

## IMPLICATION OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC FOR SUSTAINABLE EDUCATION IN NIGERIA

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**ODUSANYA Ibrahim Abidemi**

Department of Economics, Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye, Nigeria.

[ibrahim.odusanya@oouagoiwoye.edu.ng](mailto:ibrahim.odusanya@oouagoiwoye.edu.ng)

**TORIOLA Anu**

Department of Economics, Hallmark University, Ijebu-Itele, Ogun State, Nigeria

[aktoriola@hallmarkuniversity.edu.ng](mailto:aktoriola@hallmarkuniversity.edu.ng)

**SOKUNBI Gbenro**

Department of Economics Education, Lagos State University of Education, Ijanikin, Nigeria

[sokunbigm@lasued.edu.ng](mailto:sokunbigm@lasued.edu.ng)

**AKINROTIMI Akinyemi**

Department of Economics, Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye, Nigeria.

[akinrotimi2015@gmail.com](mailto:akinrotimi2015@gmail.com)

*Abstract: The emergence of the novel coronavirus, COVID-19, in 2019 had profound implications on global health, economies, and social structures. This study examines the multifaceted impact of COVID-19 on sustainable education in Nigeria. Through a critical analysis of existing literature and empirical evidence, the study investigates both the beneficial and adverse effects of the pandemic on education and proposes policies to mitigate its negative consequences. The study found that the pandemic disrupted traditional educational systems which led to widespread closures of learning institutions. In response, many educational institutions transitioned to online learning platforms to ensure continuity of education. The shift highlighted disparities in access to technology and internet connectivity, particularly in developing countries like Nigeria. Challenges such as irregular power supply, high internet subscription costs, and poor infrastructure have hindered the effective implementation of online learning initiatives. Despite these challenges, the pandemic has also stimulated innovation within the educational sector, prompting the development of creative alternatives such as remote learning, training of academic staff in online instruction, and collaborative efforts between governments and educational stakeholders. The study submitted that, while COVID-19 has presented both challenges and opportunities for sustainable educational development. By leveraging technological innovations and fostering collaboration among stakeholders, governments can mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on education and build a more resilient and adaptive educational system for the future.*

*Keywords: COVID-19, Sustainable Education, Pandemic, Online Learning, Nigeria*

### Introduction

The world populace has at one time or the other threatened by diseases, viruses and outbreaks that are contagious in nature and widely spread (Owusu-Fordjour, Koomson, Hanson, 2020; Ikoni & Ogundele, 2020) and are often referred to as pandemic or plagues. For instance, three (3) different influenza pandemics occurred in the 20th century; ‘Spanish Flu’ occurred between 1918 and 1919, ‘Asian flu’ in between 1957 and 1958 and ‘Honk

Kong flu' between 1968 and 1969 each of which posed serious threat to human living and economic progress. The worse of these pandemic recorded in history is the Spanish Flu influenza of 1918-1919 accounting for up to at least 20 million deaths out of the world population (WHO, 2011b). In recent years, the world have also suffered up to or above six big outbreaks consisting of hantavirus pulmonary syndrome, severe acute respiratory syndrome, H5N1 influenza, H1N1 influenza, Middle East respiratory syndrome and Ebola virus disease (Gostin, et al., 2016) with the first one in the 21st being the H1N1 influenza which occurred in 2009 affecting the people all over the world and causing more than eighteen thousand (18, 000) deaths (Rewar, Mirdha & Rewar, 2015). The death toll of Ebola virus was also above eleven thousand (11,000) people while the cost implication of fighting the virus across the world was more than \$2billion based on World Bank estimates (Maurice, 2016). Another outbreak; Zika virus which occurred in 2016 suffered people across 34 countries (Troncoso, 2016).

