REVISITING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC THREATS AND ITS REACTIONS IN NIGERIA

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Keywords

Analyzing, Africa, COVID -19, Pandemic, Threats

Abstract

Research Problem*: the study investigated coronavirus pandemic as a major public health threat snowballed into a global disaster with special abilities to spread, and deregulate the immune mechanisms. Thus, the socio– economic cum political and health impacts of the pandemic on Nigerians reverberated with the government imposed lockdowns as it collapsed many businesses, affects the economy, increases poverty, unemployment, insecurity threats and placed financial burden of vaccines on the country.*

Methods: t*he study adopted a qualitative approach and data were generated from secondary sources, newspapers, magazines and Government Reports. The data generated were qualitatively analysis*

Results: *the findings revealed that the Covid-19 threats portend long – term negative consequences to the overall development of the country and could only be counteracted by new paradigms and more concerted efforts in the health system, economic policies, security system, collaborations and capacity building in the area of researches to containing its challenges and addressing pitfalls in the future.*

Conclusion: *the paper concluded that depending ultimately on developed nations for continue vaccines production, supply and administration in the event of a pandemic outbreak is not only expensive, unsecured but unwise as history has shown how every nation fought to secure itself first in pandemic control*

Key Contribution to Knowledge: *while some scholars had looked into the*

immediate responses of the government towards mitigating the pandemic threats. Beyond such efforts, this paper calls for more concerted approaches aimed at building resilience, synergy and timely decisions targeted at rescuing economies, recovery and restore hope for the future. ***Recommendations****: the paper calls for application of home based solutions, unity and cooperation towards tackling pandemics surge than waiting for help indiscriminately.*

Introduction

In December 2019, there emerged a novel Coronavirus (thereafter abbreviated as COVID – 19) in China. This pandemic was described as a severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS – CoV- 2) due to its contagious nature and rapid spread. Essentially, the pandemic spread globally within a shortest period of time from a city in Wuhan, China where it was first discovered to other parts of Asia, Europe, and the United States in grave proportions (Johannes and Vivian, 2020). As a ravaging disease, in less than months the COVID -19 spread to about 196 countries and territories in every continent (Lateef& Samuel, 2020). It took only 98 days to reach 100,000 cases, 18 to reach 200,000 cases and 12 days to reach 300,000 (Shinaetal, 2020).

The World Health Organization (WHO) after established its deadly nature, declared it a global pandemic on March 11 having resulted to substantial illness, mortality and strains on the health systems of the affected countries (Editorial, 2021). According to a report by statista, an international market and consumer data provider,as of September 17, 2021, the outbreak of the coronavirus disease (COVID - 19) had spread to six continents and nearly 4.7 million people had died from the deadly virus (Editorial, 2021). In the event of the outbreak, Nigeria recorded 207,618 cases of infection and 2,745 deaths as of October 11,2021(Onyeiwu,2021). In severely affected regions, the availability of medically necessary care has become limited.

The epicentre of the virus was in the Americas, where more than 50% of the world's cases have been recorded.Whereas, Africa was the last continent to be hit by the pandemic. Africa confirmed its first case of COVID-19 in Egypt on 14th of February, 2020, while the second case in Africa came from Algeria with the arrival of an Italian adult in 17th February 2020 who was tested positive for the coronavirus disease(WHO,2020). Also, in Sub-Saharan Africa, the first case was reported in Nigeria on 27th of February when an Italian contractor flew into Nigeria from Italy on 25th of February, 2020 (Maclean& Dahir,2020). However,in Nigeria as of September 18,2021, 201,630 cases were confirmed, 190, 288 cases treated and discharge while 2,654 deaths recorded in 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) (Editorial,2021).

Beyond the tragic health hazards and human consequences of the COVID- 19 pandemic, the economic uncertainties, and disruptions that have resulted come at a significant cost to the global economy (Lateef&Samuel, 2020). Similarly, the social and economic impact of COVID -19 on the African continent and Nigeria in particular has been worrisome consequent upon the government imposed lockdown that collapsed many businesses, affects the economy, increased poverty, unemployment, heightened insecurity threats and the placed financial

burden of vaccines on the countries in the continent. Beyond the socio –economic impact,the alteration of lives as the world knows it, to say the least, has not been palatable.

