

## TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF SUSTAINABILITY OF EDUCATION DURING COVID-19 IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KWARA STATE

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### **Abstract**

*The study assessed the perceptions of teachers on the sustainability of education during COVID-19 in secondary schools in Kwara State. Descriptive research design of survey type was adopted in the study. The population was all teachers in all secondary schools in Kwara State, 250 teachers were sampled from 25 secondary schools using simple random sampling technique. The instrument for data collection was questionnaire titled "Teachers' Perceptions of Sustainability of Education during COVID-19" (TPSEC) which was validated by two experts in the field of Test and Measurement. The reliability of the instrument was ensured using test-retest reliability method. The researcher administered the instrument on 20 teachers outside the sample twice, within the interval of two weeks and data collected was analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation while the reliability coefficient obtained was 0.89. The instrument was administered by the researcher and three trained research assistants. Two research questions were raised in the study and one of them was transformed into hypothesis. The research question which could not be transformed into hypothesis was answered using mean while the hypothesis formulated was tested using t-test at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that teachers had positive perception towards the sustainability of education during COVID-19. It also found that there was no significant difference between the perceptions of male and female teachers on the sustainability of education during COVID-19. The study recommended amongst others that modern teaching facilities that could guarantee students' access to learning during pandemic should be put in place by government.*

**Keywords:** COVID-19, Sustainability, Education, Secondary Schools

## **Introduction**

In Nigeria and other countries of the world, education is viewed as a dominant instrument for presenting and sustaining social, economic and political change in human societies. Ayodele (2016) conceived education as a vehicle for enhancing upward social and economic movement. With this submission, one could conclude that education is the key to social rebuilding and an instrument for conserving, transmitting and renewing social, economic and political culture of a nation.

Education occupies a principal position for economic empowerment and development of sustainable economy. On this note, National Policy on Education (2013) submitted that one of the fundamental goals of education is the acquisition of appropriate skills and the development of mental, physical and social abilities and competencies as equipment for the individual to live and contribute to the development of the society. Education enables individuals to contribute positively to development of their society by providing to all needed manpower and personnel that will contribute to national development (Fakunle, 2020). The above, therefore, suggests that the nature and quality of education received by the people defined the level of development of any nation.

Coronavirus Diseases 2019 which is popularly known as COVID-19 was first diagnosed and reported in December 2019 in Wuhan, China was first confirmed in Nigeria by the Federal Ministry of Health on the 27th of February, 2020. The first case was discovered on an Italian citizen who returned from Milan, Italy to his workplace in Lagos, Nigeria (Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC, 2020). The pandemic

continued to spread in the country from then and it led to the closure of all schools, primary, secondary and tertiary institutions on March 26th 2020 in Nigeria in order to avoid further spreading of COVID-19. The lockdown had great impacts on the sustainability of education in Nigeria (Jimoh, 2020).

Evidences and observations from the previous pandemic such as Ebola disease showed that COVID-19 is capable of disrupting educational system and makes it unsustainable and this is supported by Plan International (2020) that outbreak of COVID-19 affects children's education. It is submitted that education is interrupted by the outbreak of the virus and school lockdown that followed it. It is a known fact that when school is interrupted, students' access to learning would be interrupted as well. Jimoh (2020) found that students had no enough access to learning during COVID-19 school lockdown in Nigeria. This indicates that sustainability of education could be achieved through the use of e-learning facilities during the pandemic.

In order for the education to achieve its goals, its process must move on without being hindered by any factors or challenges. The coming of Corona Virus brought a great global hindrance to educational system. Stephan and Christoph (2020) opined that the crisis caused by the COVID-19 has comprehensive effects on education. The breakdown of COVID-19 has significant influence on the educational development in Nigeria even after the lockdown as most of the educational programmes and activities are in hold due to fear of spread of the pandemic among the students.

Jimoh (2020) submitted that COVID-19 pandemic has challenged structures and practices of education in Nigeria and other developing countries and that the change in structure could have negative influence on education. It revealed that some of the

educational programmes in schools have openly suspended due to the fear of spreading the pandemic among students and educational stakeholders. Suspension of education programme is tantamount to non-sustainability of education in the country.

