

COVID-19 and Sustainable Development: An Assessment of Global Efforts Towards Achieving Sustainable Development Goal 3 in Nigeria

AMODU, Akeem Adekunle¹; OYEDOKUN, Dolapo Michael^{2*}, & ADEOLU-AKANDE Modupeola Atoke³

^{1, 2}*Department of Politics and International Relations, Lead City University, Ibadan, Nigeria,*

³*Department of Management and Accounting, Faculty of Management and Social Sciences, Lead City University, Ibadan, Nigeria,*

**Correspondence Author*

Abstract: Ever since the Coronavirus (COVID-19) was declared a pandemic in early 2020, it has spread to over 200 countries across the globe, claiming over 6 million lives, disrupting the world economy, and impeding the United Nations global development framework (Sustainable Development Goals). Due to the challenges posed by the virus, several agreements, policies, and efforts have been made at the international level to curb the spread of the deadly virus. This study, therefore, examined the global policies of COVID-19 towards the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Nigeria with a specific focus on SDG-3 which aims at “Good Health and Well-Being”. The data analysed in this study were sourced through a structured questionnaire. 70 copies of questionnaires were distributed Oyo State SDGs Office and some selected health institutions in Oyo State. The results of the findings showed that WHO and the World Powers have been assisting Nigeria with health equipment, funds, and the development of healthcare centres in the fight against the epidemic. The study, however, concluded that the achievement of the SDG-3 by the year 2030 depends on the actions and policies of the government, the policy-makers and the several agencies saddled with a matter concerning health matters and national development. The study implored the world powers and other developed countries to continue with the supply of humanitarian, materials, medical and financial assistance to the developing countries so the entire world can achieve SDG-3 by 2030. The study further recommends that the government, health institutions, and several concerned Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs) take necessary actions to ensure other health-related issues are not neglected while tackling COVID-19.

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

I. INTRODUCTION

Since the COVID-19 outbreak in Wuhan China in late 2019 and its pandemic declaration in March 2020, research and development efforts have focused on gaining a better knowledge of the epidemiology of the new coronavirus as a "super spreader" of infectious illness. Along with these efforts, major health agencies such as the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have recommended several pharmaceutical and nonpharmaceutical interventions for infection prevention and control to reduce morbidity and

mortality associated with COVID-19 (Oyedokun & Amodu, 2022).

The epidemic has brought practically every country's economic activity to a halt since most governments were required to set restrictions on mobility during the lockdown to prevent and control the virus's spread (World Bank, 2020). As these restrictions on people's movement take effect, they have influenced various aspects of development, including health, water, food security, economics, and education. All of these are part of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are already being adversely affected by the pandemic. However, with the emergence of COVID-19, developing nations are confronted with yet another significant setback in achieving the SDGs (Joshua, 2020). While the present setback will most likely take some time to fully reflect, the effects are already being felt throughout the world. This is obvious in the steps that each country is taking to combat the epidemic. For example, the Nigerian government was forced to set aside funds to combat the pandemic, and while these funds could have been utilised for other developmental purposes, the government was required to direct them to the health sector to effectively combat and mitigate the impact of the virus.

Inadequate financing has resulted in substandard health infrastructure in several African countries before now, however, the epidemic has pushed most nations to recognise the poor state of the health system, and they have responded by raising financial allocations to enable healthcare personnel to combat the virus's spread (Adekunle, Onanuga, Akinola & Ogunbanjo, 2020; Nuwagira & Muzoora, 2020). The epidemic has also influenced healthcare, agriculture, education, water, and the economy by exposing the systems and disclosing the condition of affairs in most underdeveloped nations (Joshua, 2020).

The Sustainable Development Goal 3 (SDG-3) titled “Good Health and Well-being” contains measurable targets involving more research and development, enhanced healthcare workforce, increased and diversified health financing, and strengthened the capacity of all countries in health risk reduction and management (WHO, 2015). Underscoring the

need to understand and solve "communicable, non-communicable, and environmentally driven diseases," these aims include efforts to address all main health priorities and are recognised as particularly critical for efforts to combat infectious illnesses in which COVID-19 is one (Seshaiyer & McNeely, 2020).

If 2020 was the year of "mask diplomacy," (as nation-states sought to contain the spread of the SARS-CoV-2 virus and obtain the appropriate safety gear), 2021 will be known as the year of "vaccine diplomacy." Growing rivalry among nations to get the necessary amounts of vaccines to inoculate their citizens has already become a characteristic of the post-COVID-19 international system, and such tendencies are only expected to worsen soon (Errighi, 2021). Normally, it can take up to a decade to go from researching and developing a vaccine in a laboratory to large-scale global dissemination. Despite present hurdles, the pace with which COVID-19 vaccination programmes are being conducted is unusual. To put an end to the current pandemic, which has claimed about 5 million lives and sparked the worst economic downturn since the Second World War, the primary objective is to vaccinate the entire global population within the shortest possible time (Errighi, 2021).

