



The Post Covid 19 era: Lessons learnt in the education system

Dr. Chipu Mutongi

PhD, MSc, MBA, BA, HND-LIS, Dip-Edu, Dip-LIS, Dip-Personnel Mgnt, Dip- Salaries Admn.
Midlands State University, Zimbabwe Open University, City of Harare, Associate Chief Editor-
IJDS

Contact Details

mutongic@gmail.com (+263772422812, +263712529824)

Abstract

The world as a global village has faced a global pandemic. In this case it does not matter whether you belong to the haves or the have nots, developed or developing country. This animal called COVID 19 knows no boundaries, knows no colour, race, class, level of education and religion. The good thing is that information and knowledge is power and we can also learn from others. We are taking lessons from COVID 19 era. The dramatic spread of COVID 19 disrupted the way of living. This really shows that we are living in the DVUCADD environment, an environment characterized by dynamic, volatile, uncertainty, volatile, ambiguity, disruptive and diversity. It was learnt that it is no longer business as usual, ICT is a human right that should have been accessed by anyone, we need to continue with hygiene way of living, the effective management of virtual working is called for and we need to institutionalize home based learning. Proactivity rather than reactive in called for and a transdisciplinary approach is a necessity in order to survive in this much changing environment.

Key words: COVID 19, education, education system, global village, lessons. The Post COVID 19 era, web 2.0, ICT, libraries, **the inner and the outer circle model**, system, transdisciplinary.

Introduction

The society is suffering not just because of the rascals, the mischievous people. It is suffering because of me, the society is suffering because of you. The society is suffering because of us good people who are doing nothing to show what show what we know. Misfortunes are bad but as to the functional perspective, everything on this planet has a functional component to stabilize the society. The COVID 19 era have some devastating effects but there are some lessons learnt from this, therefore the functional aspect comes in. Problems exist in life such that we do not just despair without a problem solving mind. It therefore ceases to be a problem but a challenge. A challenge means that we can do something about it we are optimistic. We have learnt from the challenge. In every problem, there is an opportunity. Maxwell (2000:101) opines that if you have been avoiding problems, go out looking for them. You will only get better if you gain

experience dealing with them. Problems are a sign of life. A problem is inherently good, not inherently bad as it commonly supposed (Peale, 1998). Mutongi and Mazhawidza (2018) allude that there is need to research about your problem, understand it and acquire great knowledge about the problem. You become a leader in helping others with similar or almost similar problems, since you would have conquered yours. It is against this background that the writer unearth lessons learnt in the education system as a result of COVID 19. Post COVID 19 era cannot be business as usual.

What is a Covid 19?

COVID-19 means Coronavirus disease. It is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus (WHO:2020). It was discovered in China in 2019 and spread throughout the world.

What is a System?

The **definition** of a **system** is a set of rules, an arrangement of things, or a group of related things that work toward a common goal. An example of a **system** is all the organs that work together for digestion (Your Dictionary, 2020).

What is Education?

Education is simply one aspect of socialization it involves the acquisition of knowledge and the learning of skills. Whether intentionally or unintentionally education often also helps to shape beliefs and moral values (Haralambos and Holborn, 2004: 670). Giddens (2009: 833) connotes that education, like health is often seen as an unproblematic social good to which everyone is entitled as a right. Who would not be in favour of it. Adio and Olasina (2010:10) assert that education has been defined as a complex of social process of acquiring knowledge and experience, formally or otherwise". Ogusheye (1981) states that it involves the total apparatus used for the development of individual. Gunter (1988:11) argues that "education is concerned not with the development of the head and hand only, but also the will and emotions, therefore, with the child in his totality, with the child as an individual spiritual –physical unity". As such education aims at more than just knowledge, skills and independent thought, it is especially concerned with the positive formation of the moral character and the development of the entire personality of the emerging adult. There is formal, nonformal education and informal education. **The distinction** made is largely administrative. **Formal education** is linked with schools and training institutions; **non-formal** with community groups and other organizations; and **informal** covers what is left, e.g. interactions with friends, family and work colleagues.

