
**COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND ITS IMPLICATIONS AMONG
PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS IN OGUN STATE, NIGERIA**

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Abstract

COVID-19 pandemic spread across every country of the world which has had adverse effects on different nations of the world. Therefore, this study investigated COVID-19 pandemic and its implications among pre-service teachers in Ogun State, Nigeria. The study adopted a qualitative research approach and descriptive research design. Social Studies pre-service at Colleges of Education formed the population for this study. Six pre-service teachers' were purposively selected from two Colleges of Education in Ogun State, that is, three pre-service teachers' from each College of Education. Those pre-service teachers' were selected based on their deep knowledge of their contemporary issues in Social Studies which COVID-19 pandemic issues are among. The instrument for this study was structured open interview for pre-service teachers' perception on COVID-19 pandemic implications. The result revealed that COVID-19 pandemic crippled the nation's education and it also leads to widespread use of e-learning across the globe. It is therefore recommended that every institution must improve more on their e-learning to facilitate learning inasmuch that it facilitated learning during COVID-19 pandemic educational shutdown.

Keywords: COVID-19, Pandemic, Pre-service teacher, e-learning,

Introduction

A severe economic, social, and psychological crisis has been brought on by the COVID-19 epidemic (Africa Centre for Disease Control 2020). The coronavirus pandemic is the first major global crisis in a century, although there have been many crises recently, including natural disasters, economic downturns, and even epidemics. The COVID-19 pandemic's economic repercussions include an imminent worldwide recession brought on by the shutdown of non-essential sectors and the disruption of supply lines (Aluh & Onu, 2020). Social repercussions might be seen in a variety of contexts, including the rise in family violence (Enwongo, 2020), the failure of remote education, and an increase in food insecurity among low-income families as a result of school closures (Lichtenstein, Ajayi & Egbunike, 2020). Some specialists contend that COVID-19's psychological effects are those that may last the longest and result in a global mental health disaster (Aluh & Onu, 2020). The coronavirus outbreak is causing an upsurge in stress, worry, insomnia, denial, fear, and rage throughout the world, according to NCDC (2020a). The implications of the new challenges the pandemic has presented to society are the economic, social, and psychological issues that individuals are today dealing with.

The coronavirus outbreak is causing an upsurge in stress, worry, insomnia, denial, fear, and rage throughout the world, according to NCDC (2020a). The implications of the new challenges the pandemic has presented to society are the economic, social, and psychological issues that individuals are today dealing with. Parents now have a new responsibility to oversee their children's education as a result of school closures and online learning, especially for younger children (Uchejeso & Obiora, 2020). Additionally, the government's rule of self-isolation required citizens to spend practically all of their time alone at home and to minimize or forgo all social interactions. In addition, many people were experiencing financial trouble due to the poor economic climate. All of these

issues and difficulties developed in the context of a novel, contagious illness with unknown long-term health impacts and unrecognized infectivity and mortality (WHO, 2020a). The issue of worldwide disinformation, referred to by some experts as the “infodemic,” which may be characterized as an abundance of information that makes it challenging for individuals to discover reputable sources and solid guidance, did not make dealing with the situation any easier (Uchejeso & Obiora, 2020). According to studies, people can respond to a crisis in a variety of ways, ranging from aggressive and even violent actions to self-help techniques and sadness (Aluh & Onu, 2020). In addition to the difficulties brought on by the COVID-19 epidemic, it is important to look into how individuals perceive themselves.

People’s perceptions have been found to have a significant impact on their understanding, and this will help them to adhere to safety precautions to stop the spread of infection. Data gathered from community members’ perceptions of COVID-19 could be used to target interventions needed to increase community members’ knowledge about coronaviruses. Most Nigerians’ perceptions of the origin and etiology of COVID-19 are heavily influenced by superstitious beliefs (Chukwuorji & Iorfa, 2020). Due to their travel to areas where COVID-19 problems exist, members of the political class or those with high socioeconomic standing are the first most affected (Chukwuorji & Iorfa, 2020). According to Nwaubani (2020), people believe COVID-19 is a disease of the powerful and wealthy. When COVID-19 first gained notoriety in Nigeria, many religious leaders believed they were immune to it, therefore they disregarded orders to suspend religious gatherings until the truth about COVID-19 was known to everyone (Lichtenstein, Ajayi & Egbunike, 2020). Numerous factors might have affected these perceptions. False information about COVID-19 has been circulated on social media sites including WhatsApp, Facebook, and Twitter, which has caused anxiety and panic disorders in some people and the rejection of safety precautions in others (Aluh & Onu, 2020). Physical separation, social exclusion, banning of religious and social meetings, and other measures have been suggested as unnatural ways to combat the COVID-19 pandemic in Nigeria and throughout Africa (Gbadamosi, 2020).

