

Covid-19 Pandemic and Its Implications for Human Resources: The Nigerian Experience

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Abstract

The study is to examine covid-19 pandemic and its implications for human resources: The Nigerian experience. The incessant spread of the dreaded virus globally coupled with the way we work, live and the persistent humanitarian crisis increased drastically and constituted enormous challenges to human resources available to organizations despite a coordinated effort to mitigate the risk of being infected with the virus. It is from the foregoing that the objectives of this study were drawn. Specifically, the study will ascertain the implications of covid-19 on jobs in Nigeria, investigate the implications of covid-19 on employee training in Nigeria, and examine the implications of covid-19 on psychological well-being of human resources in Nigeria. The paper is an ex-post facto research and adopted its analytical methodology from conventional content analysis based on secondary data gleaned from journals, textbooks, newspapers, web pages and government publications. Meanwhile, the study employed incentive theory as the theoretical umbrella for this discourse. The findings show that, some employees were stripped of their jobs because they could not contribute meaningfully to their organizations. Employees were not trained because employers felt they were redundant and unproductive. Some of them experienced psychological distress as a result of fear of contacting the virus and losing their job. The study recommends for people stripped of their jobs to engage in entrepreneurial initiatives as a genuine strategy of job creation, community resource assistance for those who lost their jobs, employees training for efficiency, open access to mental health and psychological support services.

Keywords: Covid-19 Pandemic, Implication, Human Resources and Nigeria.

Introduction

The incessant spread of the dreaded virus ravaging the world coupled with the transformation of the way we work, live and the persistent humanitarian crisis has increased drastically constituting enormous challenges to the human resources available to organizations despite a coordinated effort to mitigate the risk of being infected with the virus. Corona virus is conceptualized as a brand of common virus that infects humans, typically leading to an upper respiratory infection. Incidentally, the same human resources who are the life blood of every organization that were at risk of contacting the dreaded virus coordinate other organizational resources in an attempt to produce goods and services that were used by the members of the society to ensure the

achievement of organizational goals. Following that, Yeboah-Assiamah (2020) quipped that, the fear and anxiety of being infected reduced the number of human resources available to carry out the activities of the organization. Again, the severity of the virus led to urgent measures being taken to curb the menace such as the imposition of lockdown, hygiene, isolation, social distancing and work-from-home that led to increased threat of weighty job cuts as most organizations struggled to survive (Proshare Economy 2020). Thus activities in organizations were brought to a halt because of shutdown of borders, schools, offices, churches, markets, social gatherings, temperature checks and the use of hand sanitizers, nose masks became routine in offices, public places and at homes. On account of that, human resources in organizations encountered health risks, and psychological distress which metamorphosed to insufficient number of staff and reduction in the output of human resources. The talented employees, who are highly sought after, could not be attracted by the organizations because of lack of peaceful and conducive environment. The well-being and safety of workers could not be guaranteed amidst covid-19 thus there was employee dismissal, cut in salaries which led to changed attitude towards the organization. Sadly, a greater percentage of the human resources hadn't the technical know-how or the tools required to work from home or electronically (Burrus 2020). Given the humanitarian crisis generated by the virus, the human resources implications became enormous hence the need for the study to examine them.

Problematique

Covid-19 pandemic have constituted serious threats to human resources management as the spread of the virus did not only affect the victims or infected people alone but also those in their workplaces. Beyond that, digitalization was facilitated and in the bid to adapt to the changes by