The vaccines emerged as soft power instruments in this context, symbolising scientific and technological supremacy on the one hand, and on the other, to protect existing and emerging foreign policy alliances and partnerships with relevant geopolitical implications. Vaccines have surfaced as a crucial tool for power struggles, frequently associated with the promotion of rival socioeconomic and governance paradigms throughout Third World countries, from laboratory testing to procurement and distribution. Meanwhile, China managed to establish a global vaccine supply chain strategy almost immediately after the crisis began, enlisting major partners in the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative and beyond. Against this context, and with expanding vaccine competition in Europe and between the EU and the UK, it is obvious that three types of geopolitical competition are emerging in the current global vaccination race (Errighi, 2021). As a result, there is a need to investigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the multiple global health policies on the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, with a particular focus on Goal 3.

In 2015, the United Nations member states agreed to pursue a common set of goals which were termed the "Sustainable Development Goals" (SDGs). These SDGs contain 17 well-articulated goals with a total of 169 targets and indicators which the entire world is striving to achieve by 2030. Number three (3) on the list of these goals (SDG-3) was set towards achieving good health. Nigeria being a member of the United Nations was part of the countries that agreed to achieve these

global goals. But the situation changed globally when a new strain of Corona Virus broke out in the City of Wuhan, China. The virus began to spread across the globe starting, from Europe and to the rest of the world. The virus has led to an increase in the global mortality rate, which in return is a setback for Goal 3 of the SDGs.

As an international instrument saddled with the control of global health policies, the World Health Organisation (WHO) has been active in responding to the needs of the world to eradicate the new epidemic. Also, the world powers have been supportive of the emerging nations to tackle the virus to ensure the SDG-3 is achieved. This aroused the interest of the researchers to study the global efforts in the time of COVID-19 and its impact on the achievement of the SDG-3 in Nigeria. The following research questions were raised to achieve the objectives of this study:

1. How is the World Health Organisation supporting the attainment of SDG-3 in Nigeria amid the COVID-19 pandemic?
2. What are the actions of the developed countries in preventing COVID-19 towards achieving SDG-3 in Nigeria?
3. What are the political actions of the developed countries regarding COVID-19?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Sustainable Development Goals

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a set of seventeen (17) well-articulated global goals developed by the United Nations in collaboration with various governments and agencies of member countries to ensure global sustainable development by 2030 (UN, 2015). Poverty, Hunger, Health, Education, Gender Equality, Water and Sanitation, Economic Growth, Innovation and Infrastructure, Reduced Inequalities, Sustainable Cities, Consumption and Production, Climate Change, Water, Land, Social Justice, and Partnership are the 17 broad goals designed to address a wide range of social, environmental, and economic development issues (Ugwuegbe, Urama & Iloh, 2018). The SDGs, otherwise known as "Agenda 2030" is a set of goals that expands on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to cover areas that would assure global sustainability for the next generation after MDGs have been criticised in the past for mostly including targets that the developed countries have already achieved, thereby making the goals unattainable for most of the "third world" countries. Each SDG contains several obstacles, each of which can be articulated and understood in terms of targets that must be accomplished to achieve the goal (Amodu, 2019; Seshaiyer & McNeely, 2020). The following is a diagram representation of the UN SDGs:

Figure 1: Sustainable Development Goals



Source: United Nations, 2015

Sustainable Development Goal 3

The aim and objective of Sustainable Development Goal 3 are to ensure a healthy life and promote the well-being of all and at all ages worldwide by 2030. The United Nations together with other development partners and in collaboration with other countries is working hard to ensure better healthy lives are championed and promote decent well-being within the stipulated period (Amodu, 2020). Ensuring the above is achieved at all ages is very essential for sustainable growth and development. Important attempts are being taken to increase life expectancy while decreasing other frequent murderers connected with mother and infant mortality. The UN member states' efforts on achieving the set target of less than seventy (70) maternal deaths per one hundred thousand (100,000) live births by the year 2030 would need improvement in delivery care services. Also, the achievement of the target of reducing deaths prematurely due to incommunicable diseases by 2030 to one third (1/3) would require efficient technology more and clean fuel to be used for cooking and education on danger of tobacco. A lot of efforts are required to fully eliminate a wide variety of diseases and to address many more different emerging and persistent health issues. Focusing on the provision of more effective and efficient funding sources for health systems, hygiene and improved sanitation, increasing physicians' access and more tips on how to minimize ambient pollution, significant steps can be made in helping to save the lives of billions worldwide (WHO, 2015).

Sustainable Development Goal 3 in Nigeria

Evidence shows that Nigerian citizens' overall health, particularly among the poor, is declining. The very high maternal death rate (512 per 100 000 in 2018) is one of the most debilitating since it adds to household poverty by

lowering household income or establishing child-headed families. Under-five mortality rates have also increased somewhat, with deaths per 1000 climbing from 128 in 2017 to 132 in 2018 (NBS, 2020). The country's performance on these indicators reveals weaknesses in the healthcare system. The proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel reflects the country's income disparities. The public healthcare system is failing the poor mostly due to a lack of manpower and problems with National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) coverage.

