

Healthcare Workers' Perception of the Implications of COVID-19 to Sustainable Development in Nigeria

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Abstract

This study examined healthcare workers perception of the impact of COVID-19 and its health implications to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Nigeria with specific focus on SDG-3 which aims at "Good Health and Well-Being". This study adopted survey research design. The data were gathered through structured questionnaire. 70 copies of questionnaire were distributed to the staff of Biorepository and Clinical Virology Laboratory of University College Hospital (UCH), Oyo State Ministry of Health (OYSMOH), Oyo State Primary Health Care Board (OYSPHCB), Oyo State SDGs Office; Oyo State Emergency Operation Centre (EOC); the National Agency for Food and Drugs Administration and Control (NAFDAC); and National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS). The findings showed that although COVID-19 has negatively affected the plans towards the achievement of the SDG-3 in Nigeria; it could also be helpful in fast-tracking the attainment of the SDG-3 if more resources are mobilised to limit the negative impact. The study however, concluded that, achieving some of the objectives of the SDG-3 by 2030 is possible if the government, the policy makers and the several agencies saddled with matter concerning health and overall national development continue to direct resources towards the healthcare sector. The study recommended that the government, the health institutions, and other concerned nongovernmental organisations (NGOs) should ensure other health related issues are not neglected while tackling the COVID-19.

Keywords: COVID-19, Global health, Sustainable Development Goals, SDG-3, Nigeria

Introduction

In December 2019, the Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) broke out from the city of Wuhan in China, and it began to spread across the world. Due to the fast-spread and the effects it has on human life, it was declared a pandemic in early 2020 by the World Health Organisation (WHO) with preventive protocols. The tremendous social and economic consequences of the health crisis appear to have worsened existing inequities while creating new ones, with the most vulnerable bearing the brunt of the consequences. Nigeria's development ambitions and objectives have driven most of her policy initiatives in acknowledgement of this (Fagbemi, 2021). Starting from the year 2020, COVID-19 already became one of the deadliest breakouts in the history of mankind. With millions of people affected worldwide and thousands of deaths the world economy took a deep downturn. Prevailing worldwide inequality made it difficult for the deprived group of people to acquire sufficient health care facilities. COVID-19 pandemic made the situation worse than any other time in the history of mankind.

Although there are no silver linings in a global pandemic, but there has been surprising positivity to observe such as the dramatic acceleration of digitalisation in several fields (the education sector with e-learning for example). Changes in working techniques and styles have been recorded anywhere there is sufficient internet access. Meetings and conferences that used to take place in real, face-to-face settings are now just well on screen. Necessity has given birth to digital invention, as well as quick learning advancements, proving to us that we can change faster than our most ambitious management plans anticipated was conceivable.

Efforts on sustainable development has not ceased because of these advancements. In fact, it has worsened in certain important sectors (AtKisson, 2021). It is also crucial to remember that COVID-19 has not rendered

achieving sustainable development completely impossible. It has, of course, made meeting those targets by 2030 much more difficult (AtKisson, 2021). This background calls for the need to study the implications of the coronavirus on the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals in Nigeria with specific attention to Sustainable development Goal 3 (SDG-3) which aims at universal good health and well-being.

Statement of the Problem

The COVID-19 pandemic is a serious threat to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); specifically, Sustainable Development Goal 3 (SDG-3) which aims at good health and well-being for all, with consequences for all other SDGs. It is also important to note that health was also highly represented within the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) framework, with three of the eight objectives relating to health directly (MDG 4–6) and numerous other goals relating to health indirectly. Nevertheless, most third world countries of Africa, Asia, the Caribbean and Latin America widely missed out on these goals. The big question is, with COVID-19, will Nigeria be able to achieve the SDGs by 2030?

