Prospects of Online Teaching and Learning in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT: *Coronavirus (Covid-19) has great impacts on the education industry so much that it has introduced revolutionary trends into the education industry that have potentials to usher in fundamental and desirable changes. The desirable impressions of coronavirus in the education landscape are so visible that many stakeholders pray that it will be unthinkable for any reasonable state to return to the practices in the education industry prior to the coronavirus pandemic. One desirable change brought about by the coronavirus pandemic is online teaching and learning. Using the philosophical methodology, this paper discusses the prospects of online teaching and learning. The paper establishes that online teaching and learning is advantageous to teacher, learners and administration of educational institutions. It helps to improve the professional development of the teacher and through this way grows the teaching profession, enables teachers and learners to revisit what had been taught and learnt, makes teaching and learning more flexible and more convenient for both the teacher and the learners, saves cost for management, enhances effective documentation by management. The paper among other things recommends that the sense of collaboration the education industry witnessed during this period should be sustained and teacher education should be repositioned to integrate those revolutionary changes popped up during this period into the curriculum of teacher education institutions.*

KEYWORDS: Prospects, online teaching and Learning, Nigeria.

INTRODUCTION

It is a glaring fact that the world is replete with occurrence of events and these events easily become the subject matter upon which human history revolves, human philosophy develops and the sources of other inspirations that guide, influence, motivate and shape the actions of man now and in the future. Events as they occur in the world can generate pressure or heat and the scope and influence of such occurrence can be felt locally, regionally, nationally and globally. At whatever levels of influence, such happenings may have one important feature that is determinant in that such happenings may have epical and phenomenal potentials to leave good or bad footprints that may become springboards for revolutionalizing the actions and activities of man and his institutions. Any keen observer of events around the world can quickly

come to a conclusion that the world has not been the same and can never be the same again since the outbreak of coronavirus (COVID-19) in 2019.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) in all ramifications represents what Nwaokugha (2020:167) calls:
A mix bag; that is one that presents challenges as well as opportunities, ranging from wake up calls to providing avenues for man and the society to philosophically reflect and analyze issues in the affairs of man, his institutions and the state.

Such detailed philosophical scrutiny and examination is necessary as any insightful and curious observer maybe left with no other conclusion other than that coronavirus (Covid-19) has not only come to stay but has all what it takes to drastically, radically and revolutionally change the face of the earth and as human beings with God-given capacities for rational reflections that are targeted at solving and resolving problems, it may be normal and natural for humanity to collectively take a common stand or position that can be a guide for reasoning along trajectories where society recognizes that current developments posed by the outbreak of coronavirus (Covid-19) maybe a wakeup call and a serious reminder that humanity globally has derailed from prioritizing those values humanity should have prioritized. After all, the outbreak of coronavirus (Covid-19) has exposed and drawn the attention of the global community to the state of infrastructural and personnel deficits around the world and consequently the urgent need for change of policies and practices. On the other hand, the outbreak of coronavirus (Covid-19) calls for sober reflections especially the type of reflection that can trigger in man the sensitivity to see coronavirus (Covid-19) as a challenge and opportunity to be exploited.

It is not an exaggeration and cannot be that the footprint of coronavirus (Covid-19) is visible on the political, religious, economic, moral, scientific, technological, educational, environmental, aesthetic and general landscapes of man and his institutions and a disturbing revelation about coronavirus (Covid-19) is that the mere mention of it invokes feelings of uncertainty, misery, perpetual fear and other emotional inadequacies such as hopelessness, helplessness, frustration and despair that combine to threaten life and human well-being. The multiplicity of areas in human affairs where the impact of coronavirus can be felt simply suggests that it is wise and necessary that humanity starts to learn how to cope in the "new normal "that coronavirus has introduced. This is where education is a fundamental necessity in humanity's drive for survival in the ravaging and rampaging spree of coronavirus. However, education is a victim of the outbreak of coronavirus because the global crisis associated with the outbreak of the virus has far reaching effects on the conduct and practice of education across the globe (Huber and Helm, 2020) just as Ozer and Suna (2020:159) have noted that coronavirus (Covid-19) "is one of the biggest challenges which education systems have ever faced" as schools were completely closed down with billions of learners not having access to education globally. On the other hand, the outbreak of coronavirus is a revolutionary force for introducing innovations for improving, and taking education to the next level. This is the point highlighted by Vegas and Winthrop (2020:1) when they write that Coronavirus (Covid-19) "has resulted in at least one positive thing: a much greater appreciation for the importance of public schools", a position they expanded by calling attention to the fact that:

