Educational Leaders' Assessment of Educational Policies and Practices in the COVID-19 Era in Kwara State-based Universities, Nigeria

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Abstract

This paper focuses on educational leaders' assessment of educational policies and practices in the COVID-19 era in universities in Kwara State, Nigeria. The study set out to achieve two specific objectives: to ascertain the level of preparedness of educational leaders for distance learning during COVID-19 and to find out the provisions for monitoring and evaluating students' learning during COVID-19. The study adopted a qualitative research approach and a phenomenological research design. Purposive sampling was used to select seven educational leaders from the population of ten. Interviews were used to collect data, and thematic analysis was used to analyse the data collected using ATLAS.ti version 6.0. Results showed that educational leaders could prepare for distance learning during the COVID-19 era by training the trainers and creating virtual learning platforms. Furthermore, the findings showed that educational leaders made efforts to monitor student learning during the pandemic. The study concluded that more research is needed to place the situation of distance learning in each university in Nigeria in the right context. This is to bring about a policy implementation model that will facilitate effective teaching and learning by distance mode in the universities. Based on the results, it was recommended that adequate preparations should be made for distance learning during and beyond the COVID-19 era. Regular and diversified means of objectively assessing distance learning policies should be put in place to justify the human and material investments deployed in the process and reinforce the positions of the universities as pacesetters in educational innovations.

Keywords: COVID-19, educational policy, distance learning, virtual learning, educational leaders, assessment.

Introduction

In Nigeria, Africa, the South of the Sahara, and the world at large, COVID-19 has made the need for distance learning obvious, as compared to regular face-to-face teaching and learning approaches. This platform brings teachers and students together digitally and changes the mode of instructional delivery in many higher educational institutions, including universities. To curtail the spread of the virus, the Nigerian government gave blanket approval to different initiatives aimed at helping students at all levels of education to continue to learn in the comfort of their homes. The delivery of instruction via distance modes is not new in some of the universities in Nigeria, where distance learning centres have been established to cater to students who are unable to be accommodated in regular programmes.

What made it different in the COVID-19 era is the circumstances surrounding its deployment, the impromptu manner in which it had to be carried out and the new populations that had to be accommodated. The pandemic caught many institutions unaware and forced them into distance learning modes with little or no plans. While government support was given to primary and secondary school pupils in the form of government-sponsored lessons on radio, TV and online learning portals (Oyeniran & Oyeniran, 2020), no definite commitment seems to be made to tertiary institutions. TEP (2020) confirmed that the government did not provide an enabling environment for public tertiary institutions to transition from traditional schooling to remote schooling. Hence, educational leaders were left with no option but to administer distance learning in accordance with their experiences and understanding. Crucial decisions like the mode of instructional delivery required infrastructure, modalities of staff training, financial implications and commitment, and requirement for participation in courses were left to individual university administrators to decide. Virtual learning in the COVID-19 era was characterised by challenges such as inadequacy of ICT infrastructure, erratic power supply, lack of mobile learning devices, internet connectivity issues, data subscription costs, poor student-lecturer interaction and assessment issues (Yan & Moyi, 2021; Ugochukwu-Ibe & Ibekwe, 2021; Ebohon et al., 2021; Egielewa et al., 2022) There was also the problem of untrained/poorly trained lecturers, unmotivated lecturers, lack of policy framework, and lack of management support and political will, among others (Adetona et al., 2021; Olatunde et al., 2021; Anyira et al., 2021; Abosede et al., 2021). In the first instance, virtual learning was embarked upon during the COVID-19 era as a result of the directives given by the

Nigerian Government through broadcast media and/or circulars emanating from educational authorities. This situation exposed the fragility of the education system in Nigeria as there was no clear-cut policy framework to direct the institutions on the alternatives to traditional classroom practices (Yunusa et al., 2021).

Also, there was little or no infrastructure to initiate the commencement of the online teaching mode. There were also the issues of the digital divide, ownership of digital devices and the skills to operate them, which are unresolved. In many universities, there was no evidence of senate-approved, well-documented policies backing up the initiative. As a result, there were hardly any specific details on how to go about prosecuting virtual learning for a successful virtual learning experience. This is probably a cause of the lack of uniformity in the way virtual learning was carried out within and across institutions. Even within departments, disparities in the mode of learning and learning outcomes were recorded. Some lecturers scarcely had any online interaction with students since they were not hitherto online-inclined. For some others, it was more of an opportunity to dump the content of their lesson notes online without necessarily having any online interaction with their students. Lecturers who attempted to move beyond this level had various challenges to contend with (Ugochukwu-Ibe & Ibeke, 2021). With this state of affairs, it is obvious that there was a great deal of inequality in the quality and quantity of teaching and learning that took place during the period. Unarguably, the learning experience is not the same for the student who owns a learning device and the one who has to borrow one (Adetona et al., 2021). Despite these inequalities, which did not give students the chance to operate on a level playing ground, assessment was uniformly administered to all of them at the end of the learning experience. Furthermore, evidence from research reports on learning interventions during the COVID-19 incursion into universities' academic calendars shows that there was not much commitment in terms of training of lecturers, provision of mobile learning devices, ICT infrastructure, etc. Evaluation of learning outcomes, supervision of teaching/learning process, and provision of functional helpdesks to address lecturers' and students' complaints also posed some challenges to online teaching and learning during the pandemic.