Given the challenges that most African countries including Nigeria were confronted with, it is suffice to say that many African economies were already in comatose, struggling to survive from the 2014 recession and with other poor indices of failures in other sectors until the emergence of COVID-19 that hit the continent. The outbreakin Nigeria further weakened its public health system, amplify its security challenges as well as hobbled its economy and that of the entire African continent into an inglorious spot of underdevelopment.

In the light of the above, this paper analyses thethreats of the pandemic and government efforts at mitigating thesethreats beyond the immediate responses. Many researches have examined how the government in Nigeria responded through the health education protocol, lockdown restriction, palliatives and others. However, this paper seeks a paradigm shift in urgent and durable approach towards addressing future threats of COVID – 19 in Nigeria. The calls for unique COVID-19 responses in Nigeria and a concerted and multilateral actions among African countries to ensure all these issues that made the continent more vulnerable and different to the rest of the world urgently addressed.

Research Problem

Despite Nigeria's multi – sectoral response to the ravaging outbreak of Covid -19, there exist systemic gaps in health sector, challenges of infrastructure facilities, vulnerable citizens and inter –governmental coordination were all under –prepare to repond to resilience and inclusive post covid order. Beyond the notable efforts of the government which many scholars have adequately documented, this study calls for more concerted approaches aimed at building resilience, synergy and timely decisions targeted at rescuing economies, recovery and restore hope for the future pandemic outbreaks. This stems from the lessons of Covid-19 threats that portend long –term negative consequences to the overall development of the country when it occurred. Therefore, counteracting pandemics such as Covid -19 requires new paradigms and more concerted efforts in the health system, economic policies, security system, collaborations and capacity building in the area of researches to containing its challenges and addressing pitfalls in the future.

Research Objectives

The following are the objectives of the study:

i. Discuss the management and impact of Covid -19 in Nigeria;

ii. Examine Nigeria's Government responses to the Covid-19 pandemic spread;

iii. Analyse the Nigeria's state prospects and potentials in Post Covid-19 order.

Conceptual Clarification

Pandemic as the major concept in this study lacks a universal acceptable definition. According to Porta (2014), it is an epidemic outbreak over a very wide area, crossing international boundaries with the capacity of affecting a large number of people. World Health Organisation (WHO)in 2009 identified basic features that influenza pandemic as one ranging from being a new influenza virus subtype, no population immunity, causes seriousness illiness in humans, spreads easily from person to person and has a global outbreak.

It therefore means that a pandemic is an epidemic outbreak that has the capacity to spread globallyaffecting a large number of people beyond a particular region. For example, HIV started in West Africa, was epidemic in Africa for decades, then was pandemic by the late 20th century (Grennan, 2019).

Historicizing Pandemics and the Literature

Pandemics outbreaks are not recent phenomenon in the global system. Throughout history, nothing has killed more human beings than the viruses, bacteria and parasites that cause diseases (Byran, 2020). Consequently, humanity from the earliest times till date faced epidemics of different magnitudes which have resulted into massive deaths. Meanwhile, some of these epidemics were purported to be Influenza since Greek and Roman times from 430 BC. However, there was not accurate precision or criterion to determine what influenza outbreak could be termed pandemics (Poter&Jennings, 2011). Pandemic according to WHO websites simply means the worldwide spread of a new disease. It is usually across many countries with high level of fatalities.

