

Impact of Covid- 19 Pandemic Lockdown on Social-Economic Development in Rivers State.

Kobani, Doreen, Ph.D, Hailsham, Lolo Sax Fubara

Department of Adult Education and Community Development

Faculty of Education,

Rivers State University, Nkpolu-Oroworukwo

Port Harcourt, Rivers State

Department of Adult Education and Community Development

Faculty of Education,

Rivers State University, Nkpolu-Oroworukwo

Port Harcourt, Rivers State

Abstract

This study examined the Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic Lockdown on Social-economic Development in Rivers State. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population for the study comprises 1,479 leaders and 9,783 members of registered Community Based Organizations (CBOs) in the three senatorial districts of Rivers State making a total of 11,262. The proportionate sampling technique was used to select the sample size of 1,496 respondents made up of 437 leaders and 1,059 members. The instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled: Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic Lockdown on Social-Economic Development Assessment Questionnaire (ICPLSEQAQ). The reliability of the instrument was determined through a pilot study, while Cronbach Alpha Statistic Method was used to establish the reliability coefficient (r) value of 0.78. Four research questions were posed to guide the study. The research questions were analysed with mean and standard deviation statistic. The findings from the study revealed that COVID-19 pandemic lockdown control measures had negative impact on the educational development, health care services, agricultural productivity, and supply of goods/services for small scale businesses in Rivers State. Based on the findings, the study recommended amongst others that government at all levels should prioritise education by providing ICT gadgets as alternative ways of learning and training students and teachers on how to use it for learning to avoid being left behind in terms emergency situations like that of COVID-19 Pandemic.

Key Words: Impact, COVID-19 Pandemic, Lockdown, Socio-Economic Development.

Introduction

COVID-19 pandemic has been a great global challenge as a novel virus that has been threatening the whole world with its associated diseases since its appearance in 2019. Towards the end of 2019, countries across the world observed the outburst of a deadly virus known as COVID-19. According to Abid, Mohammed and Raju (2020) COVID-19 popularly known as corona virus belongs to family of viruses that can cause illness such as common cold, severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) and Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS). The virus was first discovered in Wuhan District of China in November, 2019. The virus spread to every country of the world including Nigeria. It was imported to Nigeria by an Italian citizen who works in Nigeria and returned from Milan, Italy to Lagos, Nigeria on the 25th of February, 2020 according to National Center for Disease Control (NCDC, 2020) in Nigeria.

From February 2020, the virus began to ravage all the 36 states in Nigeria including the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). This deadly COVID-19 pandemic has been a big threat to human lives with different kinds of related diseases and effects. The pandemic falls into the category of natural disasters as described by

Amirize and Kobani (2020) who noted that when such disasters do occur, there are opportunities for humans to learn from them through a diligent study of the working of nature. To them, such a disaster as the COVID pandemic is characterized by economic consequences such as monetary cost of managing attendant disruptions to human activities, anxieties, stress, depression, suicidal tendencies, physical and mental ill-health, closure of schools, social and commercial institutions, crime and deviancy.

The report of Nigeria Television Authority (2020) confirmed that as at September 18, 2020, Nigeria, had recorded 56,735 confirmed cases of COVID-19, out of the affirmed figure, 48,092 had been discharged while 1,093 deaths had been recorded. The confirmed cases were the highest in Africa. Adekola and Fekosufe (2020) observed that noting the devastating consequences of COVID-19, the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) and the State Governments adopted measures to curb the menace of COVID-19 and its connected diseases. However, such measures which include lockdown, self-isolation, institutional closure, curfew or restriction of movements was a challenge to socio-economic activities in communities.

Socio-economic development is the process of social and economic development in a society. It is measured with indicators, such as gross domestic product (GDP), life expectancy, literacy and levels of employment. To Kobani and Alozie (2019) economic development is the welfare of the people and their community in terms of quality and quantity of financial resources available to them as individuals and as groups while social development is about improving the well-being of every individual in society so they can reach their fullest potentials. According to Chojnicki (2010) socio-economic development embraces changes taking place in the social sphere, mostly of an economic nature. To him, the examples of socio-economic development include poverty, unemployment, development of roads and bridges and facilities like hospitals, educational institutions among others.