In 29th December 2019, a new unprecedented virus christened 2019 novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) by the World Health Organisation (WHO) was diagnosed from the lower respiratory tract of people that was infected with pneumonia in Wuhan, China for the first time (Li, et al., 2020; Chen et al., 2020). It is a new strains that has not been previously identified in humans (World Health Organization, 2019). The novel coronavirus or Covid-19 as frequently used interchangeably for the new virus is an illness caused by virus that can spread from person-to-person (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 2019). These illness ranges from 'the common cold to more severe diseases such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome' (World Health Organization, 2019). It spreads is majorly through a contact with the respiratory droplets from mouth or nose of a carrier during speaking, coughing or sneezing (Taylor, 2019; Tieleman, Tieleman-Gu, Shi, 2020). The contact can be with the person directly or indirectly with the surfaces contaminated with the droplet from the infected person or other less authentic channels such as faeces (Buck, Arnold, Chazan & Cookson, 2020).

After the virus was detected in December 29 in 2019, later on it spread rapidly to other cities in China and to countries worldwide (Chen et al., 2020). From China, the virus spread quickly to other parts of the world with the first countries to report cases of the virus being Japan, South Korea and Thailand (Chen, Zhou, Dong, Qu, Gong, Han, Qiu, Wang, Liu, Wei, et al. 2020). Meanwhile, most of these initial cases resulted from international travel rather than local transmission (WHO, 2019). Due to its fast spread across the world after it was detected, in March 11th, 2020 the WHO declared the virus as a pandemic (Sohrabi, Alsafi, O'Neill, Khan, Kerwan & Al-Jabir, 2020). Generally, pandemic is a disease outbreak that spread from countries to countries or continents to continents affecting large numbers of people with many deaths (Ikoni & Ogundele, 2020). Pandemic such as coronavirus and other outbreaks generally pose serious challenge for health practitioners, policy makers and the general public as to the effective measures that will not only curb its spread but also provide a lasting remedy to cure those who are already the carrier for the survival of human kind (Hussain, 2020). The novelty and phenomenal shock that came with the outbreak of coronavirus and its ravaging impact in terms of the speed of its spread, effects on economies, number of deaths recorded and its devastating effect on education all over the world distinguish the virus from other pandemics or plagues experience in human history (El-Mousawi & Kanso, 2020; Hussain, 2020).

The unavailability of precise cure or treatment for the virus which led to the adoption of several precautionary measures such as travel restrictions, lockdown and social distancing with the goal of containing its spread posed serious challenge on the survival of households, firms and the government (Miftahu & Oruonye, 2020). It impacted different facets of human life including economic, health, social and political life (Li, 2020). The dramatic death toll and high rates of morbidity of victims of the virus across many nations affected people physically and mentally (Lewin, 2020). In many countries, hospitals and other health facilities were overloaded with people already absconding medical care for fear of getting infected in the hospital environment (Filho, Brandli, Salvia, Rayman-Bacchus & Platje, 2020). As a result of the virus, the global financial markets collapsed in the first of quarter of 2020 due to-or accelerated by the global economic shutdown, fear and future uncertainty (Li, 2020). In addition, it has also led to an unprecedented boom in the level of unemployment and the need for government support forcing governments of many nations to accumulate uncomfortably high level of debts as many sectors in the economy require support (Filho, Brandli, Salvia, Rayman-Bacchus & Platje, 2020). It has also cause high level of uncertainty and rendered the vulnerabilities and fragilities of the current economic system visible (UN News, 2020). Although the pandemic affected every sectors of the global economy and the lifestyles of people, the most hit sectors are the aviation industry, entertainment industry, sports, education among others (Olagbaju, Awosusi & Shaib, 2020). With the significant growth in travel restriction due to total or partial border closure in many countries in addition to the grounding of airlines flights, international trade and tourism reduced and there is the possibility that many airlines may face bankruptcy (Leigh, 2020). According to United Nations (2020) coronavirus pandemic has pushed the world into the worst recession in human history with lasting effects on economies and public finances. The economic implication of the pandemic on the global market in 2020 was estimated around 1trillion US Dollar by the United Nation Trade and Development Agency (UNCTAD)