Historically, there were lots of records of pandemic outbreaks across the globe. The plague of Justinian outbreak in the 6th century which killed as many as 50 million people was perhaps half of the global population at the time(Byran, 2020). Also, the Black Death of the 14th Century – likely caused by the same pathogen – may have killed up to 200 million people (Byran, 2020). Africa countries were not left out of these ravaging pandemics being part of the globe. Again, Africa was a home to different cholera pandemics that had claimed many lives at different times. Aside the introduction of Cholera into West Africa in 1970, there were subsequent ones that spread to the region at the later date. For example in the lake Chad Basin according to Weil e t al , (2017) , for almost three decades, the spread of Cholera spanned: T 7(introduction dates: 1982 to 1984, T9 (1988 to 1991), and T 12 (2007) (Weil etal, 2017). The T9 introduction that later came resulted to high attack rates in areas such as Guinea in 1994 (436 reported Cholera case per 100, 000 population and Liberia in 2003 (1241 per 100,000). This pandemic occurred in sub lineage in Africa till early 1990s (Weil etal, 2017). In addition, in the 18th century, there were 13 severe epidemics and in the 19th century there were 12, and probably 8 or 9 of these 25 were influenza pandemics in the modern sense (Youri, 1994). Youri observed further that in twenty century there were several pandemics ranging from 1918, 1946, 1957, 1968 and 1977 which emerged as new subtypes of Influenza A Virus (Youri, 1994).

From the above, the worst ravaging pandemic was the pandemic of 1918. In 1918 Influenza pandemic of unprecedented virulence spread across the planet, infiltrating nearly in all areas of human habitation (Matthew&Toyin, 2006). There are controversies as surrounding the total deaths recorded during this period by scholars. According to Niall, P and Juergen M,(2002), mortality of the pandemic argued may fall in the range of 50 to 100 million (Naill&Juergen, 2002). However, despite the lack of precision, the scale of mortality undoubtedly makes it one of the greatest outbreaks of disease in recorded history, particularly as these deaths occurred in a very short time, from early 1918 through to in some cases , 1920 (Naill & Juergen, 2002).

Essentially, the outbreak of pandemics of COVID -19 has yet produced another face of pandemic confronting humanity. The Covid – 19 pandemic is one in a series of infectious diseases over the past 50 years linked to the spread of

pathogens ordinarily found in animal species, most often in wildlife, to humans. For instance in the past 50 years include HIV/Aids, avian flu, the swine flu pandemic, severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) and the Ebola fever. (Covid – 19 – crisis upon crisis in Africa. The Ebola crisis raged through West Africa, affecting Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea, killing more than 11,000 people in the period between 2013 – 2016 and resurfaced in 2019 killing many in Democratic Republic of Congo. Meanwhile, SARS outbreak never became a pandemic so was the 2014-2016 Ebola outbreaks in West Africa and the 2016 Zika outbreak, even though all three of these outbreaks did involve more than one country (Bruce, 2020).

Therefore, the pandemic of COVID-19 is considered as one of the greatest pandemics confronting humanity. It came from Wuhan City, Hubei Province of China in December 2019 and it has spread around the globe in less than 3 months. Due to its continue spread and deadly nature, World Health Organization (WHO) on 11 March 2020, declared COVID -19 as a global emergency, given its impact on the entire world population and the economy (African Union Report, 2020). As the pandemic is still ongoing, the number of countries involved confirmed cases and mortality rates are changing every day. Nigeria was badly it by te outbreak of te covid-19 like other countries of the world. It was premised on te above, thatthe federal overnmentswun into action

Prior to the COVID -19 outbreaks, the health system in Nigeria was totally in shamble. With the coming of COVID -19, the lacuna in the health system became revealed. After the confirmation of the first case in Nigeria with the arrival of an Italian, the Presidential Task Force on COVID -19 (PTF- COVID -19) through the NCDC and its supporting partners began preparedness activities that enabled a multi – sectoral response to the pandemic. The NCDC scaled up capacity for COVID-19 testing, surveillance, developed public health guidelines, as well as provided technical support to states. More so, more than 70 public health laboratories across the country; with at least one public health laboratory for COVID -19 testing in each state (NCDC, 2021). The NCDC under the cover of the Presidential Task Force began working with States and hospitals to ensure COVID -19 test, establish isolation and treatment centres for managing COVID -19 cases. Moreover, in response to the emergence of SARS CoV2 the virus that causes COVID -19, NCDC rapidly developed its capacity to make diagnosis and has also achieved the activation of 112 public and private laboratories across Nigeria (NCDC, 2021). For instance, through the NCDC giant strides, every state in Nigeria had at least one molecular laboratory with the capacity to test for COVID -19 (NCDC, 2021).

