

## Health Promotion Challenges of COVID-19 Pandemic

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### Abstract

*The study is aimed at exploring health promotion as a strategic panacea in COVID-19 pandemic challenges. Health is seen as the level of functional and metabolic efficiency of living organisms and a way of managing themselves when faced with challenges. Health promotion helps people to increase control over their health status not merely pursuing treatment and cure but targeting at prevention. A lot of challenges are prevalent during Covid-19 pandemic era such as health status of citizen, sharp economic obstruction and decline in numbers of people visiting health institutions, securing the health of doctors and other allied health workers, lockdown. The National Centre for Disease Control has not approve any drugs for the prevention and treatment of covid-19 and only health measures that can help in curbing its wide spread have not been set. Conclusively, it is observed that the covid-19 era encompasses health, family life, social distance effect of lockdown, postponement of school examinations, fear of the unknown and equally there are controversial circumstance that are involved during this covid-19 pandemic era. The pandemic seems not to have excluded any community in the world at large. Therefore, it is recommended that people should maintain proper health care services in respect to COVID 19 Pandemic and adequate surveillance service should be stirred up to checkmate the breakdown of COVID 19 Pandemic protocols.*

**Keywords:** Health, Health promotion, Challenges.

### Introduction

Health is seen as the level of functional and metabolic efficiency of a living organism. In humans it is the ability of individuals or communities to manage them when faced with physical, mental or social changes (Park, Lim, Hwana & 2010). Health is a relative term to the extent an individual is able to perform the functions assigned to him/her by the society, such an individual should be regarded as being healthy. Health implies issues that make an individual to deviate from normal ways of life and proper functioning resulting to serious health challenges (Kujundzk, 2017). Kumar and Preetha, (2012) defines health promotion as a comprehensive approach that focuses on health, environmental changes, consumption patterns and health beliefs. Health promotions help people to increase their control over their health status. It revolve on a wide range of social and environmental interventions that are programmed to benefit and prevent people health and quality of life by addressing and protecting the origin of diseases, not just aiming at treatment and cure (Eriksson & Lind Storm, 2006).

The authors asserted that there are three key elements of health promotion that need to be put into consideration thus: good governance for health, health literacy and health cities from their own points of view, they observed that health decisions must be prioritize to prevent people from becoming ill and protect them from injuries, adequate knowledge, skills and information to make healthy choices, for food they eat and the needed health care services that will foster and promote better health opportunities and the ability to set in motion those preventive measures in communities and primary health care facilities (World Health Organization, 2020).

Pandemic is seen as an adverse health event occurring worldwide, that is across international boundaries and usually affecting a large number of people. In another word pandemic can be said to occur annually in each of the temperate southern and northern hemispheres, given that seasonal epidemic cross international boundaries and affect a large number of people. However seasonal epidemic are not considered pandemic (Amari- Amaka, Aleke, Ogbuinya,, Ngwakwe and Afoke, 2020)

Challenges are something new and difficult which requires great effort and determination (Livingstone, 2011). Challenges may be probing of its truth or value. Literarily, challenges are those threats of life that are too serious to combat or as a problem that call for discussion or prominent actions. Though people might use the word challenge to mean problem but it might not apply depending on the context of the usage, but challenges is a relative term to the topic at hand are those prevailing circumstance that call for discussion. Equally challenges denote a state of worry exhibited by an individual or group of people or organization over a prevailing situation. Something that causes worry or a situation regarded as important. COVID-19 pandemic which has become a dreaded disease worldwide with threatening signs and symptoms of all kinds of diseases either communicable or non communicable/degenerative diseases has created a need for health promotion. The outbreak of Corona virus disease 2019 (COVID-19) has practically affected lives around the world. It is a disease that requires isolating patient(s) infected with the disease, contact and constant restriction coupled with economic shutdown impose a

complete change to the psychological environment of Nigeria. Schools at all levels were closed and workplaces were not left out except those that are on essential services. Aside from activities and worries caused by the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the economic situation in Nigeria has worsened with high level of unemployment that has degenerated into stress and distress cumulating to mental health problems and violence (WHO, 2020). Basically, this paper sought to examine the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic in Nigeria.

First and foremost the family seems to be most hit based on isolation and social distancing adopted in order to reduce the outbreak of the disease. The school shutdown had made parents experienced home schooling and potential postponement of school examination. Equally the fear of the unknown which is who will contact the pandemic or losing one's family member could lead to psychological maladjustment and traumatic depression, stress and even dying before their time (Stikkebroek, Bodden, Reitz, Volleberg, & Van Baar, 2016). The schools are more important focus of these efforts of health promotion. According to Haines, Neumark-sztaner and Morris, (2008) health promotion and prevention programmes build around evidence based strategies are vital to curtail certain risk factors and reducing the disease burden and lower death rates. The authors stressed that varieties of health care results from range of activities from human birth to death in which health promotion, prevention, care, rehabilitation, accident/emergency treatment and care for handicapped or deviation from normal. The sharp economic obstruction brought by the COVID -19 could have a long-term negative implications resulting to increased family conflict, abuse, suicide and substance abuse. Access to mental health service may require increased demand to cope with the economic recession (Haw, Hawton, Gunnel & Platt, 2015).