The first coronavirus case in Nigeria was confirmed on February 27, 2020, in Lagos state by the Virology Laboratory of the Lagos University Teaching Hospital (LUTH). The infected person, who arrived in the nation on February 25 from Milan, Italy, was quarantined at the Lagos State Biosecurity Facilities, where samples were collected for testing, and was treated at the Infectious Disease Hospital in Yaba, Lagos (NCDC, 2020)

As at the time of this research, there are over 6.2 million confirmed death cases of COVID-19 globally (WHO, 2022); in Nigeria, the confirmed death cases are over 3,100 (NCDC, 2022). This aroused the interest the researchers to study the implication of COVID-19 on the achievement of the SDG-3 in Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The purpose of this research is to study the effects of COVID-19 on the prospect of attaining Sustainable Development Goal 3 in Nigeria by 2030. However, the objectives are to:

1. Examine the implications of COVID-19 on the attainment of SDG-3 in Nigeria.
2. Find out the prospects of COVID-19 towards the attainment of SDG-3 in Nigeria.

Literature Review

Sustainable Development

Sustainable development is defined as development that satisfies the requirements of the present people without jeopardising future generations' ability to satisfy their own needs. Sustainable development has evolved as a means of conserving the world's resources, even though its underlying objective is to dominate the world's resources (Amodu, 2020). Environmentally sustainable economic growth is defined as economic development that serves the needs of all while leaving future generations with less natural resources than we have now. The core of this type of development is a stable interaction between human activities and the natural environment, which does not lower future generations' chances of enjoying a standard of living at least as excellent as ours.

Sustainable development is a type of respect for economic, social, and environmental development. It is also about caring for future generations and meeting the needs of the most vulnerable communities. Sustainable development, like many concepts linked to economic thought, has gone through a long process before being systemised and approved by the world community as the development framework of the end of the century and the future (Gauttam, Singh & Kaur, 2020).

The meaning of sustainable development may be interpreted in a variety of ways, but at its foundation is a development strategy that seeks to balance many, often conflicting, objectives against knowledge of the environmental, social, and economic constraints we confront as a community. Mankind was exploiting technology in ways that were negatively harming nature; resources were being destroyed daily, and

consumption had increased exponentially. To protect nature and its valuable resources, the concept of sustainable development was created (Samout & Marnissi, 2020). If development can ensure satisfying the requirements of all countries and populations for the present generation without jeopardising future generations' ability to meet their own needs and maintain biodiversity, then development is sustainable.

Sustainable Development Goals in Nigeria

Nigeria began implementing the SDGs very immediately after the approval of the 2030 Agenda. First, it developed institutional structures at the national and subnational levels to facilitate successful implementation (Amodu, 2021). With this early start, numerous action plans were implemented between 2016 and the present, while others are still underway. Nonetheless, just as Nigeria began the 'Decade of Action' for the SDGs in January 2020, the COVID-19 outbreak occurred, casting doubt on Nigeria's ability to meet the SDGs. It should be noted that Nigeria has its first index case on February 27, 2020. Despite federal and state government efforts to limit the spread of the epidemic across the country, the negative influence of the pandemic on socioeconomic development and other repercussions will endure until 2022.

The most significant effect of the COVID-19, as expected, has been on the Nigerian economy and health system. Prior to COVID-19, the health sector got just 25% of its budget requirements in 2019, putting a burden on the country's health systems' coping capabilities. Financing is currently going toward COVID-19, leaving other healthcare needs to face more budget shortfalls. Federal and state governments, as well as development agencies and the organised private sector, have increased their efforts to enhance health-care financing. The formation of the Presidential Task Force on COVID-19 and the implementation of the fiscal infrastructure plan are both positive developments. The Federal Government has obtained life insurance for all frontline health professionals involved in the continuing struggle against the spread of COVID-19 in Nigeria, and cash transfers "have been said" to have been extended to over 10-million Nigerians using the National Social Investment Office's existing database (NSIO) (OSSAP-SDGs, 2020)

Meanwhile, the socioeconomic concerns and disruptions are having a significant impact on an economy that is mostly dependent on oil and gas earnings, which have fallen. Some of the most effective 'social vaccinations' against COVID-19 are restricted suppression response tactics like lockdowns, which disproportionately affect the poor and their livelihoods. While the country was quarantined to combat the virus, several influential persons and corporate organisations provided timely and appropriate palliatives to the vulnerable and disadvantaged members of society which to some extent, reduced tensions and avert civil unrest.