It is hard to imagine there will be another moment in history when the central role of education in the economic, social and political prosperity and stability of nations, is so obvious and well understood by the general population. Now is the time to chart a vision for how education can emerge stronger from this global crisis than ever before and propose a path for capitalizing on education's new found support in virtually every community across the globe. (p.1)

It is a fact that cannot be disputed that the outbreak of coronavirus (Covid-19) has potentials which when rightly explored can lay foundations for paradigm shifts that may tilt towards higher achievements, higher creative thoughts, higher capabilities and higher drives towards inclusive and comprehensive policy formulation and implementation where the general well-being and welfare of humanity can become a priority at the educational, economic, political, scientific, technological, social, religious and cultural levels. A feature that is associated with the global coronavirus is that nothing remains the same after the footprints of coronavirus have been established in a place or institution. Specifically in the field of education, the pandemic has introduced changes that have positively and progressively "revolutionalized the education system and forced fundamental changes in the teaching-learning process" (Babbar and Gupta, 2021). That the outbreak of Coronavirus (Covid-19) has the capacity to trigger empowering and transforming revolutions in education may have accounted for why Reimers (2021:1) writes that "the educational consequences of the pandemic are considerably deeper and their impact far reaching; so visible that the levels of positive and progressive transformations (changes) are adequate to initiate what Hofman, Arenge, Dickens, Marfan, Ryan, Tiong, Badia and Blaskova (2021:39) call "transformative learning opportunities". The above scholars are also credited with saying that "the pandemic opens new learning opportunities that drives the possibility of change" (p.50), and these are not peculiar to any single state or region of the world, rather the revolution triggered by the outbreak of coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic according to Reimers (2021:1) has left its transformative impressions on "the global education landscape" and correspondingly is awaiting harnessing.

In fact, at no other time in human history has humanity globally recognized the important role education plays in the sustainable development of man and his institutions than during the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic. As a period of total emergency where the state needs its citizens to adjust to current realities, education is seriously needed to provide citizens the most responsive behavior for adjusting to specific and general demands of the time. The state needs to educate her citizens in an emergency period such as that posed by coronavirus (Covid 19) as the way of empowering the citizens so that they can turn challenges that come with the period into opportunities and the state needs education to sensitize, conscientize and redirect the axiological orientations of the citizens to directions where citizens can learn to be creative, critically minded, resilient, dogged, fair, prudent in management of resources, learn to appreciate the need for better human relations and other adaptive and survival mechanisms. However, the contagious and deadly nature of coronavirus (Covid-19) and the various precautionary measures that are associated with it such as lockdown, social distancing, quarantine, continuous wearing of face mask, regular washing of hands etc make the traditional face to face pattern of educational provision between the teacher and the learners difficult and impossible and in place of the traditional face to face pattern of education, the global community transitioned to the online teaching and learning platform.

The transition to online teaching and learning occasioned by the outbreak of coronavirus (Covid-19) has potentials to trigger tremendous revolutionary innovations in education whose sustenance can take the learner, policy formulators and policy implementers, the teacher, the teaching profession, man and the entire society to the promise land. Specifically, Slim (2020:44) heaps accolades on online teaching and learning when he writes that online teaching and learning "is a challenging experience that has reinforced new styles of learning and teaching and this is in addition to helping learners develop independent learning skills, problem solving skills, communication skills and technological communication and IT skills". It can be appreciated that the transition to online teaching and learning activities across the globe occasioned by the outbreak of coronavirus is a serious call and a serious reminder that the stage is ripe and mature for change and anyone who is inclined to change can admit that the popping up and triggering of radical and revolutionary innovations in virtually all areas of human endeavours are all moves that are directed towards ensuring that change reigns supreme and prevails in the affairs of humanity. Innovations brought about by the prevalence of change especially online activities have positively impacted on commerce, economics, politics, religion, culture, human relations, science and technology, no wonder Huber and Helm (2020:234) write that "covid-19 has far-reaching effects in nearly all social areas" and all these innovations have a common denominator namely adding value to the quality of lives of citizens across the globe in addition to taking humanity to the next level.