Consequently, socio-economic development is driven by a combination of economic forces, technological changes, political changes or state intervention towards socio-economic liberation and resources need to be reallocated to the socio-economic sectors of the economy and same time, ensuring effective delivery of socio-economic services, especially for the underprivileged illiterate poor community members (Nzeneri, 2013).

From the above assertion, it may be proper to say that socio-economic development in Nigeria is be-devilled by a number of factors such as the level and quality of education, illiteracy and ignorance, poverty and mass unemployment, inequality of income distribution, corruption among others. However, during COVID-19 lockdown control measures, community members were not allowed to go out for their daily socio-economic activities, it is based on this background that this study was designed to examine the impact of COVID-19 pandemic lockdown on social-economic development in Rivers State.

The Problem

The COVID-19 pandemic created panic around the globe and Rivers State economy and transportation or movement of people were all shut down. It is important to note that the shutdown of every activity made it very difficult for some sections of the State population to survive especially the daily income earners comprising of hawkers, traders, commercial transporters and drivers including the people in the remote fishing settlements and farmers in the State. These sections of the population are those who depend on daily socio-economic activities for survival. The shutdown of the economy, transportation, movement of people made things very hard for people. However, this was necessary for preventing this virus from spreading but on the other hand, it affects the daily socio-economic activities that most citizens depend on for survival. The social and religious lives of the citizens were disrupted adversely. For instance, people could no longer hold weddings, church gatherings, parties or funerals; the ones that have been scheduled were cancelled, and churches and mosque were no longer gathering together for worship. Schools, markets, hotels and accommodations and public business activities were also shut down as a strict measure to curb the wide spread of diseases associated with the COVID-19 pandemic which calls for great concern. The problem of this study, therefore, is to provide information based on empirical evidence on the impact of COVID-19 pandemic lockdown on social-economic development in Rivers State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are the impacts of lockdown control measures of COVID-19 on the educational development in Rivers State?
2. What are the impacts of difficulties posed by COVID-19 lockdown on health care services in Rivers State?
3. What are the impacts of COVID-19 lockdown on agricultural productivity in Rivers State?
4. What are the impacts of COVID-19 lockdown on supply of goods/services for small scale businesses in the Rivers State?

Methodology

The study adopted descriptive research design. The population of the study was 11,262 respondents, comprising 1,479 leaders and 9,783 members of registered community based organizations (CBOs) in the 23 Local Government Areas in Rivers State. The sample size for the study was 1,496 respondents comprising 437 leaders and 1059 members of the registered CBOs. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled: Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic Lockdown on Social-Economic Development Assessment Questionnaire (ICPLSEQAQ). The reliability co-efficient of the instrument is 0.78. The data collected were analyzed with mean (\bar{x}) statistic and standard deviation.

Results

Results from the study were presented as follows

Research Question 1: What are the impacts of lockdown control measures of COVID-19 on the educational development in Rivers State?

Table 1: Mean responses on the impacts of lockdown control measures of COVID-19 on the educational development in Rivers State

S/N	Statement Items	CBOs members n=884		Decision	CBOs Leaders n=412		Decision
		Mean	Std.		Mean	Std.	
1	Students were not allowed to go to school to avoid spread of corona virus disease among students.	2.83	0.83	Agree	2.57	0.89	Agree
2	Schools were closed down due to lockdown control measures of COVID-19.	2.78	0.89	Agree	2.73	0.93	Agree
3	Lockdown control measures of COVID-19 affected vocational education programmes in the community	2.75	1.00	Agree	2.84	0.67	Agree
4	During lockdown control measures of COVID-19, literacy education centers in communities were closed down	2.64	1.01	Agree	2.82	0.86	Agree
5	Some of the scholarship scheme organized at community level for the development of indigent students were put to hold because of lockdown control measures of COVID-19 pandemic	2.68	0.96	Agree	2.60	0.83	Agree

