AN EXAMINATION OF PHYSICAL DISTANCING AMIDST COVID-19 AND ITS IMPACT ON ACADEMIC CONFERENCES IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT: The study is an examination of physical distancing regime following Covid-19 pandemic and its impact on academic conferences in Nigeria. The rapid spread of the corona virus ravaging the world led to the adoption of physical distancing policy as a strategy to curtail its spread. That equally led to the disruption and interruption of academic activities as well as face-to-face conferences while virtual academic conferences became the norm. It is from the foregoing that the objectives of this study were drawn. Specifically, the study is to ascertain the extent to which physical distancing amidst covid-19 has reduced the rate of physical relationship-based academic conferences. Investigate the extent to which physical distancing amidst covid-19 has reduced accessibility of academic conferences and find out the extent to which physical distancing amidst covid-19 has reduced attention and time span of academic conferences. The secondary sources of data were used namely journals, textbooks, newspapers, web pages, and government publications. To complement that, the electronic interview was also used. Inter-group threat theory was adopted for the discourse. It was found that there was a reduced physical relationship-based academic conference; access to conferences was reduced due to unstable power supply and internet services. Attention and time span were reduced. The study recommends the enhancement of partnership building among participants. Capturing of participants attention in the first eight seconds and new stimulus introduced every few seconds of the interactions.

Keywords: Physical Distancing, Covid-19 Pandemic, Academic Conference and Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

Prior to the outbreak of the corona virus on 27th February, 2020, several institutions across the nation had planned activities, fixed meetings, conferences, sent out notices or wanted to send notices. Sadly, the severity of the effect of the virus led to an abrupt disruption of academic conferences through the declaration of lockdown order as a proactive measure to curtail its spread. Shortly after, there was ease of lockdown on 18th May, 2020 which was heralded by the approval and implementation of physical distancing measure between 2nd-26th of June, 2020. To assure the accuracy of the above submission, Amzat, et al (2020) held that, it shuttered businesses and caused global social disruption by limiting global social relations and denied the people the existence of regular social interaction required for human existence. Besides, the usual norm of close physical contacts was disrupted.

On account of that, the spread of the virus prompted a global shift in meetings and events such that many transited from face-to-face gathering to implementation of virtual meetings. It led to the use of technology applications such as Zoom, Microsoft team, Mixlr, Google meet, Google hangouts, Apache, Team viewer, WebEx premium and myriad of others for academic conferences, (Adepetun, 2020). Following that, face-to-face academic conferences were canceled, postponed and replaced with virtual conferences as the only feasible means of academic interaction in order to reduce the potential to contract and spread the virus by contact. That interrupted the development of meaningful conversations and social relationships, (Jribi, Ismail, Doggui & Debbabi 2020). Such interruption made it imperative for the study to examine the impact of physical distancing on academic conferences.

Statement of the Problem

Covid-19 pandemic has been associated with numerous challenges such as the disruption of nationwide activities. In an attempt to curtail the menace, physical distancing measure was introduced as one of the means to mitigate the spread of the virus. As a result of that, face-to-face conferences was brought to a halt and shifted to virtual conferences as the only feasible means to mitigate the spread of the corona virus. Hence, it created the following challenges:

Remarkably, there was a problem of reduced physical relationship-based academic conference. Conference participants began to lose the opportunities to discuss and reflect on researchers' areas of study and other issues because virtual conferences were shorter and lacked details. Other challenges include inadequate energy as irregular and frequent interruption of power supply in Nigeria could not allow for efficient and effective virtual conferences since they were all at different locations, countries, states, villages.

Furthermore, there was a problem of accessibility by participants in conferences as a result of technical glitches from insufficient internet. Most times, internet network fluctuates amidst virtual conferences and disrupt participants. In addition, some participants could not afford the cost of data needed to participate in conferences thus they abstain. Again, there was time constraint which did not create opportunity for interactive sessions. This is because most participants hadn't the technical know-how and the time allocated for the session is usually short. Often times, a maximum of 20 minutes were apportioned for virtual presentations and most presentations overran the time allocated to them. Flowing from these identified problems, the objectives of the study are therefore in order.

Objective of the Study

The general objective of the study is to examine physical distancing amidst covid-19 and its impact on academic conferences in Nigeria. Specifically, the study was to:

1) Ascertain the extent to which physical distancing amidst covid-19 has reduced the rate of physical relationship-based academic conferences.
2) Investigate the extent to which physical distancing amidst covid-19 has reduced accessibility of academic conferences.