In short, the receptive embrace of online teaching and learning are some of those symbolic things that coronavirus pandemic can be remembered for especially its ability to trigger change in the form of what Roy (2020) cited in Teras, Suaranta, Teras and Curcher (2020:864) calls forcing "humans to break with the past and imagine their world anew". For sure, the outbreak of coronavirus is loaded with potentials that have capacities to repudiate old ways of doing things and through this way lay foundations for a new beginning and education via teaching and learning is a gateway for the actualization of this new beginning. This paper aims at presenting in details the prospects of online teaching and learning in Nigeria and the methodology to be adopted is basically philosophical. A methodology in an academic discourse according to Nwaokugha and Danladi (2016:421) is said to be philosophical when the researcher adopts speculation, analysis and prescription.

Speculation according to Aminigo (1999:4) and Agulanna (2011:89) simply refers to attempts to find logical coherence in an entire realm of thought. In his own remarks about speculation as a method of philosophical research, Odour (2010:97) admits that "to speculate is to wonder, conjuncture, guess or to hypothesize". Any keen and insightful observer of the modus operandi of speculation can notice that the whole idea of speculation as a method of philosophical research revolves around a sense of logical unity, logical coherence and logical clarity about a presentation that is the subject matter of a philosophical discourse. This can be expanded to mean that speculation is interested in revealing and exposing how the truth or fact in a proposition can be established especially how a conclusion or conclusions reached in propositions are logically and systematically derived from the body of ideas before it or more technically how a conclusion is derived from a premise (Nwaokugha, 2022:159). To this end, the acceptability, authenticity, reasonability and reasonableness of any proposition in a speculation depends on what Nwaokugha and Ihuoma (2019) call the orderly and logical consistency of the claims that constitute the proposition. In a way, a scholar who is favourably

disposed to the speculative methods carefully builds up ideas and systematically demonstrates how one idea is inherently and logically related to other ideas in the larger system of ideas.

What is used in building up these ideas is language and logic, meaning that every successful speculation must rely on effective use of language and logic to make sense and to sustain the direction of the argument of the scholar. True, philosophical research is deeply rooted in speculation and the development of knowledge across disciplines owes much to speculation, however, topics and concepts that hardly admit definite one size fits all answers constitute the bulk of subject matters that are best addressed using the speculative method. This is why metaphysics (topics that focus on existence and reality) and axiology (political philosophy, social philosophy, ethics, and aesthetics) are major areas where speculation is used.

The central focus of analysis as a method of philosophical research is on meaning and through this excessive focus on meaning helps to resolve conflicts, build common understanding and harmonious living. Guided by the above, the analyst is interested in the use of his analytic skills to illuminate or expose whatever vagueness, contradiction, absurdity, clumsiness or ambiguity that may be contained in words, terms, concepts and propositions so that precision in meaning and understanding can be achieved. This is what Nwaokugha (2021:102) calls attention to when he writes that analysis is "key to clarifying and decoding inconsistencies and ambiguities that are ever present in man's daily social, political, religious, scientific, economic, technological and environmental activities". It is correct to say that when analysis is properly done, humanity reaps the dividends as it is key for the promotion of peace, harmony and stability and a necessary entry point for drastic reduction in disagreements, violence, lawlessness, confrontation and anarchy. Analyzing words, concepts, terms and propositions is also a basic entry point in providing multiple and many layered opportunities for establishing meaning and proper contexts of use of words, concepts, terms and propositions as the more analysis is done, the better for man, his institutions and the knowledge industry. Because of these benefits that are associated with analysis, contemporary practice in philosophy, its many applied disciplines and the knowledge industry generally favour the use of the analytic method. Language and logic are also key in analysis and both function to establish what Hirst and White (2000) call relationship between language and reality or word and the world.

