

TRENDING ISSUES IN MANAGEMENT OF PRIMARY EDUCATION DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC ERA IN NIGERIA

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SCHOOL OF EARLY CHILHOOD CARE, PRIMARY, ADULT AND NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

Abstract

This paper discussed the trending issues in management of primary education during COVID-19 pandemic era in Nigeria. A few concepts such as management, primary education together with its goals and objectives likewise the important benefits of primary education in Nigeria, and COVID-19 pandemic era were discussed in the paper. The paper further examined such trending issues that bordered and inhibited effective management of primary education especially during COVID-19 pandemic era in the country. However, possible solutions and suggestions for effective management of primary education especially during and post (after) COVID-19 pandemic era in Nigeria were made for improvement in the state and situation of things as regards to the management of primary schools in Nigeria.

Keywords: Trending, Issues, Management, Primary, Education, COVID-19, Pandemic, Era

Introduction

Education is an indispensable tool for sustainable development in the Nigerian society, Education is therefore, an aggregate for social change, socio-economic and cultural development in a society. Education such as primary education has been likewise designed to support the children early development in preparation for participation in school and society. Primary education programmes are designed for children from age 6 to 12years as indicated by the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2014) in the National Policy on Education (NPE). Its programmes are typically designed to provide pupils with fundamental skills in reading, writing and mathematics and to establish a solid foundation for learning. According to Asodike and Ikpitibo (2014), primary education is the foundation of formal education. It is an essential component in the echelon of educational system of every nation. In order to qualify for other levels of education one must first pass through primary schools, as such it is an institution upon which all other levels of education and educational achievements are built. It prepares the mind and trains the child for higher and tougher academic pursuits. It provides young learners with the fundamentals of reading, writing, skill acquisition, information and attitudes necessary for proper adjustment into the society. Primary education introduces the child to subjects as well as teaching methods that helps him or her to over time, learn to adapt to his or her environment. Replicating this in the future, becomes easier haven been introduced to it early enough. Learning to adapt to different situations is essential to existence. Primary education, prepares a child with this in mind. Primary education also teaches the child to develop and uphold rich cultural and social values. All of which helps to form the child into a decent individual on the long run (Ogungbe, 2022). Through effective and functional primary education system, children's social skills are strongly developed and built for the active participation in the development of the society. There is no doubt that primary education sector is a panacea for solving problems such as ignorance, illiteracy, religious violence, insecurity and political servitude. An educated person is capable of

making a more stable, peaceful, and prosperous country possible. However, the strength of providing a functional and active primary education system lies essentially in its effective management ability by education stakeholders and practitioners which will promote quality practices with the sole objectives of equipping young people with the tools needed to investigate and inquire, think, conclude and understand events around them which is equally necessary for the attainment of educational goals and objectives. Therefore, understanding of the importance of effective management of primary education especially during the COVID-19 pandemic era will lead to the attainment of educational objectives in primary education delivery in Nigeria, which is essential and of great importance to stakeholders (Asodike & Ikpitibo, 2014). Ogungbe (2022) pointing out the importance of primary education observed that primary education helps to equip on the basic skills needed to communicate effectively. It also helps the child to be able to engage in simple arithmetic and the likes. All of which provide a platform on which knowledge would be built on.

Primary education further aids the child in familiarizing with what citizenship which entails, his role as a citizen of Nigeria and to what extent his participation helps to the growth and development of the country. This helps to plant the seed of loyalty to one's country in the heart of the child. Primary education ensures that the child is not deficient in the area of character formation. It helps the child to get acquainted with the essentials of what is morally expected of him within the confines of the society. It also teaches the child to develop and uphold rich cultural and social values. It provides basic tools for further educational advancement including preparation for trades and crafts of the locality. It forms the foundation for other levels of education to be built upon. In describing primary education sector, in other words, primary education is an important level of education upon which all other levels of education and educational achievements are built. Never minding the importance and socio-economic benefits of the primary education sector in the country, yet there are some trending issues which still borders effective management of the sector during the COVID-19 pandemic era. Although the COVID-19 pandemic era can be viewed as a period of the coronavirus epidemic, which affected some many countries including Nigeria; management of primary education during this period was very difficult and essential too. The COVID-19 pandemic according to the World Health Organization (WHO, 2020), means Coronavirus disease, an ongoing global pandemic which is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus. It started in Wuhan, China in late 2019 and has since spread worldwide and globally as a pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic caused great difficulties in the management of primary schools in the country. According to Adelokun (2020), in Nigeria, the outbreaks of Lassa fever, bird flu, monkey pox, Ebola disease and others did not weigh down the socio-economic and management of the education system as it were with the coronavirus. This has been raising dust in Nigeria. The education system was shut down for a long time, teachers and learners were all at home and everything was relatively abandoned, especially, in developing countries like Nigeria. Adelokun (2020), Akinsuroju, Adeniyi and Anyanwu (2022) opined that the COVID-19 pandemic had posed serious threats to the educational system in Nigeria. Cepal (2020) reported that COVID-19 pandemic created a period of unprecedentedly crisis in all sectors of the nations' economy. Particularly, in the education sector, Obeidi in Akinsuroju, Adeniyi and Anyanwu (2022)