organizations employees began to work from home. That led to reduction in working hours, cancellation, postponement and recruitments were banned or reduced. Furthermore, human resources available to organizations became reluctant to work because of the fear of getting infected thus their meaningful contribution to the workplace was denied. This is in tandem with the fact that, even the increasing number of reports of confirmed cases and manpower lost to the dreaded virus became worrisome. In the light of that, it created sudden unemployment as people were unsure of the next step to take coupled with the uncertainty about what the future held (Roy 2021). Again, the pandemic ushered in a challenging environment for human resources as the workforce dabbled into the unknown. Hence, the need for workforce training became paramount in order to adapt and cope with the changes. Besides, the skills required to fit into the work environment was lacking, human resources hadn't the technical know-how and required tools to work from home electronically. Beyond that, the mere fact that there was an outbreak of a virus without a definite vaccine to cure it created so much panic among the people. Even as the entire world was disrupted and crashing, several people were subjected to the risk of psychological distress because shortly after the first death was reported, anxiety on the people increased. That was heralded by a heightened misinformation about the transmission of the virus, its period of incubation and the effects from the media that posed a serious challenge in form of psychological stress. Other challenges include mental health and psychological wellbeing, employee communication, uncertainty, employee engagement, and lack of employee training. Flowing from the identified lapses, the paper aimed to:

- 1) Ascertain the implications of covid-19 pandemic on jobs in Nigeria.
- 2) Investigate the implications of covid-19 pandemic on human resources training in Nigeria.

- 3) Examine the implications of covid-19 pandemic on psychological well-being of human resources in Nigeria.

Research Questions

- 1) What are the implications of covid-19 pandemic on jobs in Nigeria?
- 2) What are the implications of covid-19 pandemic on human resources training in Nigeria?
- 3) What are the implications of covid-19 pandemic on psychological well-being of human resources in Nigeria?

Conceptual Clarifications

Covid-19

Corona viruses are a large family of zoonotic viruses is transmitted from animals to humans causing illness ranging from the common cold to severe respiratory diseases. In other words, is a family of viruses that range from the common cold to more severe illnesses like Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome and Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (Nwobi, 2021). In the same perspective, it implies a serious disease that affects a person's ability to breathe caused by a novel kind of corona virus identified in 2019 for the first time (Cobuild, 2021). Again, it means an ill health whose source is from SARS-CoV-2 and also known as covid-19 derived from corona virus disease 2019. The acronym was adopted by the World Health Organization to avoid stigmatizing the origin of the virus in relation to populations, geography or animal associations (Cennimo, 2021). Suffice to say that, 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.

Human Resources

Human resources mean those set of people that make up the workforce on an organization whether in government or private establishment. They could be regarded as manpower, labour or talents in the organization (Krishnani, 2020). Similarly, it could be everybody engaged in the actions or services of geared towards enhancing health. The human resources encompass clinical staff, such as physicians, nurses, pharmacists, dentists etc. In other words, the generality of the employees of any organization whether in the health, finance, administrative, legal and myriad of others who contribute towards the achievement of the organizational objectives (World Health Organization, 2020). Human resources professionals as the key factor in achieving organizational objectives have the responsibility of analyzing economic, political, social, technological, health, legal environment in order to redesign human resources management processes and practices. It is the role of human resources to attract, select, motivate, and retain talented employees in their roles and technology has transformed the way human resources are currently managed (Marlene & Carlos, 2017). Similarly, it connotes all the people involved in the activities targeted at ensuring, developing, motivating and helping the organization geared towards achieving its goals in the most efficient manner in order to meet employees' needs. The society is a network of organizations that appear, develop or disappear. The people are a shared, key and vital resource to ensure the survival, development and competitive success of all organizations. As such, the removal of effective presence of men who know what, when and how to do things in an organization would amount to non achievement of their set goals.

Understanding Covid-19 Pandemic

The emergence of covid-19 could be traced to certain species of animals like cattle and Carmel. Its transmission from animals to human beings is very uncommon and the strain is frequently