Understanding the SDG-3: “Good Health and Well Being”

The SDGs are much broader than the MDGs, consisting of 17 goals and 169 targets. Health is the explicit focus of SDG-3, to 'Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages' and is backed up by 13 targets and 4 mechanisms that cover a wide range of global health issues (UN, 2015). In addition, almost all the other 16 goals are related to health or the broader determinants of health in some way or other. These include SDGs 10 and 13, which call for reduced inequalities and climate action, respectively. The scale, scope, and ambition of the SDGs are remarkable, covering issues such as poverty, employment, hunger and malnutrition, access to secondary and tertiary education, gender discrimination and violence, housing, water, sanitation, energy, communications technology access, marine pollution, and species loss (Harmer & Kennedy, 2020). Supporters argue that the scale and scope are more suited to bringing about meaningful development, because they reflect the complexity of the problems that the SDGs aim to resolve (Sachs, 2021). But critics such as the economist argue that they are “sprawling and misconceived”, while others have criticised the “encyclopedic” range of goals and targets such that “everything is top priority, which means nothing is a priority”, thus rendering them “worse than useless” (Easterly, 2015).

It is argued that open working groups and “global conversations” made SDG planning the “largest consultation programme in UN history” (Dearden, 2015). Nevertheless, the SDG terms of engagement were decided in advance (without wide public engagement), Polls, on the other hand, encouraged participants to prioritise those pre-selected development issues. More significant objections of the SDGs focus on their internal contradictions and the fact that the objectives do not address the root cause of the problems they seek to address, namely the global economic system, which has resulted in vast inequality and potentially catastrophic climate change (Hickel, 2015). The SDGs are informed by Ban Ki-moon’s assertion that ‘there can be no Plan B because there is no Planet B’ (UN, 2020).

Although all SDG-3 targets are relevant to some extent, one in particular, "achieve universal health coverage, including financial risk protection, access to quality essential healthcare services, and access to safe, effective, quality, and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all" could be viewed as an overarching goal that supports the success of all others. Coverage of essential health services, defined as the average coverage of essential services based on contact tracing interventions directed at, among other things, infectious diseases, non-communicable diseases, and provision of service and access, among general and more disadvantaged populations, is one of the related indicators. Contact tracing include tracing and monitoring contacts, assisting with contact quarantine, increasing human resources, and utilising digital technologies (CDC, 2019).

SDG-3 and COVID-19

Each SDG has several obstacles, each of which may be articulated and understood in terms of objectives that must be completed to achieve the goal. Measurable aims incorporating greater research and development, expanded and diverse health finance, enhanced healthcare workforce, and strengthened capabilities of all nations in health risk reduction and management are of special importance in SDG (WHO, 2020). Underscoring the need of understanding and resolving "communicable, non-communicable, and environmentally induced diseases," these aims encompass efforts to address all main health priorities and are acknowledged as particularly vital for COVID19 and other infectious diseases programmes.

SDG-3 in this scenario asks for a better knowledge of COVID-19's genetics, evolution, propagation, control, immunology, and epidemiology. From an economic standpoint, it has posed a difficulty to comprehend the implications for globalisation, supply chain, stock markets, trade and mobility, and labour unemployment. From a "needs" standpoint, COVID-19 has caused individuals to reconsider the impact on society due to a shortage of screening tests, a lack of hospital beds, a lack of medical supplies, and a lack of essentials such as water and toilet roll. From a policy and control standpoint, COVID-19 has stressed the importance of various preventative measures that have been recommended, such as the use of facemasks, social distance, frequent hand washing, school and university closures, and new travel prohibitions (Seshaiyer & McNeely, 2020).

COVID-19 has presented obstacles, but it has also provided some potential opportunities. School and university closures, for example, are leading to more and better ways to online instruction and remote education. Although company closures have had a severe impact on significant portions of the economy and labour, they have also boosted productive and cost saving telework and teleconferencing options for individuals. People have found unique and imaginative methods to engage and conduct daily tasks, both personal and professional, as a result of social distance. The research community has risen to the occasion in the pursuit of remedies and containment of the COVID-19 pandemic. Related efforts will contribute to a better understanding of the nature of COVID-19 spread in comparison to previous infectious diseases, its relationship to factors such as high temperature, social distancing, spreading, and regional variations, and its effect on the world economy, socio-cultural and political relations, and health policy in general (Seshaiyer & McNeely, 2020).