also stressed that the ugly scenario had made face-to-face teaching and learning activities in 190 countries impossible as educational institutions all over the world were totally shutdown so as to prevent the spread and mitigate the impact of Covid-19 virus. Nigerian Schools were also closed as a result of this deadly pandemic. As such effective teaching and learning process across all levels of Nigerian educational system during this period became a mirage. This ugly situation posed serious challenges to the management of educational system in Nigeria. As a result of this, stakeholders, including the agencies saddled with the responsibilities of managing the educational sector are on their toes looking for effective ways in making system work again. Some of the trending issues which affected the management of primary education during the COVID-19 pandemic era as observed include inadequate funding, school closure and its defaults, insecurity, inadequate ICT and e-learning facilities, obstruction of academic calendar, inability to maintain students' motivation to learn, among others. For effective management of the primary education sector, these trending issues must be curbed and controlled. However, some possible solutions and suggestions which will lead to effective management of the primary education sector both during and after the COVID-19 pandemic era in Nigeria were pointed out in the paper. This paper therefore was designated to discuss most of the salient trending issues affecting the management of primary education sector in Nigeria during the COVID-19 pandemic era. However, the paper was presented systematically according to subthemes even as key concepts explicated.

Management

The word management as defined by Sethy (2022) is the creation and maintenance of an internal environment in an enterprise where individuals working together in groups, can perform efficiently and effectively towards the attainment of group-goals. Management is equally the process of designing and maintaining an environment in which individuals, working together in groups, efficiently accomplish selected aims. It is defined as the process by which a co-operative group directs actions towards common goals. Sethy (2022) went further to describe management in a broad sense saying that it is an act of managing an organization or institution like the higher education which includes formulation of plans, policies and objectives; securing men, material, machinery, money and methods for this achievement; putting all of them into operation; directing and motivating the men at work; supervising and controlling their performance; and providing maximum satisfaction and service to employer, employees and the public at large. Kaehler and Grundei (2019) defined management from different authors perspectives. To them, management is the activity of getting things done with the aid of people and other resources. It is process of reaching organizational goals by working with and through people and other organizational resources. Management can further be described as coordinating and overseeing the work activities of others so that their activities are completed efficiently and effectively. Management is the process of assembling and using sets of resources in a goal-directed manner to accomplish tasks in an organization. It is coordinated activities (forecasting, planning, organizing, deciding, commanding) to direct and control an organization (Kaehler & Grundei, 2019). Through the functions of management which includes planning, organizing, coordinating, controlling, directing, staffing, documenting/reporting, budgeting and evaluating, the goals and objectives of any institution can be actualized.

With the above statements, Maiti (2020) observed the importance of management in the primary education sector to include that;

- i. Management guides and controls the activities of manpower for maximum utilization of the school's resources.
- ii. No organization including primary school can survive without management. This is so because, the school manager and administrator controls and coordinates all activities and affairs of the school.
- iii. School managers and administrators provide new ideas and vision to the school to do better.
- iv. The school manager and administrator provides stability to the school by changing and modifying the resources in accordance with the changing environment of the society.
- v. Management helps personality development thereby raising efficiency and productivity in school.

Management of primary education is therefore of utmost importance because every organization including the primary schools, at every level, needs management, be it an organization as small as a family or a church or bigger organizations as schools, colleges, universities, business houses or even the Government.

Primary Education

In describing the primary education sector, Ogungbe (2022) noted that primary education forms the foundation for other levels of education to be built upon. In other words, primary education is an important level of education upon which all other levels of education and educational achievements are built. Anero (2014) defined primary education as education one receives before entering secondary school or reaching early adolescents. Primary education is therefore, universally accepted as the foundation laying level of education in all nations of the world. It provides the mini-structural framework on which the quality of other levels of education is anchored. In the primary education school setting, children are exposed to a variety of subjects such as indigenous languages, English Language, French, Arabic, Mathematics or Numeracy, Basic Science, Social Studies, Health Science, Agricultural Science, Local Craft and a host of other disciplines with a view to equipping them with basic knowledge and skills which would help them to lead meaningful life in the future (Adeyemi, 2020; Etor, Mbon & Ekanem, 2013). The Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2014: 9) described primary education as education given to children aged 6-12 years. Given the above description of primary education, its benefits towards children personality development coupled with sustainable development in the Nigerian society are enormous. The goals and objectives of primary education has further been outlined below.

Goals and Objectives of Primary Education in Nigeria

The goals and objectives of primary education as stated by the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2014) under section 2, pg.10 of the National Policy on Education (NPE) are to:

- a. inculcate permanent literacy and numeracy, and ability to communicate effectively;
- b. lay a sound basis for scientific and reflective thinking;
- c. promote patriotism, fairness, understanding and national unity, and give citizenship education as a basis for effective participation in and contribution to the life of the society;
- d. instill social, moral norms and values in the child;
- e. mold the character and develop sound attitude and morals in the child;

- f. develop in the child the ability to adapt to the child's changing environment;
- g. provide 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
- h. provide the child with basic tools for further educational advancement, including preparation for trades and crafts of the locality.