COVID – 19 Pandemic Spread in Nigeria and its impacts

Irrefutably, the COVID – 19 pandemic exacerbated the existing threats facing the entire world population. These threats range from terrorism, economy, health systems, racism and other areas being directly affected by the severity of the virus globally. As of March 2020, the World came under the ravaging surge of COVID -19 which necessitated the WHO advised that the disease had the characteristic of a pandemic. The pandemic outbreaks had an unprecedented impact on countries around the world including the United States, United Kingdom, India, China and many others leading to closure of their borders, global travel and industry (Felman,2020) in a bid to mitigate the pandemic spread. However, the cases of African countries and Nigeria in particular presents a worst scenario as the pandemic slowly rattled

and become of grave concerns given the levels of vulnerabilities and challenges prior to COVID -19 outbreak.

State of the Economy: It is often said that economy is the life wire of every nation. The state of the economy of most of the developing countries in Africa generally and like Nigeria in particularare in a sorrowful state prior to the outbreak of the pandemic. Again, most of these countries have their economies over the years to be a mono product based which made them susceptible to prices fluctuations. For example, in Nigeria the oil and gas industry contributes about 65% of Nigeria's Government revenue and 88% of the country's exchange earnings (Jerry, 2020). The drop in price of crude oil in the international market as witnessed at the peak of the Covid -19 outbreak demonstrated the unsustainable nature of the economy. Even when the country claimed to have diversified or on the process of diversified her economy, findings revealed that 90% of Nigerian revenue comes from import and exportation. Consequently, the fall of global oil prices at the outbreak of the covid-19 revealed the fragility of Nigeria's economic situation just like many other Oil exporter countries in Africa such as Algeria, Libya, Angola, Congo, Gabon and Equatorial Guinea whose share of oil in total exports is over 80% on average (African Union Report, 2020). In the aspect of tourism , an important sector of the economy of many African countries including Nigeria was seriously hit by the ravaging pandemic due to travel restrictions, closing of borders for domestic and international flights. Consequent upon the pandemic outbreak State revenues declined and many things like funding of the budget for critical infrastructure , the power of the local currency , payment of salaries ,and general government running were gravely affected (Jerry, 2020). It is not longer news that many states in Nigeria and the Federal Government reviewed their budgetary allocations to reflect the moment of Covid – 19 challenges.

Insecurity challenges:Most African countries including Nigeria experience one security challenges or the other even before covid -19 .The decades of conflict portends serious challenge to the outbreak of Covid – 19 as some scholars argued that its outbreak had actually heightened the activities of criminal elements and given room to new ones in the country. According to Francois Lounceny Fall, special Representative of the Secretary – General and Head of the United Nations, Regional office for Central Africa (UNOCA), affirms that COVID -19 has disrupted lives and the functioning of institutions across countries that already suffer a range of security and development challenges. Consequently, fighting terrorism of Boko –Haram, banditry and other insecurity problems in Nigeriapresented an herculean task as terror attacks kept ravaging along with the pandemic. For example, on 23 March, 2020,Boko Haram reportedly killed around 92 Chadian soldiers and wounded 47 people in the village of Boma in Chad Lake Province , near the border with Nigeria and Niger (PSC, Insights, 2020).

Many of the African countries were prone to conflicts and that has responsible for massive displacement in Sudan, Cameroon, Nigeria, Chad, Niger, Libya and so on .Thus,Covid – 19 not only complicated the existing insecurity but also constituted additional security problem to the region already facing the daunting challenges of fragility, conflict and violence due to either terrorism, mix of Jihadists, community – based militias, bandits, political instability and climate change (African Union Report, 2020).The situation is well captured by Paul Simon Handy when he succinctly observed that: ''The health crisis is exacerbating already

existing Threats to security in Africa''(Paul, 2020).

