

PROBLEMS AND ISSUES OF RADIO EDUCATION AMIDST COVID 19 AND INSECURITY IN NIGERIA: IMPLICATION FOR EXTENSION EDUCATION.

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Abstract

Education in emergencies (EiE) providing safe, relevant and quality education to people affected by conflict, health-related crises or natural disasters. It is obvious that The COVID-19 pandemic and insecurity have cause disruptions in the education system in Nigeria, As learners stayed home and time went by, it became increasingly necessary for some form of learning to be taken place to keep the students engaged as the solution. Radio is the most popular broadcast medium used for teaching in times of crisis all over the world. In Nigeria it is evident that learning in a midst of COVID 19 and insecurity is largely driven by radio. This paper aim to examine the problems and issues of radio education programme amidst of COVID 19 and insecurity in Nigeria. The paper also explained education amidst COVID 19 and insecurity, education in emergency, radio education amidst corona virus pandemic and insecurity in Nigeria, mode of radio education in emergency period, benefit of Radio education amidst COVID 19 and insecurity, problem associated with radio education in pandemics and insecurity situation, the paper assert solution to the problems among are: extra time should be created to fill the gap of slow learners, scheme of work in both public and private schools should be unanimous, Radio education should be continuum, Private radio stations should be integrated in radio education programme. The paper reveals that using radio education to reach the mass contact in a cheaper cost is an extension education.

Key words: Radio education, COVID 19, Extension education.

Introduction

Education has been identified as a vital tool for any form of development, be it economic, social or political. It is a factor that determines the state of prosperity, sustenance of welfare and security of the people (Bray, 2000; Scott and Guogh, 2004; Osakwe, 2006). The yearnings, needs, aspirations as well as the cultural heritage and environment of any society determine, to a large extent, the kind of knowledge and skills to be acquired (Adebosin, 2004). Therefore, the kind of education operated should bring about skill development that will enable individuals to live and contribute meaningfully to the overall development of the society in which they live.

School attendance is one of the best public tools available to raise a child's skills, awareness and ability. However, the long period of school closure will have negative consequences on skill acquisition and growth of school children. It is worthy to note that schooling provides adequate learning but when schools close, children are deprived the opportunities for academic growth as well as academic development. The disadvantages of school closure are enormous for under-privileged students who tend to have fewer or no educational opportunity outside school. The closure of schools, colleges and universities does not only interrupt the teaching of students around the world, it also coincides with a key assessment period and many examinations have been postponed or cancelled. The outbreak of corona virus disease 2019 (COVID-19) which originated from the city of Wuhan, China, has become a major public health challenge for not only China but other countries across the world. The corona virus pandemic has caused unimaginable situations which led to the closures of educational institutions, manufacturing industries, aviation industries as well as the government ministries and Parastatals. The pandemic has disrupted academic activities and has affected about 1.6 billion children and youths globally (UNHCR, 2020).

In Nigeria the Federal Ministry of Education approved the closure of all learning institutions at various levels On March 19, 2020, (Nlebem, 2020). This abrupt closure led to significant disruptions in the education system. Though before the pandemic, the education is always disrupted by crises caused by armed conflict, natural disasters, epidemics and other form of insecurity. The aim of extension education programmes is to bring about desirable change in an individual which could be successfully achieved through effective communication. This paper

aim to examine the problems and issues of Radio education amidst COVID 19 and insecurity in Nigeria and to look at how extension education service of mass contact through radio education was used.

Education in emergencies

Education in emergencies (EiE) generally refers to providing safe, relevant and quality education to people affected by conflict, health-related crises or natural disasters. It focuses on the cycle of prevention of, preparedness for, response to, and recovery from emergencies (Winthrop, 2020). Although the scope of educational disruption caused by COVID-19 is unprecedented in history, there are valuable insights within the education in emergencies field for countries across the world. In individual countries and regions, education is almost always disrupted by crises caused by armed conflict, natural disasters and sometimes, epidemics. EiE is a critical response in emergency contexts that offers numerous benefits. First, it helps to meet the psychosocial needs of children and youth affected by trauma. Second, it provides physical and social protection for children and youth who face higher risks such as unwanted pregnancies, violence, sexual assault, substance abuse, among others. Third, EiE helps young people keep familiar routines by maintaining study skills to mitigate the number of school dropouts and easily reintroduce schooling. Finally, EiE is important in conveying survival and peace building messages and skills.