Given the abovementioned goals and objectives of primary education in Nigeria, it however, becomes essential to discuss the important benefits of primary education towards sustainable development in the country.

Important Benefits of Primary Education in Nigeria

Some of the important benefits of primary education in Nigeria have been indicated by several scholars and authorities. Ogungbe (2022) identifying the important benefits of primary education expressed that primary education helps to equip the child with the basic skills needed to communicate effectively. It also helps the child to be able to engage in simple arithmetic and the likes. Primary education aids the child in familiarizing with what citizenship which entails, his role as a citizen of Nigeria and to what extent his participation helps to the growth and development of the country. This helps to plant the seed of loyalty to one's country in the heart of the child. Primary education aids the child in familiarizing with what citizenship which entails, his role as a citizen of Nigeria and to what extent his participation helps to the growth and development of the country. This helps to plant the seed of loyalty to one's country in the heart of the child. Primary education ensures that the child is not deficient in the area of character formation. It helps the child to get acquainted with the essentials of what is morally expected of him within the confines of the society. It also teaches the child to develop and uphold rich cultural and social values. It provides basic tools for further educational advancement including preparation for trades and crafts of the locality (Ogungbe, 2022). Anero (2014: 58) pointed out the important benefits and relevance of primary education on both children and the society development as including the following;

1. Primary education adds economic value to the country in the sense that the act of enterprising with primary school education (both publicly and privately owned) generates income for the government, proprietors and teachers as well as other category of staff. On the side of parents, it avails them a safe place where to keep their children thereby allowing them to pursue or engage in their businesses. This view that it allows parents to engage in their businesses has equally warranted Duruamaku-Dim and Anero (2011) to say that parents and guardians who pay do not regret for doing so because the services derived justify the money they pay. The proprietors who run the schools cannot also regret their involvement because of the financial rewards they derive. The government on her part is comfortable because the schools impart skills that would make citizens survive better.
2. Primary schools target at achieving intellectual and academic excellence through the teaching of several subjects and the provision of many educational services. This is why one of the goals of primary education as contained in the National Policy on Education of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2014) is to inculcate permanent literacy and numeracy, and ability to communicate effectively. In the bid to attain the goal, it

developed well-articulated curriculum. This is contrary to the mission schools or African traditional system of education who in the past did not adopt any given standard in carrying its activities.

3. The primary schools are generally known as the custodian of societal values. The foundation laid by the primary schools plays crucial roles in achieving the inculcation of acceptable norms and values of the society. The various rules and regulations introduced in the school enhance the inculcation of acceptable societal norms and values to the Nigerian child. The values instilled in children in such early age hardly depart from them. In compliance, the primary schools expose the child to rights and wrongs. They sometimes use some reinforcement measures in the form of rewards and punishments to shape the behaviour of the child to reflect acceptable societal values such as honesty, hard work, patience, respect, faithfulness in God and service, and many more.

4. Primary education assists the child to contribute to the economic and social prosperity of the community. This view justifies why parents easily transfer their vocation, skill or talent to their children.

In pursuant of the above educational goals and objectives which are geared towards showcasing important benefits of primary education in promoting sustainable development in the country, it is also crucial that all the trending issues that borders efficient and effective management of primary education system and schools in Nigeria especially during the COVID-19 pandemic era, becomes highly resolved in order to enhance quality children learning together with the propagation of excellent service delivery in the primary schools.

COVID-19 Pandemic Era in Nigeria

The COVID-19 pandemic according to the World Health Organization (WHO, 2020), means Coronavirus disease, an ongoing global pandemic which is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus. It started in Wuhan, China in late 2019 and has since spread worldwide and globally as an epidemic, thereafter, pandemic, an outbreak that affected many people at one time and spread through one or several communities. The pandemic era on the other hand, is a term used to describe an epidemic when the spread is global. With this, the World Health Organization declared a Public Health Emergency of International Concern regarding COVID-19 on 30 January 2020, and later declared the coronavirus disease a pandemic on 11 March 2020. Cennimo (2021) opined the COVID-19 is an acronym derived from "coronavirus disease of 2019". The name was chosen to avoid stigmatizing the virus's origins in terms of populations, geography, or animal associations. COVID-19 is normally passed on through close contact with someone who currently has the virus. When people are in close contact with infected individuals, they are likely to breathe in the respiratory droplets from their mouth and nose, which can contain the virus. There is a greater risk of getting COVID-19 in places where people are closer together and spend more time together which causes the pandemic. This includes indoor, crowded and poorly ventilated spaces, such as schools, restaurants, gyms, nightclubs, offices and places of worship. Respiratory droplets from coughs and sneezes can also land on surfaces. The virus is then spread when another person comes into contact with these droplets and touches their own eyes, nose or mouth, without washing their hands first (WHO, 2020). For this facts, physical social distancing, schools closure, wearing a face mask around other people and frequent handwashing or using an alcohol-based rub frequently and not touching the sense organs like the face, eyes,

