtala Muhammed International Airport, fell ill on 26 February and was transferred to Lagos State Biosecurity Facilities for isolation and testing. Presently, Nigeria is having 199 Covid-19 cases, two death

and twenty recovered. In order to contain the spread of the virus in Nigeria, the Federal Ministry of Education has directed all educational institutions in Nigeria to shut down and allow students to go home (2).

This directive affected all educational institutions including all public universities in Nigeria (3;4;5;6,7 and 21). Many studies have been carried out on the impact of COVID-19 on educational programme and activities. For instance, (8) Did a study to investigate the effects of COVID-19 Schools close down on the Senior Secondary School Academic Programme. Result collected revealed that 80 (100%) of the respondents strongly agreed that COVID-19 Schools close down affected the academic programme of Senior Secondary Schools; 80 (100%) of the respondents strongly agreed that COVID-19 schools close down has led to suspension of internal and external examinations reduction in investment on education; 80 (100%) of the respondents strongly agreed that COVID-19 schools close down has led to suspension of teaching and learning in Schools; 80 (100%) of the respondents strongly agreed that COVID-19. Also, (9) did a study to investigate the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on higher institutions in FCT, Abuja, Nigeria. The study was carried out in Abuja. The result showed that 100% of the respondents agreed that COVID-19 pandemic have led to the suspension of academic calendar of higher institutions in FCT, Abuja, larger percentage of the respondents believes that COVID-19 pandemic have led to the suspension of research programme of higher institutions, the majorities agreed that COVID-19 pandemic have led to the suspension of community service of higher institutions, Abuja. This result also revealed that 100% of the people sampled agreed that adoption of online education is the measure of reducing the impact of COVID-19 effects on higher institutions in Abuja.

Moreover, (10) also carried out a study to find out the perception of undergraduate students on the impact of covid-19 pandemic on higher education development in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, Nigeria. Result collected and analyzed showed that;100% of the respondents agreed that Covid-19 pandemic affected the academic calendar of higher institutions; 90.5% of the respondent agreed that Covid-19 pandemic effected implementation of higher institutions financial budget for 2020; 94.5% of the respondents agreed that Covid-19 pandemic had relationship with reduction of manpower in higher institutions; 100% of the respondents agreed that Covid-19 pandemic had relationship with the cancelation of academic conferences of higher institutions and 89% of the respondents agreed that online education is the alternative measures for conversional in class teaching and learning for future occurrences of any pandemic. (11) did a study that investigated the impact of COVID-19 on private schools in Gwagwalada area council of FCT, Nigeria. The result collected revealed that COVID-19 Pandemic had impact on private school finances; COVID-19 Pandemic influenced retrenchment of staff in private school; COVID-19 government intervention funds did not get to private schools proprietors and majorities of proprietress of private schools in Gwagwalada area council have not been able to pay their staff for the past two months of the COVID-19 pandemic. (12)'s study established that Covid-19 pandemic school closure have impact on research program of higher institutions in FCT and that Covid-19 pandemic will affects the flow of international research grants into higher institutions in FCT. The result also showed that Covid-19 pandemic will affects government funding of research higher institutions in FCT and that higher institutions as part of their community services are creating awereness to the general public on prevention of Covid-19. It was gathered that higher institutions in Federal Capital Territory are collaborating with other institutions on the research for Covid-19 vaccine while higher institutions in FCT are producing face masks for free distributions for the people to protect them from containing the Covid-19 in Abuja. From the above, there is a research gap on the impact of COVID-19 on universities cardinal programmes. Based on this gap, this study seeks to fill the gap by investigating the impact of COVID-19 on public universities cardinal programmes in North-central Nigeria.

Research Objectives

The objectives of this study are to find out the impact of COVID-19 on public universities cardinal programmes in North-central Nigeria. The specific objectives;

1. Assess the impact of COVID-19 on teaching programme;
2. Identify the impact of COVID-19 on teaching programme research programme
3. Identify the impact of COVID-19 on community service programme

Research Hypothesis

Based on the research questions raised, two hypotheses were formulated:

H1: There is no significant relationship between COVID-19 lock down and teaching programme

H2 There is no significant relationship between COVID-19 lock down and research programme

H3 There is no significant relationship between COVID-19 lockdown and community service programme