Some studies reported the inability of some universities to offer distance learning opportunities to their students (Olatunde-Ayedun et al., 2021). There is also a report of the development of aversion to virtual learning

by some participants due to these unpleasant experiences (Adeoti et al., 2022; Egielewa et al., 2021; Adetona et al., 2021). Also, some lecturers believe that teaching online is much more difficult than teaching face-to-face (Lawal, 2020; TEP Centre, 2020). Private universities had the highest level of compliance with e-learning during the COVID-19 pandemic (Oyediran et al., 2020). They were able to fully utilise online learning since the facilities needed to do so were available (Olasunkanmi, 2020; Oyediran et al., 2020; Asuquo & Godwin, 2021). However, many students in private institutions were dissatisfied with online learning and would not want it to continue after the pandemic (Olasunkanmi, 2020). In Asoro and Osunade's (2020) study, students expressed that e-learning was neither more interesting than face-to-face classes nor offered more interaction time to students and their lecturers. This shows that the availability of distance learning facilities is one thing, but adequate planning for effective use is another. In countries like Pakistan, Ghana, the Philippines, South Africa, India, Namibia, and Russia, distance learning during COVID-19 also faced some difficulties (Abbasi et al., 2020; Aboagye et al., 2020; Rotas & Cahapay, 2020). Though disasters and emergencies are not on anyone's list of wants, preparing for them is not a bad idea.

Besides, no one knows exactly when COVID-19 will completely disappear (Mishra et al., 2020). Therefore, the need to address issues that can cause students to dislike distance learning cannot be over-emphasized. Students in higher institutions, especially those in public institutions, have lost a lot of learning opportunities due to industrial action by staff unions, student unrest, epidemics like Lassa fever and Ebola, and lately, the much-dreaded COVID-19 (Kaisara & Bwalya, 2021). Globalisation has made it expedient for today's graduates to compete for jobs in the global job market. In order to assist students to catch up educationally and be able to compete favourably with their counterparts in Nigerian-based private institutions and higher learning institutions outside Nigeria, an effective and efficient distance learning system must be instituted (Masalimova et al., 2022). Of particular concern is the fact that while the general experience and outcomes of the different learning interventions were vividly enumerated by different researchers, the roles played by the educational leaders of the institutions were not clearly defined.

Very few studies, like that of Yunusa et al. (2021), actually gave insight into the palliatives given by the government insight into government's

palliatives to mitigate the problems arising from distance learning. Their study helped us to understand that other parts of the world also encountered problems with COVID-19-triggered distance learning, and their governments came to the rescue by taking various decisive steps. Efforts made by the government to promote distance learning at primary and secondary levels were vividly seen during the period. Evidence has shown a conspicuous gap in information about government and educational authorities' commitment to successful distance learning in Nigerian universities during the COVID-19 era (Adetona et al. (2021); Olatunde et al., 2021). Positive outcomes of virtual learning are not expected to happen by chance. They should emanate from the consistent efforts of some purposeful and focused driving forces.

In other words, positive learning outcomes should a result from goal-oriented planning, management and capacity development for problem detection and problem-solving by educational leaders. Several researchers sprang into action to describe, assess and document the way and manner in which distance learning took place within and across different universities in Nigeria. While virtually all the research findings revealed many challenges with distance learning during COVID-19, the roles played by educational leaders during the process were not given enough prominence. Thus, the role of educational leaders in prosecuting successful teaching and learning via distance mode cannot be overstressed. According to Tomori (2022), the purpose of the university must go beyond awarding degrees and conducting research. Universities should play leadership roles in testing, validating and disseminating information about innovations to other echelons of the educational ladder as well as the general public, who tend to look up to them for guidance.

The university should not be a place where educational processes and outcomes are left to occur by chance. The aim of this study, therefore, is to highlight the views of educational leaders and the roles they played in driving distance learning initiatives in Kwara state-based universities during the COVID-19 era in Nigeria. This is with a view to providing evidence for policy making and programme design for effective distance teaching and learning in Universities in Kwara state and Nigeria in general. To this end, the following objectives were set to guide the study;

1. To ascertain the level of preparedness of educational leaders for distance learning during COVID-19

2. To find out the provisions for monitoring and evaluation of students' learning during COVID-19.

Theoretical Framework
Issues Management Theory by Howard Chase (1976)
In this study, the researchers employed Howard Chase's (1976) issues management theory to guide the study. Issues management theory is designed to prevent or lessen the damage an issue or a crisis can inflict on an organisation and its stakeholders. The theory enables one to understand, mobilise, coordinate and direct all strategies and policy-making functions, and all public affairs/public relations skills towards achieving one objective: meaningful participation in creating public policy that affects personal and institutional destiny.