believed to originate from bats. However, another study revealed that, pangolins maybe responsible for the virus. Others trace it to sea foods and animal snakes in Wuhan, China where SaRs-CoV-2 started (Kandola, 2020). In line with the above scenario, the first known severe illness caused by a corona virus emerged with the 2003 Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) epidemic in China. A second outbreak of severe illness began in 2012 in Saudi Arabia with the Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) (Scripp Research Institute, 2020). On December 31 2019, it was identified and documented in Wuhan, Hubei Province like the way Ebola did in West Africa in 2014 (Aderemi, Ojo, Okoh & Efunbajo, 2020). Subsequently, Chinese authorities alerted the World Health Organization of an outbreak of a novel strain of corona virus causing severe illness, which was subsequently named SARS-CoV-2 and declared a pandemic (Ajisegiri, Odusanya & Joshi, 2020). In the same context, it causes severe symptoms the Mers-Cov (the beta corona virus that causes Middle East Respiratory Syndrome, or MERS), Sars-CoV (the beta corona virus that causes severe acute respiratory syndrome, or SAES and the new 2019 Novel Corona virus (2019-nCoV) outbreak that began in Wuhan (Stoppler, 2020). Worth of note is that, the virus could be transmitted to a human being through the mouth or nose in small liquid particles such as small aerosols or larger respiratory droplets when people speak, cough, sneeze, breathe heavily and sing. It could get into the mouth or eyes when in close contact of less than a meter apart from an infected patient. In like manner, handshakes and hugging with infected person could also transmit the virus. Therefore people should stay two meters away from anyone who is not a member of his/her household (Total Health Trust Ltd, 2020). Again, respiratory droplets among people in close contact could as well lead to the virus infection. Through aerosol transmission like spending a long period of time with infected persons indoors, crowded and in an inadequately ventilated

places, offices, restaurants, night clubs, places of worships and myriad of others. Similarly, it spreads when an infected person sneeze, cough on or touch surfaces or objects like tables, doorknobs, handrails. In the same vein, people contact the virus when uninfected persons touch the contaminated surfaces and touch their eyes, noses or mouths without sanitizing their hands first (World Health Organization, 2020). Sadly, when it is transmitted, it has a short life span characterized by runny nose, fever, breathlessness, cough, sore throat, headache, muscle pain, chills, and new loss of taste or smell. Probably occurs within 2 to 14 days after exposure to the virus. Remarkably, the virus has an evidence of asymptomatic transmission. In other words, a person could be infected and spread the virus without presenting clinical signs (Osayomi, 2020). Furthermore, the virus has pre-symptomatic transmission which is relating to early stage of the virus or disease before all symptoms has developed. In other words, accurate diagnosis is not possible. The next categories of people are those who are mildly symptomatic. These people feel slightly sick of covid-19 infection yet they continue to come in contact with others (Oyeranti & Sokeye, 2020). That shows how dangerous it could be not to observe the covid-19 protocols. As of 23rd July, 2020, corona virus cases had affected 213 countries and territories around the world and 2 international conveyances (Wobodo, 2020). Globally, Nigeria ranked 210 out of countries that were affected. The first case of corona virus pandemic in Nigeria was confirmed in infectious disease centre, Yaba, Lagos State on 27th February 2020. It was an index case of a 44-year old man, an Italian citizen who returned from Milan, Italy, on 24th February and presented at a health facility on 26th February 2020. The Italian citizen paid a visit to Ogun state where his company sight was located and went for check up the next day at his company's clinic. Shortly after, the patient was suspected of being infected with corona virus and the doctor referred the patient to Infectious Disease Hospital where the covid-19 status was confirmed.

Following the confirmation of the index case, 216 people were identified as contacts to be followed up. Of these, 45 travelled out of Nigeria and one of the remaining 176 contacts were confirmed to be positive for Covid-19 on 9th March 2020, in Ewokoro, Ogun state (Ajisegiri, Odusanya & Joshi, 2020). There has been an incessant increase in the number of cases in Nigeria spreading across several states. While majority of the initial cases were imported, most of the recent cases have no travel history or contact with such people. Despite that, the government has implemented public health interventions such as advocacy for physical distancing, full and partial lockdown and ban on large public gathering even in churches and mosques in order to mitigate the spread of the dreaded virus. The rise in the index cases of covid-19 pandemic led to the activation of Public Health Emergency Operation Centers at national and sub-national levels with associated active case finding through contact tracing (Elimian, Ochu & Ilori etal 2020). Globally, it was recorded that about 25 million cases and 840 deaths were confirmed in August, 2020 as the group of 20 (G20) accounted for 77% of the total cases and about 82% of deaths in general. In specific term, the spread of the virus in Nigeria continues to record significant increase as the latest statistics provided by the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control revealed. In terms of ranking, Nigeria is the seventh highest African country with respect to registered cases of corona virus. In the light of this, the amount of positive corona virus test grew by 100 on April 22, 2021 and resulted to a total of 164, 588 cases in Nigeria. More so, within the same period there were 154.6 thousand recoveries (Wobodo, 2020). In a similar perspective, the following table reveals the figures of corona virus cases by states in Nigeria.