The small proportion of women of reproductive age whose family planning needs are handled by contemporary means maintains the poverty trap in which many women in Nigeria find themselves due to added financial burdens brought on by children. A significant lesson for protecting citizens in the COVID-19 pandemic is cleanliness, as well as the need of prioritising universal access to clean water and nourishment, underlining the interdependence of SDGs 2, 3, and 6. Strengthening the execution of the Second National Strategic Health Development Plan (NSHDP), which prioritises primary health care, is a key area for action:

1. Increasing the proportion of GDP devoted to basic health care.
2. Using the NHIS to manage 50% of the basic health budget to provide residents with a "basic minimum of health care." This fund should be used to subsidise payments to the State-led Social Insurance Scheme (SSIS) for healthcare consumed by individuals who are too poor to afford the NHIS's premium services or other vulnerable populations, such as the elderly and those with disabilities.
3. Redesigning primary health care facilities to address challenges of access and affordability.

4. Increasing government partnership with civil society organisations (CSOs) to promote community health education through proper training, strategic deployment, and effective use of community health extension workers to close the health workforce gap in communities.

Global Politics and COVID-19

Before the outbreak of the pandemic, global politics were rife with conflict, mistrust, political and economic tensions, and increasing populism. Tensions were high as to cybercrime, election meddling, terrorism, transnational organised crime, and human security challenges. The influx of people seeking asylum in Europe puts further strain on the conduct of global politics in an already heated and politicised atmosphere. Before the pandemic, the major event in international politics was the trade war, in which the US engaged in trade disputes with several countries, primarily China, creating uncertainty and a degree of market instability while also putting global trade regulations under agreements in jeopardy (Aldalala'a, 2020).

The responses of the world's great powers to the epidemic have greatly influenced the nature of post-COVID-19 global politics. However, there are two distinct reactions to COVID-19. One is the response to the virus itself, in which over 180 nations are protecting themselves medically without resorting to political posturing. The other response is to COVID-19's overall impact, particularly its economic impact. By deciding that the virus is Chinese, the US ex-president in 2020 unleashed a stream of negative voices from the US government, media figures, academics, and politicians eager to attack China for what they claim is Beijing's incompetence and opacity in enabling the virus to spread. In addition to condemning the Chinese for the global spread of COVID-19, the US president questioned the World Health Organization's efficacy (WHO). Despite the WHO's warning about the coronavirus as early as January 2020, the ex-president has accused the organisation of being "China-centric", and as a result, threatened to halt US to WHO funding and then ordered the withholding of those funds (McCarthy, 2020). The US former president has also singled the administration before his, even though president as of that time warned in 2014 that "there may and certainly will come a time when we have both a deadly and airborne disease. And to deal with it effectively, we need to put in place an architecture that allows us to isolate it fast, notice it quickly, and respond to it rapidly, not just here at home, but internationally" (The Independent, 2014).

In response to the COVID-19 outbreak, the centralised Chinese government was able to deploy all national resources to combat the pandemic. Army medical staff were mobilised from all around the country to be deployed in Wuhan, and the whole country's infrastructure and services functioned as one system. In the United States, the situation was much different, owing to the distinct roles of the federal and local governments in dealing with health emergencies. One example is the scarcity of ventilators, which has prompted

New York Governor to condemn the "eBay-style bidding war" for this equipment (Aldalala'a, 2020).

The pandemic, by momentarily damaging the US economy, gives the impression that the US has been violated. By considering the virus and those who are responsible as symbolic opponents, there is a risk that exaggerated language could create new foes, as was seen in the Cold War and the War on Terror. As a result, domestic politics in the US might have a significant influence on global geostrategic alliances. With COVID-19 causing a significant number of cases in the United States, the pandemic's politicisation is already impacting policy, as seen by the US suspension of payments for the WHO, claiming the organisation's bias toward China (Aldalala'a, 2020). COVID-19 has had a significant impact on the entire structure of international politics. The world's economic system has been severely impacted. This pandemic has touched millions of individuals worldwide, who are either sick or have died because of the tragedies of this sickness. It is also worth noting that the majority of those impacted by this epidemic died because of the fear that plagued their thoughts.

The COVID-19 outbreak, as well as the corresponding othering and blaming, occurred amid a global politics marked by rising racialised inequality in both the developed and developing worlds. Although nations and intergovernmental organisations profess moral and legal duties for promoting racial equality and non-discrimination standards in global discourse, racial and ethnic stratification persists in most, if not all, racially diversified cultures (Shilliam, 2013). Racialised social systems have some type of hierarchy, even if the nature of the hierarchy varies. Nonetheless, the racialised character of inequality has been a minor issue for mainstream international relations (IR) literature (Zvobgo & Meredith, 2020). The lack of race and racism in conventional international relations literature reflects a global language that emphasises racial equality and universal human rights but not directly on the issue of race. International relations academia frequently prioritises theorising and generalisation of Western conceptions above historical description, analysis, and comprehension of specific experiences in the rest of the world, resulting in "a systematic politics of forgetfulness, willful amnesia on the topic of race (Aldalala'a, 2020).

Review of Empirical Studies

Oyedokun and Amodu (2022) examined healthcare workers' perception of the impact of COVID-19 and its health implications on the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Nigeria with a specific focus on SDG-3 which aims at "Good Health and Well-Being". A survey research design was used for the investigation. A comprehensive questionnaire was used to collect the data from staff of the University College Hospital (UCH) Biorepository and Clinical Virology Laboratory, the Oyo State Ministry of Health (OYSMOH), the Oyo State Primary Health Care Board (OYSPHCB), the Oyo State SDGs Office, the Oyo State Emergency Operation Centre (EOC), the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and

Control (NAFDAC), and the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS). The findings revealed that, while COVID-19 has had a detrimental impact on Nigeria's goals for SDG-3 success, it could also be useful in accelerating SDG-3 achievement if sufficient resources are mobilised to mitigate the negative impact. The study concluded, however, that reaching some of the SDG-3 objectives by 2030 is attainable if the government, policymakers, and various organisations tasked with health and overall national development continue to direct resources toward the healthcare sector. The report advised the government, health institutions, and other concerned nongovernmental organisations (NGOs) to ensure that other health-related issues are not overlooked in addressing COVID-19.