COVID-19 has presented the world with a crisis that has both made the need for sustainable development clearer than ever before and necessitated a solution based on sustainable development principles. Similarly, the

nations that have responded most successfully to the challenges posed by COVID-19 have done so by accelerating their transitions toward economies and communities characterised by sustainable development principles. These countries have made their education, health, and social support systems more inclusive by leveraging the potential of recent technological advances, while reshaping economic patterns to incentivise more efficient resource use, cleaner and more accessible urban environments, and more climate-conscious outcomes (Bajpai & Biberan, 2020).

Review of Empirical Studies

Ogisia and Begho (2021) in a study titled “COVID 19: Ramifications for progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Nigeria” investigated whether the impact of COVID-19 at the domestic level is an impediment to attaining the SDGs of no poverty (SDG1), zero hunger (SDG2), excellent health and wellbeing (SDG-3), and decent work and economic growth (SDG4) (SDG8). According to the findings of this study, COVID-19 constituted a significant danger to the achievement of SDGs 1, 2, 3, and 8. However, the study advised that the government mitigate the impact of COVID-19 by targeted social protection programmes and policies to guarantee that the country stays on pace to meet the SDGs.

Wang and Huang (2021) conducted research on the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on Sustainable Development Goals. The study investigated the impact of the pandemic on sustainability. Web of Science research design was adopted. Cite Space and VOS Viewer was adopted for data processing. The study recommended that the continued spread of the pandemic may lead to a new round of economic recession and financial collapse. The study showed that the COVID-19 pandemic has brought negative effects on the 17 objectives of the SDGs. As a result, the government must implement a long-term strategy to rehabilitate the economy and infuse fresh dynamism into the economy to support the blossoming of sustainable business models.

Odey, Alawad, Atieno, Carew-Bayoh, Fatuma, Ogunkola and Lucero-Prisno (2021) examined impacts of the pandemic on the achievements of Sustainable Development Goals in Africa. As noted in this study, since the launch of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015, Africa has made some progress towards its achievements, particularly in gender equality, SDG-5; climate change, SDG-13; and preserving life on land, SDG-15. Even though some African nations have achieved a real effect on other goals such as health, food production, and economic growth, these initiatives have suffered significant setbacks as focus has shifted to containing the spread of the new coronavirus. As much as mitigating the spread of COVID-19 is important, so is ensuring efforts made on other goals are not lost, as the SDGs are much interconnected, and failure in one impact others. The study concluded that, for the African continent to attain sustainable development beyond COVID-19, relevant stakeholders must adopt strategic activities that include innovations, assessments, and strong political will toward implementations, so that the continent does not fall behind in achieving global targets by 2030.

Vassileva and Simić (2021) studied COVID-19 pandemic as a challenge and opportunity for reaching the Sustainable Development Goals. As the United Nations confirm, COVID-19 can mark “the rebirth of society as we know it today to one where we protect present and future generations”. The study, however, examined the impact of COVID-19 on the implementation of the SDGs. The study adopted a survey research design. The study showed that the world economy has a direct impact on the sustainable development and reaching the goals of the “Agenda 2030”. The study concluded that COVID-19 is an unprecedented disaster, but it is also a tremendous opportunity for an economic reset.

Ekwebelem, Ofielu, Nnorom-Dike, Iweha, Ekwebelem, Obi and Ugbede-Ojo (2021) in a similar study examined the threats of COVID-19 to achieving United Nations sustainable development goals in Africa. The authors acknowledged that hunger, poor health care, bad educational institutions, poverty, and a lack of

drinkable water and sanitation have all worsened the harmful effects of the COVID-19 epidemic in Africa. With the pandemic and a troubling financial meltdown because of COVID-19, our capacity to meet the 17 United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the post-pandemic era has been called into doubt. There is fear that the economic downturn induced by COVID-19 would not only force more people into poverty but will also impede foreign assistance for Africa's progress toward attaining the SDGs. This study emphasised how the COVID-19 epidemic might jeopardise the achievement of the SDGs in Africa. The research assessed scholarly studies, observations, and current worldwide trends. The study concluded that, although strengthening of health-care systems has become a priority in Africa; yet fundamental SDGs must not be sacrificed to contain the pandemic. In recommendation, the study noted that, despite the pandemic, African countries need to identify policies that will not compromise the implementation of the SDGs and/or jeopardize previously achieved SDG targets.