Education amidst COVID 19 and insecurity in Nigeria

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected the lives of many individuals, negatively impacting the global economy and sources of livelihoods. UNESCO (2020) reported that the closure of schools has affected 36,400,000 primary and secondary school learners across Nigeria, including those in internally displaced camps. Few of these learners, mostly from financially privileged households have access to quality learning opportunities from the comfort of their homes. Major causes of this inequity include limited or non-availability of smart phones, computers and internet services in most homes, and the large number of schools that lack the financial and technical capacity to transition from in-school to remote learning facilitation. Many schools are limited in their capacity to purchase the required infrastructure for remote learning and often do not have teachers with the appropriate digital skills. For schools that may be better resourced, it

has been challenging facilitating practical-oriented subjects and courses that typically engage students through laboratory experiments. With the closure of schools, there are very few schools that can afford set up and maintain virtual science laboratories where students and the teachers or lecturers can work together to simulate experiments (Abbey & Hoxley, 2020). These students will have to make do with learning the theoretical aspects of science subjects alone. The COVID-19 pandemic has also threatened the education of children or youths with special needs and disabilities. It is obvious that the COVID-19 pandemic presents unique challenges for Nigeria's already fragile education system (Obiakor & Adeniran, 2020). Before the pandemic, the education is almost always disrupted by the crises caused by armed conflict, natural disasters and sometimes, other form of insecurity.

Radio Education amidst COVID 19 and Insecurity in Nigeria:

As children stayed home and time went by, it became increasingly necessary for some form of learning to be taking place to keep the children engaged as the solution to the deadly virus is sought. The government released a COVID-19 contingency plan, the information contained within the document focused on keeping schools safe during the pandemic, counselling and providing information to the students about preventive measures and actions to curb the spread. However, with this contingency plan it was evident that there was a gap that needed to be filled to ensure that learning continued even in the face of stay at home and lockdown directives. In most cases, Nigeria's educational sector is not adjusting and is likely to struggle on that front for the expectable future. However, the major socio-economic burden will be shared excessively by students in public schools as compared to those in private schools. As most private schools took the direction of online learning for its pupils and students, it became evident that most pupils and students particularly those from public schools where internet connectivity might not be certain may miss out from the online teachings. Indeed, the private schools have started to establish distance learning programs and getting benefit of the host of ICT learning amenities offered by the international community, the government constrained by funds and incessant inadequacies in planning are still to announce any official strategies for providing distance learning amenities, particularly for public schools (Obiakor & Adeniran, 2020). The consequence being that these students and pupils presently have no formal learning arrangements and could be missing

learning entirely. Government in its bid to keep the children busy at this period has resuscitated the use of radio for formal education. Broadcasting educational programmes during the COVID-19 period can be done speedily and easily and if done correctly, will produce exceptionally satisfactory education outcomes for learners. Utilizing radio remains one of the only ways to impact majority of the most deprived students and pupils at a reasonable cost. Radio is one of the most popular means of communication. It was first utilized by the government and military to transmit information to each other especially in times of war. As time went by, it became a popular means of receiving information for many people as well. It permitted the common man to have a voice that could be heard. Radio is one of the simplest and most affordable broadcast media technologies and as a result is being used for educational purposes especially in time of crisis (Duby, 2006). Learning by radio gradually gained popularity because it was seen as a powerful tool to support education by supplementing printed texts with technology. Radio education programmes can reach a wide area as well as hard-to-reach places and this has proved to produce positive results in developing countries (Isola, 2010). Onyejemezi (2006) states that using radio as an educational tool allows the students to listen and get a feel of what their teachers are talking about. Sometimes, some of the lessons are written in a way that allows the students to have a grip of the information temporarily but the radio is often more entertaining than reading the same material. Circell (2004) opines that radio helps bring students together and connects them to one another; hence, the usefulness of radio in times of crises cannot be over emphasize. Radio Education aids the students to continue learning especially in the Covid-19 pandemic in Nigeria; thus, helping to keep the students at home to reduce the spread of the disease and at the same time keeping them busy with academic teaching. Duby (2006), suggested that educational radio has been applied within a wide collection of instructional design contexts. In some cases it is assisted by the use of printed materials, by local discussion groups, and by regional study units. It is sometimes designed so as to allow and inspire listener reaction and comment. In some cases, there is opportunity for the audience to raise questions and to receive feedback. Radio is recognized as a useful and most accessible means of providing learning experiences for a large number of students (Onyejemezi, 2006).