mouth, nose and ears, among others, were some of the best ways to prevent COVID-19 pandemic (Cennimo, 2021). Due to the dangers of COVID-19 on humans, schools were shut down for several months which affected academic programmes and school calendar. The COVID-19 pandemic era disrupted academic activities because all schools were closed down and the Nigerian Federal Ministry of Education suggested the use of online learning to continue academic activities which seem not realizable due to the fact that the country has not fully integrated the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in education. Todowede (2019) discovered in a study that the computer has not been part of classroom technology in more than 90 percent of the public schools in Nigeria. The implication is that the chalkboard and textbook continue to dominate classroom scenarios in the generality of primary and secondary schools in Nigeria. Furthermore, Todowede found out in a study that the non-availability of some ICT equipment in the schools often adversely affected the uses of ICTs by teachers and students. The lack of robust searched skills and access points in the schools were cited as compounding factors and barriers to the free usage of the Internet by teachers. However, the COVID-19 pandemic era has exposed a lot of defects and defaults as regards to the management of the Nigerian education system at all levels. Given the COVID-19 pandemic situation in Nigeria, there has been a lot of problems affecting the management of primary education in Nigeria which still are trending issues in this present times. These trending issues have further been discussed in the next section below.

Trending Issues in Management of Primary Education During COVID-19 Pandemic Era in Nigeria

Effective management of primary education sector especially during the COVID-19 pandemic era in Nigeria has been a difficult task. The sector under the pandemic era faced a lot of problems and issues which seem to be challenging for quality education delivery coupled with efficient services to be actualized. The COVID-19 pandemic era exposed all the challenges affecting the development of primary education in Nigeria. Although, many of these problems and challenges has being long existing but they are still trending issues which makes it difficult for effective management of the primary education sector during and post COVID-19 pandemic era. Most of these issues include inadequate funding, shortage of school facilities and infrastructure such that the information and communication technology (ICT) tools and sanitary facilities, lack of continuous staff/teacher development, governance problems, among others. Adalakun (2020), Akinsuroju, Adeniyi and Anyanwu (2022), Agogbua, Amobi and Anyaeji (2021), Aytac (2020), Okonkwo, Oladejo and Alimba (2022) and other scholars identified the trending issues affecting effective management of the primary education sector during the COVID-19 pandemic era in Nigeria as including the following; inadequate funding, school closure and it defaults, insecurity, inadequate school infrastructure, ICT and e-learning facilities, obstruction of academic calendar, inability to maintain students' motivation to learn, among others. These trending issues have further been discussed below.

Issue of Inadequate Funding: The issue of inadequate funding of the entire education sector including the primary education sector has been long debated in the country including during the COVID-19 pandemic era as indicated by scholars such as Okonkwo, Oladejo and Alimba (2022). During the COVID-19 pandemic era, funding of the education system including primary education by both the government and private ownership dropped drastically and became worsened; this equally negatively affected management

of all schools. Agogbua, Amobi and Anyaeji (2021) observed that inadequate funding has been a major challenge in the smooth running of primary education in Nigeria. Budgetary allocation to education in year 2021 is 6.3% while UNESCO suggests 26% of the country’s annual budget. No administration in recent times had got near to UNESCO’s recommendation. Continued underfunding of education sector threatens the development, growth, and other administrative activities in the school. Shortage of finance in the sector is the result of unequipped libraries, overpopulation of classes, the dilapidation of facilities, high level of teachers’ turnover, extortion, etc. Akinsuroju, Adeniyi and Anyanwu (2022) opined that World Bank (2012) report showed that countries like Ghana occupied first position with allocation to the education sector of 31.0%, South Africa and Kenya were in 5th and 8th positions with percentages of allocation to education sector at 25.8% and 23.0% respectively. South Africa spends 7.9%; Kenya 6.5%; Malawi 5.4%; Cote d’Ivoire 5 %; Angola 4.9 %; Ghana 4.4 % and Tanzania 3.4 %. While Nigeria spends about 0.76 % of her GNP on education, instead of 26% prescribed by United Nation Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The Nigeria government has made serious efforts to increase her annual budget for education ever since 2015 to ensure that quality education is provided for her citizens. As 5 – 10% of her annual budget has been allocated to education in 2015. Table 1 below shows government budget on education between 2015 to 2021.