Joshua (2020) assessed the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on water, health, food, economy nexus and sustainable development in developing countries. The research examined how COVID-19 has affected the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Sub-Saharan Africa. According to the findings, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on human survival. The study recommended that Sub-Saharan Africa redesign and implement measures aimed at mitigating the impact of the pandemic, particularly on economic activities, and concluded that the pandemic had an impact on economic activities, affecting other sensitive sectors such as agriculture, education, healthcare, and water.

Ussif (2020) similarly investigated the impact of novel COVID-19 on Sustainable Development Goals. This study examined the impact of novel COVID-19 on the 17 sustainable development goals of the United Nations, also known as the global goals and "Agenda 2030". It examined the effects of COVID-19 on the health and lives of the people, the employment of people, educational systems, the economic development of the nations, the social gatherings, religious worships, increasing the poverty levels of the poor due to their daily earnings who were lockdown for months, partnerships across the world that become standstill, and its effects on the past and incoming conferences, workshops, and symposiums worldwide. The study used secondary data through the World Health Organization's report on COVID-19 and its effects, United Nations Reports on Sustainable Development Goals, various countries' report on the effects of the virus on their economies. The different aspects that are examined are based on the literature review result that was generated based on the research questions of the study. The study found out that COVID-19 has a significant impact on all the aspect of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) worldwide. Employment, food production and distribution, health, poverty, and hunger, industries, economic activities, transportation, and partnerships are all heavily impacted. The study then recommend that effective measures should be taken by the World Health Organization and the various countries governments to help end this serious and widely spread pandemic across the world.

Seshaiyer and McNeely (2020) conducted a study on the challenges and opportunities from COVID-19 for global sustainable development. The study recognised the difficulties and possibilities presented by COVID-19 by relating the immediate need to curb the disease's spread to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The research focuses on health inequalities and the severe repercussions of the crisis on some demographics, particularly poor and underserved populations, and nations in comparison to others, considering wide social, political, and economic impacts. This study identified significant priorities for attaining SDG-3 (Good Health and Wellbeing), which will aid in strengthening capacity for scaling up healthcare and policy responses to identify, battle, and manage COVID-19. According to this research, the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic has reinforced the already vital relevance of SDG-3, which calls for "Good Health and Wellbeing" for all as a global aspiration. Despite widespread misunderstanding and disinformation about the disease, respected health and research institutions supplied trustworthy sources of information throughout the COVID-19 crisis, assisting in the debunking of erroneous claims and misinformation. This result recommends implementing ethical and practical techniques for allocating healthcare resources correctly to facilitate rapid

decision making at the global level. Finally, the pandemic has highlighted the importance of coordinated and cooperative governance within and across nations, as well as the establishment of flexible policies based on the best available evidence and resource sharing.

Bajpai and Biberman (2020) studied COVID-19 and pathways to sustainable development. As noted in the study, the pathway to sustainable development is governed by six major transformations: the digital revolution; human capacity and demography; consumption and production; decarbonization and energy; food, biosphere, and water; and smart cities. The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the dynamics of each of these revolutions in both positive and detrimental ways throughout the world. Countries that have successfully navigated the crisis have typically implemented policies that will accelerate these transformations toward sustainability, whereas countries that have failed to meet the challenge have reinforced patterns which will make sustainable development more difficult to achieve in the future. Following in the accomplishment of the most successful nations, policymakers in other countries now have a clear set of instruments at their disposal for saving people's lives, protecting the health of their economies, and laying the framework for a sustainable future.