	Grand total	2.74	0.94	Agree	2.71	0.84	Agree
--	--------------------	-------------	-------------	-------	-------------	-------------	-------

Source: Research's Field Result, 2022

Table 1 indicated that items 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 respectively, recorded grand mean scores of 2.74 and 2.71 which is greater than the average mean of 2.5. This implies that both the leaders and members of the community based organizations agreed that students were not allowed to go to school to avoid spread of corona virus disease among students, schools were closed down due to lockdown control measures of COVID-19, lockdown control measures of COVID-19 affected vocational education programmes in the community, during lockdown control measures of COVID-19, literacy education centers in communities were closed down, and that some of the scholarship scheme organized at community level for the development of indigent students were put to hold because of lockdown control measures of COVID-19 pandemic

Research Question 2: What are the impacts of difficulties posed by COVID-19 lockdown on health care services in Rivers State?

Table 2: Mean responses on the impacts of difficulties posed by COVID-19 lockdown on health care services in Rivers State.

S/N	Statement Items	CBOs Members n=884		Decision	CBOs Leaders n=412		Decision
		Mean	Std.		Mean	Std.	
6	Community members were subjected to hardship as a result of their inability to access medical care services from the village health centers due to COVID-19 lockdown measure	2.79	0.89	Agree	2.64	0.92	Agree
7	Community members find it difficult to access immunization and malnutrition management services during the COVID-19 pandemic	2.37	1.02	Agree	2.77	0.80	Disagree
8	Most pregnant women died because of their inability to access antenatal health care during COVID-19 lockdown	2.77	0.93	Agree	2.61	0.89	Agree
9	Family planning programme was also interrupted	2.80	0.95	Disagree	2.36	1.08	Agree
10	Maternal health services were also interrupted by COVID-19 lockdown	2.42	0.99	Agree	2.67	0.99	Disagree
	Grand Total	2.63	0.96	Agree	2.61	0.94	Agree

Source: Research's Field Result, 2022

Table 2 shows the mean response of leaders and members of community based-organizations on the impacts that difficulties posed by COVID-19 lockdown on health care services in Rivers State. This indicated that majority of the respondents were in agreement with the statements in the items 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 respectively with a grand mean scores of 2.63 and 2.61 which is greater than criterion mean of 2.5. This confirmed that both the leaders and members agree that Community members were unable to access medical care services from the village health centers due to COVID-19 lockdown measure, find it difficult to access immunization and malnutrition management services during the COVID-19 pandemic, Most pregnant women died because of their inability to access antenatal health care during COVID-19 lockdown, family planning programme was also interrupted, and that maternal health services were also interrupted by COVID-19 lockdown.

Research question 3: What are the impacts of COVID-19 lockdown on agricultural productivity in Rivers State?

Table 3: Mean Response of the impacts of COVID-19 lockdown on agricultural productivity in Rivers State.

S/N	Statement Items	CBOs Members n=884		Decision	CBOs Leaders n=412		Decision
		Mean	Std.		Mean	Std.	
11	Agricultural initiative programmes were put to halt due to COVID-19 lockdown measures	2.43	0.87	Disagree	2.81	0.84	Agree
12	Farmers find it difficult to assess agricultural loans and grants due to COVID-19 lockdown measures.	2.75	0.85	Agree	2.83	0.85	Agree
13	COVID-19 affected food production because of indiscriminate lockdown	2.57	0.87	Agree	2.56	1.11	Agree
14	Caused shortage of food due to disruption of agricultural activities	2.71	0.80	Agree	2.80	0.85	Agree
15	COVID-19 lockdown disrupted farmers agricultural inputs, transportation and processing thus affect food/feed production	2.80	0.76	Agree	2.39	1.04	Disagree
	Grand total	2.65	0.83	Agree	2.68	0.77	Agree