3) Find out the extent physical distancing amidst covid-19 reduced attention and time span of academic conferences.

Research Questions

The following three (3) theoretical research questions will guide the study.

1) Does physical distancing amidst covid-19 reduce the rate of physical relationship-based academic conferences?
2) How has physical distancing amidst covid-19 reduced accessibility of academic conferences?
3) To what extent has physical distancing amidst covid-19 reduced attention and time span of academic conferences?

Theoretical Application

The theoretical umbrella for this discourse is Inter-group Threat Theory which holds that fear springs up due to competition between scarce resources. In other words, it occurs when an in-group feels that their resources are threatened by an out-group. It automatically results to conflicting interest among the groups in an effort to protect their resources. Thus, negative attitudes are displayed towards the out-group. Key amongst the proponents is Walter G. Stephan and Cookie White Stephan (2000). Academic conferences were threatened by the fear of being infected with the corona viruses.

Tenets of the Theory: Inter-group Threat Theory has the following tenets:

1) The theory applies to any social group that may feel threatened in some way(s).
2) False alarms about threat still have real consequences for prejudice between groups.
3) There is an in-group and an out-group.

Application of the Theory to the Study

The relevance of the theory to the study comes to play because it applies to any social group that feels threatened in anyway, whether it's a majority or minority group in their society. In that vein, the unprecedented spread of corona virus provoked fear of insecurity of lives as a result of the competition between the dreaded viruses (a large family or group of zoonotic viruses) and human beings who felt threatened and were afraid of being infected with it. Similarly, the interaction between human beings and SARS-CoV-2 that causes covid-19 is its attack on human beings and our relationship with one another. Following the attempts made by different groups like the Federal and States government, World Health Organization, Nigeria Center for Disease Control and myriad of others to curtail the spread of the virus, it prompted a global shift in meetings and events such that many transited from face-to-face gathering to implementation of virtual meetings. This led to the use of technology applications such as Zoom, Google meet etc for academic conferences, church services and classroom lectures.

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATIONS

Physical Distancing

In terms of interpersonal interaction, physical distancing is about 200 year old. In the context of this study, it means maintaining physical space between oneself and others in order to avoid their chances of getting infected with the virus, (Nichol 2020). In other words, is the practice of staying at least 6 feet away from others to avoid catching a disease such as covid-19 virus. Physical distancing is used to stress the importance of maintaining physical space when in public area. Again, it could mean a range of measures that reduces physical contact between individuals in a population and hence slowing transmission, (Maragakis, 2020). Similarly, the concept was adopted by the World Health Organization to connote maintaining physical space of about two meters between people in public places amidst covid-19 as to reduce the chances of being infected with the virus, (Merriam-Webster, 2021). Furthermore, its changing ones daily routine so as to limit the chances of close contact with others such as avoiding crowded places, gatherings, handshakes, keeping a distance of at least two arms lengths or two meters away from others, (Government of Canada, (2020).

Corona Virus (Covid-19)

In Latin word, corona means halo or crown. In the light of that, it is referred to as crown-like projections on the pathogen surface, (Felman 2021). Interestingly, viruses are crown-like in shape which means secretion, poison or venom in Latin terms. As a result of that, it is seen as any kind of submicroscopic agents that causes disease, (Nichol 2020). Again, covid-19 is conceptualized as an ill health that originates from SARS-CoV-2. It's a respiratory disease contacted through some of the sense organs that kill human beings at the slightest mistake which was discovered in 2019 in Wuhan, China, (Nwobi, Umeh & Melugbo 2021). Furthermore, Katella (2020) defined it as a family of viruses seven of which can infect people, microscopic, causes common cold that emanate from rhinoviruses, severe acute respiratory syndrome and middle east respiratory syndrome.

Face-to-Face Conference

Face-to-face conference is where all the participants collocate. In other words, they are physically in the same place. It provides a social space for participants to present their work, learn about others' work and interact informally with one another, (Women Business Enterprise 2021). Again, Merriam-Webster (2021) maintains that, it is a gathering of people within each other's sight or presence in order to interact physically. In the same perspective, it could connote an in-person interaction or conversations where participants see physically with the purpose of improving their skills and knowledge, (Lau 2021).