Table 1: Data on Confirmed Covid-19 Cases in Nigeria by States as of 29TH April, 2021.

S/N	States	Cases	Active	Recovered	Deaths
1	Lagos	58,431	1,002	56,990	439
2	FCT	19,778	517	19,095	166
3	Plateau	9,057	13	8,987	57
4	Kaduna	9,054	15	8,974	65

5	Rivers	7,109	14	6,994	101
6	Oyo	6,852	7	6,721	124
7	Edo	4,902	7	4,710	185
8	Ogun	4,667	36	4,582	49
9	Kano	3,961	27	3,824	110
10	Ondo	3,248	1,105	2,080	63
11	Kwara	3,122	253	2,814	55
12	Delta	2,623	808	1,744	71
13	Osun	2,575	16	2,507	52
14	Enugu	2,401	359	2,013	29
15	Nasarawa	2,382	1,996	373	13
16	Katsina	2,097	14	2,049	34
17	Gombe	2,034	4	1,986	44
18	Ebonyi	2,030	33	1,965	32
19	Anambra	1,909	64	1,826	19
20	Akwa Ibom	1,859	24	1,821	14
21	Abia	1,689	9	1,658	22
22	Imo	1,657	28	1,592	37
23	Bauchi	1,548	13	1,518	17
24	Borno	1,337	99	1,200	38
25	Benue	1,188	575	591	22
26	Adamawa	1,103	796	275	32
27	Taraba	974	2	950	22
28	Niger	930	0	913	17
29	Bayelsa	886	5	855	26
30	Ekiti	870	8	851	11
31	Sokoto	775	0	747	28
32	Jigawa	528	20	492	16
33	Kebbi	450	42	392	16
34	Cross River	394	0	376	18
35	Yobe	390	29	352	9
36	Zamfara	240	11	221	8
37	Kogi	5	0	3	2
	Total	165,055	7,951	155,041	2,063

Source: Wikipadia the free encyclopedia, (2021, April 29). Template: Covid-19 pandemic data in Nigeria. Retrieved from <https://www.en.wikipedia.org> on 30/4/2021, 10:53am.

Data from table 1: above showed that the number of total cases in Nigeria was 165,055, active cases 7,951, total recovery 155,041 and total number of death were 2,063. Remarkably, Lagos

state has the highest number and Kogi state has the lowest case of corona virus. That established the fact that, the spread of corona virus significantly increased.

Theoretical Framework

Theoretical framework is essential because it serves as a basket to filter the variables of study and present them for possible comparison. On that footing, incentive theory was adopted as the theoretical umbrella for this discourse. Similarly, the rapid increase in the use of incentive in behavioural interventions made the theory relevant to the study. Its major proponents are Clark Hull 1940s and 1950s a psychologist whose earlier drive theory was built upon. Incentive theory otherwise known as the basic law of behavior connotes that, higher incentives leads to more effort and better performance. Extrinsic incentives are used by employers to motivate their employees (Gneezy, Meier & Rey-Biel 2011). The idea is that people are motivated by a drive for incentives and reinforcement. People behaviour is conditioned by actions that produce reward and they turn away from those without rewards or are likely to produce punishment. Human beings behave differently depending on the availability of incentives. There are monetary (salaries, wages, allowances) and non monetary incentive (job security, employee training, promotion at work, recognition & psychological well-being etc).