The theory is considered relevant for this study because situations in an organisation that can lead to unexpected results and chaos are described as crises. According to Jaques (2009), a list of situations that can be considered crises in organisations include earthquakes, fire outbreaks, attacks, violence, infections, diseases, poisoning, suicide and substance abuse. These crises need measures to be taken by school leaders to reduce their negative impact. COVID-19 is an infectious disease which is described as a crisis or an issue in education that could negatively affect universities and their stakeholders (government administrators, staff, students, and parents). Universities in Kwara State, Nigeria, are among the educational organisations in West Africa that have been grappling with COVID-19 since it broke out. Since COVID-19 is described as an issue or crisis, the preparedness of educational leaders for effective response is crucial. This calls for institutional policies and practices. Jacques (2007) presented a holistic view of crisis management focused on crisis preparedness and prevention, which are parts of the overall process as the tactical steps to take once a crisis strikes.

In order to take tactical steps and cope with COVID-19 and prevent its negative effects, the educational leaders in Kwara State adopted distance learning policies and practices in universities. With gaps existing in policy implementation and practice, the perception and expectations of stakeholders are relevant in explaining such gaps in the actions of the organisation (Regester & Larkin, 2002). Actions of the organisation, as reflected in the present study, may include the provision and functionality of distance learning infrastructure in universities such as power supply, mobile learning devices, internet connectivity, data subscription, etc.

(Adetona *et al.,*2021). The author further emphasises the need for staff training on the implementation of distance learning, effective monitoring and evaluation of students' learning aimed at ensuring standardisation in teaching and assessment in distance learning in universities. The expectation of stakeholders in regard to issues management has to do with the short and long-term impact of the educational policy and practice during the COVID-19 era. The aim of the study is to understand the essence of a social phenomenon from the perspective of those who have experienced it.

Methodology

The research approach used for this study is qualitative. The study adopted a phenomenological design. It involves a qualitative research methodology to collect in-depth information about current affairs. This method generates rich, detailed data that leave the participants' perspectives intact and provide a context for their behaviour (Bazeley, 2013). Initially, the study identified ten individuals to serve as study participants in the three selected universities. However, a point of saturation was reached after interacting with the seventh participant. Three of these participants were the directors of open and distance learning in each of the three selected universities; two were deans, and the remaining two were heads of department.

Face-to-face interviews were conducted using a set of structured questions about the themes set out for the study. The themes elicited responses on educational leaders' preparation for distance learning during COVID-19, policies formulated to drive distance learning during COVID-19, perception of the policy implementation process and perceived gaps between policy and practice. Others are distance learning infrastructure in the institutions, provisions for monitoring and evaluation of students' learning and efforts put in place to ensure standardisation of teaching, learning and assessment. The interview was first transcribed and formatted to check for the completion of the data collected. Thereafter, the researchers read through the data to identify segments in the transcribed text that convey similar ideas. The researcher went ahead and coded the concepts. This was achieved by labelling identified concepts (data that contain similar ideas) (Harding, 2013). Related codes were thereafter merged to form categories, while similar categories were pooled together under themes for easy identification, access and retrieval of data, as recommended by Friese (2012). The ATLAS.ti version 6.0

assisted the analysis process. The themes that emerged from the data analysed, supported with quotations, were used to interpret the findings.

Findings
This section presents the qualitative data analysis of the in-depth interviews conducted for Deans, Directors and HODs across three universities in Kwara State.

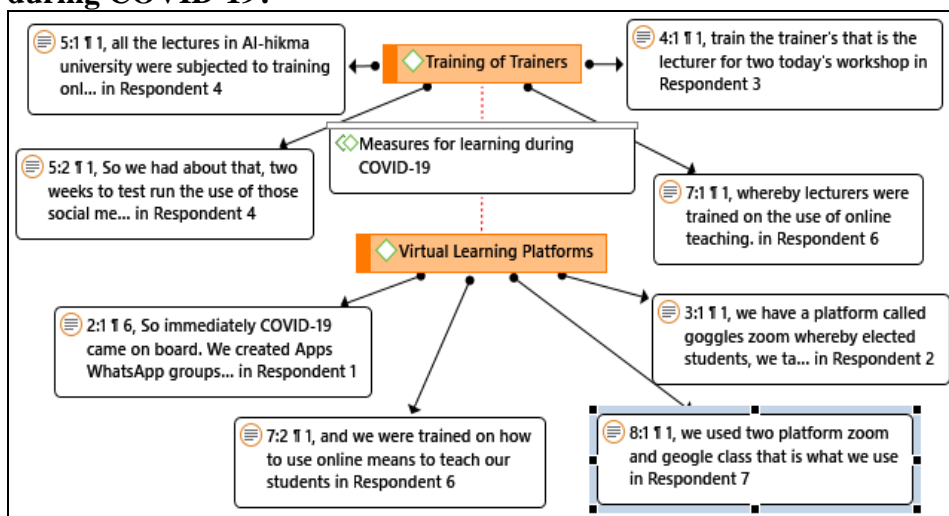**How prepared were the educational leaders for distance learning during COVID-19?**