Methodology

This study was carried out in North-central Nigeria and the objectives of the study was to the impact of COVID-19 on universities cardinal programmes in North-central Nigeria. We adopted survey research design for the study. The population of the study consisted of 300 hundred academic staff of public universities in North central Nigeria. The sample for the study was drawn from three public universities randomly comprising 100 each from each university. Questionnaire was used as instruments for the study which was titled (Impact of COVID-19 on Universities Cardinal Programmes Questionnaire).The questionnaire had two section. Section A sort information on bio-data of respondents. Section B collected information on the subject matter. Three research hypotheses was designed for the study and nine sub-item questions. The research instrument was validated by four lecturers from Kogi State University. Reliability of items in the questionnaire of the respondents were established at 0.83 and 0.88 respectively using the Kinder Richardson Formula. The validity of the instruments was established by the assistance of four experienced lectures from Nararawa State that are involved academic activities in university. The data collected were subjected to measure of internal consistency using Cronbach alpha which yielded the reliability index of 0.76 and 0.66 for parts A, and B respectively and the reliability index of 0.68 was obtained. Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to answer the research questions and t-test statistical tool was used to test the hypotheses. For decisions on the research questions, the coefficient (r) and the size of the relationship was interpreted using the interpretation of correlation coefficient by Downie and Heath cited in Nworgu (2015) as shown: 0.80 and above for high, above 0.30-below 0.80 for moderate and 0.30 and below for low respectively. For decisions on the hypotheses, if t-calculated is equal to or greater than t-critical at 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis is rejected, but if otherwise, it is not rejected.

Data Analysis

Hypothesis One:

H1: There is no significant relationship between impact of COVID-19 and teaching programme

Table 1

N		Covid-19	Teaching Programme	tcal.	tcrit.	Remarks
COVID-19	300	1	.728	1.97	1.96	
Teaching Programme	300	.728	1			Rejected

Data presented on Table 1, the t-calculated value of 1.97 is greater than t-critical value of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance and 728 degree of freedom. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected. Thus, there is significant relationship between COVID-19 and teaching programme. This implies that COVID-19 pandemic lock down affected teaching programme of the universities in Nigeria North-central.

Hypothesis Two:

H2 There is no significant relationship between impact of COVID-19 and research programme

Table 2

N		Covid-19	Research programme	tcal.	tcrit.	Remarks
Covid-19	300	1	.728	1.277	1.96	
Research programme	300	.728	1			Rejected

Data presented on Table 1, the t-calculated value of 1.277 is greater than t-critical value of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance and 730 degree of freedom. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected. Thus, there is significant relationship between COVID-19 and research programme. This means that COVID-19 pandemic lock down affected research programme of the universities North-central Nigeria.

Hypothesis Three:

H3 There is no significant relationship between impact of COVID-19 and community service programme

Table 3

N		COVID-19	Community service programme	tcal.	tcrit.	Remarks
COVID-19	300	1	.728	1.99	1.96	
Community service programme	300	.728	1			Rejected

Data presented on Table 1, the t-calculated value of 1.99 is greater than t-critical value of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance and 728 degree of freedom. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected. Thus, there is significant relationship between COVID-19 and teaching programme. This shows that COVID-19 pandemic lock down affected community service programme of the universities.

Discussion

Result from table one indicated that COVID-19 pandemic lock down affected teaching programme of the universities. This result is in line with the submission of (13);(14);(15), (16) and (21) that COVID-19 affected the implementation of teaching programme in higher

institutions.

Result from table two disclosed that there was a significant relationship between COVID-19 and research programme. This means that COVID-19 pandemic lock down affected research programme of the universities. This result collaborates with the discovery of (17) (18);(19) and (20) who concluded that COVID-19 affected research programme of higher institutions.

The result in table three revealed that there was a significant relationship between COVID-19 and teaching programme. This shows that COVID-19 pandemic lock down affected community service programme of the universities. This result supported the finding of (20) and (12) who found out that COVID-19 affected community service programme of higher institutions.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The study was designed to find out the impact of COVID-19 on cardinal programmes of public universities in North-central Nigeria.

The study concluded that COVID-19 pandemic that led to shutdown of public universities in Nigeria affected the teaching, research and community service programme of the public universities.

The study hereby recommended that the government should provide adequate funds to the public universities to enable them acquire ICT facilities that will enable the universities conduct their activities virtually in case of future pandemic.

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