Weak Health systems: Prior to the pandemic outbreak, the health systems of the country was in total shambles. Thus, the outbreak came with significant strains on the capacity of the health systems. As the number victims increased, Nigeria was pressured to build isolation centres converting football stadium, NYSC camps and many public places as many private hospitals rejected patients as most of the hospitals were already filled up. The facilities in the health centres were not enough to cater for the victims of the pandemic.

Since the first case was confirmed in Egypt in February 2020 and its eventual spread across to most African countries, COVID -19 has been stretching medical resources across Africa. This is particularly a grave concern in Nigeria putting into consideration the health systems. For example in 34 of Sub – Saharan Africa's 45 countries where Nigeria belong, per capital health spending in 2019 was below 200 US Dollars and the figure barely reached 50 US 200 U.S dollars in many of those countries according to World Bank (Cgtn, news, 2020). Consequently, many health systems in African countries suffered and worst hit by the pandemic. According to report of the partnership for Evidence Based Response to Covid -19 (PERC), health care systems in many African countries including Nigeriaare ill prepared for a pandemic, with low numbers of health care workers and little capacity for providing critical care.

The COVID -19 response is largely built on existing infrastructures, a wealth of scientific and medical expertise and community mobilization to control the dual HIV and tuberculosis (TB) epidemics (Nesri&Naido, 2020). The diversion of resources to the ravaging pandemic had,had grave consequences for the provision of health care services for other diseases particularly HIV. For example, in South Africa of about 20% of global HIV infections, made giant strides in prevention, access to care and treatment of HIV. However, with the outbreak of the pandemic, within 8 months , South Africa experienced a surge of cases and by mid – July 2020 had 4000 deaths (Salome, etal, 2020). The high demand arising from Covid – 19 patients portend further challenges to health facilities and shortage of medicines that were relatively in low supply which may increase morbidity and mortality in Africa and Nigeria. This portends serious challenges since African countries imports around 90% of its pharmaceutical products from outside the continent, mainly from China and India (African Union Report, 2020) as most of these countries are also on halt in further supplies in observance of the global restriction on borders and travelling.

Poverty/Unemployment: Wide spread of poverty and unemployment conditions in Africa has made it difficult for most of the adopted measures towards curtailing the spread pandemic to work. Within the shortest period of the closures, there was a simulation that suggested an additional 9.1% of the population in Sub – Saharan Africa, immediately fallen into extreme poverty as a result of COVID -19 (Mathieu & Celine, 2020). This therefore means that measures adopted towards mitigating Covid -19 in developing countries like Nigeria could only achieve little as many of the populace lives from hands to mouth. For example the stay at home policy was of little effect as many citizens in Nigeria live base on daily income. The Covid – 19 affected every segment of the society. It furthers increased the pace of unemployment, poverty and other challenges confronting the

low income earners, disables, aged and other vulnerable population across in Nigeria.

Food insecurity: Food security prior to Covid – 19 pandemic in virtually all African countries present a worst scenario. Half of Africans including Nigerians already faced food insecurity, of which 50 percent are severely food insecure (Jennifer, 2020). The farmer –herder crises, Boko –Haram, banditry and kidnapping in the Northwest and other security skirmishes across Nigeria affected the socio –geographic contours of the country which is essential for food security. This gets complicated with poor governance and careless handlings of the state of the economy till date. The levels of inflation of goods currently witnessed in Nigeria cannot be divested from the economic doldrums emanated from the Covid -19 outbreak that impacted the sector negatively.