Source: Research's Field Result, 2022

Table 3 shows the mean response of the respondents on the impacts of COVID-19 lockdown on agricultural productivity in Rivers State. Item 11 has mean scores of 2.43 and 2.81, standard deviation of 0.87 and 0.84. Item 12 has mean scores of 2.75 and 2.83, standard deviation of 0.85 and 0.85. Item 13 has mean scores of 2.57 and 2.56, standard deviation of 0.87 and 1.11. Item 14 has mean scores of 2.71 and 2.80, standard deviation of 0.80 and 0.85. Item 15 has mean scores of 2.80 and 2.39, standard deviation of 0.76 and 1.04. The grand mean is 2.65 and 2.68, which indicates that both the leaders and members of community based organisations shared strong opinion that COVID-19 lockdown measures impacted negatively on agricultural productivity in Rivers State.

Research Question 4: What are the impacts of COVID-19 lockdown on supply of goods/services for small scale businesses in the Rivers State?

Table 4: Mean responses on the impacts of COVID-19 lockdown on supply of goods/services for small scale businesses in the Rivers State

S/N	Statement Items	CBOs Members n=884		Decision	CBOs Leaders n=412		Decision
		Mean	Std.		Mean	Std.	
16	There was increase in the cost cost/price of goods and services due to difficulty in transportation during lockdown	3.18	0.79	Agree	3.04	0.68	Agree
17	The community members experienced insufficient supply of goods due to COVID-19 lockdown	3.14	0.78	Agree	3.13	0.78	Agree

18	There was high demand of goods and services due to inadequate supply during lockdown	2.85	1.03	Agree	2.84	1.03	Agree
19	Business owners in the community suffered financial loss due to their inability to trade	2.73	1.07	Agree	2.72	1.07	Agree
20	There was also low revenue or income generation due to COVID-19 lockdown	2.86	0.66	Agree	2.91	0.69	Agree
	Grand total	3.02	0.87	Agree	2.92	0.85	Agree

Source: Research's Field Result, 2022.

Table 4 above for research question four shows the mean response of respondents on the impacts of COVID-19 lockdown on transportation and supply of goods/services for small scale businesses in the Rivers State. Item 16 has mean scores of 3.18 and 3.04, standard deviation of 0.79 and 0.68. Item 17 has mean scores of 3.14 and 3.13, standard deviation of 0.78 and 0.78. Item 18 has mean scores of 2.85 and 2.84, standard deviation of 1.03 and 1.03. Item 19 has mean scores of 2.73 and 2.72, standard deviation of 1.07 and 1.07. Item 20 has mean scores of 2.86 and 2.91, standard deviation of 0.66 and 0.69. The grand mean is 3.02 and 2.92 recorded, indicates that all majority of the respondents agreed that COVID-19 lockdown had negative impact on supply of goods/services for small scale businesses in the Rivers State.

Discussion of Findings

Finding in research question one revealed that the respondent shared same opinion that lockdown control measures of COVID-19 impacted negatively on the educational development in Rivers State. Hence, items 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 recorded a grand mean of 2.74 and 2.71 indicating that students were not allowed to go to school to avoid spread of Corona virus disease among students, schools were closed down due to lockdown control measures of COVID-19, lockdown control measures of COVID-19 affected vocational education programmes in the community, During lockdown control measures of COVID-19, literacy education centers in communities were closed down, Some of the scholarship scheme organized at community level for the development of indigent students were put to hold because of lockdown control measures of COVID-19 pandemic.

This finding is in agreement with the findings of Magomedov, Khaliev, and Khubolov (2020), that COVID-19 pandemic affect educational development hence, learning institutions were closed and most students' loss the opportunity to return to school, some of the learners were highly in danger of not moving to the next academic year, while most learners dropped out from or had no access to attend schools. The finding is also inline with the discovery of Adekola, and Fekosufa (2020), that that educational institutions were closed down as a result of COVID-19 pandemic as a measure to curtail the spread of the disease. This implies that learning activities were negatively influenced during COVID-19 pandemic hence, both the teachers and students could not go to school because of the closure of the learning institutions.