Figure 1: Educational Leaders' Preparation for Distance Learning During COVID-19/

Figure 1 indicates that the educational leaders were prepared for distance learning during the COVID-19 era by training the trainers and creating virtual learning platforms. Participants 3, 4 and 6 noted that lecturers were trained on the use of different social media platforms for teaching and learning. According to participant 6,

> *"lecturers were trained on the use of online teaching to teach students in the university", while participant 1 said, "We created social media fora like WhatsApp groups, zoom classrooms, Google Classroom and Telegram groups. These are some of the applications we use to manage students during COVID-19 era".*

The participants agreed that lecturers were taught first how to teach students using different virtual platforms. In summary, all the participants

noted that all the lecturers in the selected universities were trained to use virtual platforms to teach students.

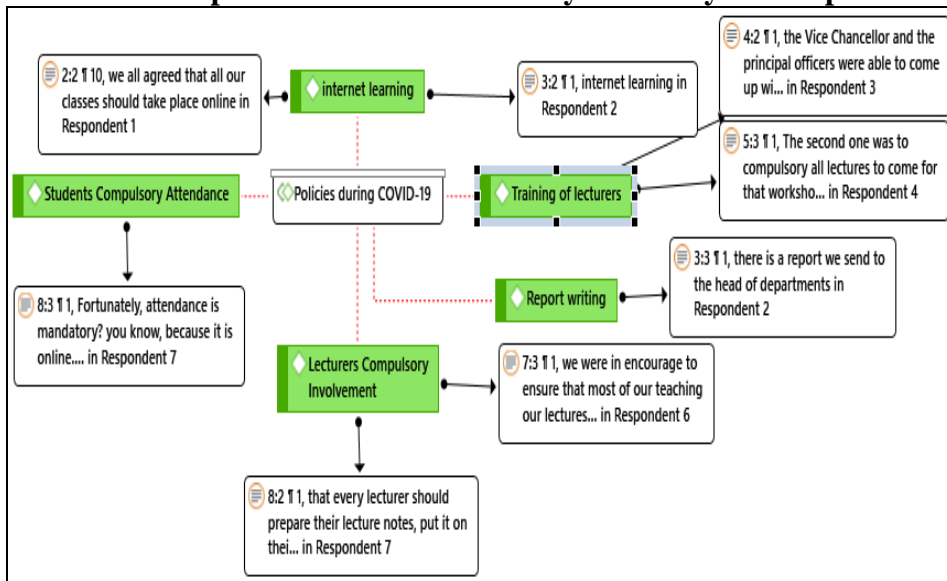## What relevant policies did each university or faculty come up with?

Figure 2: Policies Formulated to Drive Distance Learning During COVID-19.

Figure 2 shows that different policies were adopted by various institutions. Some of the policies include students' compulsory attendance, internet learning, lecturers' training, report writing, and lecturers' compulsory involvement. Participants 1 and 2 spoke about compulsory Internet learning and report writing. Participant 4 commented:

> *"First, we used WhatsApp. Secondly, we used the Zoom platform for online teaching. Sometimes when the network is not full, we use voice notes for teaching in place of the online Zoom platform",* while participant 7 emphasised that attendance of students was compulsory.

How do the Educational Leaders Perceive the Policy Implementation process in the Faculties of their Universities?
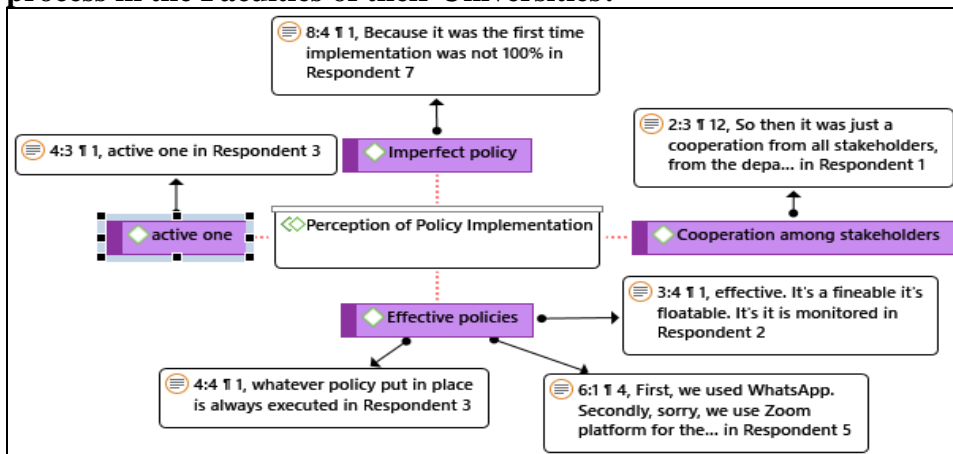

