# Covid-19 Pandemic: Responding To a Gender - Friendly Creative Engagement during Lockdown and Isolation

**By**

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**Abstract**

No one living has ever come out to say he or she had witness Corona virus in this manner, as such every nation, government and individual was caught unaware. The fear of Covid-19 to stay indoor became the way to live unaffected, while the more the merrier portends death. Lockdown became inevitable to curtail the spread of Corona virus. Little did one know that this would be a bitter pill to swallow. Strange because no one living had witnessed such incarceration until this time, to many it was house arrest where eating, playing, sleeping became routine. The need to get engaged, connected, involved to diffuse loneliness and idleness became sacrosanct. This study is one of the creative outlets during the pandemic lockdown in the first quarter of 2020. Seventy two beneficiaries in which about 60% of them were females, who incidentally have never engaged in origami responded to this 21-day online practical creative sections of folding papers, different sizes of paper and different styles were taught through video assignments. The paper presents creative works and few overall positive comments of beneficiaries.

**Keywords: Covid-19, Pandemic, Gender Friendly, Creative Engagement, Lockdown**

## Introduction

All aspects of Arts: music, dance, creative writing, short drama, "ewi" (poetry) and visual arts responded in the fight against coronavirus. For instance many songs were composed to address best wishes, courage and hope to the sick and healthy folks, instructions on what to do and how to prevent contacting the virus. Skits and Short drama were also used to sensitize people all over the social media, the artistes humorously address prevention of the virus. Music Performances were also staged at some isolation centers in Lagos to keep the spirit of the isolated and quarantine up, such performances focused on their wellness, faith hope, togetherness. While creative writing and well-crafted graphics were sent to people to communicate best wishes and assurances, positive and motivational words. The caregivers, volunteers and health workers were not left out of appreciations,

commendations and prayers during this pandemic. Beyond doubt arts remain the active voice and the faithful messengers that engage idle hands during the fight against the deadly virus. All corporate, associations, institutions, schools and government carry out administration, management and daily running of the system through Virtual meetings, Artists were privileged to utilize this lockdown, social distancing to produce, train and showcase their works. Engaging in art related activities helped a lot of youths to translate lockdown and movement restrictions to gainful engagements. Virtual workshops were held, one on one home instructions to impact children and youths with hands-on skills. The learning experience and mode at this time differ from before the pandemic outbreak. This trying time of no movement would have been with woes for many without one form of engagement or the other in acquiring a form of knowledge that keep them busy. Virtual classes are organized through zoom, instagram, whatsapp and Microsoft Teams. Example of such are Talent not enough by Bolaji Ogunwo, Master Art class art by Peju Layiwola, Art educators' Hangout by Adeniyi Segun, Art in Medicine Fellowship virtual class, Origami Therapy Challenge by Oluwatobi Sodimu e.t.c. This study documents the engagements of a cross section of youths and adult who took part in paper folding exercise called "Origami Therapy Challenge".

**Origami**

Origami entails paper folding techniques to achieve three dimensional art, it is the ancient Japanese art of paper folding (Kao 2001). Origami folding methods have the ability to transform paper into unlimited numbers of shapes and patterns without any cuts or adhesives (Magrone, 2015). The aspect of origami focused is origami for recreational purposes (birds, flowers, animals, and other objects that are more familiar. Origami Therapy Challenge is an offshoot of many of the activities of Art in Medicine Fellowship titled "Bedside Arts" This study focuses on output of works from participants during covid- 19 lockdown.

**Research Methods**

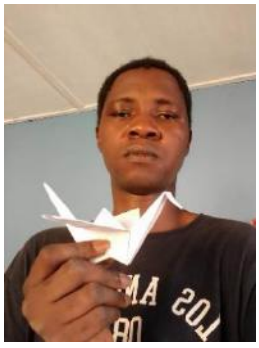
The study made use of non-experimental research, a longitudinal design that examines variables such as performance exhibited by the group under study over a period of time. The challenge was over a period of 21-days virtual drill with a task to model a day. Seventy two participants majority of who were youths, some professionals/gainfully employed adults and youths while others were graduates and students. Below are some responses of participants of the virtual folding sessions.