Table 1: Government Budget on Education from 2015 till 2021

Year	Total FG Budget	Allocation to Education	Percentage
2015	N4.5trn	N484.2bn	10.70%
2016	N6.0trn	N369.6bn	7.90%
2017	N7.4trn	N550.5bn	7.40%
2018	N9.1trn	N605.8bn	7.04%
2019	N8.8trn	N620.5bn	7.05%
2020	N10.3trn	N671.07bn	6.70%
2021	N13.08trn	N13.08trn	5.60%

Source: Federal Government of Nigeria (2021) cited in Akinsuroju, Adeniyi and Anyanwu (2022)

From Table 1, the percentage of government annual budget on education are as follows; 10.70% in 2015, 7.90% in 2016, 7.40% in 2017, 7.04% in 2018, 7,05% in 2019, 6.70% in 2020 and 5.60% in 2021. From the above, it is clear that government of Nigeria had increased her spending on education across all levels (Primary, Secondary and Tertiary) in form of long-term investment to improve the life of her citizens. To buttress this, Ekundayo cited in Akinsuroju, Adeniyi and Anyanwu (2022) submitted that the funds allocated to education should not be merely considered as an expense but a long-term investment that will benefit the society as a whole. The degree of funds allocated to education and its utilization affects the graduates produced by any educational system (Asiyai cited in Akinsuroju, Adeniyi & Anyanwu, 2022). However, inadequate funding of education has posed a serious threat to effective management of educational system in Nigeria particularly during covid-19 pandemic. There are no adequate funds for planning, organizing, coordinating and implementing educational activities and programmes at various levels of Nigerian educational system especially, the primary education sector. A buoyant economy like Nigeria economy has failed to make remarkable improvement and achievement in as a result of inadequate funding (Akinsuroju, Adeniyi & Anyanwu, 2022). Onanwa and Wisdom (2020) asserted that the issue bothering on limited financial resources or funds both at the local government level accounts for non-

payment of salaries, dilapidating building and lack of infrastructure in the primary schools. Approximately five percent of the primary schools in Nigeria have no building; while many of the buildings where available, were either without roofs, inadequate, or in a terrible state.

Issue of School Closure and Its Defaults: The COVID-19 pandemic era led to the closure of schools for several months which obstructed the academic calendar. Unlike western countries, the Nigerian Federal Ministry of Education's school-closure directive did not produce policy measures on how to ease learning disruptions for children and how to address the digital mean of learning which may be alternative method to physical teaching-learning process in the dynamic society. As emphasized by UNESCO, temporary school closure comes with high social and economic costs, with severe impact on children especially those from disadvantaged background (Adelakun, 2020). Akinsuroju, Adeniyi and Anyanwu (2022: 4) opined that the closure of Nigerian schools as a result of covid-19 pandemic had its own defaults that led to the following:

- a. **Increase in dropout rate in schools:** Closure of school made face to face teaching and learning impossible in schools across the world including Nigeria. This had serious implications on educational system globally. The closure of schools as a result of covid-19 pandemic had led to many children of school age out of schools. Buttressing this submission, UNESCO in Adelakun (2020) submitted that 35.9 million children in both primary and secondary schools across the world were out of schools due to the outbreak of covid-19 pandemic. For primary schools, this number totals approximately 25.6 million students, of which about 87 percent (23.5 million) are students enrolled in public schools (Adelakun, 2020). However, the sad news is that not all students returned back to schools at the end of and post covid-19 pandemic. Some of them changed their orientation that going to school is a waste of time, the pandemic might have claimed the lives of some, also, closure of school might have led the students to get involve in an unproductive venture such as yahoo business and online crime which is dangerous to them and the nation.
- b. **Inefficiency in the school system/educational sector:** There is tendency that educational sector was not efficient during covid-19 pandemic era, as this might have led to increase in the number of repetitions in schools. Before the outbreak of covid-19 virus when there was face to face classroom interaction between the teachers and students, the rate at which students repeated classes was alarming talk less when students did not have opportunity to interact with their teachers face to face. Progression rate in the schools was a mirage as students was held constant in their classes. Those that supposed to graduate and make impact in various sectors were denied the opportunity to do so. Akinsuroju (2018) submitted that government had invested huge amount of money on education as recommended by UNESCO. If this is true as claimed, the students' flow in the system may not justify government spending or investment on education.
- c. **Unrealistic educational objectives:** The Covid-19 pandemic era made the objectives of education globally unrealistic. Closure of the schools for many months and the lockdowns particularly in

developing countries like Nigeria might have punctured the efforts of individuals, groups and government in providing quality education at various levels. It was rather impossible for countries to train their citizens to be self-reliant, contribute their quotas towards the development of their respective countries and develop them into useful members of the society.

- d. **Increase government spending on education:** The pandemic forced the government to spend more on education. As observed in the educational system in recent time, priorities are now given to virtual learning. Government has no choice in purchasing e-learning gadgets that could aid effectively teaching and learning possible for both the teachers and students. In order to make education accessible during this pandemic era, more computers need to be purchased, Wi-Fi needed to be provided for schools, series of training for teachers needed to be organized on the use of e-learning tools, all these and many more requires extra cost and adequate funding.