Prescription as a method of philosophical research stimulates a meaning that revolves around scholars and researchers establishing criteria or standards for judging values or making prescriptive value judgments. Any scholar or researcher who demonstrates some measure of expertise in any branch of knowledge must incorporate prescription in his research or scholarly endeavours and the naturalness of this in researches and other scholarly endeavours is highlighted by Oduor (200:97) when he write that "to prescribe is to recommend or set down as a rule or guide." Attention needs to be drawn to the fact that what scholars and researchers do in the forms of suggestions and recommendations qualify as prescription. To this end, Nwaokugha (2021:102) hits the nail on the head when he writes that prescription;

Is achieved in a research in the form of a researcher making autonomous value statements on how an issue that has been the focus or subject matter of a philosophical discussion can be resolved so that all the wrongs noticed in the course of the discussion can be harmoniously

addressed. In a way, suggestions and recommendations in researches and other forms of writing fall within the frame of reference of prescription.

True, every serious scholar or researcher must build in elements of prescription in his or her academic dealings, however, there are scholars and researchers who may not ply their trades well without prescription. Scholars and researchers whose research interests are in the field of axiology (social philosophy, ethics, aesthetic and political philosophy) must prescribe and why this is so is that values are not fixed, that is, values are constantly changing, with the prevailing turn of events in the state and the direction of the change may mainly and basically not be in tune with what is supposed to be the case and on the basis of this, the scholar or the researcher must without bias objectively prescribe what ought to be the case. In other words, the onus is on the scholars or researchers to be on top of their games by prescribing appropriate solutions to the problems of man and the state and the society or state needs to accept them as well as be grateful to the scholars and researchers.

In recent times philosophical research method has become the preferred destination of choice by many academics due to its many benefits, part of which is that philosophical research method superlatively triggers the breaking of new frontiers of knowledge across disciplines and this systematically results in enriching the knowledge industry, especially affording man opportunities to reap the dividends of research and investments in education, boosts the confidence level of learners and researchers as learners and researcher see every challenge in any academic discipline as solvable and resolvable (Nwaokugha and Ihuoma, 2019:277). This is so because philosophical research method helps to polish and sharpen learners' and researchers' investigative skills. What seems to be a comprehensive benefit of the philosophical research methodology is provided by Nwaokugha and Danladi (2016:421) in these words:

Indulgence or embrace of philosophical research affords freedom and opportunity that invites, motivates and challenges researchers to venture into various problem areas across disciplines. By this feature, researchers are availed platforms which in addition to tackling diversified subject matters also promote progress in the form of extending and breaking new frontiers of knowledge. The issue of diversified subject and the dividends thereof are possible because philosophical research methods produce and rely more on theories than any other research method. What is implicated here is that philosophical research method is not restrictive and consequently does not in any way impoverish researchers and disciplines that are favourably disposed to using it rather contributes to ground breaking breakthroughs in the knowledge industry. All these by implication mean that the knowledge industry and mankind can be better off in terms of opportunities and dividends associated with research, its contributions to improving human conditions and acquisition of knowledge.

A tradition in any study that employs the philosophical methodology is to start with detailed clarification and discussion of the key concepts under investigation and to this we turn.

Online Teaching and Learning
Among laymen and men of substance the world over, the outbreak of coronavirus (Covid-19) is one development in the history of man that has cracked the foundations of the earth and correspondingly has generated psychological and emotional traumas on man so much that its

impressions have potentials to revolutionalize the world in ways that the world can never be the same again. One consolation that comes with developments within this period is that though, there are emotional and psychological traumas, the developments are also capable of triggering and igniting behaviours which when exploited can become foundations for initiating changes in positive directions. Discussing some positive developments that emerged as a result of the outbreak of the global coronavirus (Covid-19), Holman et al (2021) instructively and specifically noted that the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic has potential for durable shifts in educational thinking and practice beyond the pandemic, (p.39), including that "the pandemic has necessitated the trailing of new ways of teaching" (p.53) that "has pushed teachers and schools beyond the boundaries of practice-as-usual (p.55). True, it is a health challenge but all the spheres of life of man is directly and indirectly affected by its rampaging and ravaging spree. Of all areas of its influence in the affairs of man, its impact on education is enormous. Crises associated with coronavirus (Covid-19) such as lockdown, stay-at-home, continuous wearing of face mask, regular washing of hand under running water, social distancing, isolation, quarantine, confinement and other precautionary measures taken to avoid its spread negatively impacted on education.