Tenets of the Theory: Incentive theory has the following tenets:

- 1) Reward must be obtained in order to act or be motivated.
- 2) Behaviours are driven by desire (reward)
- 3) Incentives are used to either engage in certain behavior or stop performing certain actions.
- 4) Incentive is powerful if the individual places importance on the reward.
- 5) There are good and bad rewards

6) Two people may act differently in the same situation

Application of the theory to the study

As people were stripped of their jobs, salaries slashed and myriad of others which are the monetary incentives to work, they became de-motivated coupled with the fear and anxiety that followed the spread of the covid-19 virus. In the light of the above incidence, the input of human resources was not felt at workplaces because of their change in behaviour caused by lack of incentive and reinforcement due to covid-19 outbreak. Flowing from the same direction, those who lost grip with their incentives lost the motivation needed for efficiency on their jobs. Several people would have worked harder assuming they were given the opportunity to receive salary or pay increase and vice versa. Sadly, the devastating effect of covid-19 translated into deductions in the salaries and wages of workers thus the attitude of human resources became decreased motivation and reinforcement to work. In other words, the behaviour of decreased motivation became encouraged through repeated stimulus.

Prior to the outbreak of the virus, payment of salaries was in full, regularly and psychologically rewarding to workers. Since the covid-19 pandemic outbreak and the introduction of full and partial lockdown, human resources experienced payment of half salaries, irregular payment of salaries, deductions from salaries, unpaid compensations and allowances, those who were due for promotion such were suspended and there was loss of jobs. On account of the fact that, human resources turned away from actions that produced punishment, non rewarding actions that de-motivated them such as loss of jobs, payment of half salaries, lack of promotion as a result of the consequences of being infected with the virus, even the fear and anxiety that preceded lost incentives affected the psychological well-being of human resources which translated to stress.

Human resources who worked from home also faced the risk of increased isolation as they lacked emotional connection with their colleagues. The aftermath of the stress was associated with sleep disorder, anxiety and depression.

Methodology

The paper is an ex-post facto research and adopted its analytical methodology from conventional content analysis based on secondary data gleaned from journals, textbooks, newspapers, web pages and government publications. Meanwhile, the data were analyzed through historical and interpretative methods.

Covid-19 Pandemic and its Implications for Human Resources

The mere fact that, human resources available to organizations are working with fear of being infected prevented them from contributing meaningfully in their organizations. More so, technology collapsed the boundaries between work and home. In other words, employees worked from their homes, others were at home idling away for fear of being infected. It therefore reduced the availability of human resources to make an input towards productivity and individuals to recruit in the places with high density of the infected cases despite the high rate of unemployment in Nigeria. Consequently, operations in organizations slowed down simultaneously with previous performance of activities. As a result of that, the drive on the part of the employers to recruit new workers became whittled in order to avert unnecessary spending (Mwita, 2020). In the same perspective, the talented and valuable human resources highly sought after, who are easily attracted by organizations in a peaceful and conducive environment could not be retained due to fear of attack which translated to lost investments in recruitment in crisis prone areas (Alonge, 2019). Consequently, manpower planning was affected negatively because

of the number of people that lost their lives which translated to loss of jobs as well since the outbreak of the virus. This is because the availability of human resources in the right quantity, quality and at the right time that are essential for effective human resources management was unavailable within the milieu of covid-19 (Aitken-Fox, etal 2020).

In corroboration of that, the dreaded virus had a devastating effect on remunerations of workers as many were dismissed; salaries were slashed and myriad of others. Most of the employees had to remain in their jobs because they had no option. That stirred up a change in the attitude of employees on the organizations thus their motivation at work became reduced. Despite the fact that, all employees appointments were not terminated, the psychological stress, fear, and insecurity of the rest of the workforce was so high that the degree of loyalty in those organizations decreased. Given the experiences of the pandemic, most workers were made redundant or idle at work which translated to an involuntary and permanent loss of employment by excess manpower. In other words, the human resources were idle doing nothing to enhance the productivity of the organizations. As a result of that, employers found them irrelevant and had to terminate their appointment. In the same context, the overwhelming nature of the never seen before catastrophe made employers to see termination of employments as a last resort bearing in mind the principle of frustration and contractual force majeure to terminate their workers employment (Seun-Oguntuga & Olorunmaiye, 2020). Employees turned their living rooms into their workplaces as a result of the lockdown orchestrated by the dreaded virus. In addition to that, employees had to simultaneously manage their children and work obligations. The wide spread impact of the virus made it difficult for recruiting practices in Nigeria. In an attempt to concur with the above view, Fine etal, (2020) maintains that, the virus was one of the