Fagbemi (2021) in a study titled "COVID-19 and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): An appraisal of the emanating effects in Nigeria," investigated the impact of COVID-19 on Nigeria's sustainable development goals (SDGs) through the systematic depiction of recent trends. According to the study, the preoccupation with the COVID-19 spread could cause many other critical issues, such as infrastructural deficiencies, prevailing armed conflicts (such as current terrorist attacks (Boko Haram) on communities and other social unrest), inequalities, fragile fiscal space, poor education quality, and weak institutions, to suffer a terrible state of neglect or be overlooked. The study emphasised the need of establishing a robust institutional regulatory framework as well as the resources (both financial and material) required to support long-term economic reform.

Thalpwala (2021) studied the role of the global powers in combatting the COVID-19 pandemic. The study examined the international cooperation that has been taken forward to combat the 'Covid-19' pandemic in the context of management of major calamities by the global powers. The study adopted secondary data. As noted by the author, the "Vaccine Politics" of the world powers undermined the WHO policy on vaccine distribution. The study stated that the WHO anticipated global powers and the international community to work together to combat the COVID-19 pandemic since it performs an official function and is responsible for preventing global pandemics.

Santos-Carrillo, Fernández-Portillo and Sianes (2020) conducted a study titled "rethinking the governance of the 2030 agenda for sustainable development in the COVID-19 era". The study examined the impact of the pandemic on the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals and the changes that can be expected in the institutional design of the "Agenda" to face this challenge. The study adopted the rational-functionalist model. The study showed that a higher level of centralisation of authority and a redefinition of control and flexibility mechanisms are needed to improve the governance of the agenda. The study concluded that the causes must be sought in the foreseeable change in the behaviour of governments in the face of scenarios of greater risk and uncertainty and their negative impact on multilateral cooperation, a fundamental pillar of the agenda

Filho, Brandli, Salvia, Bacchus and Platje (2020) examined how the coronavirus pandemic would affect the SDGs and their implementation. The exploratory research adopts a critical contextual method anchored in systems theory. This study concluded that the tremendous harm caused by the COVID-19 epidemic to the global economy and the social well-being of millions of individuals will take many years to recover from. Nonetheless, due to the uncertainties ahead, it may only reach 80% of pre-COVID-19 levels. Economic activity will continue to be impeded in the absence of a viable vaccination. As a result, more efforts in the field of public health must be conducted. Specifically, attention should be focused on strategies to reduce exposure to SARS-COV-2, the virus responsible for the COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, COVID-19 may undermine the potential and chances provided by the SDGs, such as fighting poverty or eradicating hunger. It is thus essential to express a cautionary note, emphasising the need of continuing to prioritise the implementation of the SDGs so that the progress made thus far is not jeopardised.

Gururaj and Aithal (2020) examined the future of world leaders' behaviour towards global health after COVID-19. The study is descriptive as it analyses the existing reports of various pandemics, calamities and other health-related issues proposed by various departments, government, and non-government authorities. The study relied mainly on using secondary data referring to various books, research articles, journals, and seminar presentations from Google Scholar, SSRN, Academia.edu, Shodhganga and Zenodo. The study also analyses various news media articles and reports. The study discovered that the general behaviour of the leaders is critical in leading the entire human race toward secure, healthy, and future-oriented living. The study concluded that failures to provide a safe and healthy livelihood for people on Earth are due to a lack of proper behaviour readiness among world leaders and joint efforts to combat any global health concerns. Healthy citizens are always a source of support for a country's overall growth and development. According to the study, international leaders should adjust their behaviour to be more positive, cooperative, humane, and environmentally friendly. They should quit battling for dignity, power, and dominance over one another. As a result, we can anticipate improved global health and increased strength to combat any future challenges that humanity may face.

Açar (2020) conducted a study on global governance and the COVID-19 pandemic. The provision of global public goods, a combination of informal bilateral interactions and multilateral or treaty-based relations among states, and network governance that incorporates the interests and activities of non-state players are all part of global governance. The empirical analysis was adopted in this research. According to the findings, the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated that few international actors can be isolated from the implications of global problems, and international solidarity mechanisms and connections have been established to provide global support, such as the provision of equipment to health institutions,

infrastructure, financial supports, and training to countries in need. The study concluded that throughout this crisis, international stakeholders realised the need of working together for humanity's common future. Many nations, international institutions, organisations, and people collaborated and shared knowledge, skills, technology, and resources to tackle the global health crisis, and they worked together to achieve a common goal.