Issue of Insecurity: The problem of insecurity which is still persisting in the recent time has had negative impact on the management of primary schools during the COVID-19 pandemic era. Akinsuroju, Adeniyi and Anyanwu (2022) opined that insecurity is a nation issue of concern to all and sundry. Insecurity in Nigeria in recent time has posed serious challenges to management of education. The Niger-delta militancy tensions in the south-south region, the activities of secret cult on campus, Fulani herdsmen killings, Boko haram Crisis, and kidnapping activities across the six geo-political zones in Nigeria are detrimental to attainment of educational goals. Stakeholders in the educational system are no longer safe. Teachers, students and school administrators are being kidnapped daily in schools. We have had of cases of kidnapping and killing of teachers (school administrators inclusive) and students in major cities in Borno, Adamawa, Niger, even in Lagos and other major state in the country. The case of Chibok girls, is still very fresh in the memories of many Nigerians. Adesulu (2019) reported that between 2009 and 2018, two thousand, two hundred and ninety-five (2,295) teachers and school heads have been killed while 19,000 teachers have been displaced in the BAY states (Borno, Adamawa and Yobe); 1,500 schools destroyed and over 1,280 casualties were recorded among the teachers and students in the area. Many as time in these states, school administrators are the most vulnerable. The incessant challenges of insecurity had led to lack of control where defensive steps against Boko haram, Kidnapping, abduction, etc are not taken by managers of education simply because there was fear, anxiety and lack of protection for them in that kind of settings. This ugly scenario has negative consequences for effective management of education during and after covid-19 pandemic.

Issue of Inadequate School Infrastructure, ICT and e-Learning Facilities: The COVID-19 pandemic created some gaps in the primary education sector, because only the private schools located especially in the cities with adequate ICT infrastructure and e-learning facilities were able to substantially afford and provide education for their learners. Those schools located in the remote rural areas could not afford to provide e-learning and ICT facilities for the children, this probably affected children learning. According to Adetakun (2020), many schools could not afford to provide e-learning because of inadequate school

infrastructure and ICT facilities. In the same vein, Agogbua, Amobi and Anyaeji (2021) remarked that the public primary schools in remote villages or rather economically backward schools faced serious issues in keeping up with e-learning. Many students who were found sitting at home during the covid-19 pandemic era were given no education as a result of lack of e-learning solutions. Village schools were completely short down without plans to keep the students mentally busy. However, the coronavirus pandemic exposed the socio-economic inequalities of the Nigeria education system; where many wealthy families in Nigeria send their children to private schools leaving the poor resources and facilities in public schools all because of the increase in mismanagement of resources allocated to the education system. The children in private schools might have experience little disruption in their learning, because the authorities of most standardized private schools ensured their schools are well equipped with ICT infrastructures and they were able to afford remote learning. Learners from vulnerable and disadvantaged communities without access to computers, the internet and other devices outside school were left struggling. In many cases, these children lived in communities with poor or non-existent of school infrastructure, internet connectivity and epileptic power supply. Inevitably, since the digital innovative technology was the only alternative to switch to during the lockdown, it made worse learning disparities among these children because not many parents could afford an android phone talk less of other sophisticated ICT tools used in aiding e-learning (Adelakun, 2020).

Issue of Obstruction of Academic Calendar: One of the major issues in the management of primary education was obstruction of the academic calendar in which schools had to deal with at school reopening and resumption. The COVID-19 made it difficult for many primary schools to cover their scheme and curriculum at resumption, which made children loose most of the important lessons in the curriculum which were not taught in the classroom. Adelakun (2020) indicating the negative impact of COVID-19 pandemic on obstruction of the schools' academic calendar noted that there is no doubt that students in terminal classes in lower and higher levels of education system of Nigeria were held on a spot; they were unable to graduate or even move to the next level in their academic pursuit and this has led to the set a great back of the smooth running of educational sector of Nigeria and the world at large. What makes education beautiful and fulfilling is the progress in terms of moving to the next level, graduating and becoming a useful and acceptable member of the society after being exposed to the teaching-learning processes in the school. The careers of the graduates might be severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, since they have experienced majorly teaching interruptions in the final part of their studies, interruptions in their assessments, and finally they are likely to graduate at the beginning of a major global recession, because there is no doubt there was going to be a global recession in the economy of the world at large at the end of the pandemic lockdown. COVID-19 interruption affected learning; leading to changes in the school time tables and schedules; and in fact at the resumption of the school after the lockdown, so many grounds needed to be covered in order for the educational system of Nigeria to be able to compete with the world's educational system.

Issue of Inability to Maintain Students' Motivation to Learn: Given all the health challenges, threats to life and deaths caused by the COVID-19 pandemic which has created a lot of anxiety, fear and worries on humans all over the world; all these happenings have affected children emotional and mental stability including their psychological balance, thus, creating a situation which have demoralized and equally demotivated children to focus on continue learning. The emphasis from the general public was on how to survive and stay alive during the pandemic era, so nothing else matter to both adults and children during the coronavirus era which negatively affected the motivation to learn caused by a few factors. Buttressing the above points, Aytaç (2020) stressed that some factors were responsible for the children low interest and less motivation to learn during COVID-19 pandemic which can be likened and linked to the inability of parents to create a home learning environment for children, lack of access to live broadcasts, and connection problems of most education portal, among others.