Methodology

The study adopted descriptive survey research design which is predicated on the use of primary and secondary sources of information. The population of this study comprises staffs of Biorepository and Clinical Virology Laboratory, University College Hospital (UCH); Oyo State Ministry of Health (OYSMOH); Oyo State Primary Health Care Board (OYSPHCB); Oyo State SDGs Office; Oyo State Emergency Operation Centre (EOC); and the agencies of the Federal Ministry of Health present in Oyo State which are: the National Agency for Food and Drugs Administration and Control (NAFDAC); and National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS). This study adopted purposive sampling techniques. The researcher administered copies of questionnaires randomly to 10 officials of the selected 7 agencies/institutes, making a total of 70 participants. The data were analysed using the Statistical Product and Service Solutions (SPSS) 23 while the results were presented using Tables.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Demographic Data Presentation

Table 1: Demographic Data

N	Variables		Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	Gender	Female	30	42.9
		Male	40	57.1
2.	How long have you been working with this agency/institute?	1-5yrs	16	22.9
		6-10yrs	26	37.1
		11-15yrs	18	25.7
		16yrs & above	10	14.3

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Analysis from the Table 1, showing the demographic data of the respondents reveals that 42.9% of the respondents are female while male counterparts constitute 50.1%. This clearly shows that male staff of these agencies/institutions participated in this study more than female. Also, 22.9% of the participants have been working with their respective agency/institute between 1-5years, 37.1% for 6-10years, 25.7% for 11-15years, while 14.3% of them have been with their organisation/institute for more than 16years. Analysis from Table 1 shows that the questionnaires were administered mostly by senior staffs of the selected health agency/institute

Research Questions

Table 2: What are the implications of COVID-19 on the attainment of SDG-3 in Nigeria?

S/N	Statements	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)
1.	COVID-19 pandemic has affected Sustainable Development Goal 3 which aims at “Good Health and Well-Being for All”	34 (48.6)	33 (47.1)	3 (4.3)	0 (0)
2.	There were efforts aimed at achieving Sustainable Development Goal 3 in Nigeria before the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic.	23 (32.9)	47 (32.1)	0 (0)	0 (0)
3.	The COVID-19 pandemic has impeded Nigeria’s plans for the attainment of SDG 3	24 (33.4)	34 (48.6)	10 (14.3)	2 (2.9)
4.	The outbreak of the COVID-19 has disrupted budgeted finance for other health issues	29 (41.4)	25 (35.7)	10 (14.3)	6 (8.6)
5.	The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic has halted ongoing medical research on how to eradicate other communicable diseases	18 (15.7)	23 (32.9)	15 (21.4)	14 (18)
6	COVID-19 has interrupted the efforts made toward reducing the mortality rate in Nigeria	22 (31.4)	31 (44.3)	15 (21.4)	2 (2.9)

Source: Field Survey, 2022

From the analysis in Table 2, a total of 67 respondents which represents 95.7% in the affirmative (strongly agree and agree) answered that the COVID-19 pandemic has affected Sustainable Development Goal 3 which aims at “Good Health and Well-Being for All”. The table described that a total of 70 (100%) that is, all respondents affirmed that there were efforts aimed at achieving the Sustainable Development Goal 3 in Nigeria before the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. 82% responded either by strongly agreeing or just agreeing that the COVID-19 pandemic has impeded Nigeria’s plans towards the attainment of SDG 3. 77.1% of respondents either strongly agreed or just agreed that the outbreak of the COVID-19 has disrupted budgeted finance for other health issues. The table further indicates that 48.6% agreed that the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic has halted ongoing medical research on how to eradicate other communicable diseases while a total of 39.4% disagreed with the statement. Also, 53 respondents (75.7%) confirmed that COVID-19 has interrupted the efforts made toward reducing the mortality rate in Nigeria.

Table 3: What prospects does the Nigerian COVID-19 experience bring forth for the attainment of SDG-3 in Nigeria?