Aldalala'a, (2020) in a similar study examined the impact of COVID-19 on global politics: the study revealed that the impact of COVID-19 on global politics will remain limited. While the pandemic will have an impact on how people live and how they cope with public health and global health security, it will also highlight the importance of government(s) in everyday life. On a global political level, the impact of the pandemic is dependent on the responses of the world superpowers, particularly the United States' assessment of how the viral breakout would harm its economy. The US has already set the tone by transforming the epidemic from an unseen threat to a visible adversary, singling out China as the source to appropriate and enforce a reaction. According to this viewpoint, the virus's major influence on global politics will be to expand the schism between the United States and China, particularly if President Donald Trump is re-elected to a second term.

Akon (2020) analysed the United States-China dichotomy and its impact on Post COVID-19 global politics. The study sought to ascertain their worldwide reactions to COVID-19, as well as how they maximised their prospects to lead the post-COVID-19 world order. The qualitative research approach was used. The study suggests that China's "One Belt, One Road (OBOR)" programme might be one of the most important concerns for Chinese leaders to lead the post-COVID-19 global order. The study concluded that the failure to ensure health care, the rising unemployment rate, and the collapse of the export sector will plunge developing countries into a major crisis.

III. METHODOLOGY

The Sustainable Development Goal 3 was specifically chosen for this study as it is the most affected Goal of the SDGs. It is often said that "a healthy nation, is a wealthy nation". Hence, the justification for this selection. Oyo State capital (Ibadan) was selected as the study area. The rationale for this selecting is that Oyo State has one of the highest numbers of COVID-19 cases in Nigeria.

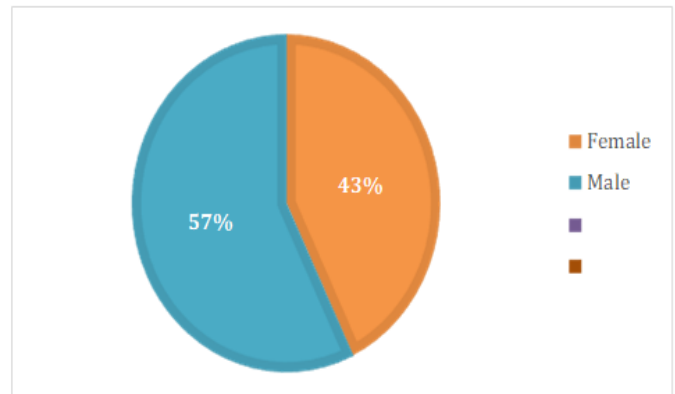
The study adopted a descriptive survey which relied on the use of primary and secondary sources of information. The population of this study comprises the staff of Biorepository and Clinical Virology Laboratory, University College Hospital (UCH); Oyo State Ministry of Health (OYSMOH); Oyo State Primary 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 to 10 top officials of the selected 7 agencies/institutes, making a total of 70 participants. The data were analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) while the results were presented using Tables and Charts.

IV. DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Demographic Data Presentation

Figure 2: Gender Distribution



Source: Field Survey, 2022

Analysis presented in Figure 2, showing the demographic data of the respondents reveals that 43% of the respondents are female while their male counterparts constitute 57%. This clearly shows that male staff of these agencies/institutions participated in this study more than females.

Figure 3: How long have you been working with your agency/institute?

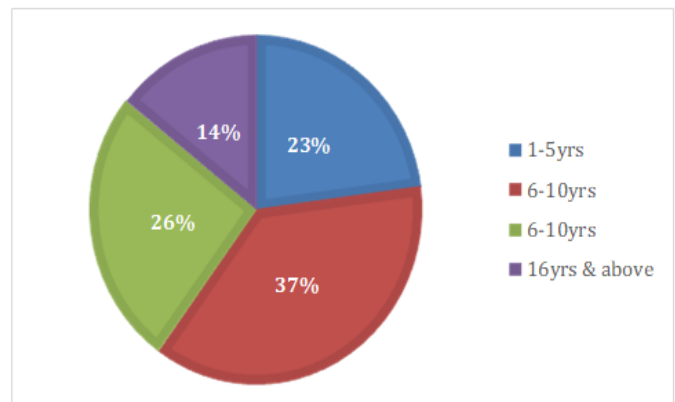


Figure 3 revealed that 23% of the participants have been working with their respective agency/institute between 1-5years, 37% for 6-10years, 26% for 11-15years, while 14% of them have been with their organisation/institute for more than 16years. This analysis demonstrate that the questionnaires were administered mostly by senior staff of the selected health agency/institute.

Table 1: How is the World Health Organisation supporting the attainment of SDG-3 in Nigeria amid the COVID-19 pandemic?

S/N	Statements	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)
1	The World Health Organisation is responding toward eradicating the COVID-19 pandemic.	34 (38.6)	33 (47.1)	3 (4.3)	0 (0)
2	The World Health Organisation has embarked on a series of research and development of vaccines toward eradicating COVID-19.	42 (60)	26 (37.1)	2 (2.9)	0 (0)
3	The World Health Organisation is ensuring the availability of affordable healthcare and medicines for all, towards attaining SDG-3	33 (47.1)	25 (35.7)	11 (15.7)	1 (1.4)
4	The World Health Organisation is supporting COVID-19 vaccine distribution to Nigeria	38 (54.3)	28 (40)	4 (5.7)	0 (0)
5	The World Health Organisation has been supportive in the aspect of health financing and development of the health workforce towards achieving SDG-3 in Nigeria	25 (35.7)	17 (24.3)	24 (34.3)	5 (5.7)
6	The World Health Organisation has been supportive in ensuring universal access to sexual and reproductive healthcare services towards achieving SDG-3 in Nigeria.	21 (30)	39 (55.7)	6 (8.6)	4 (5.7)
7	The World Health Organisation has put in place measures to prevent newborns and children's death towards achieving SDG-3 in Nigeria.	25 (35.7)	37 (52.9)	4 (5.7)	4 (5.7)
8	Measures have been put in place by the WHO for the prevention and treatment of substance abuse in achieving SDG-3	27 (38.6)	35 (50)	8 (11.4)	0 (0)