The educational sector which serves as a catalyst for development of nation has also suffered unprecedented changes and disruptions due to the temporary total or partial closure of all educational institutions across countries in an attempt to stop the spread of the virus (Adeoye, Adanikin & Adanikin, 2020). The social effects of lockdowns in addition to its economic effects in terms of loss of production and business confidence have serious implication on the educational system all over the world (Lewin, 2020). The closures of school have resulted in complete disruptions to all areas of educational administration process and procedures. In most countries, examinations have been postponed; in a few examinations have been cancelled; and in others, they have been substituted with continuous assessments or alternative modalities, such as online testing for final examinations (United Nations, 2020). The pandemic created highly challenging economic circumstances that threaten the sustainability of education (Universities UK, 2020). It led to the largest disruption of education in history, having already had a near total impact on students and trainers all over the world, from pre-primary to secondary schools, technical and vocational education and training institutions, universities, adult learning, and skills development institutions (United Nations, 2020). It has not only affect students, teachers, and families, but have far-reaching economic and societal consequences (Lindzon, 2020). It have prompted various social and economic issues, including student debt (Jamerson, Josh, & Joshua, 2020), digital learning (Karp & McGowan, 2020), food insecurity (Cecco,

2020) and homelessness (Ngumbi, 2020) as well as access to childcare (Belinda, 2020), health care (Feuer, 2020), housing (Barrett, 2020), internet (Jordan, 2020) and disability services (Alex, 2020).

#### *Statement of the problem*

The closures of schools and other learning spaces have impacted 94 per cent of the world's student population, up to 99 per cent in low and lower-middle income countries. In addition to the learning loss due to the closure of schools, the economic impact on households is likely to widen the inequities in education achievement. With the pandemic, children from households in the poorest quintiles are significantly less likely to complete primary and lower secondary education than those in the richest quintile; this divide can be greater than 50 percentage points in many sub-Saharan countries (United Nations, 2020). In Africa, the first case of coronavirus was recorded in Egypt on February 14, 2020 while the first detected case in Sub-Sahara Africa occurred in Nigeria on the 10th March 2020 through an Italian expatriate (BBC News, 2020; Daily Punch, 2020) with most of the index cases imported from Europe and America rather than China where the virus originated (Maclean, 2020). The spread of the virus in Africa is worsening the situation of education in Sub-Sahara Africa, a region that already have 47 per cent out-of-school children out of the population of 258 million children in the world even before the emergence of the virus (UIS, 2019). Since the emergence of the virus in Nigeria almost all sectors in the country; social and economic life have been affected with varying degrees of intensity ranging from heavy to very heavy (Oladipo, Oyedele & Fawale, 2020). The effect of covid19 is evident in the Nigeria educational system by the halt in academic session by the federal ministry of education to bring-down the spread of the virus.

Globally, to reduce the effect of the pandemic, educational sectors are shifting towards the adoption of electronic learning (e-learning) including, Zoom, Microsoft teams, google hangout (meet), skype, Bamboo learning, google classroom, Docebo, WIZIQ, Adobe captivate, Elucidat, Blackboard learn amongst others to ensure that their academic calendar is not totally distorted (Adeoye, Adanikin and Adanikin, 2020). Developing countries like Nigeria faced several challenges in shifting from the traditional teaching method to the e-learning during the pandemic which result from varying degree of preparedness of the educational institutions, lack of infrastructures, paucity of funds and policies issues in the Nigeria educational sector (Adeoye, Adanikin & Adanikin, 2020). In addition, the irregular power supply, high internet subscription costs, poor internet access amongst other factors rendered the application of e-learning difficult (Adeoye, Adanikin and Adanikin, 2020). Consistently for a 10 year period budgetary allocation to the educational sector has been well below the minimum recommended by UNESCO. The inadequate funding of the educational system provide no room for educational institutions to have access to information technology facilities, electricity, teacher-tutor training amongst others needed to allow e-learning grow in Nigeria (Adeoye, Adanikin & Adanikin, 2020). Majority of the existing studies focused attention on the immediate and direct effect of coronavirus but there is scarce evidence on the implication of coronavirus on sustainable education in particular. The limited study on this area has either focused on the overall sustainable development goal or one or more of the goal excluding education. It is against this background that this study was motivated to investigate the implication of coronavirus on sustainable education.