biggest destroyers of jobs in human history because people were stripped of their work the impact of the losses were not basically their income but their dignity, meaning and hope. Many organizations incurred some debt and found themselves in financial obscurity that led to salary slash in order to cut cost. Similarly, National Bureau of Statistics, (2020) confirmed that, according to states the looming unemployment amidst covid-19 pandemic in Imo state recorded the highest rate of unemployment in Nigeria with 48.7%. This was heralded by Akwa ibom 45.2% and Rivers state with 43.7%. The lowest rate came from Anambra (13.1%), Kwara (13.8%) and Sokoto (13.9%) respectively. Following that, Oseni et al, (2020) also agreed that, 42% of overall job losses in Nigeria were traceable directly to covid-19 pandemic with the highest percentage of lost job among the poor (49%) and urban (48%) households. The percentage of the wealthiest was (39%) and rural household (38%). Sadly, the agricultural, commerce and service sectors were the hardest hit by the spread of the virus. Again, AO2 Law, (2020). In support explained that, the unemployment report showed that Nigeria ranked 21st among the 181 countries with an unemployment rate of 23.1%. It was further stated that, it has a possibility to spike given the ravaging effects of the dreaded virus.

Training as a prime opportunity to expand the knowledge base of all human resources could not hold in order to protect or shield employees from being infected by the dreaded covid-19 virus. The work-from-home through electronic method adopted by several organizations created increased demand for digital skills training. Organizations that had previously offered physical skills training to their employees, moved to e-training. Funny enough, such shift had little or no impact on the employees' skills training. It became ineffective because a significant number of employees were not trained on its use. Furthermore, face-to-face training goes with per diem (a

daily stipend) for each training programme unlike e-training. That lack of financial incentives associated with e-training affected employees' motivation negatively (Simplilearn, 2020). Again, organizations could not invest in human potential development because the management was trying to save costs given the economic recession. That affected employee motivation, retention, well-being, organization's effectiveness, further advancement, and its ultimate success on the market (Seun-Oguntuga & Olorunmaiye, 2020).

Flowing from the same direction, employees could not acquire new skills, sharpen existing ones, perform better and increase productivity because of the insecurity created by covid-19 virus. In most cases, the necessary facilities for the e-training were not provided by the organization and training was derailed (Greene, 2020). There was a change in the structure of human resources because of the new attempt to work-from-home. Attendance was affected as time of resumption and close of work was no longer monitored. Offices that used electronic registers prior to the pandemic, suspended it. That made timing of employees' elastic because scheduling meetings for training could not work out because many employers and employees felt entitled to skip scheduled sessions as home life encroached on work life. In the same vein, ensuring accountability is a huge concern for human resources managers who aren't used to dealing with work-from-home. In an office environment, there is a free flow of information, people relate face-to-face in the halls, memos were sent, announcements were made and messages sent. Unfortunately, those things became more difficult to do because people were not conversant with it (Eudy, 2020). In the same context, several people who desired to be engaged in industrial training and internship in various organizations were also made incapacitated due to the covid-19 pandemic.

When the human resources were denied their incentives in form of job loss, lack of training or skills acquisition and myriad of others, it affected their psychological well-being which led to stress. Human resources working from home were at risk of increased isolation as they lacked emotional connection with their colleagues. Having friends at work is a crucial driver of employee engagement. Unfortunately, virtual or e-business environment could not guarantee that because it was harder to build and maintain friends through that medium. Similarly, most employees of organizations who were shifted to work from their homes because of the fear of contacting the virus were on full time while others worked some of the time. These categories of people were not provided the additional technology and support by their employers such as home Wi-Fi to enhance performance of workers for better productivity (Kropp, 2020). For that reason, employees began to get worried about the safety of their jobs and the well-being of their family because of the disruption in the way people worked thus it translated to psychological distress linked to work or a combination of work and personal issues (Neilson & Dorney, 2020).