Mahama and Badu-Nyarko (2014) conceived sustainability as the continuation of the benefits of educational beyond the time of the programmes. Onkoba (2016) opined that sustainability is the ability of educational programmes and practices to maintain a flow of their benefits at a specified level for a long period. This implies that the expansion of benefits or advantages of educational programmes for a long time is all about its sustainability. For education to be sustainable, its benefits must continue without any sign of cessation due to certain factors. This implies that sustainability of education during COVID-19 means the achievement of the benefits education as it was before the beginning of the pandemic. It is believed that sustainability of education could be achieved only if it is not stopped from performing its major functions and roles to individual and national development.

The perception of individual, particularly teachers, during the period of COVID-19 could be unpredictable as everyone is skeptical of achieving any meaningful goals during the period of COVID-19 pandemic. The above is supported by the submission of Ojo (2020) that belief and perception of teachers on the continuation (sustainability) of education is divisionary as some of the educational programmes such as quiz competitions, debates, public symposia and conferences have been suspended to avoidance of contracting COVID-19.

Olorunfemi (2018) submitted that teachers usually show related perceptions about the sustainability of education even during crisis. It was submitted that proper

information about the educational programmes could be of benefit to the perception of teachers to the sustainability of educational programmes. Some of the reasons for the difference in the perception of teachers on educational issues is gender which is the state of being a male and female.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Sustainable education aims at developing students, schools, communities and nation at large. It was observed that breaking down of COVID-19 in Nigeria has limited the roles of education in maintaining sustainable development in Nigeria. Its prevalence seems to have barred Secondary Schools in Kwara State from organising skill acquisition programmes and extramural activities, particularly in primary and secondary schools. It seems that schools are not opportune to gather students and scholars from far and near for educational programmes that could facilitate development like the time before COVID-19.

The recent observations by the researcher have shown that sustainability of education may not be guaranteed during the period of COVID-19 due to suspension of key educational programmes throughout the world including Nigeria. It appears that the perception of teachers about the sustainability of education during the pandemic is not known as majority of them seem not to have been contacted for details on it (Jimoh, 2020). Equally, it seems that the perception of teachers about the sustainability of education during the pandemic could be determined by their gender differences.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to determine perception of teachers on the sustainability of education during COVID-19 pandemic in Secondary Schools in Kwara State, Nigeria. Specifically, the purposes of the study included the assessment of:

1. Perception of teachers about the sustainability of education during COVID-19 in Secondary Schools in Kwara State, Nigeria.
2. Difference in the perception of male and female teachers on the sustainability of education during COVID-19 in secondary schools in Kwara State, Nigeria.

### **Research Questions**

1. What is the perception of teachers about the sustainability of education during COVID-19 in Secondary Schools in Kwara State, Nigeria?
2. Is there any difference between the perception of male and female teachers on the sustainability of education during COVID-19 in secondary schools in Kwara State, Nigeria?

### **Research Hypothesis**

1. There is no significant difference in the perception of male and female teachers on the sustainability of education during COVID-19 in secondary schools in Kwara State.

### **Methodology**

The descriptive research design of survey type was adopted in the study. This allowed the researcher to describe the situation as it appears. The population for the study was all teachers in all secondary schools in the sixteen Local Government Areas

(LGAs) of Kwara State. The sample was 250 teachers sampled from 25 secondary schools in five LGAs using multistage sampling procedure. The first stage was the use of simple random sampling technique to sample five out of sixteen LGAs in Kwara State. The second stage was the use of simple random sampling technique to sample five secondary schools from each of the five LGA's making 25 schools. The third stage was the use of simple random sampling technique to sample ten teachers from each of the 25 schools making 250 teachers.

The instrument for data collection was questionnaire titled "Teachers' Perceptions on Sustainability of Education during COVID-19 (TPSEC). Both face and content validity of the instrument were ensured by two experts in the field of Test and Measurement. The reliability of the instrument was done using test-retest reliability method. The researcher administered the instrument on 20 teachers outside the sample twice in the interval of two weeks and data collected was analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation while the reliability coefficient obtained was 0.89. The validated and reliable instrument was administered by the researcher and three trained research assistants on the respondents. Two research questions were raised in the study and one of them was transformed into hypothesis. The first research question which could not be transformed into hypothesis was answered using mean and standard deviation. The responses are based on four-point, Likert-type scale of Strongly agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly disagree, and the mean rating is 2.5, with the mean values of each of item compared in order to determine perception of teachers on the sustainability of education during COVID-19 in Secondary Schools in Kwara State. Any mean value which is equal to or greater than 2.5 means agreement to the questionnaire

item, but when the mean value is less than 2.5 it means disagreement. The only hypothesis formulated in the study was tested using t-test at 0.05 level of significance.

