


Chapter 6

The Restructuring of Schools Ethos to Comply With COVID– 19 Protocols as Well as Innovative Teaching Strategies as the New Normal Post Pandemic

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ABSTRACT

This study analyzed the compliance level of COVID-19 protective protocols among public and private secondary schools in Nigeria and the introduction and application of innovative teaching strategies (Blended Instructional Strategy – BIS) in public secondary schools. The study consisted of two phases: phase one was on the compliance level of the COVID-19 protocols whilst phase two was on the application of innovative teaching strategy. It was found out that there was partial adherence to the WHO COVID-19 protocols in all the schools visited but a better compliance level in private schools compared to public schools. Provision of alcohol-base hand sanitizers, avoiding touching of surfaces, and temperature check were the least pro-

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ocol complied with by both secondary schools type. Schools were forced to adopt an alternative method to teach students during the lockdown. The implementation of innovative teaching strategy was the phase two of this study and proved to be a better teaching strategy than only face-to-face teacher instruction.

INTRODUCTION

This study analyzed the compliance level of COVID-19 protective protocols among public and private secondary schools in Nigeria and what it means for the future in the restructuring of schools as the new normal post pandemic, and also the introduction and application of innovative teaching strategies (Blended Instructional Strategy – BIS) in public secondary schools. The study consisted of two phases: phase one was on the compliance level of the COVID-19 protocols whilst phase two was on the application of innovative teaching strategy. The findings from phase one of the study has already been shared at the European Conference on African Studies ECAS2023 African Futures held at University of Cologne Germany from 31st May to 3rd June 2023. This chapter will share the findings from both phases and what it means for the new normal post pandemic. COVID-19 disease spreads primarily through contact hence the development of preventive protocols by World Health Organisation (WHO). The phase one study methodology involved adapting the WHO COVID-19 protocols checklist which was used to check compliance of schools when schools re-opened in January, 2021 after the Nation-wide lockdown in Nigeria. The study population for phase one was all the private and public secondary schools in Yenagoa metropolis of Bayelsa State, South of Nigeria. This consisted of twenty-nine (29) private secondary schools and twenty-four (24) public secondary schools. All the private and public schools were visited by the researcher (sample size $n = 53$). It was found that there was partial adherence to the WHO COVID-19 preventive protocols in all the schools visited, but a better compliance level in private schools compared to public schools. More students were wearing face mask in the private schools (90%) visited as compared to the public schools (40%). Provisions of alcohol-based hand sanitizers, avoiding touching of surfaces and temperature checks were the least number of protocols complied with by both public and private secondary schools. Strict adherence or compliance with the COVID-19 directives is a serious challenge amidst other existing and endemic myriad of challenges in Nigerian schools. Based on these findings, it was recommended that provisions be made for the compliance with the protocols going forward. Provisions of hand washing facilities; thermometers for temperature checking; and emphasis on seating arrangements in the classroom to reflect physical/social distancing; should be the new normal. During school assemblies, the school populace should be educated

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