Issue of Inadequate Teacher Motivation and Continuous Development: The problem of inadequate teacher motivation and continuous teachers training were among the serious issues in the management of primary education during the COVID-19 pandemic era. Poor teachers' motivation in the forms of their salaries, bonuses, as well as, irregularities in payments, were observed as major factors affecting teachers' commitment to their job during the COVID-19 pandemic era. Moreover, good housing, money, and a better working environment are motivating factors for teachers during and after the COVID-19 pandemic era. Good welfare packages will serve as motivators to high productivity. Fair wages attract qualified and dedicated teachers and also will change the mind of young graduates towards the teaching profession. Annual review of salary will reduce incessant strike action in schools. Until the government treats teachers fairly the education output remains the same (Agogbua, Amobi & Anyaeji, 2021). During the COVID-19 pandemic era, it became almost impossible to train teachers at the primary school level. If primary school teachers are to effectively and efficiently perform their functions during the COVID-19 pandemic era as observed by Agogbua, Amobi and Anyaeji (2021), it becomes imperative for them to be retrained in new skills and modern methodology. The Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2014) stated in the National Policy on Education that no level of education can rise above the quality of its teachers. Hence, adequate teacher motivation and a continuous in-service training and development programme in institutions of learning is necessary to enhance teachers' skills, knowledge, and experience especially during the time of the COVID-19 pandemic era. This is beneficial as it provides opportunities for increasing the number of trained and qualified teachers at all levels of education during and post COVID-19 pandemic era. Training teachers with current and up-to-date materials and technology will improve the standard and quality of primary education in the country during the COVID-19 pandemic era.

Issue of Bad Leadership in Primary Schools: The lapses in administrative practices caused by bad leadership and governance made it impossible for the management of primary education during COVID-19 pandemic era. Many school administrators were found inefficient to implement education policies and take decisions that would impact positively in the management of schools during the pandemic era. The

Glossary of Education (2012) observed that there is administrative team that is saddled with the task of planning, organizing, directing and controlling of primary schools. This team of administrators found in primary schools includes the head teacher as the head of school administration, followed by the assistant head teacher, as the Head of Departments, and other departmental heads. Johnson (2012) agreed with Glossary of Education when he explained that school administration is the school's main governing body, and it plays a major part in decision making related to students, teachers and the school's overall status. However, experience does not necessarily qualify one to be a good leader. Ozumba (2013) pinpointed that the problem of humanity has remained leadership despite the technological, scientific, economic development. Most school administrators do not adhere to policies. They do not have regular and open lines of communication with their subordinates or their superiors. Their leadership style has made the majority of them become less accessible leading to fewer face-to-face interactions which are important for both the teachers and the students. A disconnect can result in resentment on the part of the teachers who perceive a lack of concern and distorted priorities on the part of the leaders. When teachers become indignant, their performance suffers along with students' achievement (Agogbua, Amobi & Anyaeji, 2021).

Issue of Lack of Supervision of Schools: Agogbua, Amobi and Anyaeji (2021) asserted that lack of supervision, inspection and monitoring of schools during the COVID-19 pandemic era were the major drawbacks in the primary education sector. The importance of external and internal instructional supervision cannot be overemphasized. For primary education to remain relevant, attention must be given on the ways administrative duties are carried out as well as teaching and learning. Therefore, regular and constant supervision is necessary to ensure the effective and smooth running the primary schools. However, Edho (2009) blamed poor response to supervision on inadequate vehicles for monitoring, poor funding for supervision, and insufficient number of qualified school supervisors. The success or failure of the management primary education sector in Nigeria is tied to both constant internal and external supervision of instruction.

Way Forward

Given all the trending issues discussed in the previous section, here are the possible solutions and suggestions towards effective management of the primary education sector during and after COVID-19 pandemic era in Nigeria. These includes the under listed;

1. The different levels of governments which involves the federal, state and local governments including the private school owners should constantly improve on effective management of primary education both during and post COVID-19 pandemic era through adequate budgetary allocations, funding and financial provisions. Agogbua, Amobi and Anyaeji (2021) opined that to lift the standard of primary education from decadence, the government through the ministry of education must make available adequate funds for infrastructural development such as classrooms, electricity, equipped libraries, playground, pipe-borne water, etc. Adequate financing is vital in education as there are many compelling education needs like the purchase of equipment, instructional materials, in-service training programmes, seminars, workshops, and conferences for teachers (Nwiyi 2012). Finance is required in order for the primary education system to

actualize the Sustainable Development Goals. Allocation of funds to the primary education sector should at least meet up to the 26% of UNESCO's minimum suggested standard. Primary education being the foundation on which other levels of education are built is the key to the development of a people but adequate funding is required to perform the needed magic.