Figure 3: Participants' Perception of the Policy Implementation Process

Figure 3 shows the policy implementation perception of participants. According to participant 7, the implementation of policies that were adopted was not perfect. In participant 7's words, the implementation was not perfect because it was the first time. Participant 2 said that

> *"the policy was effective, fineable, floatable and monitored." According to participant 3, "the policy implementation process in my institution is a very active one and whatever policy is put in place is always executed and that is what is keeping the university growing."*

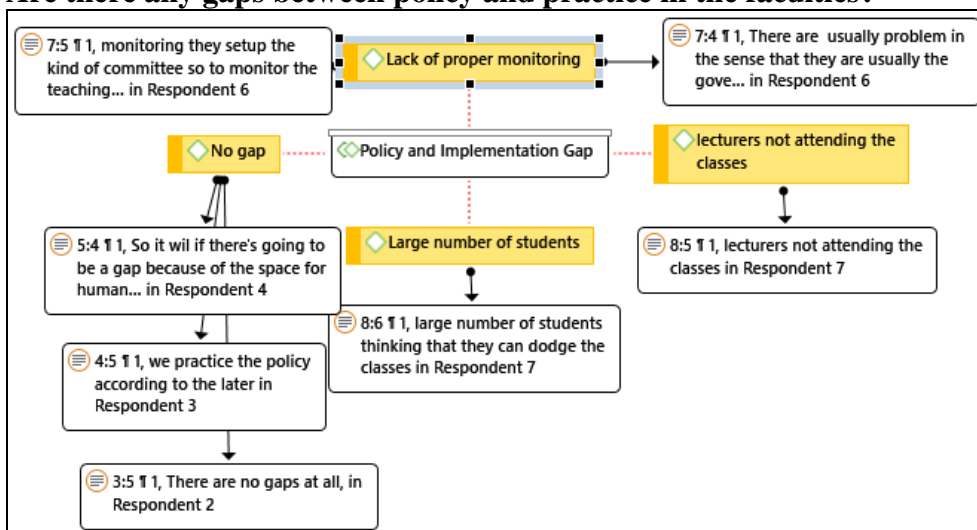## Are there any gaps between policy and practice in the faculties?

Figure 4: Perceived Gaps between Policy and Practice

Figure 4 shows the policy and implementation gap identified by participants. According to the Policy for Open and Distance Learning (ODL) in Nigerian Universities produced by the National Universities Commission (NUC). The following are some of the policy statements guiding the operation of ODL in Nigerian Universities: Curriculum should be congruent with minimum academic standards. Learning objectives should be well-defined, and pedagogy should meet them appropriately. Learning resources should be interactive, comprehensive and assessable and make use of media and ICT infrastructures. Evaluation and assessment should include a summative assessment that validates the achievement of learning objectives. There should be adequate and qualified staff that is appropriately skilled in terms of subject and ODL pedagogy. A robust management information system (MIS) should be implemented to enable programme monitoring. Some of the gaps identified include a lack of proper monitoring and a large number of students and lecturers who did not attend classes. Participant 7 opined that the gaps identified included lecturers missing the classes and a large number of students thinking that they could dodge the classes. However, the identified gaps were used to advance and improve the method. He said, "*Yes, of course, gaps existed, but attempts were made to close such gaps*". Participant 6 agreed that there were problems in the sense that the government or the management did not put in place appropriate measures to ensure proper monitoring of the policy to ensure that it is put into practice to the letter. However, participants 2 and 3 said there were no gaps at all as the policy was implemented to the letter. Participant 4, who also noted the inexistence of gaps, gave an exception. According to him, "*If there is a gap, considering that humans are imperfect, it will be a minor one because all the policies formulated were keenly followed, tested and evaluated*".