It is necessary to evaluate pre-service teachers' perception of COVID-19 given the significance of risk perception in behavior modification for disease management. To the best of our knowledge, it is currently unknown how Ogun State's pre-service teachers feel about COVID-19. To lower the danger of COVID-19 infection in Ogun State, an evaluation of pre-service teachers' perceptions is crucial.

Objectives of the Study

This study thus aimed at assessing the perception level of the pre-service teachers regarding COVID-19 implications in Ogun State. The specific objectives are to:

- i. examine the level of pre-service teachers' perception of COVID-19; and
- ii. determine the perceived implications of COVID-19 by pre-service teachers.

Research Questions

- i. What is the level of pre-service teachers perception of COVID-19?
- ii. What are the perceived pre-service teacher implications of COVID-19?

Methods

The study used a descriptive research design and a qualitative research approach. The population of this study was pre-service instructors of social studies at colleges of education. For this study, two colleges of education in Ogun State were specifically chosen. To prepare them for their teaching practice, in which they will be mixing with students and teachers from other environments, Year Two pre-service teachers of social studies were specifically chosen for this study. Once more, focus groups were established, this time with six pre-service teachers chosen from each of the two colleges of education in Ogun State, or three pre-service teachers overall. These pre-service teachers of social studies were chosen at random

to be interviewed about how COVID-19 is seen among pre-service teachers. Perception Scale on COVID-19 (PSC) and structured open interview questions about pre-service teachers' perceptions of COVID-19 pandemic implications were the instruments used in this study. The researcher created the PSC instrument, which has two pieces, to assess how pre-service teachers perceive COVID-19. The pre-service teachers' background information, such as name of college and sex, was requested in Section A, while Section B comprises 15 scale statements that are formatted in accordance with the Likert 4-point scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). For statements that are positively written, the scales (SA), (A), (D), and (SD) receive 4, 3, 2, and 1 points, respectively. For remarks that were phrased negatively, this was reversed. The 20 item scale instrument was drawn were subjected to peer and expert review to determine their appropriateness with reference to the targeted learners. The test was given to aspiring Social Studies instructors by the researchers and research assistants. The reliability of the system was estimated using the Kuder-Richard 21 Formular, which produced a coefficient of 0.76.

Results

Research Question 1: What is the extent of pre-service teachers' perception of COVID-19?

Table 1: Level of Social Studies Students' Involvement in Democratic Engagements in Junior Secondary Schools

S/N	Items	Mean	S.D	Decision
1	This disease is a political game revealed by developed countries.	3.46	.67	VLE
2	The cause of this pandemic is the effort of developed countries to sell drugs and vaccines	3.37	.64	VLE
3	This virus is spread on purpose to contribute to the economic system	3.24	.78	LE
4	This disease was produced as a biological weapon.	2.91	.93	LE
5	This pandemic is a part of a great experiment.	3.38	.68	VLE
6	The cause of this disease is the economic crisis.	3.29	.70	VLE
7	Environmental pollution is one of the important causes of the disease.	3.19	.70	LE
8	One of the causes of the pandemic is contamination of water resources	3.31	.63	VLE
9	The coronavirus pandemic is making me feel discomfort	3.20	.76	LE
10	I feel worried about what could happen if any of my family or friends caught the virus	2.98	.79	LE
11	This disease is not as dangerous as told	3.18	.68	LE
12	Media exaggerates the pandemic	3.08	.76	LE
13	Healthcare professionals exaggerate the pandemic	3.07	.73	LE
14	This disease has a treatment.	3.02	.80	LE
15	Virus causes a fatal disease.	2.90	.91	LE
16	This disease may spread to anybody	3.45	.60	VLE
17	The disease spreads easily	3.25	.73	LE
18	The possibility of spread to women and men is similar	2.57	.89	LE
19	The virus may spread via cargo or any shopping product	2.92	.85	LE
20	This disease is a political game revealed by developed countries	2.45	.82	SE
	Total	3.15	.74	LE

Key: VLE – Very Large Extent (4.00-3.26), LE – Large Extent (3.25-2.51), SE – Some Extent (2.50-1.76), LoE – Low Extent (1.75-1.00).

