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## LOCKDOWN PANDEMIC AND LIBRARIANSHIP PRACTICE IN NIGERIA

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### ABSTRACT

*This study explores the role of Libraries and Librarians in the Corona-Virus pandemic era as obtained in other parts of the world. This article found out that in most countries the Libraries were not exactly operational nor were they totally closed from services amidst the lockdown, but found out ways to deliver services to clientele as all physical buildings were locked up, of which this was not the case in Nigeria where Libraries were totally locked down with no services rendered to her clientele. This observation prompted the need for this research. In Nigeria, with the COVID-19 outbreak and the imposition of the lockdowns the Academic Libraries were basically locked up and Librarians were away from service. The article looks at how Librarians, especially Academic Librarians in Nigeria could prepare to render services to their clients in the wake of such outbreaks and lockdown(s) in the future, modelling on what was obtained in Libraries from other parts of the world. In the peak of the spread of COVID-19 all over the world, towns, cities and countries world over went on lockdown, Nigeria was on total lockdown, Nigerian universities and every level of schools were lockdown. The study highlights the role of University Librarians in this type of emergency situations which includes; raising awareness through public health education, providing support to medical staff, researchers, traditional services to regular Library patrons and providing links to useful resources like Open Access resources.*

**Keywords:** Academic Librarians, Lockdown, Pandemic, COVID-19, Nigeria Universities, Library services.

## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

In Nigeria the first case of the COVID-19 was confirmed on 27<sup>th</sup> February, 2020 in an Italian citizen of age 44 years, who returned from Milan, Italy to Lagos, Nigeria on the 25<sup>th</sup> of February, 2020 by the Federal Ministry of Health, since the first confirmed case was reported from China in January 2020 (NCDC, 2021). The COVID-19 pandemic also popularly referred to as the novel corona-virus disease has swept through the world with a high voltage of devastating damages to every aspect of life, while health care professionals continue their fight on the frontline of combating the COVID-19 and system leaders negotiate public health measures, the place of “Librarians”, academics and information professionals cannot be down played.

The COVID-19 pandemic, also known colloquially as the coronavirus pandemic is on-going global pandemic of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus2 (SARS-CoV-2) WHO, 2020). The official name COVID-19 and SARS-CoV-2 were issued by the WHO on 11 February 2020. Today there are about five dominant variants of COVID-19 the Alpha variant, Beta variant, Gamma variant, Delta variant, Omicron variant, and the Stealth Omicron also known as the Omicron BA.2 variant which is the latest of them all as at 4<sup>th</sup> March, 2022. The virus is thought to be of natural animal origin, with evidence suggested that it descend from a coronavirus that infects wild bats, and spreads to humans through an intermediary wildlife host. There is also the consideration that the virus was possibly and accidentally released from a laboratory.

The disease is mainly transmitted via the respiratory route when people inhale droplets and small airborne particles, that form an aerosol that infected people or persons exhale as they breathe, talk, cough or sneeze. Symptoms of COVID-19 vary, but often include; fever, cough, headache, fatigue, loss of smell and taste and difficulty in breathing (WHO, 2020).

As at 4<sup>th</sup> March, 2022 more than 444.10million cases and 6.01million deaths have been confirmed making the pandemic one of the deadliest in history of mankind.

As expected the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control in collaboration with the Federal Ministry of Health and the Federal Government of Nigeria swung to action, strengthening measures to ensure an outbreak in Nigeria was promptly controlled and contained: activated its National Emergency Operations Centres, Presidential Taskforce on COVID-19, Quarantine Centres and Isolation Centres, public sensitization on how to stay safe, rolling out COVID-19 protocols to be observed by all and implementing the lockdowns. The government of Nigeria began the imposition of total lockdown in the country on the 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020 first for two weeks this was followed by other successive lockdowns which lasted till the 29<sup>th</sup> June, 2020 when the first of the relaxation of the lockdown(s) was pronounced. Following significant drops of the cases recorded between months September and November of 2020 that led to the total lifting of the lockdown(s) and reopening of the country’s economy, school prepared to reopen and now in full sessions.

In Nigeria when the government directed schools to resume, universities in the country seem not to be properly ready for the resumption as adequate measures were not in place for keeping the COVID-19 protocols hence the fear of eminent spread, so the academic union in the country insisted the needful be done by the government and school managements before resumption proper, and it was so. Fumigation of university premises, provisions for face masks, alcohol base sanitizers, and wash handbaths with washing soaps were provided for, so also are all of these provided for the libraries in the universities in Nigeria. Librarians also

ensured in the control of the number of patrons accessing the open spaces within the library facilities at a time, this was to ensure for social distancing.