Source: Field Survey, 2022

As analysed in Table 1, 95.7% of the respondents affirmed that the World Health Organisation (WHO) is responding toward eradicating the COVID-19 pandemic. The analysis shows that 97.1% of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that WHO has embarked on a series of research and development of vaccines towards eradicating COVID-19; 82.8% of the respondents agreed that WHO is ensuring the availability of affordable healthcare and medicines for all, towards attaining SDG-3 in Nigeria. Also, 94.3% of the respondents agreed the WHO is supporting COVID-19 vaccine distribution to Nigeria towards the attainment of SDG-3 while 60% of respondents confirmed that the WHO has been supportive in the aspect of health financing and development of the health workforce towards achieving SDG-3 in Nigeria.

Additionally, a total of 85.7% of the respondents agreed that the WHO has been supportive of ensuring universal access to sexual and reproductive healthcare services towards achieving SDG-3 in Nigeria; 86.6% affirmed that the WHO has put in place measures to prevent newborn and children's death towards achieving SDG-3 in Nigeria; while 88.6% of the respondents confirmed that measures have been put in place by the WHO for the prevention and treatment of substance abuse in achieving SDG-3.

Table 2: What are the actions of the developed countries in preventing COVID-19 towards achieving SDG-3 in Nigeria?

S/N	Statements	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)
1	The developed countries are responding concerning eradicating the COVID-19 pandemic towards achieving SDG-3 in Nigeria.	16 (22.9)	45 (64.3)	4 (5.7)	5 (7.2)
2	The developed countries are still making research on the development of vaccines for eradicating the COVID-19	31 (44.3)	33 (47.1)	4 (5.7)	2 (2.9)
3	The developed countries are aiding the distribution of the COVID-19 vaccine to Nigeria towards attaining SDG-3.	27 (38.6)	37 (52.9)	6 (8.6)	0 (0)
4	The developed countries are supporting Nigeria in health financing and development of the health workforce towards eradicating the COVID-19	22 (34.1)	38 (54.3)	6 (8.6)	4 (5.7)

Source: Field Survey, 2022

According to the analysis presented in Table 2, 92% of respondents affirmed that the developed countries are responding concerning eradicating the COVID-19 pandemic towards achieving SDG-3 in Nigeria. A total of 91.4% respondents attested that the developed countries are still making research on the development of vaccines toward eradicating COVID-19. Further, Table 2 revealed that 91.5% of respondents also confirmed that the developed countries are aiding the distribution of COVID-19 vaccine to Nigeria towards attaining SDG-3. Also, as analysed in Table 2, 88.4% of respondents confirmed that the World Powers are supporting Nigeria in health financing and development of the health workforce towards eradicating the COVID-19.

V. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The WHO and SDG-3 in Nigeria amid the COVID-19 Pandemic

The first objective of this study was to examine the actions and policies of the World Health Organisation as far as assisting Nigeria in achieving SDG-3 amid the COVID-19 pandemic is concerned. As analysed in the data presented, the World Health Organisation (WHO) is responding toward eradicating the COVID-19 pandemic globally. The WHO

embarked on a series of research and development of vaccines toward eradicating COVID-19. The results show that WHO is supporting COVID-19 vaccine distribution to Nigeria towards the attainment of SDG-3. From this analysis, it can be concluded that the World Health Organisation is supporting Nigeria in achieving Sustainable Development Goal 3. The findings agree with that of previous studies which concluded that the World Health Organisation as the global health organisation has been supporting many countries (especially the developing countries) in tackling the COVID-19 pandemic (Fagbemi, 2021; Kienzler & Prainsack, 2021).

The Developed Countries in Preventing COVID-19 Towards Achieving SDG-3 in Nigeria

The second objective was to assess the actions of the world powers in preventing COVID-19 concerning achieving SDG-3 in Nigeria. According to the analysis presented, the World Powers are responding concerning eradicating the COVID-19 pandemic towards achieving SDG-3 in Nigeria. It was also found that the World Powers are aiding the distribution of the COVID-19 vaccine to Nigeria towards attaining the SDG-3. Furthermore, the World Powers are supporting Nigeria in health financing and the development of the health workforce towards eradicating COVID-19. Previous studies also agreed with the findings that the developed countries are helping the developing and underdeveloped countries through vaccine distribution and financial aid including those within Sub-Saharan Africa (Nastos, 2020; Akon, 2020). However, Thalpwila (2021) stated that the WHO policy on the distribution of vaccines was undermined due to the "Vaccine Politics" of the world powers.