Management of Covid – 19 in Nigeria: Reflecting on the Government Responses

Importantly, the first containment efforts of the Federal Government of Nigeria was the constitution of the Presidential Task Force on COVID -19 on March 9, 2020 to coordinate the COVID-19 in Nieria through a multi –sectoral inter – overnmental approach. The Federal Ministry of Health and Nigeria Center for Disease Control work closely in collaboration with relevant ministries, departments, agencies, partners and other stakeholders to coordinate and review the national response, strategies and implementation activities on daily basis to enhance effective containment (NCDC, 2020). More so, several non – pharmaceutical measures were employed to contain the spread, and limit importation. There were diverse paradoxes faced by most African countries including Nigeria in the management of the COVID -19. These challenges have undoubtedly hindered adequate responses of the government to the containment efforts towards the pandemic spread. While it is necessary to address these issues proactively to mitigate the impacts of future pandemic threats. Some of the responses are discussed below:

Movement Restriction/Border Closure: Borders, restriction of inter – states travel, staying at home order, and deployment of rapid response teams to all affected states, ensuring state – level training and capacity building of health personnel (Tijjani& Ma ,2020,). This undoubtedly helped to mitigate the pandemic spread in Nigeria as the Federal Governemnt was credited for the the timely initiated and proacted action to nip its surge.

Development of Health Protocol: Besides, many landmark achievements recorded in the health care delivery of Nigeria in a bid to respond effectively to the COVID -19 challenges. The government committed reasonable financial investments that increased the procurement of medical equipment, personal protective equipment, medicines for COVID -19 control as well as general detecting, testing and responsive capacity of the country. Importantly, financial supports , provision of medical equipment across different regions of the country such as testing kits, and donation of isolation centres from private, bilateral and multilateral institutions aided the giant strides recorded in the response to COVID -19 outbreak and treatment in Nigeria. For example, the European Union contribution of 50 million euros to the basket fund and the establishment of the Coalition Against COVID -19 (CACOVID) launched in March 26, 2020 and raised over $ 72 million in purchase of food relief materials , medical facilities and others to strengthen the Nigerian COVID -19 response (Dixit, et al, 2020).

Lockdown of Social Gatherings:Furthermore, social and religious gatherings were steadily

banned and reviewed periodically across the country. Also, social gatherings such as wedding, clubbing and any forms of gatherings were put to 50 persons at the early period of the pandemic and later reviewed to a complete close. More so, the country expanded isolation centres, increased diagnostic centres and laboratories were top – notch in mitigating the challenges.

Distribution of Palliatives:More so, the Federal Government of Nigeria expanded its social safety net and welfare programmes in a bid to reduce the rate of poverty and cushion the pandemic impacts on the citizenry. The major strategic responses of the federal government took the form of provisions of support to businesses and individuals through the Economic Stimulus Bill 2020 , cash transfers of 20,000 naira to those considered vulnerable, Stimulus package of the Central Bank of Nigeria that offered a credit of 3 million Naira to poor families impacted by COVID -19 and food assistance in rations to vulnerable households especially in Lagos, FCT, and Ogun states on April 1, 2020 (Dixit, et al, 2020), anchored through the Federal Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs Disaster Management and Social Development .

Fiscal Stimulus Measures: There were also a series of the CBN intervention to douse the adverse economic impacts of the COVID -19 pandemic on the economy. The moratorium of one year on all principal repayments, effective 1 March 2020 as well as interests rate reduction on all applicable CBN intervention facilities from nine percent to five percent per annum for one year effective 1 March ,2020 (CBN,2020). Retrospectively, all these assumptions are ruse that could hardly explain the realities of the covid-19.

The Nigeria's State Prospects and Potentials for post covid -19 order

More so, the pandemic put further strains on food crisis, poverty, unemployment and crime rates all which have come to taunt the post – Covid -19 order in Nigeria.Again,the inequality and inequitable distribution of vaccines based on priortised national interests of developed nations than vulnerabilities and needs of nations shown that a nation is first to itself in the fight of pandemic control.