In the Libraries both users and staff were ensured to observe all of the laid down observances for the COVID-19 when the universities returned, but during the lockdown and the successive lockdowns that followed while all universities were closed down the Librarians and Libraries in this part of the world were out of services of any form to patrons meanwhile in some other parts of the world the Librarians and Libraries found a way to render services to different categories of clientele, both traditionally and remotely using various technologies and innovations.

At times such as this the Librarian has a great deal of role to play as much as the libraries; in assisting the academic need of the society, providing resources to their users, disseminating information especially on the subject matter at hand and providing library services to users and the public on issues of the pandemic and more.

This study aims to investigate on how Libraries and Librarians in other parts of the world were able to render the needed services and supports while on COVID-19 lockdown so that the Nigerian Library Association community (especially the Academic Librarians' community) can model on this for future purposes.

Lockdown is a mass safety measure in an emergency situation and or a disease outbreak which can also be referred to as a stay-at-home order as was in the case with the COVID-19 outbreak. A full lockdown usually means that people must stay where they are and not enter or exit a place. During the COVID-19 outbreak the first lockdown was implemented for preventive measure in Wuhan, China in January 2020. Some of the possible lockdowns we may have are; preventive, emergency, in epidemics and pandemics and lockdown in climate change. A lockdown can be said to be some kind of mass quarantine or a stay-at-home-order.

## **1.2 LITERATURE REVIEW**

University Libraries exist to provide and disseminate information to users or the academic community (Oche & Sambe, 2018). Academic Libraries and Librarians in Nigeria were duly rendering adequate library services before the outbreak of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic which eventually crippled all academics activities; the Library not exempted went into total closure with library services returning only at the return from the successive lockdowns imposed by the government. In Nigeria during the COVID-19 lockdown services in the Library of all types and kinds were suspended, of which elsewhere in the America, Europe, Asia and some countries in Africa found ways to render some services to their clientele within this period. Nigerian academic environment being a very much dynamic one has always learnt and implement new advance developments in every area of academic advancement which is the intention of this study.

The COVID-19 pandemic has created the largest disruption of education system in history, and present time has widened the gaps in the education industry across the globe (Nwankwo et al, 2020). It is well known and agreed that the emergence of COVID-19 has caused major disruptions in the academic activities and style of schooling world over. During the lockdowns around the world the schools were also locked down; many universities were on lockdown so were the Academic Libraries too. Some Academic Libraries found ways to continue in their rendering of services to their students, staff, client and or patrons. Different academic activities have been exercised remotely using various technology driven

applications like Google Classroom, Zoom meeting application, Cisco WebEx application and many more. Social media platforms like WhatsApp, Facebook, etc. have also been used for assigning and submission of Home Assignments in various institutions (Neog, 2020). There was the strong need to change with the trend and the demand of the pandemic; the style of teaching and conducting of educational affairs at lockdown changed even to this very day. Library users should make aware about the availability of social media services of the libraries for optimum utility of the service (Neog, 2020). Librarians as a social institution are responsible for ensuring public health awareness and the provision of up to date information to clinicians, academics, researchers, students, managers and the public in general.

In the age of multiple information sources and diverse communication channels, users do not always access the most valid information (Ali & Gatiti, 2020). It is estimated that there are eleven different types of information sources ranging from valid information to untrusted or doubtful information (Asrafi-Rizi & Kuzempour, 2019). For academics, intellectuals, students and most information seekers Google Trends has become a useful tool for monitoring development of situations (climate, security, research, public health, innovations and trending IT etc.) at both national and international level. It is worthy of note that the internet, social media, government, radio, television, blogs, personal contact with health professionals were and still the channel to which information on COVID-19 were disseminated and retrieved by most information seekers and users, this is why it becomes very important for the Librarian to come in, using these mediums and making sure that they function well in this loop to help manage the quality and genuineness of the information that reaches out to the public and professional users of these information. IFLA reported on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020, that Libraries around the world are being affected by the emergence and spread of the coronavirus. This situation has made Librarians around the globe to mobilize and provide a collection of valuable and reliable information on coronavirus in order to give people a source they can trust (IFLA, 2020).

Some of the activities popularly carried out by Librarians during the time included status updating, COVID-19 health information, photos sharing, archiving events, getting updates on COVID-19, and sending private messages, and or in professional chartrooms. Web 2.0 technology is a social networking tool for library services and this tool will allow Librarians to interact with their users in other to study their needs and provide feedbacks. This tool can also give patrons various updates on COVID-19 health information (Chukwuyere et al, 2020).