Virtual Academic Conference

It is a gathering of several people with a common interest who confer about a theme and talk about specific subject through the use of technology applications such as zoom, Microsoft team,

Mixlr and myriad of others for academic conference in order to ensure researchers present their study, (Market Business News, 2020). In a similar vein, Merriam-Webster, (2021) concurred that; it is a gathering of two or multiple people in order to discuss issues of common concern. It become virtual when online approach takes over face-to-face conferences. In the same perspective, a virtual conference is a meeting of two or more persons with a formal interchange of views, consultation, organized in a way that participants can meet and discuss themes of common interest through the use of electronic communication tools or software such as zoom linked through a central location on the internet, (Wieman 2001). In a nut shell, Buddie (2020) conceptualized academic conference as a one-day or multiday event when researchers present their work to each other. It is an avenue through which researchers stay connected to others in their field of study and learn about advancements in some fields *via* the use of technology applications like zoom.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Brief History of Covid-19 Pandemic

It was first identified in 1937 when the bird responsible for Bronchitis in birds with the tendency of devastating poultry stock was isolated in order to limit its spread. Apart from that, most of the cases were seen to have direct or indirect link to sea food market in Wuhan. As the transmission passed through the first and second generations, it was discovered that, more cases hadn't any direct link with the animal rather it was transmitted from person to person. Respiratory droplets and facial contacts are the two most common means of transmission and recently, through community spread, (Sahu1, Mishra1 & Lal, 2020). It became evident in humans in 1960s when it was found in the noses of people with common cold. It is categorized into mild illnesses like common cold and the one that causes severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS-Cov-2) which causes covid-19. The viruses are found in animals but when it mutates it can be transmitted to humans called human coronaviruses (HCoVs), (Felman, 2021). Remarkably, it was documented in Wuhan, Hubei Province China with approximately 11 million people on 31st December 2019 when an outbreak of a new strain of corona virus was identified by World Health Organization, (McLeod 2020). The first case of covid-19 in Nigeria was at the infectious disease hospital Yaba, Lagos at the centre for human and zoonotic virology. A sputum specimen was re-suspended in 500ul. A clinic confirmed it on 27th, February, 2020, (Oluniyi, 2020) and that marked the beginning of the corona virus in Nigeria.

Amidst that, the second case of covid-19 was detected after about eleven days when the contact of an Italian national on 9th March, 2020 was uncovered. Since then there has been an upsurge on the spread of the virus with Lagos state considered as the epicenter of the virus. The incessant spread of the virus in European nations and China made Nigeria more vulnerable. The virus even affected the nations revenue which made the federal government to revise downwards the 2020 budget by more than N71 billion. Such effect spanned through every other sector in the nation, (Alagboso & Abubakar, 2020). A presidential task force was constituted on Match 9th 2020 as a response to the pandemic. The body coordinated and provided technical and material support to states to manage the outbreak. It was as well an advisory body responsible to the President on issues like imposing and lifting of lockdown while returning feedback on job done to the

President. Despite that, it was recorded that, on 19th March, 2020 there was about 244,979 confirmed cases in 180 countries with 10, 035 deaths. China was the hardest hit followed by Italy, South Korea, Iran, France, Spain, Germany and other European countries. Italy surpassed China in the same month, (Sahu1, Mishra1 & Lal, 2020).

In terms of prevalence as at April 14th, 2020, the five most affected countries in the world were all from the northern hemisphere namely, the United States of America (582, 607), Spain (172, 741), Italy (159, 516), France (137, 877) and Germany (130, 072). The epicenter of the virus in the Middle East had (73, 303). In terms of morbidity, South Africa ranked first with (22, 872 cases), Egypt (2,190), Morocco (1, 763) and Nigeria (373), (Osayomi, 2020). In the same month, the number of confirmed cases increased in G20 nations such as India, South Africa and the Latin Americans. On July 2020, more cases were reported in several countries especially in America. Reports had it that, about 25million cases and 840 deaths were confirmed globally in August, 2020. The G20 nations accounted for 77% of the cases in totality and 82% of deaths in general, (International Labour Organization 2020).