Consequently, Briggs & Numere, (2020) submits that, prolonged physical, social distancing and lockdown order harmed the psychological well-being of human resources through sleep disorder, anxiety and depression. Besides, there were allergic manifestations like migraines, asthma, hypertensive or hypotensive attacks, headaches and varieties of pain etc (Lopresti, 2020). In like manner, the inputs of human resources were unfelt because most employees working from their homes were distracted by their family members. It was also confirmed from the findings of Olaseni et al, (2020) who said that, psychological complications were found to be related with young people who blamed themselves. Older people mostly females and well educated had higher rate of anxiety for the virus. Those with little education displayed slight anxiety and those

with known contact record with the infected persons felt they have the symptoms and need preventive measures against the virus. In specific terms, loneliness orchestrated by reduced social interaction was a risk factor for psychological disorder. They include drug abuse, insomnia, major depression and suicidal ideation especially among vulnerable people such as the elderly and health challenged people. Sadly, in Nigeria little or no attention was given to the psychological well-being of the human resources. More so, the attempts made to curtail the spread of the virus had a potential damaging effect on the psychological state of human resources. Such effect spanned through anxiety and depression as a result of inability to afford three square meals daily, chronic illness and those residing in places with a high incidence of the virus. In the same direction, the virus is associated with fear of getting sick and dying, being excluded socially, and placed in quarantine or loosing livelihood. For that reason, several employees react to anxiety and depression.

Concluding Remarks

Covid-19 pandemic was figured out as a threat to human resources at workplaces against the motive of making an input towards organizational efficiency despite a coordinated effort to mitigate the risk of being infected with the virus. Sadly, the fear and anxiety of getting infected made people to operate from their homes. Hence this study aimed at examining covid-19 pandemic and its implications on human resources. Findings from the study revealed that, most of the people were stripped of their jobs because most of them were redundant and could not make any input to productivity. That made human resources irrelevant to their employers. Training as an alternative means of reward was insignificant, there was de-motivation of workers and improved productivity were not visible as a result of the never-seen-before catastrophe

coupled with delayed payment of worker salary. Amidst that, those working from home required some technical know-how in terms of technology. Unfortunately, most of the human resources were not trained thus, it hampered efficiency and effectiveness. All these affected the psychological well-being of people negatively and made the input of human resources unfelt. Similarly, to address the challenges associated with threat of covid-19, delayed payment of salaries on human resources the recommendations below should be employed.

Recommendations

The paper recommends based on the findings as follows:

- 1) Individuals should be proactive and engage in entrepreneurial initiatives as a genuine strategy of creating jobs. To achieve that, people should take advantage of attractive sectors.
- 2) There should be a transition beyond reliance on primary commodity like exports and natural resources. To achieve that, we must diversify our economy by channeling our focus to alternative sources of jobs and growth such as petrochemicals, manufacturing and myriad of others.
- 3) Employees should be trained for efficiency. To achieve that, they should ensure a safe work practices such as wearing face mask and gloves, practicing social distancing, good hand hygiene and employees who need the personal protective equipments should be trained on that as well.
- 4) Human resources should be trained in infection prevention, control practices and use of personal protective equipments. This can be done through educating them on the need to enhance regular hand hygiene, providing and use of medical face mask.

- 5) The government should invest in workforce training approach. To achieve that, organizations have to evaluate, invest and promote workforce training programmes that align with the new normal and their skill needs.
- 6) There should be open access to mental health and psychological support services for all employees and employers. To achieve this, awareness should be created on where and how they can access them.
- 7) As a soothing balm for psychological well-being, individuals should desist from being misinformed about the covid-19 pandemic and its outbreak. This could cause a lot of worry. To achieve this, seek information only from the genuine sources such as World Health Organization, Centers for Disease Control.

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