The Political Actions of the Developed Countries Regarding COVID-19

In discussing the global politics of COVID-19 among the superpowers, secondary data was acquired from the review of previous studies on the subject matter. Fagbemi (2021) noted that the preoccupation with the COVID-19 spread could cause many other critical issues, such as infrastructural deficiencies, prevailing armed conflicts (such as current terrorist attacks on communities and other social unrest), inequalities, fragile fiscal space, poor education quality, and weak institutions, to suffer a terrible state of neglect or be overlooked. According to Filho et al. (2020), COVID-19 may undermine the process of implementing the SDGs owing to its broad reach and regions of effect. The study concluded that the tremendous harm caused by the COVID-19 epidemic to the global economy and the social well-being of millions of individuals will take many years to recover from.

The study of Gururaj and Aithal (2020) revealed that the overall behaviour of the leader plays an important role to lead the whole of mankind together towards a secured, healthy, and future-oriented life. The study implores international leaders should adjust their behaviour to be more positive, cooperative, humane, and environmentally friendly. They should quit battling for dignity, power, and dominance over one another. So that we can expect good global health and more strength to

fight against any future challenges that come to mankind. Açar (2020) also noted that the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated that few international actors can be isolated from the implications of global problems, and international solidarity mechanisms and connections have been established to provide global support, such as the provision of equipment to health institutions, infrastructure, financial supports, and training to countries in need.

The growing rivalry among countries to get the necessary amounts of vaccines to protect their citizens has already become a characteristic of the post-COVID international system, and such tendencies are only expected to worsen in the coming years. Normally, it can take up to a decade to go from developing and testing a vaccine in a laboratory to large international dissemination. Despite present hurdles, the pace with which COVID-19 immunisation programmes are being conducted is unusual. To put a stop to the present epidemic, which has claimed about 6 million lives and caused the biggest economic downturn since the Second World War, the goal is to vaccinate the whole world population within the shortest time possible.

COVID vaccines in this context have emerged as soft power instruments, symbolising, on the one hand, scientific and technological prowess and, on the other, a method to promote existing and new foreign policy and alliances with substantial geopolitical significance. Vaccines have evolved as a crucial weapon for power rivalry, frequently related to the promotion of conflicting developmental and governance paradigms throughout third-world nations, from their trial in laboratories to their procurement and distribution (Errighi, 2021). Meanwhile, China worked to build a worldwide vaccine delivery strategy almost immediately after the crisis began, enlisting major partners in the context of the Belt and Road Initiative and beyond.

Against this context, and with increased competition over the vaccine also existing in Europe as well as between the EU and the UK, it is obvious that three sectors of geopolitical competition are forming in the present worldwide vaccine race. These countries compete in the "race to develop" to position themselves as world powers by developing a domestically manufactured vaccine, which is a show of scientific and technological supremacy as well as strategic autonomy (Errighi, 2021). The present vaccine research race has been aided by enormous government funding programmes and commercial incentives.

VI. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As discussed in this study, the COVID-19 outbreak has caused significant damage to the long-standing international system and modern world researchers have predicted that the twenty-first century's race of international relations will displace the weapons race of the twentieth century. COVID-19 has fueled the debate about whether globalisation is a menace or a blessing to humanity. Aside from the growing globalisation debate, nation-states are increasingly focusing more on unconventional security than traditional security,

which has lessened the intensity of this armaments race and put problems such as health security to the forefront.

From the findings of the study, the study concludes that the COVID-19 pandemic has caused a major setback in the pursuit of Sustainable Development Goal 3 in Nigeria. Also, the developed countries and WHO have been supportive of Nigeria through vaccine distribution, finance, test kits, protective gear, and the development of the healthcare system with the necessary equipment.

Although the virus has hindered the plans for the achievement of the SDGs, it was also found to be helpful in fast-tracking the attainment of the SDG-3 in Nigeria. whether or not Nigeria will then achieve SDG-3 by the year 2030 depends on the actions and policies of the government, the policy-makers and the several agencies saddled with matters concerning health and national development.

From the findings of this study, the followings recommendations were made:

1. The Nigerian government through the offices of the special assistant on SDGs (both at the federal and state level) should redesign and implement new measures toward achieving SDG-3 in Nigeria. This should also include other stakeholders (including community leaders) who should be carried along for better policy formulation and implementation.
2. The World Health Organisation as the global health body in conjunction with the Ministry of Health (both Federal and state) should put more effort into making provisions that will ensure the attainment of SDG-3 in Nigeria by the year 2030.
3. It is also imperative for the world powers and other developed countries to continue the supply of humanitarian, materials, medical and financial assistance to the developing countries so the entire world can achieve SDG-3 by 2030.
4. The government, health institutions, and several concerned Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs) should take necessary actions to ensure other health-related issues are not neglected while tackling COVID-19.