**Practical Creative Responses of particpants**
**Crane Project - 17th May**











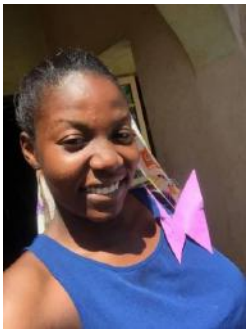




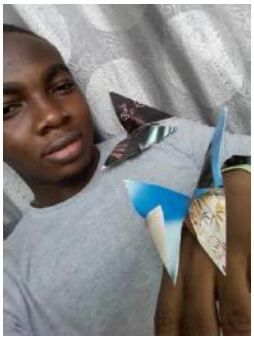




**Origami Butterfly- 26th May**

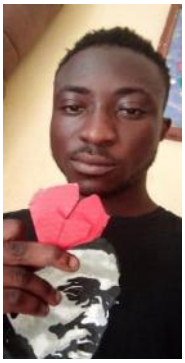


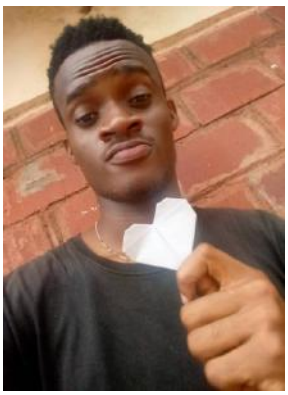
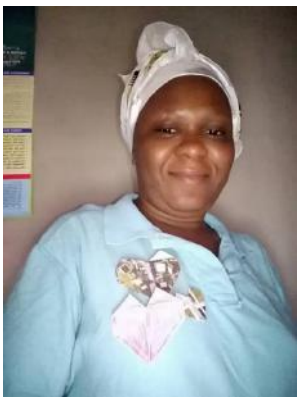
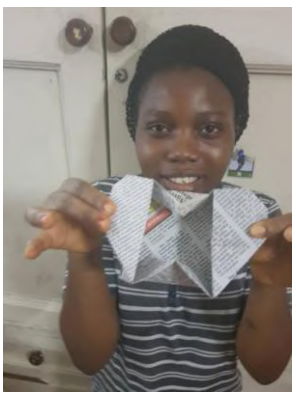