Physical Distancing and Covid-19 Pandemic

As events unfolded, the pandemic took it tolls on the world as the number of confirmed cases continued to rise. In response to the early outbreak and rapid spread of the virus, China was the first country to introduce strict containment measures such as implementation of lockdown order on February 2020 followed by other countries. In China where the virus was believed to have emanated from banned journeys in and out, suspended public transport, private cars barred from the roads, businesses, schools and universities closed and severe limit placed on individual mobility outside of residences. As the pandemic intensified, house searches for potential infected persons were forced into quarantine as directed by the government authorities in China, (Bausch 2020). Other nations globally and their governments at various levels took cue from China and implemented strict lockdown with different level of stringent measures and timeliness such as physical distancing, stay-at-home order, restrictions on mass gathering, closure of schools, churches and myriad of others, (Koh, Naing & Wong, 2020). Specifically in Nigeria following its spread, the Federal and State governments imposed restrictions on movement of people in several regions throughout the country to mitigate the covid-19 pandemic. This was reflected on table 1 below:

Table 1: Movement Restriction in Nigeria During the Covid-19 Pandemic

	Affected sector	Impact
1	Aviation sector	Massive flight cancellations, NCAA suspends all international airports
2	Education sector	Students were sent back home. Private & public schools including universities were closed
3	Banking sector	Senior staff works from home. Few branch staff available to attend to depositors
4	Civil servant sector	Suspension from work for about 30 days for remote quarantine
5	Markets	Major food markets were partially closed

6	Religious sector	All religious services were banned during the pandemic. A Christian pastor was arrested for holding a church service during the ban.
7	Sports	All sporting events were cancelled
8	All sectors	Series of nationwide stay-at-home lockdown was officially enforced from 30th March-April 12th, April 13th -26th April 2020.
9	Eleven (11) businesses excluded from the ban	(i) private security companies, (ii) medical establishments, (iii) broadcasters, (iv) food processing & distribution companies, (v) petroleum distribution and retail entities, (vi) power generation, transmission & distribution companies, (vii) hospitals, (viii) telecommunication workers, (ix) health care manufacturing & distribution companies, (x) print media staff, (xi) electronic media personnel.

Source: Adapted from Ozili, P. (2020). Covicd-19 pandemic and economic crisis: The Nigerian experience and structural causes, *SSM Electronic Journal*, Retrieved from www.researchgate.net. Doi: 10.2139/ssrn.3567419. Updated by the author

In the light of the above table 1; several services and activities were stopped airports, civil servants were suspended from work, academic and religious activities banned, all sporting events cancelled, flight cancellation, markets shot down excluding major food markets partially closed and eleven essential businesses excluded. This in general affected every nook and crannies of the nation.

Worthy of note is that, as soon as the first phase of the lockdown was eased on 18th May, 2020 approved by the President, the following were approved for implementation between 2nd - 29th June, 2020 subject to review: physical distancing of maintaining 2 meters between people in public places, ban on attendance of more than 20 people outside of a workplace, relaxation of restriction on places of worship in line with guidelines of Presidential Task Force and state government, managed access to markets and locations of economic activities, ban on interstate travels except for movement of agricultural produce, petroleum product, manufactured goods and essential services, mandatory use of non-medical face masks in public places, easing of total lockdown of Kano state and introduction of phase one of the eased lockdown among others, (Office of the Secretary to the Government of the Federation 2020)[1].

In consonance with the above, the presidential task force fifth interim report on 1st July, 2020, extended the eased lockdown for four weeks, reopened schools for students in graduating classes (basic 6, JSS 3 & SSS 3). Again, there was removal of interstate travel restriction. Nevertheless, travelling was outside curfew hours of 10pm - 4am. Domestic flights resumed in the country and enforcement of the directives on usage of face-masks in public places and other non-pharmaceutical interventions. Federal and state government offices were to maintain current timing of 9am-2pm as officers of grade level 14 and above, essential staff from grade level 13 and below were to continue to report for duty among others, (Office of the Secretary to the Government of the Federation 2020)[2]. Similarly, the previous attempt made to reopen schools for exit students in order to enable them write their examinations was aborted. Subsequently, the

second attempt kicked off on 3rd August, 2020 because the examinations were billed to commence on 17th August, 2020. The second phase of the eased lockdown was extended by one week with effect from 7th August, 2020, (Olisah, 2020). Specifically, ease of lockdown in Lagos state opened places of worship on 7th August, 2020 for Muslims only on Fridays and on 9th August, 2020 for Christians only on Sundays. Again, only 50% of their maximum capacity was allowed to worship, night vigils were cancelled and elders of above sixty five years stayed at home, (Know Afrika, 2020). Remarkably, the widespread lockdown and physical distancing measures globally made the impact of covid-19 felt immediately and effortlessly, (Hea & Harris 2020).