What is an Education System?

Mullins (2010:57) connotes that The systems approach encourages managers to view the organization as a whole and as part of a large environment. The idea is that any part of the organization's activities affects all other parts. Education either functions as an instrument which is used to facilitate integration of the younger generation into the logic of the present system and bring about conformity or it becomes the practice of freedom, the means by which men and women deal critically and creatively with reality and discover how to participate in their world (Freire: 1988). Education either functions as an instrument which is used to facilitate integration of the younger generation into the logic of the present system and bring about conformity or it becomes the practice if freedom, the means by which men and women deal critically and creatively with reality and discover how to participate in their world (Freire: 1988). Education

system in this context refers to the interrelationship and linkages of the education structure and operations.

Lessons learnt from the Covid 19 Era

Today one has to run very fast in order to stay in the same place as propounded by Kotler (2005). We are living in the DVUCADD environment. An environment characterised by dynamic, volatile, uncertainty, complexity, ambiguity, diversity and destructive environment. The COVID 19 era has clearly portrayed this environment. The whole world as a system has been affected. This also include the education system in the world.

The inner and the outer circle model

Mutongi and Mazhawidza (2018) developed the inner and outer circle model that we can use in handing COVID 19 effects. They pointed that negatives changes and different situations can affect individuals, organisations and nations. It is the right mindset that make these people, organisations and nations succeed or effectively able to deal with their situations. This model was developed as a result of the life the experiences of the authors.

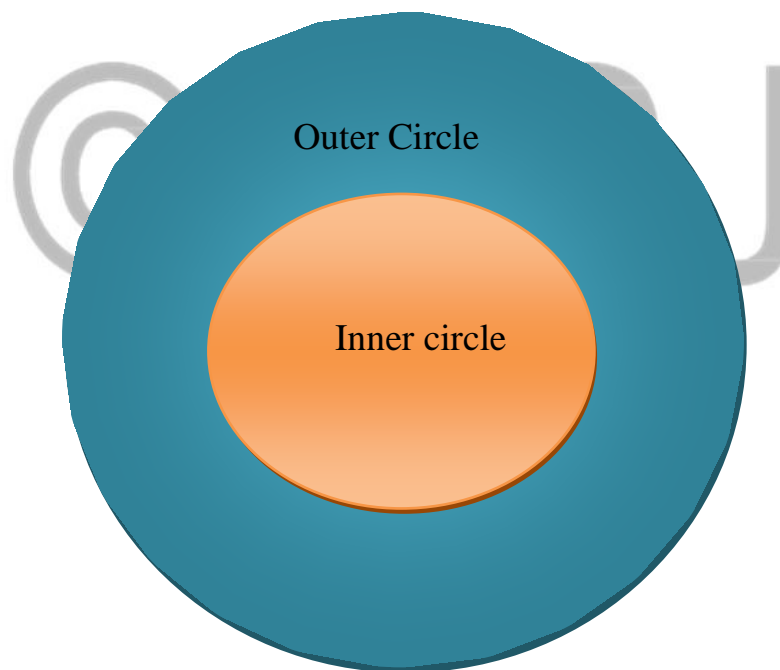


Figure 1: The outer and inner circle model

The inner circle is made up of changes, things and circumstances that we can control. In that regard we need to work on how we can deal with that change, thing or situation as we have control over it. In the COVID 19 era we need to control the recurrence of the same disastrous experiences. We still need to continue practicing hygiene measures. The outer circle is made up of changes, things and situations in our life that we have no control over for example death. The world united as one to mourn the departed due to the pathetic pandemic. There are a lot of forces of change and situations that we can experienced that we do not have control over during the

COVID 19 era. It is the mindset that needs to be correctly positioned to handle these changes and situations.