### *Objective significance and Organisation of the study*

In order to understand the unfolding economic and social effects of coronavirus and its impact on sustainable educational development and the method to cushion the potential adverse effect of the virus, this study follows a critical, evidence-based assessment of the effect of coronavirus on sustainable educational development in Nigeria. The specific objectives are to:

explore the beneficial impact of coronavirus on sustainable educational development

explore the adverse impact of coronavirus on sustainable educational development

suggest policies that can help to cushion the adverse impact of coronavirus on sustainable educational development

To achieve the stated objective, the study first introduce the subject matter by tracing its evolution vis-à-vis other pandemic, plagues and other outbreaks, its severity and implication on the sectors of the global economy in addition to the stamen of the problem, objective of the study, organisation of the study, theory and concepts. The second part of the study, presents arguments against and in favour of adverse effect of coronavirus on sustainable educational development. In addition, it captures the present reality of coronavirus. The third part of the study is on the conclusion and recommendations.

### *Concept and theory*

Education is a both a fundamental human right and an enabling right which have direct impact on the achievement of all other human related right. Given this realisation, all the seventeen (17) sustainable development goals is dependent on quality education to achieve a just, equal, inclusive peaceful society (United Nations, 2020). In a nation where the educational system is grounded, there will be the absence of peace, progress and growth in productivity (United Nations, 2020). Thus the sustainability of the educational system is paramount to growth and development of all nations (Owusu-Fordjour, Koomson, Hanson, 2020). The word sustainability from literary meaning implies the ability to maintain some entity, outcome or process over time period (Basiago, 1999). It is an efficient and equitable strategy or framework of distributing resources intra-generationally and inter-generationally through the aid of socio-economic activities within the confines of a finite ecosystem (Stoddart, 2011). According to Ben-Eli (2005), sustainability is a dynamic equilibrium process of interaction between the population and the carrying capacity of its environment in a way that the population develops to express its full potential without producing irreversible negative effects on the carrying capacity of the environment upon which it depends. Sustainability bring into fore-front human activities and their capacity to satisfy their needs and wants without exhausting the available productive resources (Thomas, 2015)

On the other end, coronavirus also referred to as the novel coronavirus or Covid-19 as frequently used interchangeably in the literature is an illness caused by virus that can spread from person-to-person (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 2019). These illness ranges from the common cold to more severe diseases such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (World Health Organization, 2019) and can spread from one person to another primarily through droplets of saliva or discharge from the nose when an infected person coughs or sneezes (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2019). The term was coined from the Latin word 'corona' which mean crown or halo implying the appearance of virions (the infectious form

of the virus) based on its appearance in an electron microscope which resemble a large, onion-like margin and is reminiscent of a picture of a royal crown or solar crown (Lebni, Abbas, Moradi, Salahshoor, Chaboksavar, Irandoost, Nezhaddadgar & Ziapour, 2020). Thus, coronavirus refers to ‘crowned virus’ (Shuja et al., 2020). The members of the coronavirus (CoV) family refer to infectious disease, which refer to CoV flu, CoV pneumonia, or a respiratory syndrome (Lebni, Abbas, Moradi, Salahshoor, Chaboksavar, Irandoost, Nezhaddadgar & Ziapour, 2020) The outbreak of the virus was declared by World Health Organization as pandemic referring to disease outbreak that spreads across countries or continents affecting a lot of people and causing deaths (Ikoni & Ogundele, 2020)