In what seems to be a twist about coronavirus (Covid-19) in this period of time, humanity more than ever before recognized and acknowledged the importance and centrality of education as a dynamic social process and institution for addressing the health, economic, political, religious, moral, axiological and general problems of man. Part of what accounts for the heightened and esteemed regard humanity has for education during this period is the recognition and acknowledgement that education holds the sole key for providing immediate survival remedies, cures and the proffering of long term coping strategies to the dreaded novel coronavirus (Covid-19). In the prevailing circumstance, the traditional face to face pattern of providing education that involves the teacher and the learners in a formal classroom setting became impossible due to the precautionary measures of the time, thereby causing the global community to resort to online teaching and learning not only as an available option and alternative but a fundamental necessity (Maheshwari, 2021) for providing man basic ideas and knowledge about coronavirus (Covid – 19) and its coping and survival strategies. It is correct to say that online teaching and learning has been in existence in many developed countries of the world especially where there are established and suitable Information and Communication Technology (ICT) infrastructure and adequate skilled manpower to maintain it.

However, this is not the cause in developing and underdeveloped states that embraced online teaching and learning as a measure for bringing education to the people in the face of the outbreak of the global coronavirus (Covid-19). This accounts for why some stakeholders in education (Basar, Mansor, Jamaludin and Alias (2021), Almahasees, Mohsen and Amin (2021), Maheshwari (2021) see the introduction of online teaching and learning as a sudden innovation undertaking by some states to meet up the learning and educational needs of the citizens during the coronavirus (Covid – 19) pandemic.

Whether it is a sudden innovation or innovation that states consciously embraced by choice or not, online teaching and learning has come to stay as a 21st century innovation and destination of choice for any teacher or learner who wants to remain relevant in the knowledge industry especially as the relevance of online teaching and learning will continue to be impactful on the

teaching and learning landscape and education generally even after the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic. Because online teaching and learning is the trending thing in the 21st century, it attracts a lot of scholarly attention so much that it goes by different names such as e-learning and virtual learning and to be expected, it does not have a one size fits all definition, rather it has many definitions that reflect areas of interests of scholars who show interests in online teaching and learning so much that one scholars may provide more than one definition.

In fact, Maheshwari (2020:6630) admits that online learning and e-learning are mostly used interchangeably but however notes that there is difference in the two terms. This difference between online learning and e-learning as claimed by the above scholar has attracted scholarly attention from scholars. According to Nichols (2003) and Maheshwari and Thomas (2017), e-learning invokes a meaning that revolves around having access to web-based technological infrastructure that can facilitate instruction (teaching and learning) in and outside the classroom while Oblinger, Oblinger and Lippincott (2005) write that online learning invokes "meaning which describes learning situation where learners learn outside the formal classroom setting usually by using online platforms. On their own, Basar et al (2021:121) write that online learning describes any forms of pedagogy delivered using digital technology.

The above scholars go on to provide what may be called a more inclusive and comprehensive definition of on-line learning in these words:

Online learning is defined as a teaching and learning process between teachers and pupils that involves various digital mediums, such as Whatsapp, Zoom and Google classroom. In addition, online learning does not refer to direct learning alone. Any assignments or activities provided by the teacher online are considered part of online learning (p.121).

Irrespective of the ideological and social constructs from which scholars define online teaching and learning, there are some common denominators or threads that cut across all the definitions provided by such scholars or that can be pictured out from the various angles from which such scholars define online teaching and learning. Such threads or denominators that cut across all the definitions of online teaching and learning point in the direction that online teaching and learning is driven by;

1.   Digital technologies, information and communication technology, internet and these correspondingly make online teaching and learning an ideal platform for a digital age.
2.   It is heavily dependent on electricity (power), computers and their accessories, networks and technologically skilled personnel.
3.   In fact, effective service delivery depends on the availability of relevant infrastructural facilities.
4.   It is not affected by distance or the different locations of the teacher and the learner.
5.   It is the best pedagogical alternative for teaching and learning in technologically developed societies as well as best medium to ensure the continuity of teaching and learning globally during crises irrespective of level of developmental sophistication. This position is taken because in situations where classes maybe disrupted due to crises or emergencies, online teaching and learning still makes room for undisrupted learning.