It is not in doubt that there were swift responses from governments across Africa including Nigeria towardscurtailing the pandemic through the early adoption of some public health measures. Retrospectively, such response gave Nigeria as a country an advantage to limiting the spread of the virus. Moreover, the relative youth of the African population comes with another added advantage in the fighting against the pandemic as data suggested that older people are mostly at higher risk of the infection. Interestingly, Sub – Saharan African where Nigeria belongs has only 3% of the population at 65 years older and above while 43% is less than 15 years older (Weforum, 2020).

Regardless of all the above opportunities, it is worthy to note that the ravaging pandemicnot only witnessed continued spread but cascaded into different variants killing slowly across the Africa continent. Perhaps the most important thing is that the people need to organize themselves in ways that made it easier to live with diseases, managing it and at the same time sticking to the stipulated guidelines while allowing economic activity and other aspects of life to continue. Africa countries including Nigeria could only tighten or loosen measures appropriately as total releasing pressure on the virus that had killed over 650,000 people and

infected 16.3 million worldwide according to World Health Organization (WHO) (Vanguard, July 27, 2020).

Essentially, post covid -19 order in Nigeria must proffer timely solutions to hydra- headed vulnerabilities confronting the country in a way that projected a readily -made victim to any future pandemic. As evidences from the health sector had shown, prior to the Covid -19,the health systems is not only in battered situations but possessed the tendencies to get worst with any further strains of the pandemic without continuous medical stocking . Consequent upon this, a post – Covid Nigeriamust be the one that develop local contexts, defining research priorities and funding and transition to greater self – sufficiency in critical supplies of vaccines, medicines, and health products (Salome etal, 2020).Thegovernment should pay more attention to the Nigerian health sector in terms of funding , equipping hospitals ,training of medical staff and general reforms to rid the health sector of corruption mostly perpetrated by politicians and current brain drain.

There is need for the Federal Government to diversify the economy to alternative sectors such as agriculture, solid and minerals resources.This would on a long run reduce Nigeria's reliance on oil. In the area of palliatives, government should develop workabable and achievable pallatives for citizens on different categories of needs to reduce hardsip face by the people especially during the outbreaks of pandemic.

Again, the outbreak of the pandemic had further shown the structural imbalances and its consequences as handed over to Africa by colonialism. COVID -19 had shown that regions and countries take care of their own people first when crises hit (Akanmori, 2021). Therefore, for Nigeria to attain the feat of taking care of its citizens,there is need to pursue with vigourcollaborative efforts within the continent of Africa and possibly beyond towards building functional and dependable health systems; improve budgetary allocations, increase doctor – patient rations; discourage brain drain and build capacity through the already established synergy.

The synergy between continental organizations such as the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, World Health Organization Regional Office for Africa and African Academy Sciences can perform the magic wand of setting the pace for Africa self – sufficiency and this can be leveraged upon by Nigeria in terms of research and funding as a leeway of combating future pandemics. For example, some African countries are already producing ventilators; more home based solutions should be sought. The NCDC could further leverage on this platforms to seek home based solutions derived from local contents. This can be done without necessarily waiting for the next pandemic outbreaks.

COVID -19 vaccination highlighted the gaps between the haves and have –nots and widens the social inequality gap. There is no gainsaying the fact that countries on the continent grappled with diverse array of challenges ranging from vaccine hesitancy, supply bottlenecks and a lack of operational funding and human resources to administer jabs (Akanmori,2020). Hence, a post COVID -19 Nigeria must go beyond the transfer of technology for expansion of local vaccine production as witnessed in Egypt, Senegal and South Africa(Caussy,2021). Nigeria under the auspices of Africa countries must rise to push for public private partnerships, bilateral agreements and international supports in the production of vaccines generally to cover the inequality gaps created in the distribution of COVID -19 across the globe rather than relying on supply through the COVAX alliance. Africa has 54 countries and 1.2 billion people, but

produces only 1% of all the vaccines it administers (Akanmori,2020). This is a big challenge to Nigeria- the giant of Africa