Theories abound explaining how a country can achieve development status irrespective of the challenges or problems being experienced or the stage the economy is in development ladder. These theories include the modernisation, dependency, world system theory and social sustainability theory. The modernization theory posits that the primitive societies are entwined by norms, beliefs and values, which are hampering their development. Therefore, in order to progress, these societies must copy the culture of developed societies characterised by accumulation of capital and industrialization (Tipps, 1976). The dependency theory, based on Marxist ideology posits that the industrialization of the advanced nations subjected the poor nations to underdevelopment as a result of the exploitation of the economic surplus of the poor countries by the developed countries (Bodenheimer, 1970; Webster, 1984). The world systems theory posits that international trade specialization and transfer of resources from the less developed nations (periphery) to developed countries (the core) suppress development in the less developed nations by making them rely on advanced nations (Petras, 1981). The theory submitted that the unequal relation in the exchange between the Third World and First World countries is the source of First World surplus. In this regard, the theory of social sustainability’ posits that the alleviation of poverty should neither entail unwarranted environmental destruction nor economic instability. It should aim to alleviate poverty within the existing environmental and economic resource base of the society (Kumar, Raizada, & Biswas, 2014; Scopelliti et al., 2018).

### **COVID-19 effect on sustainable educational development**

The emergence of coronavirus has been argued in the literature to affect the global economy both positively and negatively. While several studies provide evidence and support for the positive effect of the pandemic on the global economy, also several studies offered several in the opposite direction. This section overview the arguments in favour and against the adverse effects of coronavirus of sustainable education

#### *Argument against adverse effects*

After the outbreak of coronavirus pandemic and subsequent partial or total closure of schools at all levels of education in most of the countries in the world to curb the spread of the virus (Adeoye, Adanikin & Adanikin, 2020; Muftahu, 2020), many educational institutions across countries of the world have devised online education mediums in order to maintain their programmes (Filho, Brandli, Salvia, Rayman-Bacchus & Platje, 2020; Adeoye, Adanikin & Adanikin, 2020). The online platform that have been adopted include Zoom, Microsoft teams, google hangout (meet), skype, Bamboo learning, google



classroom, Docebo, WIZIQ, Adobe Captivate, Elucidat, Blackboard Learn amongst other (Adeoye, Adanikin & Adanikin, 2020). Consequently, the closure of schools have shed light on various social and economic issues including digital learning (Karp & McGowan, 2020) internet (Jordan, 2020). As a result of the virus, national and local governments in many countries with Nigeria inclusive encourage colleges and universities, together with the rest of the society, to participate in joint implementation of online education. The policy makers in the educational sector also demands that new online courses should be transformed to meet up the quality as previously delivered face-to-face courses. It demands that teacher workload in delivering online courses should be recognized as equivalent to teacher workload in delivering face-to-face courses; it also encourages students towards online self-directed learning (Pius-Uwhubetiyi, 2020).

The pandemic has shaped a new normal in the higher educational sectors all over the world as it has stimulated the transformation of the traditional classroom teaching delivery system to an online learning platform and has aided the restructuring of the application processes and stimulating crisis management strategies (Adeoye, Adanikin & Adanikin, 2020). Also, the pandemic has reminded the world of the essential role of teachers and the responsibility of government and key partners in ensuring adequate care for the life and well-being of the teachers (United Nations, 2020). It has also pointed-out that the future outlook of learning and the accelerated changes in the mode of delivering quality education must ensure that no one is left behind especially for children and youth that lack resources and enabling environment to access learning including the teaching profession that needs better training in new methods of education delivery as well as support as well as the educational community at large including the local communities upon which the continuation of the education depends during the crisis and who are key to building back better (United Nations, 2020).

In favour of positive implication of Covid-19 on sustainable education, the United Nations (2020) posits that coronavirus pandemic has stimulated innovation within the educational system. It has brought about innovative approaches to support education and the training community; from radio and television to take-home package. In addition, distance learning solutions were developed through the effort of the governments and the Global Education Coalition organised by UNESCO (United Nations, 2020). The conventional classroom instructional system has shifted in favour of e-learning platforms such as Google and virtual classroom, radio and television classroom instruction (Olagbaju, Awosusi & Shaib, 2020). Despite, the applicable opportunities associated with the embracing e-learning includes lecturers/learners convenience, exposure and cost benefits, the adoption of the online learning platform has revealed the lapses and shortages in the educational system and facilities in many educational institutions across the world especially in the developing countries of Africa with Nigeria in particular.