What is the state of distance learning infrastructure in the universities?
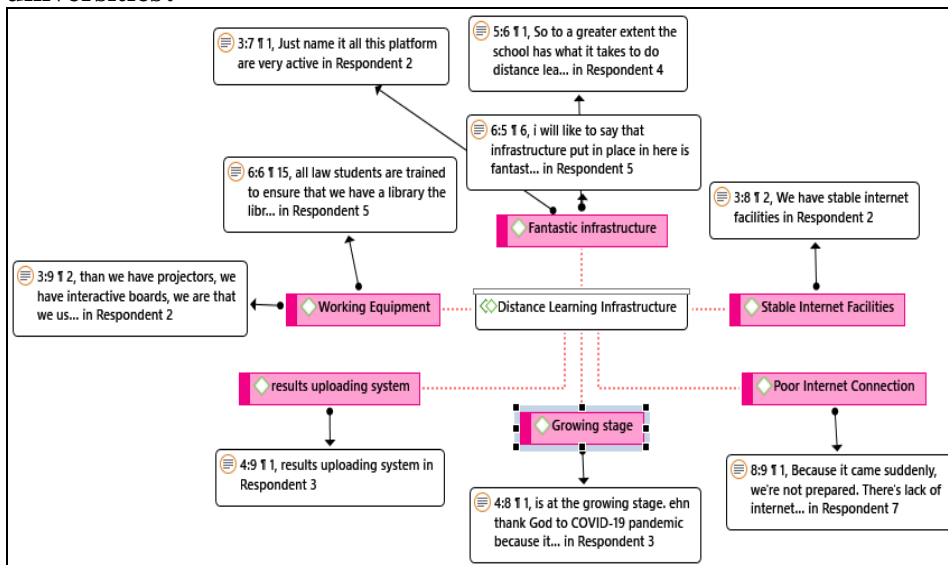

Figure 5: Distance Learning Infrastructure in the Institutions

Figure 5 shows the state of distance learning infrastructure as stated by participants of the study. While some participants agreed that the infrastructure of the infrastructure was good, with stable internet facilities, others said it was at a growing stage. In contrast, others complained of issues like poor internet connection. Participant 4 said,

> *"To a great extent, the school has what it takes to administer distance learning through online facilities." Participant 5 also noted: "I would like to say that the infrastructure put in place here is fantastic". Participant 2 noted:*

> *If I were to rate it on a scale of 100, I would say it is 100% because even after the COVID-19 lockdown, all these platforms are still active: Google Connect, Zoom, WhatsApp, just name it all. These platforms are very active. We still give assignments on these platforms.*

Participant 3 said: "*It is at the growing stage, but thank God for the COVID-19 pandemic because it's a blessing in disguise*". Participant 7 commented: "*Since it came suddenly, we were not prepared. There was a lack of internet access*".

Are there provisions for monitoring and evaluation of student learning?
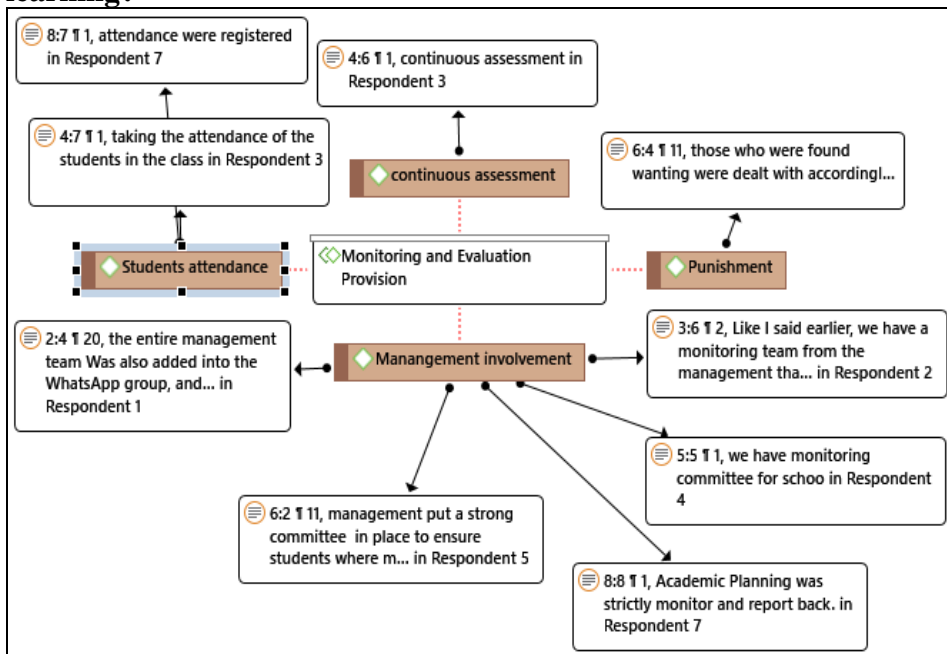

Figure 6: Provisions for Monitoring and Evaluation of Students' Learning

Figure 6 indicates monitoring and evaluation provisions made by the schools. The participants spoke about the provision of a monitoring committee. According to Participant 6, "A committee was set up *to monitor the teaching and learning among lecturers and students*." Participant 5 agreed by saying, "*Management put a strong committee in place to ensure students were monitored and those who were found wanting were dealt with accordingly*". Participant 4 commented: "*We had monitoring committees that ensured that in all online classes in each faculty, the monitoring group were added*".

