

Covid -19 Pandemic and Introduction of Educational Globalisation in Developing Countries

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Abstract: Sometime in the mid- 2019, shocking waves about a disease called corona virus spread slowly but surely and within a twinkling of an eye, it became a worldwide phenomenon titled ‘‘COVID- 19’’. After frantic efforts to combat the disease, it still ravaged the globe affecting and killing people in thousands and of recent we talk of millions dead. Countries, in order to salvage the situation placed barrier measures. In the sector of education, one of the measures was to close down schools to reduce the rate of contamination. In order to continue schooling, distance education through information and communication technology (I C T) was adopted as a veritable mode of communication. Most countries of the world adopted this strategy. Developed countries had been used to the use of I C T in teaching/learning; developing countries introduced this mode of communication in the teaching/learning process and it opened up these countries to the concept of educational globalization which centre on the use of technology in education. This research endeavor to bring out information relating to COVID-19 and introduction of educational globalization in developing countries. Qualitative approach through documentary research and content analysis approach was used to bring out the justification that COVID -19 actually lead to introduction of educational globalization in developing countries. Also to complement the documentary information, the researcher designed ten open ended questions and distributed to teachers of three secondary schools ; two public and one private (ten per school) and also to 55 students of higher institutions (fourty from University of Ngaoundere, Garoua annex and fifteen from Higher Institute for Professionalism and excellence ; HIPTEX based in Garoua). The hypothesis to be verified include: 1. Covid 19 pandemic has contributed to the introduction of educational globalization in developing countries. 2. Covid 19 pandemic has not contributed to the introduction of educational globalization in developing countries. The results obtained were analyzed using content analysis approach (Patton, 1990). At the end of the research a major recommendation was that developing countries continue to use I C T in the teaching / learning process even after COVID -19 must have ended as the use of technology in education guarantees fast learning, easy research and teacher – student collaboration. It was also recommended that legislation be used to drive across this lofty practice for its fast applicability in the educational systems in developing countries.

Key points: Covid -19, Educational globalization, Developing countries.

INTRODUCTION

The closure of educational institutions as a preventive measure against the spread of COVID -19 has affected the educational systems in the world. While the process of shifting learning to an online format has already become common to many educational institutions worldwide, several factors are assumed to affect the quality of online learning, teachers’ performance, and students’ knowledge and skills. More than 1 billion and 575 million students in approximately 188 countries around the world are reported to have been affected by the closure of schools and universities due to preventive measures taken by countries against the spread of COVID -19 (UNESCO, 2020a). Due to

isolation, the use of technology has been considered the most appropriate (if not the only) alternative to keep educational systems functional in many parts of the world during this period. Despite the challenges in implementation, several advantages have been acknowledged in the need to shift to online learning, among which stands out the opportunity for rapid progress in the field of digital education, which, in other circumstances, would take years (UNESCO, 2020b). The shift to the online learning format has also been assessed as a good opportunity for teachers and students to become more creative and collaborative (UNESCO, 2020b).

Although the shift to online learning has already become part of many education systems in the world, the level of use and the way technology is used to achieve the quality of distance or online learning is considered to vary. This level depends on many factors, related to the various parties involved in the implementation of this learning format and the integration of technology in education systems before the school closure period as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. For years, numerous studies around the world have focused on identifying factors that make technology integration successful in classrooms teaching and learning. The same factors are assumed to influence the level of use of technology in the processes of shifting learning from school to a distance or online format, and the quality of learning in both formats. According to the findings of studies conducted so far, through which it was intended to identify the factors influencing the ability of educational systems to integrate technology in teaching, it is suggested that to achieve positive results in the integration of teaching technology, it is required to understand the types of interchanges between teachers, students, and technology (Honey et al., 2000). In the group of factors influencing opportunities to successfully integrate technology into the classroom and make it part of the learning process, it has been suggested that the teachers' perspective on teaching has an impact. This means that it depends on whether the teachers consider the learning process:

- as a process of information transfer, or use the teacher –centered approach, within which the teacher communicates information to students and uses various assessment techniques to assess the memorization of data ;
- as a process through which conceptual change is achieved (for example change of attitudes, knowledge, way of thinking) and/or see learning as a process that facilitates conceptual change, and therefore use the student –centered approach, where independence in learning is driven through discussions, debates, and questions among students, and by the forms of assessment through which conceptual change is assessed (Prosser and Trigwell, 1999).

On the basis of the above preamble regarding the introduction of technology due to COVID -19, this research will bring out documentary evidence and qualitative survey responses to prove that COVID -19 contributed to the introduction of educational globalization especially related to developing countries.

CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND / DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE OF TECHNOLOGY INTRODUCTION DUE TO COVID -19

The effects of the use of technology in educational institutions have been researched many years ago by researchers in the field of education, through which it has been proven and promoted that technology can help in various educational processes (Hung and Yyen, 2010), it can have a positive impact on supporting learning in students (Dyson et al., 2015), it can assist teachers, and aid them in professional advancement and development (Donelan, 2016 ; MancaRaineri, 2017). Therefore, the integration of technology in the classroom has been promoted and supported for many years now in different countries of the world (Cope and Ward, 2002). The development of information and communication technology (ICT) and its utilization in learning processes has enabled learning to become more open and teaching methodologies to become more flexible, thus making students more independent and self –determined, becoming responsible for learning (Goode et al., 2007), gaining self –regulating abilities in relation to goal setting, and becoming self –monitoring and adaptable. Such opportunities also allow teachers to promote active learning so that learning is engaging and effective (Collis 1998), which makes them facilitators of the learning process (Huang

et al. 2020;) and exempts them from the responsibilities of teaching alone by giving students responsibilities as well (Goode, 2007).

Latin America context:

The prevention measures announced by the Government of Kosovo against the spread of COVID 19 on march 11, 2020, have affected the lives and education of approximately 450146 students and 30528 teachers/professors in the country (Kosovo Agency of Statistics 2017, 2019; MESTI, 2020c). Days later, the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation (MESTI) in cooperation with other actors, including education directorates at the municipal level and non governmental organizations, began planning distance learning for children of certain age groups, and for particular subjects (language and mathematics). Weeks later, distance learning for public pre –university education began with video recordings broadcasted on the national television, through which selected teachers, for the subjects of Albanian language and mathematics, presented lessons for students in grades 1 – 5. Furthermore, in the framework of the plans of the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation, for the further planning of distance learning, the tasks and responsibilities for the realization of learning were published, through which the role of each party engaged in educational institutions in the country was specified (MESTI, 2020b).

In latin America and Caribbean area countries in the region have implemented emergency measures to maintain some continuity in teaching and learning processes while schools remain closed. These range from using radio and television channels to deliver curricula to use of mobile phones or virtual platforms. Measures put in place so far to maintain distance learning are not necessarily suitable for all age groups, as they do not adequately address the respective needs of specific groups. For example, younger children require close supervision, which they do not necessarily receive at home. Moreover, these strategies do not serve all students equally, as they depend on access to unevenly distributed resources for studying at home, such as internet connectivity, electronic devices, space and parental support. The information collected on the 33 countries of Latin America and the Caribbean up to 7 July 2020 shows that, in the area of education, most of the measures taken are related to the suspension of face –to-face classes at all levels of education. Of these countries, 32 suspended face-to-face classes, with this measures still in force nationwide in 29 countries (Nicaragua has not taken this course of action). In Uruguay, schools began to reopen in rural areas as of 22 April, before opening nationwide on 29 June. Most countries (29 out of 33) have established ways of continuing to provide education services through various distance learning modalities. For example, 26 countries implemented internet-based forms of learning. Only 8 of the 33 countries provided technological devices as one of the measures adopted to implement distance learning activities (Argentina, Chile, Colombia, El Salvador, Jamaica, Peru, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Uruguay). In addition, to carry out distance learning activities, the strategies of 14 countries include providing training resources for teachers, especially with regard to tools for the use and management of information and communication technologies (I C Ts). Most countries have adopted digital resources and platforms that can be accessed online, which have been bolstered with unprecedented speed by the ministries of education by online resources and the launch of free-to-air television or radio programming.

Nigeria context

Generally, Nigeria’s education sector is not adapting, and is expected to struggle on that front for the foreseeable future. while several private schools have begun to initiate distance learning programs, and taking advantage of the myriad of I C T-LEARNING opportunities provided by the international community, the government limited by funds and persistent deficiencies in planning, is yet to announce any official plans for providing distance learning opportunities, especially for public schools. The implication being that these students in public schools currently have no formal learning plans and could be missing learning altogether. According to the DIGITAL 2020 GLOBAL OVERVIEW REPORT published in January 2020, about 60 percent of Nigerians are not connected to the internet. But quantitatively more than 100 million Nigerians are connected due to their large population size. The statistics for mobile phones, which is used as a medium for learning is more