In the Nigeria educational system, the adoption of e-learning during the COVID-19 pandemic has exposed a lot of lapses and gaps to be filled in the Nigerian educational system. This is most obvious amongst the public universities. The challenges of e-learning in Nigeria ranges from irregular power supply, high internet subscription costs, poor internet access amongst other factors (Adeoye, Adanikin & Adanikin, 2020). The presence of this lapses and infrastructural gap that needs to be addressed to sustain the educational system was made very obvious as a result of the outbreak of the virus. Furthermore, the outbreak of the virus revealed very clearly the dismal state of the public health system in

Africa and West Africa in particular. The region health system has been in a state of disrepair and total neglect for many years as most African leaders and politicians prefer medical tourism to hospitals in developed countries. But with the lockdown and travel restriction, the inadequacy of the local health system became obvious (Olagbaju, Awosusi & Shaib, 2020)

Several studies have attempted to justify the positive contribution of the emergence of coronavirus to the global economy and sustainable education. For instance, Muftahu (2020) on the implications of the Covid-19 pandemic to higher education with specific attention to developing universities in African context based on secondary source of information through the review of systematic literature, policy documents, as well as related models between Covid-19 and Higher Education. The study submitted that the pandemic has helped universities in different nations to develop appropriate and creative alternatives such as transitioning to remote learning, training of academic staff in the use of online instruction materials and tools which have encourage students to complete their education requirements through online learning in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. In the same vein, Cam-Tu, Anh-Duc, Van-Quan, Manh-Tuan, Viet-Hung, Quynh-Anh, Thu-Trang and Hiep-Hung (2020) on the teachers' perspectives and perceived support during the COVID-19 pandemic based on evidence from Vietnamese teachers using an e-survey to more than 2,500 randomly selected teachers from two major teacher communities on Facebook supplemented with primary source of professional response. The dataset indicated the teachers received support from their schools, government bodies and other stakeholders such as teacher unions and parents associations among others.

In another study, Molise and Dube (2020) on the need for relational leadership in a rural school context in emergency online teaching in economics and management science based on focused group discussion carried through Whatsapp group. It was found that EOT and learning is desirable and doable, even though various challenges need to be overcome, especially in rural schools. Similarly, Corbera, Anguelovski, Honey-Rosés & Ruiz-Mallén (2020) on how the COVID-19 crisis is affecting the teaching profession and how it may change it in the future. The study argued that academia must foster a culture of care, help to refocus on what is most important, and redefine excellence in teaching and research. Such re-orientation can make academic practice more respectful and sustainable, now during confinement but also once the pandemic has passed. In the same vein, Aristovnik, Keržič, Ravšelj, Tomažević and Umek (2020) on how students perceive the impacts of the COVID-19 crisis on various aspects of their lives on a global level using a sample of 30,383 students from 62 countries, the study reveals that amid the worldwide lockdown and transition to online learning students were most satisfied with the support provided by teaching staff and their universities' public relations. The study also found that the pandemic has led to the adoption of particular hygienic behaviours (e.g. wearing masks, washing hands) and discouraged certain daily practices (e.g. leaving home, shaking hands). Students were also more satisfied with the role played by hospitals and universities during the epidemic compared to the government and banks.