There are basically two approaches to online teaching and learning namely synchronous and asynchronous approaches. According to Akorful and Abaidoo (2014:339), the synchronous approach allows learners to discuss with the instructor and also among themselves on the internet at the same time with the use of tools such as video conference and chart rooms. What the synchronous approach means is simplified by Almahasees et al (2012) when they write that it offers responses, actions and activities at the exact time of lecture, teaching or class. What is implicated here is that the synchronous approach offers real time, including immediate, on the spot and instantaneous feedback between the teacher and his learners. Good examples of synchronous approach in online teaching and learning include live chart, audio and videoconferencing, data and application sharing, virtual hand raising, shared whiteboard and joint viewing of multimedia presentations and online slide shows. On the other hand asynchronous approach is not immediate or does not take place at the same moment but later. What is implicated here is that asynchronous approach to online teaching and learning is not undertaking in real time rather can be recorded (Almahasees et al, 2021) and played anytime anywhere at the convenience of the teacher and the learner. E-mails, newsgroup and bulletin boards, and file attachments and other systems that can save whatever instructions the teacher has for the learners are examples of asynchronous approaches to online teaching and learning. An advantage that is associated with the asynchronous approach, to online teaching and learning is that learners can learn what the teacher has for them at any time they deem it fit and convenient while its disadvantage is that learners cannot obtain any feedback from their teacher or from their fellow learners. Whichever one a teacher wants to use, there are prospects (advantages) that are associated with online teaching and learning.

Prospects of Online Teaching and Learning
Online teaching and learning is associated with many prospects for the teacher, the learner and the administration. Online teaching and learning affords teachers opportunities to try out new teaching methods especially those that identify with online methods of instruction. A revelation this exposes is that online teaching and learning helps to improve the professional development of the teacher, helps to introduce sustainable innovations in the education industry as well as helps to add quality to the growth of the teaching profession and humanity. It is glaringly clear that ideas and techniques developed in online teaching and learning by the teacher can be explored by teachers to improve instruction in the traditional face to face method of teaching. This means that the influence of such ideas can be inclusive and comprehensive as they can trigger, extend and lead to the effective expansion of design and implementation of curriculum, effective guidance and referral services and effective involvement of stakeholders in planning and administration of education.

The teacher's receptive ingenuity in initiating online teaching and learning has potentials to positively influence educational practices locally, regionally, nationally and globally and correspondingly results in phenomenal and epical rewarding, empowering and emancipating experiences for teachers and stakeholders in education. Teachers can be relieved that through online teaching and learning, innovations that are impactful are making inroads in the society. It is an open secret that through online teaching and learning, teachers can teach learners at the convenience of both the teacher and the learner in a setting that is flexible for both. This means online teaching and learning enhances the teacher's capacity to technologically, digitally and pedagogically improve and empower himself intellectually. Such twenty first century

intellectual capacity building the teacher acquires through online teaching and learning helps him to open up his professional operational space in line with global best practices and this plays significant role in enhancing the organization of his instructions to learners. The result of the teacher's intellectual capacity building through online teaching and learning is the many dividends it brings into teaching and learning, the most important of which is the unhindered access and connection the teacher has with the learners any day any time.

Online teaching and learning is cost effective for the teacher and it saves him the inconveniences of transportation and its associated traffic and other forms of risks to and fro his house to the school especially in developing and underdeveloped states. Issues associated with effective classroom management and administration that give teachers headache, emotional stress including causing teachers to clash with students, parents and other members of the society are systematically not in online teaching and learning. Learners are one group that can be described as special beneficiaries of online teaching and learning globally. Online teaching and learning and the multiplicity of platforms through which learners can access it provides sufficient opportunities for learners to have unhindered access to education. What this means in practice is that online teaching and learning has unlimited and unrestricted channels, platform and correspondingly more choices for the education of learners across disciplines. No state in the contemporary world can complain of lack of digital platforms and by extension such platforms can be transformed into ready online assets for the education of the citizens.