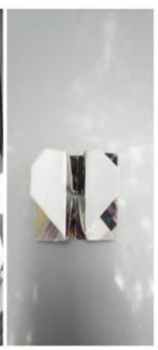



**Origami Heart - 27th May**



**Sail Boat - 28th May**

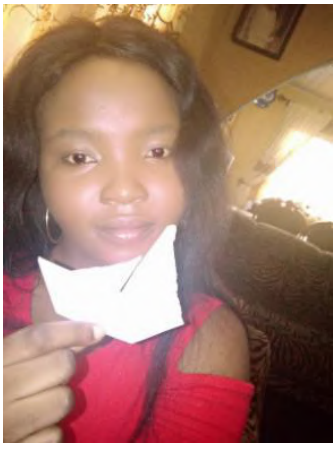




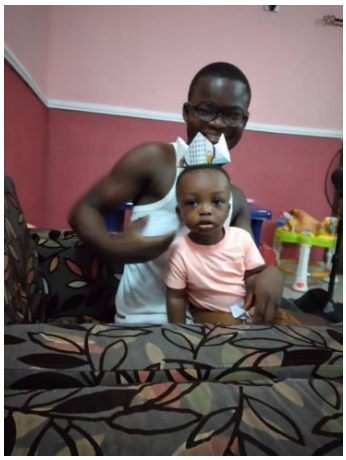


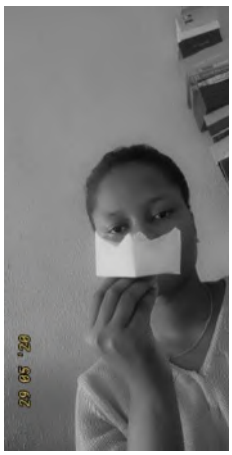






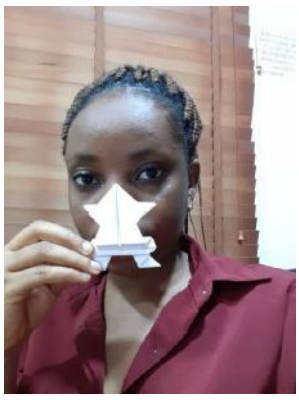
**Origami Crown - 29th May**





**Frog - 1st June**







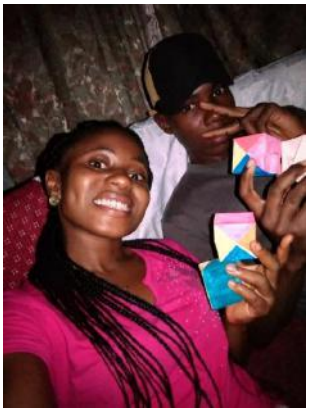





**Origami Ball - 2nd June**











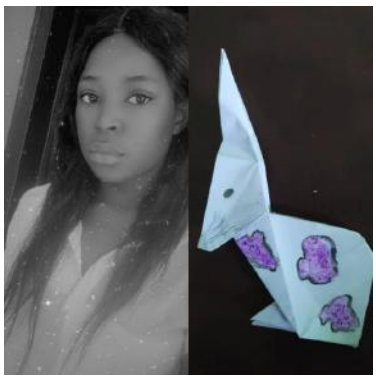







**Rabit - 3rd June**














**Robin Star 1 - 4th June**











**Origami Dress - 5th June**











**Heart Envelope - 8th June**




**Robin Star 2 - 10th June**









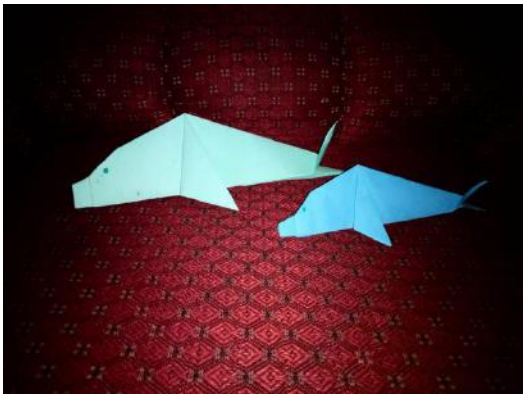


**Origami Dolphin - 11th June**



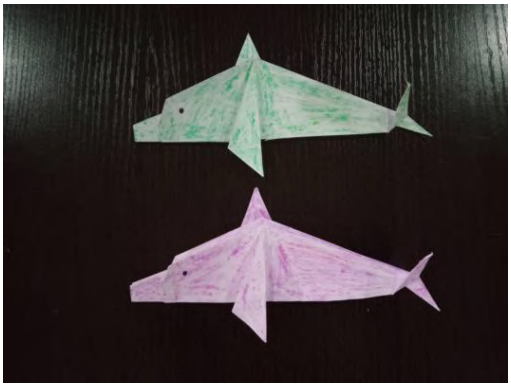






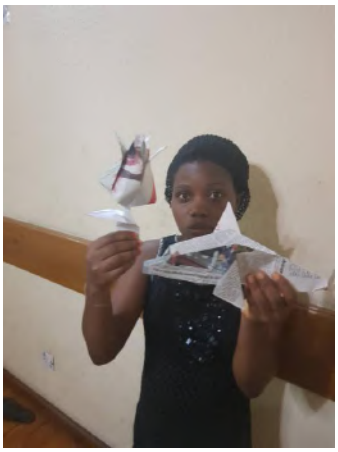




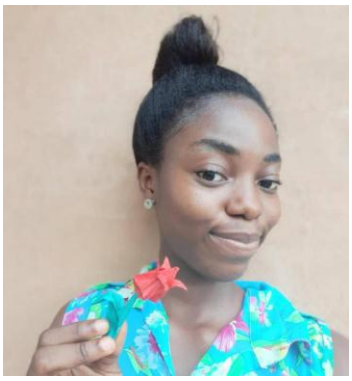
**Tulip Flower and Stalk – 12th June**

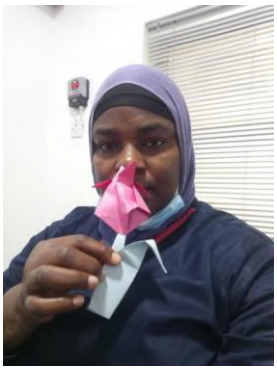














**Presentation**

Below is the collage of participants, individual presented all works produced for two weeks on 9th June on social medial handles with hash tags #origamitherapychallenge, #origamycreativityday @ifoledit and so on.




Source: Origami Therapy Challenge

**Summary**

The study found out that females responded to this paper folding engagement more than males, the feedback from participants show excitements. Even though 98% of participants had no knowledge of origami and paper craft before 17th May 2020, the above creative use of papers turned out to be successful. Although, it appears that the newness of "origami" was a factor to the choice of participants, notwithstanding, the play-way approach of the instruction and learning contributed to the females sustenance participants interests. From the data collected after the exercise, a few written feed backs emphasizing the timely intervention of paper fold engagements are highlighted here. Olympus Ade-Banjo comments "The Origami Therapy Challenge has helped me as a medical student when I faced emotional pitfalls. It was hard to pick up the paper when I was not motivated to do anything at all, but the moment I pick up the paper and play the lesson video, I became engrossed till the end. It has been really helpful through the recent tough times". Otuyalo Iyanuoluwa confesses Origami actually made me realize that you can do anything you set your mind to do. It also brought out another part I did not realize I had. I fell in love with

every bit of it. It help me utilize my day during the lockdown, I also decide to teach my cousin who was also eager to fold something daily.

**Conclusion**

This paper is a report of a folding exercise that provides a form of escape therapy mechanism from emotional stress, boredom, idleness and trauma especially during lockdown and social distancing. "Devil finds work for the idle hands" the experience also serve as diversional and an antidote against vices such as rape cases rampant during the Lockdown.

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