S/N	Statements	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)
1	The COVID-19 outbreak has strengthened Nigeria’s capacity for early warning and management of health crises.	16 (22.9)	35 (50)	8 (11.4)	11 (15.7)
2	The outbreak of the pandemic reduced the number of road injuries and deaths in Nigeria during the lockdown.	15 (21.4)	31 (44.3)	15 (18.5)	11 (15.7)
3	The COVID-19 outbreak has led to a significant increase in the number of healthcare workers in Nigeria.	8 (11.4)	23 (32.9)	26 (37.1)	13 (19.6)
4	The outbreak of COVID-19 has driven significant improvement in health financing and the development of the health care system in Nigeria.	10 (14.3)	38 (54.3)	8 (11.4)	15 (20)
5	The outbreak of COVID-19 has led to the availability of affordable healthcare and medicines for all in Nigeria.	3 (4.3)	12 (17.1)	37 (52.9)	18 (25.7)

S/N	Statements	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)
6	The COVID-19 experience has helped in the prevention and treatment of substance abuse in Nigeria	2 (2.9)	16 (22.9)	23 (32.9)	29 (41.4)
7	The outbreak of COVID-19 has aided the prevention of newborns and children's death in Nigeria.	10 (14.3)	8 (11.4)	34 (48.6)	18 (25.7)
8	The COVID-19 experience has taught Nigeria a lesson on how to control epidemics and other communicable diseases.	13 (18.6)	33 (47.1)	19 (26.1)	5 (7.1)
9	From the lessons of the COVID-19 outbreak, Nigeria has learned how to reduce premature mortality from non-communicable diseases.	16 (22.8)	34 (48.6)	15 (21.4)	5 (7.1)
10	Lessons from the COVID-19 outbreak have taught Nigeria how to reduce global maternal mortality.	8 (11.4)	32 (45.7)	15 (21.4)	15 (21.4)
11	The COVID-19 outbreak has facilitated the research and development of vaccines in Nigeria.	12 (17.1)	32 (45.7)	15 (21.4)	11 (15.7)

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Analysis from the Table 3 shows that 72.9% of respondents attested that the COVID-19 outbreak has strengthened Nigeria's capacity for early warning, while management of health crisis, 27.1% disagreed. A total of 65.7% of respondents confirmed that the outbreak of the pandemic reduced the number of road injuries and deaths in Nigeria during the lockdown, while 34.2% disagreed. 44.3% of respondents agreed that the COVID-19 outbreak has led to an increase in the number of healthcare workers in Nigeria, while 56.1% disagreed with this statement. 68.6% agreed that the outbreak of COVID-19 has driven increased health financing and developed the health care system in Nigeria, while only 21.4% disagreed.

A total of 21.4% of respondents agreed that the outbreak of COVID-19 has led to the availability of affordable healthcare and medicines for all in Nigeria, and 78.6% while disagreed with this statement. 25.8% of respondents agreed that the COVID-19 outbreak has helped in the prevention and treatment of substance abuse in Nigeria while 58.6% of the respondents disagreed. 25.7% of respondents agreed that the outbreak of COVID-19 has aided the prevention of newborns and children death in Nigeria while 74.3% of respondents disagreed. 65.7% of respondents agreed that the COVID-19 experience has taught Nigeria a lesson on how to control epidemics and other communicable diseases, however, 34.2% of respondents disagreed. 71.4% of respondents attested that, from the lessons of the COVID-19 outbreak, Nigeria has learned how to reduce premature mortality from non-communicable diseases; 28.6% of respondents disagreed with this statement. Also, 63.4% of respondents agreed that the lessons from the COVID-19 outbreak have taught Nigeria how to reduce maternal mortality, while 36.3% of respondents disagreed. A total of 62.8% of respondents then confirmed that the COVID-19 experience has facilitated research and development of vaccines in Nigeria; however, 27.2% are of contrary opinion.

Discussion of Findings

Objective one was to find out the implications of COVID-19 on the attainment of SDG-3 in Nigeria. From the analysis given, it was found that the COVID-19 pandemic has negatively affected Sustainable Development Goal 3 which aims at "Good Health and Well-Being for All. COVID-19 pandemic was found to have hampered Nigeria's plans towards the attainment of SDG-3 by 2030. Also, the outbreak of the COVID-19 has disrupted budgeted finance towards other health issues that the entire nation is encountering. The results indicate that the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic has halted ongoing medical research on how to eradicate other communicable diseases. Furthermore, this study confirmed that COVID-19 has interrupted the efforts made towards reducing mortality rate in Nigeria. From the foregoing, it can be deduced that the COVID-19 pandemic has caused a

major setback on the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goal 3 in Nigeria. The findings in accordance with that of previous studies which concluded that the COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant negative impact on human survival and mortality rate in Sub-Saharan Africa (Joshua, 2020; Okereke, et al., 2020; Odey, et al., 2021).