Findings of the study in research question two indicated from the data analysed in table 2 that respondents strongly agreed that during COVID-19 lockdown measures, community members were unable to access medical care services from the village health centres, find it difficult to access immunization and malnutrition management services, most pregnant women died because of their inability to access antenatal health care, and that family planning programmes, and maternal health services were also interrupted. The result of hypothesis 2 also affirmed that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of members and leaders of community based organizations on the impacts of difficulties posed by COVID-19 lockdown on health care services in Rivers State.

The findings in this research question two relates to the findings of Akindare (2020). That health sector was faced with Challenges of effective delivery of health care services to community members due to lockdown and focused attention on those affected with COVID-19 and quarantine than other health related problems. It also corroborate with the report of World Health Organization (WHO) (2020) that COVID-19 pandemic has led to a dramatic loss of human lives and presented an unprecedented challenge to public health, as many people lacked access to quality health care and have lost access to productive assets. Consequently, finding

also relate to finding of Nega, Ali, Dongqing, Michelle, Elena, Hemler, Abdullahi, Bruno, Ourohire, Chukwu, Firehiwot, Phyllis, Till, Yemane, Wafaie, Fawzi and Ayoade (2021) noted that during COVID-19 lockdown, there was interruptions to immunization, malnutrition management services, maternal health care among other health cases.

Table 3 in research question three shows that the grand mean of 2.65 and 2.68 indicated that respondents agreed that due to COVID-19 lockdown measures, Agricultural initiative programmes were put to halt, Farmers find it difficult to assess agricultural loans and grants, COVID-19 affected food production because of indiscriminate lockdown, caused shortage of food due to disruption of agricultural activities, disrupted farmers agricultural inputs, transportation and processing thus, affecting food/feed production. The result of hypotheses three also confirmed that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of members and leaders of community based organizations on the impacts of COVID-19 lockdown on agricultural productivity in Rivers State. The finding in this research question three affirmed the discovery of Ayodeji and Ajayi (2020) that COVID-19 pandemic affected agricultural programmes, and farmers find it difficult to access loans and there was scarcity of food due to inability of farmers and food merchants to buy and distribute food items and other agricultural products.

The findings in research question 4 as shown in Table 4, has a grand mean of 3.02 and 2.92 respectively. This revealed that majority of the respondents agreed to items 16, 17, 18, 19 and 20, that during COVID-19 lockdown, there was increase in the cost/price of goods and services due to difficulty in transportation, community members experienced insufficient supply of goods, there was high demand of goods and services due to inadequate supply, Business owners in the community suffer financial loss due to their inability to trade, there was also low revenue or income generation. This finding was affirmed by the result of hypothesis four which revealed that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of members and leaders of community based organizations on the impacts of COVID-19 lockdown on supply of goods/services for small scale businesses in the Rivers State. The findings in this research question four, corroborate with the finding of Igwela (2021), the effect of COVID-19 pandemic had a negative impact on socio-economic and small and medium scale enterprises hence, the communities witnessed low turnout of customers, low income, increase in the cost of goods and services, sales fluctuations and insufficient supply of goods, low demand of goods and services and there was no reduction in the cost/price of goods and services. This could be due to the lockdown control measures taken by the government in curbing the pandemic which has reduced the flow of income and consumption of goods and services. Similarly, Eggers (2020) also discovered that citizens suffered for insufficient supply of goods, financial loss due to their inability to trade, and low revenue or income generation.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that COVID-19 pandemic lockdown control measures had negative impact on the educational development, health care services, agricultural productivity, and supply of goods/services for small scale businesses in Rivers State. Therefore, Government should always be proactive in finding alternatives to problems that citizens may face during emergency situations than being taken unawares and overwhelmed by emergency situations.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Government at all levels should prioritize education by providing ICT gadgets as alternative ways of learning and training students and teachers on how to use it for learning to avoid being left behind in terms of emergency situations like that of the COVID-19 pandemic.
2. The government at all levels and NGOs should establish a community outreach health programmes that will be in charge of vaccinating children, attend to pregnant women, and people with severe health related cases during emergency communicable disease outbreak like COVID-19.
3. The government must see agriculture and its value chain as an essential service, establish food banks with demand or community based financial support devoid of corruption and insincerity from

government officials and farmers without diversion to cope with the post pandemic effect of COVID-19 infection.