2. Government at all levels, should deploy workable strategies and strategic plans through the improvement, restructuring and renewal of such programmes as the school health, school safety, virtual learning and school feeding programmes into the mainstream which will have positive impacts on the management of the primary education sector for continual increase in primary schools' enrolment, schools' efficiency, prevention of government overspending and realistic attainment of the primary education goals and objectives. Adedokun (2020) indicated that since it was observed that there were no proper plans in place to curb and manage the influence of coronavirus on the educational system in Nigeria, it is therefore, highly recommended for the government and concerned educational personnel should ensure there are futuristic plans to avoid school total shut down and closure in case of another similar experience. This is COVID-19, nobody knows what other occurrences will happen in future and will lead to interruption and obstruction of the activities of the educational system of Nigeria, therefore plans are to be made in ensuring the future of the education system is secured and not been disrupted or closed down with emergence of disease or any other virus attack.
3. Both government and the private school owners should improve on the provision of adequate school security for effective management of the primary education sector during and after COVID-19 pandemic era in Nigeria. Nevertheless, the use of digital technologies together with other means such as deploying armed-guarded guards and use of community vigilante groups should be highly encouraged in order to improve on school security. This suggestion is in line with Akinsuroju, Adeniyi and Anyanwu (2022) which indicated that the security of lives and properties in the school system is key to the realization of the nation educational goals likewise, for effective management of the primary education sector, during and after the COVID-19 pandemic era. National Security and civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) should be moved to the schools to provide security service in the system. Also, the Nigeria Peace Corps (NPC) needs to be approved by government of Nigeria, and join the National Security and civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) in maintaining adequate security for teachers (school administrators inclusive) and students in schools during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.
4. Adequate financial contributions from all education stakeholders including constant mobilization and accessibility of school infrastructure, ICT resources and e-learning facilities are required for effective management of primary education for attainment of educational goals both during and after the COVID-19 pandemic era in Nigeria. This has been further buttressed by Okonkwo, Oladejo and Alimba (2022) who opined that adequate infrastructure and instructional materials should be provided in the primary schools by all concerned authorities. The use of ICT tools should be highly encouraged to support the children

- learning in most subjects and enable pupils to use these technologies to design, deliver, select, administer and extend learning or communicate with experts, colleagues, peers both in and outside the classrooms.
5. Relevant authorities through collaboration with the primary school administrators in should ensure that the already obstructed academic calendar during the COVID-19 is well-restructured and planned for effective management of primary education. The head teachers and other auxiliary heads should ensure adequate coverage of the curriculum and scheme through constant monitoring and instructional supervision in order to achieve this course.
 6. School administrators should work in partnership with parents and other stakeholders to ensure that children motivation to learn is highly boosted for effective management of primary education during and after the COVID-19 pandemic era. New programmes should be introduced and the old ones redesigned for attraction of pupils in primary education. Okonkwo, Oladejo and Alimba (2022) opined that professionally trained, talented and well screened teachers should be employed to teach in the primary schools and school-community partnership strengthened so as create the motivation to learn.
 7. Adequate teacher motivation and teacher development through continuous in-service training and retraining programmes should be encouraged and well-implemented for effective management of primary education during and after the COVID-19 pandemic era. Etor, Mbon and Ekanem (2013) also pointed out that teachers that are already serving should be retrained in order to make them functional in their jobs. This could be done through in-service education programmes or courses which include workshops, seminars, conferences, induction or orientation programmes, part time or sandwich courses and effective supervision by the bodies concerned. As regards, effective staff training and retraining of primary school teachers together with adequate teacher motivation and welfare packages are very crucial during and after the COVID-19 pandemic era (Agogbua, Amobi & Anyaeji, 2021; Okonkwo, Oladejo & Alimba, 2022).
 8. School administrators like the head teachers, their assistants and other administrative heads such as the HODs should engage in constant administrative training through financial support and scholarship from relevant authorities and the private sector in order to improve their leadership skills and competences for effective and good school leadership/governance, which will enhance effective management of the primary education sector and schools for education goal(s) achievement during and post COVID-19 pandemic era.
 9. The governments and private school owners should ensure constant supervision of primary schools both during and post COVID-19 pandemic era for improvement in their management and actualization of educational goals. Through constant supervision, various loopholes and areas of needs in the management of the primary education sector will be discovered for positive improvement. Agogbua, Amobi and Anyaeji (2021) gave a remark that for primary education to remain relevant, there is need to promote and improve on the external and internal supervisory processes.

Conclusion

Primary education with its relevance in sustainable development of the Nigerian society has been recognized as an important level of education in the life of every child and beginner in education. Being the foundation upon which every other level of education such as secondary and tertiary levels are built and

developed, the need for effective management of the primary education sector by all and sundry, during and post (after) COVID-19 pandemic era. Failure to do so, will continue to have negative impacts on the management of primary schools in the country which makes the realization of educational goals difficult and almost impossible. Hence, the need for effective management of primary education throughout the States of the federation in Nigeria for quality education and learning to triumph in schools.

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