The elite benefited most

It is learnt that the elite benefited most in the digital education system. Freire (1988) talks about the pedagogy of the oppressed of which he indicated how the education policy and curriculum favoured the elite. He reiterates that the education policy and curriculum usually result in the banking concept, whereby learners are expected to produce what they have taught using the curriculum prepared by the elite. The online lessons benefited the haves and the have nots lagged beside. The gap between the have and the have nots became widened. World Bank (2020) observed that hard-won gains in expanded access to education could stagnate or reverse as school closures are extended and accessibility to alternative options like distance learning remain out of reach for those without means to connect. This may cause further loss in human capital and diminished economic opportunities.

Libraries were affected

We cannot talk of an education system without a full functional library. Library is the heart of the education system. Libraries make the formal, nonformal and informal education possible. The library influences students from early childhood, primary school, secondary and tertiary education as well as lifelong learning. The best performances at work are also facilitated by libraries for example the special library. The library is a pre-requisite for education and sustainable development. During the COVID 19 era libraries were physically closed in the lockdown process. It is a lesson that in such devastating situations libraries should remain functional as they provide the solutions to the problems. They provide solutions even to the COVID 19 responses through information. Mutongi and Chiwanza (2016) aver that the purposes of information include informing, alerting, education and entertaining. There is need for the use of robots and virtual libraries even in the African Societies in the case of such a pandemic.

The importance of parental involvement

The parents or guardians play a significant role in the learning process of learners during the lockdown period. The parents or guardians played both the parenting and teaching roles. Burgess and Sievertsen, (2020) observed that the severe short-term disruption is felt by many families around the world: home schooling is not only a massive shock to parents' productivity, but also to children's social life and learning. Teaching is moving online, on an untested and unprecedented scale. Student assessments are also moving online, with a lot of trial and error and uncertainty for everyone. Many assessments have simply been cancelled. Importantly, these interruptions were not just be a short-term issue, but can also have long-term consequences for the affected cohorts and are likely to increase inequality. COVID 19 demonstrated the importance the of parental or guardian involvement in the online learning system. Perhaps to the disappointment of some, children have not generally been sent home to play. The idea is that they continue their education at home, in the hope of not missing out too much.

Effects of global lockdown

The global lockdown of education institutions caused major (and likely unequal) interruption in students' learning; disruptions in internal assessments; and the cancellation of public assessments for qualifications or their replacement by an inferior alternative (Burgess and Sievertsen, 2020).

ICT a Basic Need

ICT has become a great necessity and should be added on the Maslow's Hierarchy of needs as a physiological need. It was noticed that one could not survive without the ICT tools during the COVID 19 era. In higher education many universities and colleges are replacing traditional examinations with online assessment tools. This is a new area for both teachers and students and assessments will likely have larger measurement error than usual. Research shows that employers use educational credentials such as degree classifications and grade point averages to sort applicants (Piopiunik et al. 2020). The increase in the noise of the applicants' signals will therefore potentially reduce the matching efficiency for new graduates on the labour market, who might experience slower earnings growth and higher job separation rates. This is costly both to the individual and also to society as a whole (Fredriksson et al. 2018).

The Management of Virtual Workers

A new paradigm swift has emerged of managing virtual workers. It was evidenced that human capital can work at home and produce the required results. This has an advantage of maintaining work life balance. One can even work while cooking, playing music and even working with a movie is playing. The question raised was did this promoted organisational behaviour or it affected organisational behavior?

Socialisation

There is a high probability that people will never go back to their original way of living. There is a shift from the norm. Even if it is found out that there is no case for corona virus, people remain vigilant. They may still maintain social distancing and avoiding greetings. The socialization process has greatly affected.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are proposed:

Need for more talking books

Talking books does the talking and the explanation to learners. They are of great necessity in making virtual learning more interesting. The talking books also help those with visual impairment such that they will not be left out in the virtual learning process as it is now a norm

Sign language to be institutionalized in every institution and in e-learning

The e-learning tool should be incorporated with sign language as well so that the hearing impaired are not left behind.

The need for transdisciplinary system

Solutions to problems should not come from one discipline. There is need for a transdisciplinary approach to education and life. This is finding a solution to a situation using different disciplines. The COVID 19 era and Post COVID 19 Era made the whole world come together for a solution to a common problem and this should not just be medical but all the disciplines.