The role of Librarians and Libraries in the era of COVID-19 was essentially and still is the same as it was before its emergence- to support their patrons in the mission of higher education. Though during this period of lockdown Librarians have had to shift from supporting classroom based instruction to online instruction which means getting students and faculties access to quality digital materials as quickly, efficiently and affordable as possible. Hence, many Libraries moved from shopping on just print books to e-books. Since COVID-19 pandemic and the lockdown switched education system more into online based than it were, Librarians had to work remotely during this times, helping in the ways they can, partnering with electronic databases resources providers like EBSCO and Elsevier etc., to source for E-contents expanding their access and making resources freely available to their institutions as they focused on online learning during the period as patrons themselves had to learn and work remotely. Medical teams from EBSCO had to create a COVID-19 portal that encouraged Librarians and other information professionals to recommend resources for researchers and clinicians (EBSCO, 2020).

The regular traditional library services were also offered during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown by Librarians, remotely, creating online platforms that enable them to render these services.

### **1.3 SCOPE OF STUDY**

This study aims at investigating the mediums and innovations used by Libraries and academic Librarians elsewhere around the world for delivering needed library services during the COVID-19 pandemic that led to lockdowns world over.

### **1.4 OBJECTIVES and SIGNIFICANCES**

1. To help draw and expose the attention of Academic Librarians in Nigeria Universities on how to use available mediums and resources to disseminate information during lockdown as was experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic.
2. Devising innovating ways to meeting core needs of regular users during future lockdown(s)
3. To stay in the know on how to extract and disseminate information on public health and stay safe protocols to the public.
4. Effectively and efficiently supporting research teams, academics, students, and all information seekers and users on latest information and development of cases at hand.
5. To identify useful ways of delivering traditional library services to clientele while on lockdown.
6. Knowing how best to promote public health awareness by creating and disseminating needed information on preventive and combative measures.

### **1.5 METHODOLOGY**

The method employed in this study first, was based on personal observations on happenings in the University of Jos and other Universities in Nigeria, through interactions with colleagues within university in the country during and after the COVID-19 lockdown, analysing information from the news (print and voice media), examined information from websites of some Libraries, trusted available open access resources and lastly from journal publications/articles on the COVID-19 pandemic.

It suffices to say that the method employed for this study was based on personal observations and desktop analysis of updates and relevant literatures.

### **1.6 LIMITATIONS**

Study focused only on federal (public) universities in Nigeria, and information was gathered only on 3 institutions of 43 federal universities in the country as at 2021. The Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) which the academic Librarians in Nigeria belong was on an absolute and total industrial action before the imposition of the COVID-19 lockdown which met them on the action. This factor was not considered in this study.

### **1.7 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

This study agrees with the fact as reported from Pakistan by (Ali & Gatiti 2020) that the role of University Librarians in emergency includes; raising awareness through public health education, providing ongoing support to medical staff, researchers, and providing ongoing traditional services to regular library users. Adding to these facts is also worthy of note that Librarians also owe the duty of making available to users list of available Open Access

Resources during such lockdowns as was the practice during the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic.

Experts in the field of infectious diseases suggest that during a pandemic virtual communication provides a good way to inform patients who are in isolation wards (Hollander & Carr, 2020). It was also observed that Librarian and information professionals as well as academics share information at a very large volume using the virtual method of communication, social media, and other online (internet) mediums like e-mail etc.

In any pandemic there are three dimensions to a Librarian's role:

- To provide public health awareness by creating and disseminating information relating to preventive measures.
- To support research teams, researchers and faculties by providing information regarding the latest developments, researches and literatures.
- To meet the core needs of regular library users. (Ali & Gatiti, 2020)

### **1.8 PROMOTING PUBLIC HEALTH AWARENESS**

It is very imperative that Librarians and information specialists should properly and effectively play these three roles well, because in such confusion as an outbreak of a pandemic arises a lot of confusing information reaching the populace. Conflicting news and a lot of this information been fake news (most times from social media) making it difficult for most persons seeking information to know which to trust. The Library being an institution of academic enjoys a great level of trust on the information she shares, especially for populations with good number of literacy. To improve on the status of the rural and urban dwellers, there is the need for sufficient access to health information (Chukwuyere et al, 2020). To improve the health status of the world populace, the need for sufficient, the right and correct access to health information cannot be over emphasised.

In other to effectively play her role in making the public aware especially to the academic population, the Librarians must work with health care workers in other to retrieve the right information to be disseminated to the communities, hence filling the gap in minimising poor and fake news dissemination. During the COVID-19 pandemic that led to the lockdown there was the list of observances to keep as listed out by the WHO and the public health preventive professionals, which most Libraries obtained and communicated to the public. Chukwuyere et.al, (2020) noted that COVID-19 seems to spread from person to person by the same mechanism as the other common cold or influenza viruses. That is by face-to-face contact with a sneeze or cough (or droplets), or from contact with secretions of people who are infected (WHO, 2020). Some of the COVID-19 protocols to be observed are: maintaining at list 1 meter distance between persons (social distancing), avoiding handshakes, and contact with the other person, avoiding unnecessary touching of the face, mouth, eyes, nose, with the hand, avoiding crowded places, proper and regular washing of hands with detergent, rob hands with preferably alcohol base hand sanitizers, cough and sneeze to your elbow, stay indoors and only go out when it is most necessary to, use nose mask when outdoor, quarantine when suspecting or having sign of fever or may have come in contact with a suspected case, then call for emergency health care centre for COVID-19 control in your country for isolation and medical care when symptoms manifest or worsen. Symptoms are very similar to that of fever. The COVID-19 guide was to help control and minimise spread or casualties.