#### *Argument in favour of adverse effects*

To justify the devastating effect of Covid-19 on sustainable education, Cam-Tu, Anh-Duc, Van-Quan, Manh-Tuan, Viet-Hung, Quynh-Anh, Thu-Trang and Hiep-Hung, (2020) stated that the pandemic has led to intangible destruction of the educational institutions with both



the teachers and students suffering the adverse consequences. The teachers in particular who happen to be the most critical intellectual resources in the educational system have faced various types of financial, physical and mental struggles due to the pandemic. With the combined effect of the pandemic's worldwide economic impact and the school closures, the learning crisis could turn into a generational catastrophe (United Nations, 2020). The outbreak has intensified the already existing disparities in the educational system by reducing the opportunities for many of the most vulnerable children, youth, and adults, in addition to those living in poor or rural areas, girls, refugees, persons with disabilities and forcibly displaced persons to continue learning. The loss in learning also threaten to extend beyond this generation and erase decades of progress already achieve in supporting girls and young women's educational access and retention (United Nations, 2020).

The pandemic has also influenced the tertiary institution at both the undergraduate and post graduate level (Alsafi, Abbas, Hassan and Ali, 2020). The most significant impact is on the postgraduate research community with research into many non-coronavirus grounded (DHSC, 2020). In addition, there is concerns regarding the number of conferences that have been cancelled or postponed. These conferences are the key to scientific research in many disciplines, allowing dissemination of research as well as providing networking opportunities for collaboration and job-seeking. Many conferences have moved online, however these 'virtual conferences' are often not as amenable to networking and informal means of scientific communication (Nicola, Alsafi, Sohrabi, Kerwand, Al-Jabird, Iosifidis, Agha and Agha, 2020). Similarly, the education disruption has had, and will continue to have, substantial effects beyond education. Closures of educational institutions hamper the provision of essential services to children and communities, including access to nutritious food, affect the ability of many parents to work, and increase risks of violence against women and girls (United Nations, 2020).

As fiscal pressures increase, and development assistance comes under strain, the financing of education could also face major challenges, exacerbating massive pre-COVID-19 education funding gaps. For low income countries and lower-middle-income countries, for instance, that gap had reached a staggering \$148 billion annually and it could now increase by up to one-third (United Nations, 2020). One of the SDG4 ambitions is that LICs and LMICs will allocate around 6% of GDP to education (from a current average of around 4%) and that the proportion of the public budget that governments spend will increase to 20% (from an average of about 15%). These changes will almost certainly happen in many countries in 2021. But it will not mean more money spent on education. This is because GDP in many LICs and LMICs will fall and at the same time educational spending will prove sticky on the downturn (Lewin, 2020).

Due to severity of the virus, the world is now off-track in the achievement of sustainable development goal number 4 which deals majorly with equal access to education (United Nations, 2015). The pandemic pose serious threat to the achievement of the goal including the fact that student already lock-out of school by the temporary closures may not return to school asfter lifting the lockdown, especially if they are already at risk of drop out; demand for technical and vocational education will fall as labour markets contract; equitable opportunities to learn are threatened by instabilities in school income, staffing, and safety; universal literacy may have less utility as modern sector development slows; global citizenship is challenged by closing borders and restrictions on movement of workers and

students (Lewin, 2020). Many educational institutions are attempting to maintain programs through online education. However, equity is a major constraint on access to distance learning. In developing countries, many students do not have access to the internet, or do not possess personal computers or tablets, or a safe and supportive learning environment appropriate for e-learning. The pandemic will therefore harm education in all spheres (SDG 4-Quality education), driving up the need for childcare, and causing higher economic costs, increased pressure on schools and a rise of dropout rates (Filho, Brandli, Salvia, Rayman-Bacchus and Platje, 2020).

Several studies also abound arguing for the negative effect of the emergence of coronavirus to the global economy and sustainable education. For instance, Owusu-Fordjour, Koomson, Hanson (2020) on the impact of Covid-19 on learning using questionnaires administered to 214 respondents from the second cycle and tertiary institutions of Ghana. The study brings to light that the pandemic really has had a negative impact on their learning as many of them are not used to effectively learn by themselves. The e-learning platforms also pose a challenge to majority of the students because of the limited access to internet and lack of the technical knowhow of these technological devices by most Ghanaian students. In the same vein, Stanley, Nkporbu and Stanley (2020) assessed the socio-economic implications of the coronavirus pandemic on the general population, with focus in Nigeria. The study found a high level of fear and apprehension associated with the COVID-19 Pandemic among the general public occasioned by huge National, State as well as individual socio-economic loss and difficulties due to the lockdown and restrictions including markets, shops and other private and public businesses. As a result, many especially those on small and middle cadre employments have lost their jobs, there increased dependency, hunger, sufferings and has posed a lot of restiveness and social insecurity.