Not a time to relax

Messages that we have all on how to prevent COVID 19 infections are the most important messages that our community needs to heed right now. Somehow, we have heard these messages for so long and we are starting to relax. We have learnt that this is not the time to relax.

We still need to maintain hygiene way of living

Washing of hands frequently and thoroughly with water and sanitization continue to become a necessity.

Testing of people to continue

Testing of people should be a routine activity so that we are not reactive but rather proactive. This then promote triple loop learning which predicts the future and correct any errors and eventualities before they occur rather than single loop learning which is reacting to a situation.

Home schooling can still be formalized

It was found that in some instance home schooling benefited the learners in the sense that there was one on one learning at home with the guidance of a parent or guardian. My seven year child improved greatly through learning at home.

Great realisation of web 2.0

Web 2.0 has to be enhanced with much greater connectivity in the developing countries. The google classes, google meet, Microsoft teams and zoom classes have to be made available to everyone. Data bundles should be accessible. Free Wifi is mandatory in this environment. This will ensure equitable access to resources by all sundry including the marginalized.

Conclusion

A new dawn has arrived which calls for the embracing of all the lessons learnt in the COVID 19 era. We must not be caught unaware as we need much preparation particularly in the issues to do with online teaching and virtual working. There is need to cater of the marginalized such that they would not be left behind in the new route that COVID 19 had taken us to. ICT has become a basic necessity and a human right and personal hygiene should always be maintained.

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Biography

Dr. Chipo Mutongi: A Lecturer at the Midlands State University (MSU) and a part time Lecturer at Zimbabwe Open University (ZOU) with more than twelve years lecturing experience; PhD/DPhil research thesis Supervisor. PhD/DPhil research thesis supervisor/ under study (2014-2016-ZOU), Research Supervisor for all levels of education; **Associate Editor in Chief** for the International Journal of Doctoral Studies (IJDS); **Associate Editor** for the International Journal of Doctoral Studies (IJDS) (Bronze Editor) (July 2018 to November 2019), A member of the International **Board of Reviewers** for the International Journal of Doctoral Studies (IJDS) 2015 to July 2018. (Bronze Reviewer), A member of the International Board of Reviewers for the Informing Science: The International Journal of Emerging Transdiscipline. Reviewer for InSite International Conference. Reviewer of the *American Journal of Industrial and Business Management (AJIBM)*. Reviewer of Current Journal of Applied Science and Technology (CJAST). Journal Reviewer -Journal of Information and Knowledge Management (JIKM), published over fifty-four articles in International Journals; DCIZ board member (2016), Member

of Institute of People Management of Zimbabwe (IPMZ) and member of Zimbabwe Library Association (ZIMLA), published more than ten modules with Zimbabwe Open University (ZOU); Published a book on University Teaching in the Political Sciences. S. B. M. Marume, T. M. Chiunye, C. W. Namusi and **C. Mutongi**: July 31, 2018 [ISBN 978 – 613 – 9 – 89365 – 2) LAP Lambert Academic Publishing Berlin, Germany. Published a book titled “The Miraculous Story of Tayambutswa”-Dr Chipo Mutongi and Learnmore Zuze. (ISBN 978-0-7974-8222-7), is in the process of authoring books on Knowledge Management and Information Policy. Attained the highest and most prestigious degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Information and Knowledge Management (ZOU); Master of Science in Library and Information Science (NUST); the more professional degree of Master of Business Administration (ZOU); Media Studies Degree (ZOU); Higher National Diploma in Library and Information Science (Harare Polytechnic); Diploma in Library and Information Science (Bulawayo Polytechnic); Diploma in Education (UZ); Diploma in Personnel Management (IPMZ); Diploma in Salaries Administration (Stallone Consultancy); Certificate in Desk Top Publishing (CCOSA); Certificate in Web Designing (People’s College); Certificate in Computer Repairs (People’s College).