Online teaching and learning especially when recorded avails teachers and learners opportunities to revisit what had been taught and learnt. By this benefit which online teaching and learning avails to the teacher and the learners, what was taught and learnt in the class can be replayed for as many times as the teacher and the learners want them and this has the capacity to call the teacher's attention to any possible area(s) in the topic that may not have been thoroughly covered, and in this same way, the continuous replaying of the recorded class can improve learner's understanding of what had been taught.

Online teaching and learning makes teaching and learning easier for both the teacher and the learners as teaching and learning takes place across time zones. In other words online teaching and learning is flexible and convenient so much that learners enjoy the convenience and luxury of determining the place, speed, time and the degree of devotion and commitment to their individual studies and the pursuit of any particular information or knowledge. What the foregoing may be revealing is that online teaching and learning grants and permits learners access to learning irrespective of distance, time and space, meaning that with the online teaching and learning platforms, teachers and learners are free to link up to any online learning platforms of their choice at their preferred time. The comfort and convenience associated with online teaching and learning promotes and encourages the spirit of independent inquiry, self-study and individualized instruction in learners as well as challenges individual learners to identify their educational needs and correspondingly work towards actualizing such individual educational needs. This is where stakeholders who maintain that online teaching and learning encourages and promotes student-centred learning can be said to be one hundred percentage correct.

Online teaching and learning exposes teachers and learners to strategies for the integration and exploration of technology in teaching and acquisition of knowledge. This means that online teaching and learning is a formidable foundation for engineering epistemological revolutions for the continuous and mandatory training and retraining of teachers and learners on latest technology driven and technological development in education. This simply means that online teaching and learning in any state is a sure foundation for changing the educational narratives and landscapes of states both in terms of its delivery and support. True, it is a fact that online teaching and learning has potential which when appropriately explored can triggered revolutions where educational technology and innovations in digital technology especially in developing and under developed states can take deep roots for the transformation of the people.

Due to the serene and private environment in which online teaching and learning takes place, online teaching and learning has the capacity to help especially learners who are introverts and correspondingly have some levels of inferiority complex to be transformed so that they actively participate and benefit from learning. Learners in this category who discover their rhythm in the pursuit of knowledge via online teaching and learning soon realize, according to Almahassees, et al (2021:3) that online teaching and learning is an entertaining way of learning, which when adequately developed and explored provides opportunities for learners to learn and discover new things on a daily and regular basis. For those states that do not make the employment of teachers a national priority, online teaching and learning can become a powerful force for addressing this deficit and consequently through online teaching and learning remedy this deficit. This is because online teaching and learning can go on smoothly in situations where educational institutions in a state are terribly under staffed. What this means is that the shortage of academic staff is not a hindrance and cannot be a hindrance to effective teaching and learning in any state where online teaching and learning is the means of instruction, after all, one platform in one location can serve many educational institutions in the state.

The above by extension has opened up another revelation that is a serious reason why online teaching and learning is a destination of choice in the 21st century by developed, developing and under-developed states. As a way of teaching and learning that permits the teacher and the learners to participate from any place that is convenient for them, online teaching and learning can be said to be cost effective as the learners cannot pay for transport to get to their institutions and their learning may not be impaired or compromised by the inability of the learners' institutions or states to provide building infrastructure. This means that with the necessary technologies and digital devices, online teaching and learning has all what it takes to go on irrespective of deficits in building infrastructure and personnel.

A resounding benefit of online teaching and learning is its ability to serve as a spring board for the mounting of more courses and programmes and consequently be a platform for increasing access to education and the foundation for actualizing the various equality of education opportunity policies of states. All because it is technology driven, online teaching and learning can be capitalized upon to challenge stakeholders in education and states generally to develop alternative paradigms for accommodating the different people who thirst and crave for education. To this end, online teaching and learning can be relied upon for providing education

for full and part time candidates, physically challenged learners as well as be the best option for education of citizens during crises and emergencies.

In addition to online teaching and learning providing teachers and learners easy access to quality resources from experts across the globe that can enhance the quality of their products and researches, online teaching and learning is also a big money spinning business where many investors can invest their time and resources. That this is the case means that online teaching and learning has potentials to help boost the economies of individuals and those of states through the creation of employment opportunities.