More so, in a bid to fighting the pandemic, the continent of Africa whichNigeria occupied strategic position must set her economic priorities right. It is disheartening that despite the numerous resources nature endowed the continent, many countries chose to be a mono product economy, exporting raw materials and importing goods that can be produced within their domain. There is need for strategy and multi sectoral reforms in the aspect of the economy for mutual benefits of the populace. African economies must embraced diversification and leverage on the opportunities of Africa Continental Free Trade. The reliance on oil by countries like Nigeria and others as the mainstay of the economy at the detriment of agricultural sector is not a good one. The decline in prices of crude oil, hovering around $30 per barrel at the heart of the COVID -19 pandemic contributed significantly to the drop in Gross Domestic Product grow for Sub – Saharan Africa and importantly demonstrated the fragility of mono product economy. This as usual poses challenges to revenues, remittances and infrastructural development of African countries. Diversification priorities to alternative sectors such as agriculture, solid minerals, manufacturing and services sectors, should be further intensified (Lateef& Samuel, 2020). The African Continental Free Trade Area aims at reducing all trade costs and will eliminate 90% of tariffs and enable Africa to integrate further into global supply chains if its opportunities could be leveraged upon.

There should be multilateral strategy to address the level of unemployment, poverty and crimes that dotted the landscape of Nigeria. Nigeria must mobilized fund to rescue vulnerable states beyond payment of salaries to workers as most Governors see that as the best achievements with little investements across critical sectors of their states. The Post Covid – order must provide succours in form of empowerment, palliatives and supports for the distress populace such as the aged, youths and women affected by the pandemic while continuing to fight terrorism and stemming the tides of conflicts.

To achieve the above, there is need for a change of attitudes by leaders across the country, impacting on human security, improving social conditions of the people and genuinely build collaborations and multilateral reforms in post – Covid -19 era in the country. This is needful rather than seeking salvation from the foreign countries.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The outbreak of Covid -19 however come with some challenges that have rendered government efforts minimal and ineffective given the vulnerable state of affairs in the country prior to the pandemic outbreak. Despite the early responses of the Federal Government in Nigeria towards containing the spread of the pandemic, it kept spreading virtually across the 36 states and Federal Capital Territory making significant killings. However, the prevailing situations facing the country prior to the pandemic deeply contributed to the overall challenges recorded by the outbreaks.

Thus, the outbreak and spread of the Covid -19 pandemic undoubtedly dealt a great blow to the global economy and health systems. The infection claimed over 650,000 thousand lives across the globe with about 16.5million people tramped under the spreading virus which portends greater danger for the future. The impacts on the economies of the developed and developing countries like Nigeria may be

difficult to calculate given the economic doldrums that is still recruperating till date. Though, Nigeria like other African countries seemed to be the last victims and relatively experienced the lowest levels of the pandemic spread when compared to other continents. However, the spillover effects from broken supply of imported goods, value chains, and inflow of foreign direct investments, remittances, crashing of crude oil prices, strains in health systems, and fuelled insecurity challenges pose unsafe future which the country witnessed gradually. In a nutshell, the restrictions on flights, closure of markets, schools, borders and work have significant negative impacts on the economies . It did not only affect the tax revenues, budgets, value chains and remittances of the governments but also posed more challenges in the area of unemployment, poverty and insecurity.

Interestingly, when the pandemic spread offers Africa continent some relative advantages, it was impossible for Nigeria to leverage on them to transform her raw materials into finished products in terms of responding to high demand of goods and services both in domestic and international markets since it is a servicing economy. Regardless of the above, if the country does not take her economic diversification serious, build functional health systems; increase funding for medical research and ready to apply home based solutions to her problems; capitalizing on the opportunities in Africa Continental Free Trade and working on her technologically savvy, these continuous act of seeking salvation from foreign countries may come with further economic drift, instability and fragility in post Covid era. While the health of those affected by the virus must be given adequate treatments, Nigerian governments must also prepare for the pandemic's economic effects to ensure that the country come out from the crises stronger than before. Essentially, leaders across levels of government in Nigeria must be ready to make a shift and quest for structural reforms capable of rejiging economy and make her a global hub otherwise inclusive growth will remain a mirage.

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