Based on the controversial circumstance emanating from the pandemic, there has being decline in the number of people using medical service just because of the fear of being infected by COVID -19. Subsequently, after the pandemic there might be a sudden surge of activity to a magnitude that may overwhelm the capacity of the service. There has been a lot challenges which may probably hinder government initiative toward preventive effort such as non-challant attitude, misconception whether such disease even exist, selective lockdown, social media interference, stigmatization, insufficient health facilities and inadequate man power to handle the prevailing disease (Amari-Omoka, Aleke, Ogbuinya, Ngwakwe and Afoke, 2020).

Another major concern during the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic is how to secure the health of doctors and other allied health workers since the disease is communicable in nature, there is need for provision of adequate and right information to protect people. It is equally the duty of the relevant authorities to put in place facility, policies and practices to reduce exposure to respiratory pathogens. These measures are to be carried out before patient arrival, upon arrival and throughout the duration of affected patients in the health care unit, before assuming standard precautions which says that every person is potentially infected with COVID-19 pathogen that could transmit the disease (Bergo, 2020).

Economic imbalance during the era of COVID-19 seems to be a major effect of the pandemic not only in Nigeria but the whole world at large. Before the advent of COVID-19, Nigeria as a nation has been battling with its peculiar economic challenges. The economic impact will be felt across all sectors. This is because the country wide range lockdown has hit the retail and real estate and equally the banking sector. The private sector investment during this pandemic era is not only vital for economic recovery but there could also be increasing opportunities for investors to lose out, but government will provide more resources during this period, this is because most government agencies will want to partner with local and foreign investors (Lenon, 2020).

Presently, vaccines like Pfizer and Astrazeneca vaccine have been approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for the prevention or treatment of COVID-19, although the Pfizer drug is still under review by US (WHO, 2020). Harvard Health publishing (2020) viewed COVID-19 era as an era that need to propagate those preventive measures that can prevent/protect people from contacting the infection. According to the institution, it suggested the following as basic preventive measures to be taken to address the wide spread of COVID-19. Those preventive measures are avoidance of close contact with people who are sick, avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth, stay away from people who are sick at home, when coughing or sneezing cover it with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash, clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces everyday and washing of hand regularly among other things to be observed.

According to National Center for Disease Control (2020), that gave the analysis of the outbreak of COVID - 19 thus:

**Table 1: Analysis of COVID-19 Outbreaks as at 15<sup>th</sup> October 2020**

STATE AFFECTED	LABORATORY NO OF CASES CONFIMRED	NO LAB	NO OF CASES (ON ADMISSION)	NO DISCHARGED	NO DEATHS	OF
LAGOS	20367		4910	15253	204	
FCT	5858		537	5242	79	
PLATEAU	3547		404	3110	33	
OYO	3324		730	2554	40	
RIVER	2683		69	2555	59	
EDO	2639		29	2503	107	
KADUNA	2522		68	2413	41	
OGUN	1954		184	1742	28	
DELTA	1810		24	1734	49	
KANO	1740		6	1680	54	
ONDO8	1652		31	1585	36	
ENUGU	1309		19	1269	21	
KWARA	1050		43	982	25	
EBONYI	1044		4	1010	30	
OSUN	907		63	825	19	
ABIA	898		18	872	8	
KATSINA	896		1	871	24	
GOMBE	883		111	747	25	
BORNO	745		4	705	36	
BAUCHI	710		9	687	14	
IMO	585		12	561	12	
BENUE	483		60	413	10	
NASARAWA	475		137	325	13	
BAYELSA	403		3	379	21	
JIGAWA	325		6	308	11	
EKITI	325		4	315	6	
AKWA IBOM	295		3	284	8	
ANAMBRA	275		27	229	19	
NIGER	269		12	245	12	
ADAMAWA	248		23	208	17	
SOKOTO	162		0	145	12	
TARABA	108		13	89	6	
KEBBI	93		1	84	8	
CROSS RIVER	87		4	74	9	
YOBE	79		5	66	8	
ZAMFARA	79		1	73	5	
KOGI	5		0	3	2	

**COVID – 19 IN NIGERIA AS AT 15<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2020 (THURSDAY 7:50PM)**

**SAMPLES TESTED 567,857**

**ACTIVE CASES 7,575**

**DISCHARGED CASES 52,143**

**DEATH 1,116**

Authorities should take into cognizance when passing across information to the public concerning COVID-19 to provide information to the literacy needs of the people they want to reach. This means the response to the pandemic should be looked at through an equity lens (Smith & Judd, 2020) Health promotion researchers should learn from crisis situations, analyze the reactions and document the learning. A good example is how the Singaporean government dealt with the SARS outbreak in 2003, in the same vein, it is observed that, the actual knowledge about the virus, the high confidence and trust in the government's ability to cope with SARS was a major factor in controlling the crisis/ the outbreak.



## Conclusion

It is observed that COVID-19 encompasses health, family life, social distance, effect of lockdown, postponement of school examinations, fear of the unknown and the controversial circumstances that are involved during this COVID - 19 pandemic era. The pandemic seems not to exclude any community in the world at large.

**Based on the foregoing, the following recommendations are made. It is therefore recommended that people should:**

1. Ensure an effective maintenance of health services, with regard to COVID-19 pandemic.
2. People should observe those health protocols that have been laid down in order to prevent the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic.
3. Adequate surveillance service(s) should be stirred up to checkmate the outbreak of those COVID-19 pandemic protocols.

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