Online teaching and learning is also beneficial to the administration of educational institutions in many ways. It helps the management of educational institutions to save cost in the administration and management of educational institutions. This means online teaching and learning provides foundations for prudent management and utilization of scarce resources. Dissemination of information to members of the school community becomes faster through the pressing of a button rather than spending the available resources on paper and ink. Management and administrative processes such as conduct of admission examinations, documentations of students' and teachers' profiles and access to them when needed becomes easier to manage and maintain through online processes. Online teaching and learning ensures that management of educational institutions remains relevant in providing education to the people in the face of crises and emergencies, meaning that with online teaching and learning, there is no room for the discontinuity or disruption of the academic calendar of any educational institution.

CONCLUSION

True, coronavirus (Covid-19) is a health challenge, which without exception has multidimensional impacts on all areas of human activity. Its outbreak is associated with stimulating and triggering frustration, stress, anxiety, depression and other psychological and emotional instabilities that negatively affect people's mental and psychological health possibly because coronavirus (Covid-19) makes hunger, fear, loss of job, loss of means of survival reduction in the quality of life of people and death common features among the populace. Despite being deadly and dreaded, coronavirus (Covid-19) can be credited with initiating people into moods and conditions where their sensitivity and sense of critical consciousness becomes more responsive to the point of reasoning out how to turn the challenges posed by the outbreak of the virus into opportunities. Globally, one institution for providing the necessary information for mitigating the spread of the virus, coping strategies as well as for sustaining the critical consciousness that coronavirus (Covid-19) has introduced or has made a norm globally is education. However, the present situation on ground makes the traditional face to face method of teaching and learning impossible and correspondingly warrants a case for new innovations inevitable and the most plausible innovation in the teaching learning process that can produce the best result to the situation is online teaching and learning. This paper specifically focused on the prospects of online teaching and learning in Nigeria.

It is as clear as day and night that the introduction of online teaching and learning occasioned by the outbreak of coronavirus (Covid-19) introduced insightful and transformative changes that when sustained are capable of widening and expanding the educational and

epistemological spaces for all stakeholders in education. It is correct to say that emerging developments occasioned by the introduction of online teaching and learning in the education system are developments that no responsible state should allow to slip away, relapse or make itself fall back to practices in the education system prior to Covid-19. The baseline is that those transformative changes popped up by online teaching and learning are beneficial to the education industry in particular and humanity generally and correspondingly should be sustained if humanity is to harness and gear up to the dynamic, transformative, empowering, problem-solving and emancipating potentials that are expected from education. This calls for change of policy and practical commitments to issues of education that can start first with show of political will to education. The sustenance of these new learnings must be supported through the provision of all the supporting digital and technological infrastructure.

The success that was recorded in education during the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic can be traced to the epical and monumental collaboration that stakeholders in education and others in the other sectors demonstrated and this presently pops up challenges in the face of all of us namely teacher education institutions should reposition by incorporating the new visions and the new thinking in education that emerged within this period into the curriculum for professional education of would-be teachers. For the benefit of all, education received extraordinary attention within this period and the relevance of the teacher and the school in the moral, political, social, economic and general wellbeing of humanity was acknowledged and recognized. This should be sustained.

The sense of collaboration can be extended to the private sector in the form of urging them to get involved in issues of education in the state. Drivers of the private sector can commit a given percentage of their profits in sponsoring education or those who are specifically in information communication technology can provide data, educational website or other accessories free of charge or on subsidized terms to learners, teachers and other stakeholders in the education industry. Teacher education institutions should develop in would-be teachers the curiosity and attitude that can enable them view any challenge in education as one that presents explorable learning opportunities that have potentials and capacity to pop-up new and transformative insights into their professional practice. The ability of stakeholders in education to capitalize on the new thinking in education and advancement recorded within this period can bring honour to the teacher and education to the point where humanity can acknowledge that realistically teaching and learning is still a force to reckon with in positively and progressively charting road maps for guiding man to the right direction for his empowerment, sustainable development and acquiring skills for solving all his problems.

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