Participant 2 and 1 were explicit about what the monitoring committee did. As Participant 1 said earlier, "We *had a monitoring team from the management that ensured that online learning infrastructure was intact and effective learning was taking place on all the platforms*". In respondent 1's words, "*The entire management team were added to the different WhatsApp groups, as monitoring committee members; this included the dean of each faculty and heads of departments*". Respondent 6 spoke about class attendance, which respondent 3 agreed with. In respondent 3's words:

A continuous assessment test that is regularly done" Another one is taking the attendance of the students in the online class by asking them to say "Hi," getting them to respond to questions, and submitting the reports of the student's attendance performance to the monitoring committee.

What efforts were put in place to ensure Standardization in Teaching, Learning and Assessment?
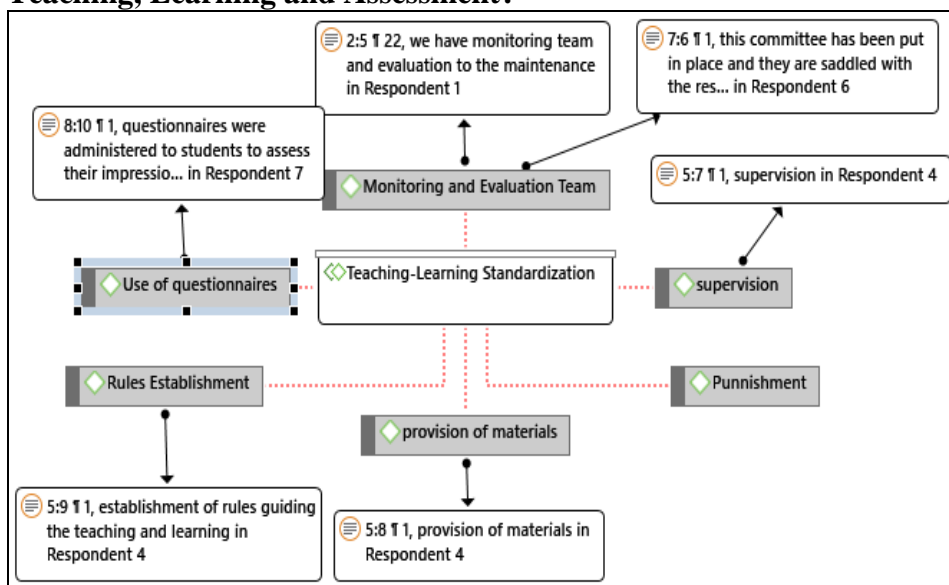

Figure 7: Efforts put in Place to Ensure Standardization of Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Figure 7 indicates the effort put in place to ensure standardisation in teaching and learning in distance learning during the COVID-19 era. Participant 1 spoke about stable internet facilities; Participant 2 mentioned a monitoring and evaluation team. Participant 2 said: "*We have projectors and interactive boards that we use for different seminars, clinical experiences, presentations, field works, and many things that are put in place. They are very active and in good working condition*". Agreeing to the monitoring and evaluation mentioned by Participant 2, participant 4 mentioned the issue of supervision. Participant 6 also agreed by saying, "*This committee has been put in place, and they are saddled with the responsibility to ensure proper monitoring and standardisation of the lecturer's teaching and evaluation.*" Participant 7 spoke about the use of questionnaires. Participant 7 commented: "*Questionnaires were administered to students to assess their impression on the effectiveness of the lecture, so as to improve in future*".

Discussion of Findings

In this study, educational leaders trained the trainers and created virtual learning platforms as preparation for distance learning during COVID-19. As observed in this study, the creation of virtual learning platforms is a good development, especially where popular social networking sites like WhatsApp are involved. Similar studies have reported the use of learning platforms to achieve regular instructional interactions between lecturers and students (Egielewa et al., 2022; Anyira et al., 2021). Variety in these platforms is a good idea as it gives participants a chance to choose the one that is most convenient for them. As one of the institutions did, test running the online teaching platforms before deployment for use is highly recommended as it will give room for necessary adjustment to the needs of the target learners. Regarding policy formulation, the present study showed that different policies were adopted by various institutions.