REFERENCE

- [1] Açar, D. A. November (2020). Global governance and the COVID-19 pandemic, Global Academy Talks Series. İstanbul: Global Academy and International Relations Council, 3.
- [2] Amodu, A. (2019). Philosophy of science and sustainability: A concise introduction. Ibadan: College Press.
- [3] Amodu, A. (2020). History and philosophy of sustainable development: Road-mapping interdisciplinarity for wellbeing. Journal of Interdisciplinary Sciences, 4(1), 58-65.
- [4] Adekunle, I. A., Onanuga, A. T., Akinola, O. O., & Ogunbanjo, O. W. (2020). Modelling spatial variations of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in Africa. Science of the Total Environment. 729, 138998.
- [5] Akon, M. S. (2020). United States-China dichotomy and its impact on post-COVID-19 global politics: a critical analysis. Malaysian Journal of International Relations 1-19.
- [6] Aldalala'a, N. (2020). The impact of covid-19 on global politics: It is all in the response. Trends Research Organization, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, 1-8.
- [7] Errighi, L. (2021). COVID-19 and the global vaccine race. Instituto Affari Internazionali, 21(19), 1-7.
- [8] Fagbemi, F. (2021). COVID-19 and sustainable development goals (SDGs): An appraisal of the emanating effects in Nigeria. Research in Globalization, 3, 1-9.
- [9] Filho, W. L., Brandli, L. L., Salvia, A. L. Bacchus, L. R. & Platje, J. (2020). COVID-19 and the UN sustainable development goals: Threat to solidarity or an opportunity. Sustainability, 12(13), 2-14.
- [10] Graham, L. (2020). Interview with Fox News. Retrieved from: <https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/news/this-could-have-been-stopped-steve-bannon-blames-murderous-chinese-communist-party-and-front-who-for-pandemic>.
- [11] Gururaj, I., & Aithal, P.S. (2020). A study on the future of world leader's behaviour towards global health after COVID-19. International Journal of Case Studies in Business, IT, and Education, 4(1), 127-135.
- [12] Joshua, W. K. (2020). The impact of Covid-19 pandemic on water-health food-economy nexus and sustainable development in developing countries. European Journal of Engineering Research and Science, 5(11), 1-6.
- [13] Khan, A. U., Proma, A.A., Akter, M., Rahaman, M. D., & Das, S. (2020). A review on coronavirus disease (COVID-19) epidemic threat for global health in 2020. American Journal of Microbiological Research, 57-62.
- [14] Khojayan, K. (2021). Transformation of the system of the international relations in post Covid-19 period. International Journal of Innovative Technologies in Social Science, 1(29), 1-5.
- [15] Kienzler, H., & Prainsack, B. (2021). Solidarity and global health cooperation during Covid-19 and beyond. Global Governance Spotlight, 1-4.
- [16] McCarthy, N. (2020). Which Countries are the biggest financial contributors to the world health organization. Forbes. Retrieved from: <https://www.google.com/amp/s/www.forbes.com/sites/niallmccarty/2020/04/08which-countries-are-the-biggest-financial-contributors-to-the-world-health-organization-infographic/amp/>
- [17] McKay, H. (2020). Coronavirus: US gives 10 times the amount of money to WHO then China. Fox News. Retrieved from: <https://www.foxnews.com/world/coronavirus-us-chinawho-world-health-organization-china>.
- [18] Nastos, G. (2020). European response to Covid-19 health crisis. HAPSc Policy Briefs Series 1(1), 123-129.
- [19] Nuwagira, E., & Muzoora, C. (2020). Is Sub-Saharan Africa prepared for COVID-19. Tropical Medicine and Health, 48(1).
- [20] Oyedokun, D. M. & Amodu, A. A. (2022). Healthcare workers' perception of the implications of COVID-19 to sustainable development in Nigeria. Renaissance University Journal of Management and Social Science, 8(1), 51-62
- [21] Santos-Carrillo, F., Fernández-Portillo, L. A., & Sianes, A. (2020). Rethinking the governance of the 2030 agenda for sustainable development in the Covid-19 era. Sustainability, 12(18), 1-24.
- [22] Seshaiyer, P. & McNeely, C. L. (2020). Challenges and opportunities from COVID-19 for global sustainable development. World Medical and Health Policy, 12(4), 443-452.
- [23] Shilliam, R. (2013). Race and research agendas. Cambridge Review of International Affairs, 26(1), 152-58.
- [24] Thalpwala, O. N. (2021). Politics of COVID-19: A study of the role of the global powers in combatting the pandemic. Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences Studies, 3(7), 25-35.
- [25] The Independent, (2014). Obama, Trump Corona Virus Prepare Pandemic. Retrieved from: <https://www.indy100.com/article/obama-trump-coronavirus-prepare-pandemic-2014-speech-watch-video-9457926>
- [26] Ugwuegbe, U., Urama, N. E., & Iloh, E. (2018). Meeting the 2030 SDG in Nigeria: The role of entrepreneurship development. AfriHeritage Policy Brief, 16.
- [27] United Nations (2015). Sustainable Development Goals. Retrieved from: <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/>

- [28] World Bank, (2020). The global economic outlook during the COVID-19 Pandemic: A changed world. Retrieved from: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2020/06/08/the-global-economic-outlook-during-the-covid-19-pandemic-a-changed-world>
- [29] World Health Organization, (2015). Targets of Sustainable Development Goal 3. Retrieved from: [https://www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/health-](https://www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/health-policy/sustainable-development-goals/sustainable&hyphen-qj4:-developmentgoals-sdgs/targets-of-sustainable-development-goal-3)
- [30] Zvobgo, K., & Meredith, L. (2022). Why race matters in international relations. Foreign policy. Retrieved from: <https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/06/19/why-race-matters-international-relations-ir/>