Bansal and Choudhary (1999), revealed that radio holds great prospects in terms of assisting students who are learning at a distance or who are confined at home as a result of a crisis breakout or pandemics. There is no doubt that the corona virus pandemic has caused unimaginable situations which led to closures of educational institutions at various level and access to educational, radio makes learning process more effective and productive which is why radio learning is advocated for especially in the time of crises like the COVID-19 pandemic in Nigeria and the world at large.

Mode of Radio Educational amidst of COVID 19 and insecurity

The concept of radio educational broadcasting means the system through which radio is used to attain the objectives of formal, informal and non-formal type of education particularly in times of crises or pandemics such as that of the COVID-19 that currently ravaging the world. Radio educational broadcasting can pertain to programmes that are enlightening informative and intellectually stimulating. It can be introduced at home or at school. It is often directed to a target audience at desired locations. Obiakor & Adeniran (2020) states that the advent of the corona virus has brought about a rude awakening to the necessity of using radio for formal education in times of crises as children are not in school as a result of the lock down.

Agba & Brown (2012) stimulates that radio educational broadcasting can be observed from four different modes of education which are:

- i. Formal Educational Broadcasting: Addresses the use of radio for instructional objectives that conform to the characteristics of formal education a formal syllabus, stringent grade system, formal school hours, formal certificates and general formal school experiences.
- ii. Non-formal Educational Broadcasting: This means a situation in which the resources (human and material) of radio services are utilized to obtain the needed skills of adults without extracting them from their work-day habits. It involves the procuring of functional knowledge that is meaningful to the adult social/ working responsibilities.
- iii. Informal Educational Broadcasting: This means the daily encounter with radio programmes that assist individuals to gain knowledge; however, the individual did not set out to acquire it but does through daily encounter with radio broadcasting. It

is in this reason that radio broadcast houses affirm to be educating their audience. The layout may come in different formats like news, drama, discussion programmes and documentaries.

- iv. Mobilization Educational Broadcasting: These are the purposively planned radio broadcast messages intended to encourage, convince, dissuade, motivate the general public to conduct themselves in certain, desired ways. It is about urging people to agree to the perspective of the sponsor. The format may be in Jingles; basically composed lyrics or any other broadcast programme pattern.

Benefits of Radio Educational amidst COVID 19 and Insecurity:

Sambo (2012) stated that radio is a tool that invests the past with an air of reality. They provide the learners with realistic experience, which capture their attention and help in the understanding of the historical phenomena. Samb0 (2012) further emphasize on the four main advantages of educational radio which are; improve education quality and relevance especially in crisis times, lower per student educational costs; enhance access to education especially for under-privileged students or groups and; It provides an evident clear audio and visual signal, which is specially necessary in instructional programs.

Other advantages of using radio for educational learning in crisis times may includes

- i. Radio can connect to a wide audience, as wide as distance and reception will permit.
- ii. Radio administers a less-expensive means for reaching a large geographically scattered population with consistent classroom teachings.
- iii. Radio lesson can provide up to date or latest and accurate information about classroom teachings on different subjects.
- iv. It sometimes supplies source of materials for the main stream of classroom work.
- v. It composes a supplementary source of information enabling the pupils to listen to original instructional talk by the experts of the subjects under study.
- vi. Radio is readily accessible.
- vii. Radio is easy to use. Almost everyone is conversant about and comfortable with the use of radio.

Eyyam and Menevis (2010) found that teachers agreed that the educational radio has a positive impact on their experience. In the same way, Ozcinar, Hursen, Ozdamli (2009) observed that teacher trainees believed in positive effects of educational radio in times of crisis. More so,

educational radio can provide instruction for one group of students whilst the teacher is occupied with another. Radio education programme can be listened to in the privacy of one's home or room, they are often the preferred choice in times of pandemics like the COVID-19 where students are expected to be indoors and still be engaged in learning.

Challenges of Radio Education in Nigeria amidst COVID 19 and insecurity: Radio education programme face many challenges that hinder or slowdown the teaching learning process amidst COVID 19 pandemic and insecurity in Nigeria. These includes

- i. Problem with slow learners: One of the weaknesses of radio education is that there is no direct communication between the learner and the educator. All students and learners are not the same; there are variations in their level of confidence, capabilities as well as understanding. Some students who are slow learners may not comprehend easily without the teacher being around to put them through. Some of these slow learners depend on their friends to re-explain the concepts of what has been taught by the teacher, but now that they are isolated from others how will they manage the situation? These learners may never catch up with their peers and they will continue to feel the effect of the gap.
- ii. Difficulty in assessing the students: It is difficult to assess students through Radio education. When the teacher give assignment, how to mark it and feed the students back during or after each radio lesson, students and teachers found it difficult to interact by asking and answering questions.
- iii. Disparity in scheme of work: Scheme of work differs from school to school, as the topic that is scheduled to be taught in first term in school may be scheduled for second term in another school. There is no clear stipulation by the government in their educational policies and there is no uniformity, adequate quality control as well as radio delivery in the learning processes
- iv. Lack of conducive environments for learning at home: Lack of conducive learning environments for students is a major setback as students are easily distracted by noise

and many other activities going on in their surroundings and could affect their academic performance.