hopeful. According to the report, around 169.2 million people –83 percent of Nigerians have access to mobile phone connections; however, of these, 50 percent –around 84.5 million people, reside in urban areas. For children from poorer backgrounds who tend to have less access to internet connectivity, computers, and other devices, and reside in rural areas where local languages take dominance over English, ICT-learning uptake will be limited. The inequity in access to ICT-based learning has the adverse effect of further intensifying the existing disparities in learning outcomes along socio-economic lines, and the rural- urban divide. Reaching the vulnerable population in Nigeria will require adopting multiple learning delivery modalities ranging from television, radio and SMS-based mobile platforms that are more easily available to the poor. With over 80 percent of the adult population having access to radios and phones, it would be possible to reach most children left behind with targeted instructions via these mediums. However, while online platforms offer personalized learning, other delivery modalities require a central planner, as well coordination between all three tiers of government, and the private sector (media platform owners). This is where the role of the Ministry of Education will crucially extend beyond traditional policy making and regulations. The commissioners of education could help in deployment and use of these tools within states, while the federal government coordinates the state efforts by plugging capacity and finance gaps. The government could draw on the experience of Sierra Leone, where the Ebola crisis led to school closures for about 9 months. To reach the most vulnerable and excluded children, the government of Sierra Leone harnessed radios and televisions to deliver lessons.

One emerging evidence from the present crisis is the need to embed more technology into the classroom. Technological solutions, like adaptive learning technology, can ensure personalized learning with minimal teacher involvement, and have the potential to deliver better learning experiences at low-costs. The post –crisis period is an opportunity to invest in technology in both the private and public –school systems.

Cameroon context

With more than 320 deaths and almost 15,000 officially confirmed cases as of 6 July 2020 (Coronavirus Statistiques 2020) Cameroon was among the top most COVID-19 affected countries in sub-Saharan Africa. Nick Routley (2020) pointed out that, as of 12 May 2020, Cameroon was the country with the highest weekly coronavirus infection rate in the world (12 %). The spread of COVID-19 in Cameroon, which began on 6 March 2020, has not left the education sector unscathed: on the contrary, it has had a significant impact on schools (UNESCO 2020) and to a slightly lesser extent on higher education institutions.

Education has been at the heart of the government’s strategy for responding to COVID-19 pandemic. The strategy set out by the Prime Minister on 17 March 2020 placed education as a top priority. Schools and universities were ordered to lock down, and face –to-face academic activities were suspended. To compensate for the cessation of ‘‘ live’’ teaching, the Ministries of Basic Education, Secondary Education and Higher Education decided, after two weeks of hesitation, to continue courses by using distance teaching and learning tools. The government also recommended that school and university administrators should prioritise the use of distance communication tools for meetings, seminars and conferences. The paralysis of the education sector caused by the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, occurring in the middle of the academic year, meant that all Cameroonian learners were suddenly ‘‘ involuntarily out of school’’: 4.5 million in primary schools, 1.8 million in secondary schools, 40 000 learners in vocational training, and 347 000 in higher education (UNSDG 2020).

Challenges faced by some other African countries in the wake of COVID 19

Developing countries such as Burundi, Eritrea, Madagascar, and Mozambique are suffering from the lack of advancing distance learning technology, inadequate infrastructure, and weak (or absent) internet network connections. While in the emerged economy countries such as Egypt, Kenya, and South Africa, information technology providing the platform for better facilities used in the distance learning is sure.

On the other hand, many African countries are still grappling with tribal wars and instability. They do not have the resources to bridge the educational gap of the weak and fragile system. Long term school closures cause children to drop out of school and enter the labor market at an early age. They are abused and suffer from sexual harassment, exploitation in the illegal trade of human organs, recruitment into wars, and carrying out terrorists acts. Aids and grants are essential to establish a new learning system based on acoustics, reading, and visual platforms. At present, the challenges to learning online and the use of digital education are due to high cost, and lack of technical support. Moreover, people are suffering from an increase in illiteracy, and parents cannot help their children and support their studies at home.

In this context, cooperation between African countries enriched to benefit from the exchange of the available experiences of the Ministries of Education and communications to support the learning process, raise the efficiency of digital content, create a public internet network, and facilitate participation in the use of smartphones. The continuation of the educational process in Africa requires a comprehensive treatment for the learning loss that students suffered due to school closures. For this reason, it is necessary to increase the education budget, introducing simplified curricula, supporting teachers and administrators. It is hoped that after the pandemic, many African states will have the opportunity to restructure their educational system in the direction of technology.