In the same vein, Filho, Brandli, Salvia, Rayman-Bacchus and Platje, (2020) discussed how the coronavirus pandemic may influence the SDGs and could affect their implementation based on the analysis of the literature, observations and an assessment of current world trends. The result shows that strong concerns in dealing with COVID-19 are disrupting other disease prevention programmes. There are signs that the impacts of COVID-19 on the global economy will be more intense and long-lasting. These impacts pose a serious threat to the development prospects of less industrialized nations, and to the realization of the UN SDGs by 2030. Equally, Sumner, Hoy and Ortiz-Juarez (2020) on the potential short-term economic impact of COVID-19 on global monetary poverty. The study shows that COVID-19 poses a real challenge to the UN Sustainable Development Goal of ending poverty by 2030 because global poverty could increase for the first time since 1990 and, depending on the poverty line, such increase could represent a reversal of approximately a decade in the world's progress in reducing poverty. In some regions the adverse impacts could result in poverty levels similar to those recorded 30 years ago. Under the most extreme scenario of a 20 per cent income or consumption contraction, the number of people living in poverty could increase by 420–580 million, relative to the latest official recorded figures for 2018. In another study, Miftahu and Oruonye (2020) on the social and economic impact of covid-19 in Nigeria based on analytical approach. The study shows that virtually all essential macroeconomic indicators are grossly affected with tax, remittances and employment exhibiting severe consequences. Also, uncertainty, panics and lockdown measures are key to motivating higher decrease in world demand. The supply disruptions and huge death toll generates a heightened uncertainty and panic for household and

business. This uncertainty and panic leads to drop in consumption and investment thereby causing a decrease in corporate cash flows and triggered firm's bankruptcy. Also, lay-off and exiting firms produce higher unemployment while labour income decreased significantly. Similarly,

### **Conclusion**

The two contrasting argument presented above have shown that the coronavirus pandemic is both a curse and a blessing for sustainable education and the global economy at large. Although, the emergence of the pandemic has been blessing for educational sustainability in terms of the ability of a number of educational institution to sustain learning even during the pandemic through various online platform, the adoption of these various online platform also come with a lot of challenges such as the possibility of online learning facilities providers to steal data and make public data transmitted by users. In addition, for the technology backward countries their ability to afford these facilities and the necessary training and education to use the facilities efficiently a lacking which is a possibility that the emergence of coronavirus that led to the adoption of online learning will further widen the gap in the level of education between the rich and the poor countries.

In the same vein, that the emergence of the pandemic is completely evil for sustainable education and the global economy at large is not true in its entirety because the outbreak of the virus has spur a number of innovations and new discoveries in medicines, technology and educational sector with potential to ease the process of getting things done, improving the health of the people and enhancing comfortable living. In the educational sector, the emergence of coronavirus has led to the discovery and adoption of various online learning tools and technologies and brings about improvement in teachers expertise of the use of technologies in learning thereby easing their work load and facilitating the learning process.

In summary, it is evident that that the coronavirus pandemic is both a curse and a blessing for sustainable education and the global economy at large. Hence, the educationists and policy makers in the educational sector are only expected to mitigate the threats associated with the outbreak of the virus in achieving the goal of educational sustainability and build upon the blessing side of the emergence of the virus. This will no doubt facility the advance of the educational system and fast-track the achievement of the goal of educational sustainability. The study recommends thatnational and local governments should encourage colleges and universities, together with the rest of the society, to participate in joint implementation of online education. The Ministry urges universities to conduct multi-dimensional learning evaluation, and to appropriately credit student online achievements.

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