METHODOLOGY

This paper adopted an aggregate of qualitative sources namely, journals, textbooks, newspapers, web pages, government documents and online electronic interview. The data collected were analyzed using content analysis through historical and interpretative approach.

DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS

1. **Physical Distancing Amidst Covid-19 Reduced the Rate of Physical Relationship-Based Academic Conferences.**

Conferences as undoubtedly an essential part of academic life shifted to the use of virtual modality as an alternative medium of interaction and posed potential threats to its success. It gave rise to reduced rate of physical relationship-based academic conferences which is incredibly difficult to maintain in the absence of face-to-face conferences. It is so because there were fewer opportunities to discuss and reflect on researchers areas of study and other issues because virtual conferences were shorter and lacked details. In a related development, a researcher felt de-skilled because he could not meet participants face -to- face, use his experience to read body language, (Harker, 2020). Academics utilize their sensory potentials to construct meaning out of a given concept. Surprisingly, virtual modality created problem space for free exploration. In this case, feedback and interaction could be observed through visual, auditory and myriad of others by participation. Those lack of face-to-face interactions with other participants in a conference impaired academics because it could not offer them the needed opportunity to have their hands on experience, (Anakwe, 2017). It is much more difficult to deal with a challenging conference participant via virtual meeting rather than in face-to-face, where people can take a break or leave the meeting. In a similar vein, it could not replicate the experiences that involve impromptu meetings and social get together. As a result of that, researchers as social species who naturally interface with other researchers lost some of those opportunities. The real conference experiment such as face-to-face interactions, the warmth of person-to-person relationship was denied the researchers in virtual conferences amidst covid-19, (Price, 2020). Again, the ability of researchers to run into colleagues spontaneously, identify future research collaborators and socialize with one's peers as the case may be was not replicated.

Furthermore, it constrained development of meaningful conversations and social relationships. The disruption of face-to-face conference by physical distancing measure made it impossible for

researchers to meet, share ideas and plan with people in their academic community. Meeting of established and popular scholars with their junior colleagues who have comparable interest to share personal connection with was also put on hold. They were denied the opportunity of meeting colleagues who could give them a lead to contribute to frontiers of knowledge *via* books, book reviews among others. They did not have the chance of being exposed to a range of research papers and number of panel sessions. Participants could not socialize by emulation attained via face-to-face conference because virtual conference was chosen as an alternative means of interaction. Participants identity was not strengthened rather it was lessened because there was fewer communication, no regular contact and relationships with significant others required to strengthen peoples identity. Most of the knowledge people were expected to get unconsciously by face-to-face interaction were lost to the use of virtual approach, (Gendron 2020). In addition, learning and collaboration which are better achieved through mutual two-way interactions and exchange of ideas was not found in virtual conferences. As the virtual conference accommodates a large number of participants, many of them could not communicate with each other. That made active participation unguaranteed. Beyond that, it could not substitute for the live experiences of being in one of the cultural cities with cultural heritage, (Falk & Hagsten, 2020).

2. Access to Academic Conferences was reduced by Physical Distancing amidst Covid-19.

Accessibility of academic conferences was impaired because of inadequate energy as irregular and frequent interruption of power supply in Nigeria could not allow for efficient and effective virtual conferences since they were all at different locations, countries, states and villages etc.. Even when people turned to the use of generators, they had to spend so much on premium motor spirit or diesel. Others found it a difficult task switching over to generator for power supply. That lack of power supply specifically reduced technological advancement. In the same vein, rural areas are not connected to the national grid therefore the application or use of Information Communication Technology was ineffective. Again, most of the academics are not trained in computer applications. As a result of that, they could not perform, so efficiency of the conferences was not felt (Okorocha, 2020).