Based on the above literature, lots of effort has been put in place by governments in some less developed countries to continue education as COVID 19 continue to destroy citizens and hold back the educational process. The introduction of numerous strategies in order to continue teaching and learning in these countries have gone a long way to strengthen technology in the learning process especially countries that did not dream of having such activity in the learning process. The use of applications in mobile phones such as WATSAP, GOOGLE CLASS ROOM, TOPYX LEARNING PLATFORM, E –LEARNING PLATFORM ETC. have become the order of the day in developing countries and almost becoming a habit in use in various educational systems in developing countries. This practice has in the most open up these countries to the globe in the domain of education titled educational globalization which centre on globalization of knowledge itself, such inquiries can be directed to various sites and discipline outside of education ; in considering how communication, values, and knowledge are being dynamically revised today on a global scale through processes of globalization. Globalization in education has had many obvious effects on educational technology and communication systems change the way education is delivered as well as roles played by teachers and students.

To demonstrate further that COVID 19 pandemic battle lead to the introduction of educational globalization, five(05) open ended questions were asked to students and teachers as we shall uncover in methodology.

GENERAL OBJECTIVE OF THE RESEARCH

The general objective of this research effort is to demonstrate that there is a link between COVID 19 PANDEMIC and introduction of technology in teaching and learning leading to globalization in education or educational globalization in developing countries.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

To inform stakeholders especially policy implementers to strengthen the application of technology in the educational system. Information and communication technology (UNESCO 2018) brings life to learning as teachers and students do fast research and strengthen collaboration in the teaching and learning process.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Two research questions guide this study:

Research question 1: Has COVID 19 pandemic lead to the introduction of educational globalization in developing countries ?

Research question 2: what are some declarations by teachers and students showing that COVID 19 pandemic lead to the introduction of educational globalization in developing countries?

HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

Two research hypothesis guide this study:

Hypothesis 1: (null): COVID 19 pandemic has lead to the introduction of educational globalization in developing countries.

Hypothesis 2: (alternative): COVID 19 pandemic has not lead to the introduction of educational globalization in developing countries.

METHODOLOGY

To come out with findings of the research, qualitative approach through documentary research and content analysis approach was used to bring out the justification that COVID 19 actually lead to introduction of educational globalization in developing countries. To complement the documentary information, five open ended questions were designed and distributed through convenience sampling technique to teachers of three secondary schools ; two public and one private (10 per school) and also to twenty students of higher institutions (40 from university of Ngaoundere, Garoua Annex) and (15 from higher institute for professionalism and excellence ; HIPTEx based in Garoua). Out of the 85 participants, 81 responded to the open ended questions to complement the documentary information. This gave a response rate of 95.2%.

The documentary information related to COVID 19 pandemic battle in developing countries were analyzed base on its content as presented. Also, the responses on the 5 open ended questions were analyzed based on each theme representing each open ended question.

FINDINGS

OPEN ENDED QUESTIONS TO TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

- 1) Has COVID 19 pandemic lead to the introduction of educational globalization in developing countries?
- 2) Do teachers use technology (ICT) in their teaching in class ?
- 3) Do teachers and students show interest in following e –learning as prescribed by government due to COVID 19 pandemic ?
- 4) Do teachers and students use their mobile phones and other devices in teaching and learning ?
- 5) Why do you think the use of ICT in teaching and learning is very necessary in the education system?

Findings on open ended question 1 relating to whether COVID 19 pandemic has lead to the introduction of educational globalization in developing countries.

Out of the 47 participants who responded to this question secondary schools students where clarified the meaning of globalization/educational globalization. teachers and students of higher institutions understood the meaning of the question. All the participants agreed that COVID 19 pandemic has lead to the introduction of educational globalization in developing countries. Most of the teachers and students of secondary schools acknowledge the use of mobile telephone during the crisis especially the watsapp application where teachers posted valuable information on academic issues. This was perculiar to final year students in form five and upper sixth. Two teachers explained that the crisis has made it possible to connect to other countries of the world. Searching relevant academic information through Google has become very common with secondary school students and teachers of secondary schools. Regarding teachers and students of higher institutions they fastly acknowledge that COVID 19 pandemic has opened up the educational system of Cameroon to the rest of the world through the use of internet connection using devices such as mobile applications such as watsapp, google classroom and e –learning platforms. Voicemail

messages and notes were posted on whatsapp applications. Generally, School closures in Cameroon and adoption of technology for continuous studies in secondary and higher institutions opened up the educational system to the globe as technology in education became synonymous with globalization explained one lecturer in the university of Ngaoundere, Garoua Annex.