- v. Flexibility nature of radio education: Lack of personal attention on the side of students is a huge challenge facing radio learning. Radio teaching is too flexible and lazy students may never find time to do it. Also, there is a low-level of readiness and seriousness among the students when it comes to finding time to attend the lesson. Teachers are not visible to supervise and monitor what they are teaching; therefore students are free to do whatever they like with their time.
- vi. Limited time: Another challenge associated with radio education is that the allocated time for each subject is too short or unfavourable to the learning.
- vii. Signals and coverage problems: Unavailability of signals due to epileptic power or lack of coverage in some community can cause a lot of setback due to which many students might lose out from the learning process. It is not every student that has access to radio services in their community.

Extension education:

The basic concept of extension is that it is education. Extension means that type of education which is stretched out to the people in rural areas, beyond the limits of the educational institutions to which the formal type of education is normally confined. Extension education appears to have unlimited scope in situations where there is need for creating awareness amongst the people and changing their behaviour. Extension has supported efforts and educated communities during crisis such as HIV/AIDS, Ebola, natural disaster and pest infestations. Extension agents received social communication training to encourage preventive and behaviour change message through community sensitization meetings and radio discussion. The process of radio education programme amidst of COVID 19 and insecurity requires Extension advisory Service (EAS). Awareness should be at forefront to makes individuals realised the existence of new idea and to adapt their regular outreach to the news of social distancing and noncontact communication.

Radio was already a trust source of information for rural resident. Radio is used by EAS to reach rural people with information and advice. It was expected that listening to radio increases knowledge and lead to adaptation of new technology and practice and the students will continue

learning while at home. In extension education, various methods are employed in structuring effective education delivery system. These can be used to create situations in which new information can pass freely between the extension worker and target audience. The selection of delivery methods for a programme delivery system should be based on the needs and preferences of the target audience and the specific educational purpose. Four conditions are necessary for effective use of teaching methods. These include the learning situation, the learning objective, the learning experiences and the use of variety of teaching method. Mass contact teaching method to reach the large number of people quickly and often at low cost was employed during COVID-19 and insecurity. Mass contact teaching methods are suited to attract attention and simulate the interest and desire for further information (William et al., 1984). Mass contact comprise bulletins, leaflets, newsletter, radio, television, exhibition, posters, cinema vans etc. the use of radio education to reach the mass contact at cheaper rate which increases knowledge and adaptation is extension education.

Conclusion

Radio education programmes have great influence on academic achievement of learners though it was associated with some problems. The devastating effects of COVID-19 pandemic have shut down all educational institutions across the world. The Governments of different nations of the world have put in place strategies that would allow continuous learning at home through the use of mass media channels, social networks and the internet. In Nigeria, radio education was stations across the country to broadcast the learning programmes in collaboration with the Federal and State ministries of education so that learners could have the opportunity to continue study while at home. The strategy employed in delivering radio education to reach the mass contact in a cheaper cost is extension education which assist learners to acquire knowledge, helps in mitigating the spread of the diseases as well as saving them from the deadly disease.

Recommendations

This paper recommends on the following area in improving radio education programme not only in a period of crisis and pandemics but also in safe and violence free situation across Nigeria.

- i. Extra time should be created over the weekend for the slow learners to fill the gap with their counterparts.
- ii. Assessment strategy of free calls through mobile phone should be introduced to assess the weekly lessons.
- iii. Government should ensure the uniformity of the scheme of work in both public and private schools. So that common objectives will be attained.
- iv. Parent should be educated on the effect of radio education so that much attention should be given to their children during the lessons by radio.
- v. Radio education should be continued even after the pandemics and educational radio should be introduced in schools curricular.
- vi. Private radio should be integrated on radio education so that learning time will be adjusted.
- vii. Government should strengthen the coverage of community radio and ensure adequate supply of diesel in case of power eruption.

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