## Results

**Research Question 1:** What is the perception of teachers about the sustainability of education during COVID-19 in Secondary Schools in Kwara State, Nigeria?

**Table 1:** Teachers' Perceptions on Sustainability of Education during COVID-19 Pandemic

No.	Items	Mean Scores	Remarks
1.	Students are able to learn during COVID-19 like before the pandemic	3.81	Sustainable
2.	Educational programmes in place before the pandemic are still in used.	2.72	"
3.	COVID-19 has no effect on secondary school curriculum in Nigeria.	2.59	"
4.	Students are still able to do practical in secondary schools.	3.09	"
5.	Students are able to go to field trips as done before COVID-19.	2.76	"
6.	Students are able to cover all the topics in secondary school curriculum as of period before COVID-19.	3.06	"
7.	Students' present learning can make them effective in their society as of period before COVID-19.	4.01	"
8.	Instructional materials being used to teach in secondary before COVID-19 are still relevant now.	3.89	"
9.	Teachers are able to perform their teaching as of before COVID-19	4.02	"
10.	Inter-class quiz competition is still being organized for within each of the secondary schools as of period before COVID-19.	2.69	"
11.	Inter-school quiz competition is still being organized as of period before COVID-19.	2.51	"

Results in Table 1 showed the mean scores of the perception of secondary school teachers in Kwara State on the sustainability during COVID-19. The benchmark



to decide the perception is 2.5. This indicated that perception with mean score of or above 2.5 is said to be positive while anyone less than 2.5 is negative. The results in Table 1 showed that secondary school teachers in Kwara State have positive perception of the sustainability of Education during COVID-19. This findings are in line with the finding of Olorunfemi (2018) that teachers usually show related perception about the sustainability of education even during crisis.

**Hypothesis 1:** There is no significant difference between the perception of male and female teachers on the sustainability of education during COVID-19 pandemic in secondary schools in Kwara State.

**Table 2:** t-test Analysis of the Difference between Male and Female Teachers' Perception on Sustainability of Education during COVID-19 Pandemic

Variable	N	Mean	SD	df	t	Decision
Male	141	1.034	1.236	248	0.371	Accepted
Female	109	1.219	1.312			

**P>0.05**

The results in Table 2 revealed that the calculated t-value was 0.371 computed at 0.05 significance level with degree of freedom of 248 using SPSS 17 version. Since the calculated t-value (0.371) was greater than the significant level (0.05), the null

hypothesis which states that there no significant difference between the perception of male and female teachers on the sustainability of education before and during COVID-19 pandemic in secondary schools in Kwara State fail to reject. The mean scores showed that there is no difference between the perception of male and female teachers on the sustainability of education during COVID-19 pandemic like before the pandemic.

### **Discussion**

The result of the study revealed that education was sustainable during COVID-19 as before the pandemic. Teachers perceived that there was sustainability of education during COVID-19 pandemic in secondary schools in Kwara State, Nigeria. The finding agreed with the finding of Onkoba (2016) that there is sustainability of education in Nigeria despite the presence of crisis that affected the sector. The study found that the introduction of electronic means of learning (e-learning) facilitate the sustainability of education in a period of crisis like COVID-19 pandemic. The finding is in disagreement with the finding of Stephan and Christoph (2020) that the crisis caused by the COVID-19 has comprehensive effects on education. This implies that education sustainability might not be achieved during COVID-19.

The study found that there was no significant difference between the perception of male and female teachers on the sustainability of education during COVID-19 in secondary schools in Kwara State. The finding concurred with the finding of Olorunfemi (2018) that teachers usually show related perception about the sustainability of education even during crisis. The study however found that there was no significant difference in the perception of the teachers on the basis of the gender.

### **Conclusion**

The study concluded that there is sustainability of education during COVID-19 in secondary schools in Kwara State. It was concluded that education could still provide its roles despite the presence of the pandemic. The study also concluded that there was no significant difference between the perceptions of male and female teachers on the sustainability of education during COVID-19 in secondary schools in Kwara State.

### **Recommendations**

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

1. Secondary schools should device other teaching strategies such as e-learning to guide against break down of learning during a period like COVID-19.
2. Educational programmes in education should be sustained through the use of relevant methods that will cater for both genders.

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