Findings on open ended question 2 relating to whether teachers use technology (ICT) in their teaching in class.

This question was easily answered by students and teachers of secondary schools and higher institutions. All 47 participants agreed that COVID 19 pandemic lead to the introduction of technology in the teaching and learning process. Most of the students and teachers in the university of Ngaoundere, Garoua, Annex were explicit. The use of PB LAPTOPS offered by the Ministry of Higher Education to students of higher public and private schools was cited by students and teachers as a veritable tool that was and is currently being used in the teaching learning process. Using internet connection, the PB LAPTOPS, mobile phones particularly certain applications aided teaching and learning explained by most of the teachers of higher institutions particularly university of Ngaoundere lecturers.

Findings on open ended question 3 relating to whether teachers and students show interest in following e-learning as prescribed by government due to COVID 19 pandemic.

Looking at the participants responses mostly university teachers and students responded by insinuating that the university of ngaoundere e-learning platform was used by teachers. They indicated that courses were lodged at the platform and students accessed the platform through codes and could download courses lodged by teachers. They explained that all 8 state universities adopted this e-learning platform to enhance teaching and learning. From the responses, participants of secondary schools did not show mastery of the e-learning strategy for continuous studies. Many respondents at the secondary schools talk of specialized radio programs and some mobile phone applications especially WATSAP in passing on some academic materials to students of form five and upper sixth seating for end of course examination.

Findings on open ended question 4 relating to whether teachers and students use their mobile phones and other devices in teaching and learning.

This question was welcome fully by participants. All 47 participants said mobile phones and laptops were the most popular devices. Internet connection according to all participants was needed to effectively use these devices.

Findings on open ended question 5 relating why participants think ICT is very necessary in teaching and learning.

All participants gave varied reasons why ICT is necessary in teaching and learning. They include:

- ✓ make it easy for teachers and students to collaborate in the learning process.
- ✓ open up the teaching learning process in relation to research.
- ✓ brings in quality information to teachers and students.
- ✓ learn other positive cultures from other countries due to globalization in education.
- ✓ stimulate self studies
- ✓ preserve researched information for a long time to be used in future.

BRIEF CONTENT ANALYSIS OF DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE OF TECHNOLOGY INTRODUCTION DUE TO COVID 19 PANDEMIC IN LATIN AMERICA, NIGERIA AND CAMEROON.

COVID 19 pandemic emerged in all these countries of the developing world and the countries adopted similar measures to combat the COVID 19 pandemic in the education sector. School closures were the immediate consequence of the crisis to stop contamination in these countries.

Strategies to continue teaching and learning in these countries were all similar. The use of technology in teaching and learning was introduced in these countries which to a certain extent introduced them to globalization. Distance education using internet connection via mobile phones, laptops and computers were popular in these countries. Specialized radio and television programs was also a channel used. In a nutshell, technology introduced in the teaching and learning process due to COVID 19 pandemic open up the educational systems to the rest of the world called EDUCATIONAL GLOBALISATION.

HYPOTHESIS TESTING

HYPOTHESIS 1: COVID 19 pandemic has lead to introduction of educational globalization in developing countries.

This hypothesis is found correct. The respondents agreed on the introduction of technology in the teaching learning process opening up to Educational globalization. Various strategies put in place by some developing countries to combat school closures due to COVID 19 is also a support to the hypothesis.

HYPOTHESIS 2: COVID 19 pandemic has not lead to introduction of educational globalization in developing countries.

This hypothesis is rejected. Participants statements ran contrary to this hypothesis. The documentary evidence is also contradicting this hypothesis.

CONCLUSION

This research has succeeded to bring out clearly the link between the use of technology to combat COVID 19 pandemic school closure and educational globalization. Some developing countries vigorously pursued ICT in this endeavor while others epileptically pursued the practice due to limited resources. Others were trap in the middle trying to change from the traditional face to face teaching to distance education. Observations from varied respondents of the research point to the fact that introduction of distance education using technology open up the educational systems of developing countries to other educational systems and cultures.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Developing countries should continue using ICT in their teaching /learning even after the eradication of the corona virus pandemic as ICT guarantees fast learning, effective research and strong teacher –student collaboration.
2. Legislation should be used in developing countries to implement this lofty practice of using ICT in the educational system.
3. Adequate training be given to teachers of all disciplines on effective use of ICT in their teaching endeavor.
4. Seminars/workshops should be organized to inform students and teachers on the importance of using distance education based on technology.
5. A department be opened in teacher training institutions regarding the use of ICT in education.

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