The second objective of this study was to identify the prospects offered by COVID-19 with reference to attaining SDG-3 in Nigeria. Analysis from the data gathered shows that COVID-19 outbreak has strengthened Nigeria's capacity for early warning, and management of health crisis. The study confirmed that the number of road injuries and deaths in Nigeria were reduced during the lockdown. The outbreak of COVID-19 was found to have driven increase in health financing and developed healthcare system in Nigeria which can be confirmed in the amount of testing laboratories and isolation centres that were built nationwide within year 2020-2022. This study also show that COVID-19 experience has taught Nigeria a lesson on how to control epidemics and other communicable diseases. Furthermore, the COVID-19 experience is believed to have facilitated research and development of vaccines in Nigeria. Previously conducted studies (Kapata, et al., 2020; Seshaiyer & McNeely, 2020; Gonzalez-Perez, et al., 2021; Vassileva & Simić. 2021) agreed with these findings that even though COVID-19 has a significant impact on all the aspect of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) worldwide such as employment, food production and distribution, health, poverty, and hunger, industries, economic activities, transportation, and partnerships are all heavily impacted, the epidemic has the potential to become the engines for an SDGs-based recovery (Ussif, 2020: Wang & Huang, 2021).

According to the study of Seshaiyer and McNeely (2020), COVID-19 has presented obstacles, but it has also provided some potential opportunities. School and university closures, for example, are leading to more and better ways to online instruction and remote education. Although company closures have had a severe impact on significant portions of the economy and labour, they have also boosted productive and cost saving telework and teleconferencing options for individuals. Bajpai and Biberman (2020) also agreed that the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the dynamics of each of these revolutions in both positive and detrimental ways throughout the world. Several countries that have successfully navigated the crisis have typically implemented policies that will accelerate these transformations toward sustainability, whereas countries that have failed to meet the challenge have reinforced patterns which will make sustainable development more difficult to achieve in the future. Vassileva and Simić (2021) concluded that COVID-19 is an unprecedented disaster, but it is also a tremendous opportunity for an economic reset.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study examined the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the chances of achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 3 (SDG-3) which focused on health and wellbeing. From the findings of the study, it can be concluded that COVID-19 pandemic has caused a major setback in the pursuit of the Sustainable Development Goal 3 in Nigeria. It was also found in this study that, although the virus has hindered the plans for the achievement of the SDGs, but it could also be helpful in fast-tracking the attainment of the SDG-3 in Nigeria. Achieving SDG-3 in Nigeria by 2030 is possible if the actions and policies of the government, the policymakers and other stakeholders who are saddled with matters concerning health and national development are focused on healthcare transformation through medical research and revitalisation of the health sector.

Based on the findings from this study, the followings are recommended:

1. The outbreak of the COVID-19 was found to have disrupted budgeted finance towards other health issues. Therefore, it is important that the government, the health institutions, and the several concerned Nongovernmental Organisations (NGOs) to ensure other health related issues are not neglected while tackling the COVID-19.
2. The outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic was also discovered to have halted ongoing medical research on how to eradicate other communicable diseases. This is a wake-up call to the Nigeria Institute of Medical

Research (NIMR) to ensure that research on how to eradicate other communicable diseases are not abandoned while tackling COVID-19.

3. The Ministry of Health (both Federal and States) should put more efforts towards making provision that will ensure the attainment of SDG-3 in Nigeria by the year 2030.
4. It was discovered in this study that, despite the COVID-19 outbreak, much the number of healthcare workers in Nigeria has not really increased. Therefore, it is important that Nigerian government through her various agencies ensure more health workers are employed to attain the SDG-3 by the year 2030.
5. Even though the outbreak of the COVID-19 has caused a major setback in the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals generally, this study has suggested that it could be an engine to power the targeted goals. This can be achieved by diverting both the humanitarian and monetary aids accumulated from the various international governmental and nongovernmental organisations (IGOs and INGOs) towards the health sector.

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