Table 1 reveals the result of the extent of pre-service teachers' perception of COVID-19. It can be seen that the students to a very large extent perceived that: this disease is a political game revealed by developed countries; the cause of this pandemic is the effort of developed countries to sell drugs and vaccines; this pandemic is a part of a great experiment; the cause of this disease is an economic crisis; One of the causes of the pandemic is contamination of water resources; and this disease may spread to anybody. It can also be seen that students to a large extent perceived that possibility of spread to women and men is similar; This disease has a treatment; the virus may spread via cargo or any shopping product and so forth.

Research Question 2: What are the perceived pre-service teacher implications of COVID-19?

The research question constitutes the themes of analysis from which sub-themes have emerged, for data analysis.

College A1: *COVID-19 disrupted the physical interactive aspect of teaching and learning process thereby extending the estimated years of learning of many students.*

College B3 agreed with the point mentioned above

A preservice teacher perceived that COVID-19 made some people lost their job. He stated thus:

College B2: *Many people lost their jobs due to COVID-19 pandemic*

College A 2 agreed with College B2 when stated that:

College A2: *Because of COVID-19 some business owners have not fully recovered and it was difficult paying their kids school fees*

College A3: COVID-19 made some students become mothers during COVID-19

College B1: *It resulted to total lockdown that stopped academic growth but at the same time improved hygiene of the world*

College A1 supported what College B1 perceived, the participant stated thus:

College A1: *It affects students' achievement due to overstaying at home. The long protract break affects students academically*

College B3: *It promotes e-learning*

Many students perceived that Covid-19 has two sides, that is, positive and negative sides implications. Preservice teachers perceived that many people lost their job due to stay at home order from the government to prevent spreading of pandemic to many other people. They also perceived that many business owners closed down their businesses during COVID-19 pandemic. Many workers were also layoff which made those who lost their jobs to experience hardship. Preservice teachers reported that physical contacts of teaching and learning were disrupted and no lecture was taken place for sometimes before introduction of online lectures. On the other side, preservice teachers perceived that e-learning was well embraced in many institutions in Nigeria in order to avert the effect of COVID-19 on physical teaching and learning contacts.

Discussions

This study found that many individual believed that Covid-19 disease is a political game revealed by developed countries. It was found out in this study that the cause of this pandemic is the effort of developed countries to sell drugs and vaccines. These kinds of perceptions indicate that there still exists inadequate knowledge of COVID-19 among pre-service in Ogun State. This finding corroborates the finding of Nwaubani (2020), which states that people believed that Covid-19 is a disease of the rich and mighty. The study revealed that there are wrong perceptions of preservice teachers as regard COVID-19 which adequate awareness can address. The study revealed that many businesses were affected negatively during COVID-19 due to the government order of stay at home at early stage of pandemic with hope of controlling the spread of the disease. Educationally, study revealed that physical teaching at all levels of education was stopped initially before the use of e-learning in many schools. On the positive side, study revealed that pandemic made e-learning to be widely used more than before in many institutions in Nigeria.

Conclusion

COVID-19 is a major pandemic disease that set entire world backward. It is a fact that Covid-19 affected every sector of every nation which includes Nigeria. Despite the negative influence of Covid-19, many individual still denied the existence of COVID-19 while some also have wrong perception about COVID-19. This study revealed that pre-service teachers have good perception of COVID-19 to some large extent. There is a need to increase awareness of people about COVID-19 and other viral diseases to prevent subsequent damage by any pandemic. Positive side of COVID-19 in the area of e-learning should be embraced by every pre-service teacher in their mode of learning as their lecturers make use of it.

Recommendations

Pre-service teachers should embrace virtual learning they are already exposed to during COVID-19 pandemic to enhance their learning. Precautionary measures must stick to avoid COVID-19 infection.

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