Consequently, virtual academic conferences suffered challenges of internet access even when the quality of internet connection was a vital issue. Interestingly, more than 95% of Nigerians use the internet daily, with the highest consumption being for knowledge-seeking purposes (78.6%). Nonetheless, unstable internet connections have been an issue and have had a tremendous negative impact on virtual conference delivery amidst covid-19 pandemic. This is because virtual academic conferences and activities took place with unstable internet connection throughout. It became obvious that fast internet connection would be needed to maintain the quality and enhance the attractiveness of virtual conferences, (Noorashid *et al.,* 2020). In the same direction, there is no universality of internet access in Nigeria because it posed a significant cost on the researchers. If a participant time online is limited by their affordability of internet access, then, there won't be efficiency and effectiveness. Furthermore, lack of adequate knowledge of technological tools on the part of participants dragged virtual conferences down because most of them are not skilled in the use of computers in order to function efficiently in virtual conferences. Often times, servers are not user friendly as they crash most times leaving the entire

conference participants in the dark. That made virtual conferences unreliable, (University of Illinois Springfield, 2021). In the same context, it was inferred that, recording talks on zoom and uploading them was an ordeal because of poor internet connectivity.

Inversely, through virtual conferences it was possible for participants residing in remote areas of the nation such as those with restricted mobility to engage in research conference from their homes. It translated to wider and diverse contributions to the world of research in all fields of study. Emphatically, it enhanced the pathway of individuals' career and professional development. Inversely, face-to-face conference required a well funded location with good travel connection, mobility. Similarly, it was also more accessible for some researchers with disabilities such as a deaf respondent who concurred that, there was an improved access to conferences.

3. Attention and Time Span were reduced by Physical Distancing amidst Covid-19.

Stretching further, it was difficult to remember most things done *via* virtual conferences. The intent and emotion of the unconscious mind that flew from body language was removed, unseen which made participants not to be fully engaged. When emotional subtext could not be assimilated, the tendency was that, recall became difficult. Processing non verbal cues such as facial expressions, tone and pitch of the voice was difficult and paying much attention on that guzzled so much energy. Besides, it outstripped researchers' attention span because conference time was as short as 10 minutes instead of the dictates of habit that requires meeting schedule in hour-long segments and even longer. It was also impossible for organizers of virtual conferences to detect when their audience gets puzzled, lost, bored or interested, (Morgan, 2012). In the same perspective, time constraint did not create opportunity for interactive sessions because virtual platform changed the rules of engagement in line with the delivery of papers and communicating complex issues in a fractured environment, those we communicate with were the means of accessing understanding. Most participants hadn't the technical know-how and the time allocated for the session is usually short. About 20 minutes was the optimal time for virtual presentations and most presentations overran the time allocated to them. Even the questions from the audience consumed most of the time, (Fischbacher-Smith, 2020).

Concluding Remarks

The issue of virtual academic conference as an alternate means of interaction in order to curtail the rapid spread of the dreaded virus through keeping away and maintaining a physical space of about two meters between oneself and others was the challenge. Hence this study aimed at examining physical distancing amidst covid-19 and its impact on virtual academic conferences in Nigeria. Physical distancing amidst covid-19 was figured out as a disruption and interruption of academic activities as face-to-face conferences were suspended for virtual academic conferences as an alternative means of interaction. Sadly, it reduced the rate of physical relationship-based academic conferences, accessibility of conferences virtually was negatively impaired and attention and time span was reduced as well. All these significantly affected efficiency and effectiveness of academic conferences in Nigeria negatively.

Recommendations

The study recommends the following:

1) There should be partnership building among participants in virtual conferences in order to address reduced rate of physical relationship-based academic conferences because it improves skill development and learning. This could be achieved through collaboration. That is to say, cooperative partnership entails planning and problem solving to develop specific positive strategies to help enhance relationships.
2) There should be an enforcement of universities to be information communication technology compliant in order to attain efficiency and effectiveness in virtual conferences.
3) In order to improve access to conferences, energy supply must be improved. There should be detailed assessment for the strengthening and expansion of the national grid along with improvement of distribution systems as well as promoting the development of fuels for gas, coal and nuclear power plants.
4) To have access to meetings, internet stability must be guaranteed. To achieve this, your router should be mounted somewhere high off the ground, and in the centre of your house to reach all ends equally.
5) Broadband access and usage are other critical factors that must be managed to safeguard against conference interruptions and provide practical platforms for the participants
6) The gathering should not be more than twenty minutes but the attention of the participants must be captured in the first eight seconds and new stimulus must be introduced every few seconds of the interactions in order to get the attention of participants. This is because there is a natural rhythm to human attention that requires the subject to experience a stimulus change every few seconds so as to maximize attention.
7) There is need to create voluntary engagement. This could be done by creating structured opportunities for attendees to engage fully by taking meaningful responsibility.

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