4. Government should provide support for small and medium scale enterprises by providing grants, waive tax as well as a flexible policy that will aid easy operation; to dedicate appropriate resources, financial and technical, to ensure the right to free, quality public education for all is maintained during the likes of the COVID-19 crisis.

References

1. Amirize, B. and Kobani, D. (2020). *The Adult Educator as a Disaster Manager*. Owerri: Beauty Concepts.
2. Akindare, O. (2020). Challenges Facing Health Care Workers in Nigeria as they Tackle Covid-19. Retrieved on 11TH June, 2022. From <http://www.Globalcitizen.org/en/content/challenges.care-workers-nigeria-covid>.
3. Abid, H, Mohammed, J. & Raju, V. (2020), Effects of covid-19 on daily life. *Current Medicine Research and Practice*, 10, (2), 78-79
4. Adekola, G. and Fekosufa, O.A (2020). Post Covid-19: Implications of the Control Measures on Peoples' Participation in Community Development in Ibadan Metropolis, Nigeria. *African Journal of Adult Education and Development Studies*. 1, (1): 91-101
5. Ayodeji, F. and Ajayi., A. (2020). COVID-19 Pandemic and Lockdown: Effects on Agricultural Activities and Value Chains in the Six States of South-western Nigeria". *Act a Scientific Agriculture* 5 (1): 22-34.
6. Chojnicki, Z. (2010). Socio-economic development and its axiological aspects. *Journal of Quaestiones Geographicae*, 29 (2): 7-17
7. Eggers, F. (2020). Masters of Disasters? Challenges and Opportunities for SMEs in Times of Crisis. *Journal of Business Research*, 116, 199–208.
8. Izediuno1, O.L., Alice, O.T, & Daniel, O.A. (2018). Analytical review of small and medium Scale Enterprises in Nigeria. *International Journal of Small Business and Entrepreneurship Research*, 6 (2): 32-46
9. Igwela, J. (2021). Effects of Covid-19 Pandemic on Small and Medium Scale Businesses in PortHarcourt Metropolis. *Journal of Applied Information Science and Technology* 14 (1): 66-73.
10. Kobani, D. and Alozie, K. (2019). *Essentials of Community Development in Nigeria*. 2nd Edition. Owerri: Beauty Concepts.
11. Magomedov I A I A, Khaliev, I. A. & Khubolov, S. M. (2020). The Negative and Positive Impact of the Pandemic on Education. *Journal of Physics: Conference Series*, 4 (8): 1-8
12. Nega, A. Ali S. Dongqing W. Michelle L. K, Elena C. Hemler, Y Y. Abdullahi, Bruno L, Ouhohire M, Chukwu, A. Firehiwot W. Phyllis K. Till B. Yemane B. Wafaie, W. Fawzi & Ayoade O (2021). Reported Barriers to Healthcare Access and Service Disruptions Caused by COVID-19 in Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, and Nigeria: A Telephone Survey. *American Journal of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene*. 105, (2): 323-330.
13. Nigerian Television Authority (2020). Network News at 9. Relayed on 10th June, 2022
14. National Centre for Disease Control (2020). Daily Update on covid-19. Accessed from need.gov.ng on 15th April, 2022.
15. Nzeneri, I.S. (2013). Adult Education and Socio-Economics Development in Developing Countries. In B.AEheazu, C.N.Barikor, & I.S.Nzeneri (eds). *Reading in Adult and Non-Formal Education*. Port Harcourt, University of Port Harcourt Press.
16. World Health Organizations (2020). Impact of Covid-19 on Peoples Livelihood, their Health and our Food System. Retrieved 10th June, 2022, from who.int/.news/item/13-10-2020.