These include students' compulsory attendance, internet learning, lecturers' training, report writing, and lecturers' compulsory involvement. This was contrary to the opinion of Adeoye et al. (2020), who argued that in many universities, there was no evidence of senate-approved, well-documented policies backing up the initiative. Educational leaders need to formulate strong policies and set the right mechanisms in motion to ensure adequate implementation. Perceptions varied on the issue of policy implementation. While some saw the policies as being active and effective, with cooperation among all stakeholders, others considered them ineffective due to the novelty of the use of distance learning technologies with regular undergraduates. Apart from the innovative aspect of the policy, lecturers and students must be considered to achieve the objective for which the policy was formulated. Ugochukwu-Ibe and Ibeke (2021) agreed that lecturers who attempted to move beyond the excellent use of virtual learning equipment had various challenges to contend with. As a result of these efforts, it is obvious that there was a great deal of inequality in the quality and quantity of teaching and learning that took place during the period of COVID-19. Adetona et al. (2021) noted that the learning experience is not the same for the student who owns a learning device and the one who had to borrow one. The gaps between policy and practice and participants include a lack of proper monitoring of teaching and learning. Also, despite the policy on compulsory attendance by staff and students, most students did not attend classes; many lecturers did not attend classes. This contradicted the policy statement identified above. Given this situation, Abbasi, Ayoob, Malik and Memon (2020) argued that traditional in-person teaching was better

than online classes. Policies can only be implementable when the right mechanisms are implemented.

For instance, lack of access to any one or more learning devices, data subscription, good internet connectivity, and power supply by either a lecturer or student is enough to hinder effective participation in distance teaching and learning activities. These disparities in opinion are not unexpected, in as much as there is the absence of definite policies to drive the provision and maintenance of online infrastructure during the COVID-19 distance learning experience. Experiences are bound to be different. As a result, the provision of additional infrastructural facilities by relevant stakeholders is a recommendation common to most research conducted on distance learning during COVID-19 (Abosede et al., 2021). This will also help to keep students informed and prepared for the task ahead. The intervention of educational leaders should be a continuous process. This is why setting up a mechanism for monitoring and evaluation through the addition of members of the management team to classes on learning platforms is a welcome development, as the necessary checks and balances for fruitful learning can be achieved. It is important to institute policies that provide a level playing ground for all lecturers and all students to ensure standardisation and achieve desirable learning outcomes. The growth in online education will require regulatory systems and policies to standardise quality and enhance accountability (Mungai et al., 2022). Similarly, as Zhang et al. (2020) observed, putting efficient and effective policies in place is the best way to ensure standardisation and prevent wide disparities in the quality and quantity of instruction and consequent learning outcomes.

Conclusion
Based on the two research questions and seven interview questions generated therein. Educational leaders were able to prepare for distance learning during the COVID-19 era through training trainers and the creation of virtual learning platforms. The policies adopted by individual institutions varied; however, lecturers' compulsory involvement and students' compulsory attendance were common to all. Efforts at standardisation included setting up monitoring committees to monitor the quality and quantity of teaching in the different online forums. This could mean that Kwara State's higher institutions were, to an extent, exempted from the irregularities pointed out in the literature. More research is needed to place the distance learning situation in each Nigerian university in the right context. This is to pave the way for designing a policy

implementation model that will facilitate effective teaching and learning by distance mode in the universities.

Recommendations

Right before establishing the distance learning programme, educational leaders should collaborate with government and non-governmental agencies that can assist in providing ICT infrastructure, learning devices, and staff training, among others. While some of the identified challenges may be well beyond the control of the educational leaders, quite a number of them are amenable to solutions if educational leaders promptly rise up to the challenges. Projecting beyond the COVID-19 era, what are the imperatives for improvement? To answer this question, we offer the following recommendations to educational leaders, especially those in universities that serve as mainstreams of distance learning initiatives.

- Regular and diversified means of objectively assessing distance learning policies are needed. This will justify the human and material investments deployed in the process and reinforce the universities' positions as pacesetters in educational innovations.
- Adequate preparations should be made for distance learning during and beyond the COVID-19 era, as disasters can be highly unpredictable despite the most sophisticated human interventions. This can be achieved through training the trainers and creating virtual learning platforms, such as WhatsApp groups, Zoom classrooms, Google Classroom, and Telegram groups.
- Educational leaders should formulate strong and achievable policies and set the right mechanisms in motion to ensure adequate implementation in order to ensure effective distance and learning during and beyond the COVID-19 era.
- Educational leaders should ensure that the perceived gaps in policy implementation, such as lack of proper monitoring and a large number of students and lecturers not attending classes, are bridged to enhance distance learning in universities.
- Educational institutions, government agencies, and non-governmental organisations should collaborate to provide ICT infrastructure, learning devices, and staff training, among other requirements for a successful virtual learning experience.
- Proper monitoring and evaluation of students' learning should be ensured. This can be achieved by setting up committees to monitor the teaching and learning among lecturers and students. To make assessment meaningful and results documentable, the medium for

- assessment, frequency of assessment, task volume, and grading rubrics should be well spelt out at the beginning of virtual learning.
- Furthermore, educational leaders should enable the standardisation of distance learning and assessment in universities through stable internet facilities, monitoring and evaluation teams, provision of projectors, and interactive boards that are used for different seminars, clinical experiences, presentations, and field works. These boards should also be in good working conditions.

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