Library associations and individual libraries have been designing posters and handbills to educate people regarding COVID-19. Librarians also helped to motivate COVID-19 infected persons to share their experiences. Some of the Libraries that involved in such activities as mentioned above are University of Mississippi Libraries, National Network of Medicine, Australian Library and Information Association and many more. Researchers at Arizona State University created a separate web portal, 'A Journal of the Plague Year', to collect the experiences of users (Tebeau, 2020). As most countries were experiencing shortage of masks and face shields which are necessary for preventing infection, Librarians have been offering webinars on how to create mask (Yuvaraj, 2020).

In the age of social media that we are in, it is well known that sometimes false information are spread through social media channels not that social media itself is a misinformation channel, but people sometime tends to spread such false rumours, and information on social media travels at a very high spread at the shortest possible time. Librarians and information experts try to counteract this by only sharing reliable information (Ali & Gatiti, 2020). Trust worthy information may be shared with libraries users through institutional and personal social media accounts and platforms to try control rumours and fake news (Ali & Gatiti, 2020). Some social media platforms employed by most Libraries and Librarians who rendered services during the COVID-19 lockdown are; Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, WhatsApp etc. this was found in Faculty of Health sciences Library, The Aga Khan University, The Chinese University of Hong Kong Library, Department of Library Bindma University of Science Education, Zimbabwe to mention but a few. Other online plat forms used are blogs, web pages of libraries, ZOOM for virtual meetings, webinars, Google Classroom, Skype, and E-mails are the most tools used by Libraries to provide digital services and create public health awareness on the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak, during the lockdown that engulfed the world in the year 2020.

The rate of infection on the COVID-19 pandemic might be due to lack of proper dissemination of information and public awareness on the virus (Chukwuyere et. al, 2020). This has necessitated the need for social media usage as it has the ability to inform a wide population in the shortest possible time. Social media has the ability to inform a wide population in the shortest space of time (Mack D., & Behler A., et.al, 2007). Information disseminated by Librarians through social media tools includes: selective dissemination of information and customers services in general which includes information on public health as was in the case of COVID-19 and other outbreaks before it and in the future. It is worthy of note that in developed countries Librarians are expected to provide decentralised and accessible health information through social media which is an important goal of primary health care. Lack of knowledge and information dissemination using appropriate social media platforms remains a significant deterrent to good health practice leading to heightened health risk (Kargdo cited in Chukwuyere, et. al, 2020). The potentials of Librarians and its associates to acquire, evaluate, package, store and disseminate information, especially to the information poor society has placed a huge demand on it to intervene in critical situations such as COVID-19 pandemic era (Laden, Haruna & Madu, 2020).

Social media network sites can be said to be an online platforms through which individuals, groups and organisations create presence and share information using texts, photos, videos, voice. They are also one of the fastest mode and medium of public health awareness today. Ganiyu and Oluwafemi (2016) see social media as a web-based channel of information dissemination rapidly permeating all aspects of the Librarian profession as it has been used to communicate with potential library patrons as well as extending the information services to other remote users particularly in the community. Social media was also defined as a fusion

of sociology and technology that transforms monologue (one-to-many) into dialogue (many-to-many), and is the democratisation of information that transforms people from content reader to publishers (Ganiyu & Oluwafemi, 2016).

### 1.9 SUPPORT TO RESEARCH TEAMS AND FACULTY

At normal times the Librarian has the responsibility of making sure to support researchers, faculties, academics and students making sure they have access to useful information, the right and correct resources for their use. More so, more than ever before the Librarians are needed at times like in the outbreak of pandemics and epidemics leading to lockdown, the Academic Librarian and the Libraries must be useful getting to work more than ever before, helping to source, collect and disseminate information to her clientele.

During the lockdown of the COVID-19 pandemic, Librarians made it easy for those in the academics to get trusted information on the outbreak as well as other information for their consumption, importantly to researchers and professionals who are working on the disease outbreak as in the case of the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19). Ali and Gatiti, (2020) noted that Librarians can support medical staff, academics, research teams and paramedical staff by drawing attention to the latest developments regarding vaccination, diagnosis kits and relevant studies published in medical journals. During the COVID-19 struggle popular electronic databases and libraries provided free access to articles relating to COVID-19, literatures on coronavirus publications increased during this period.

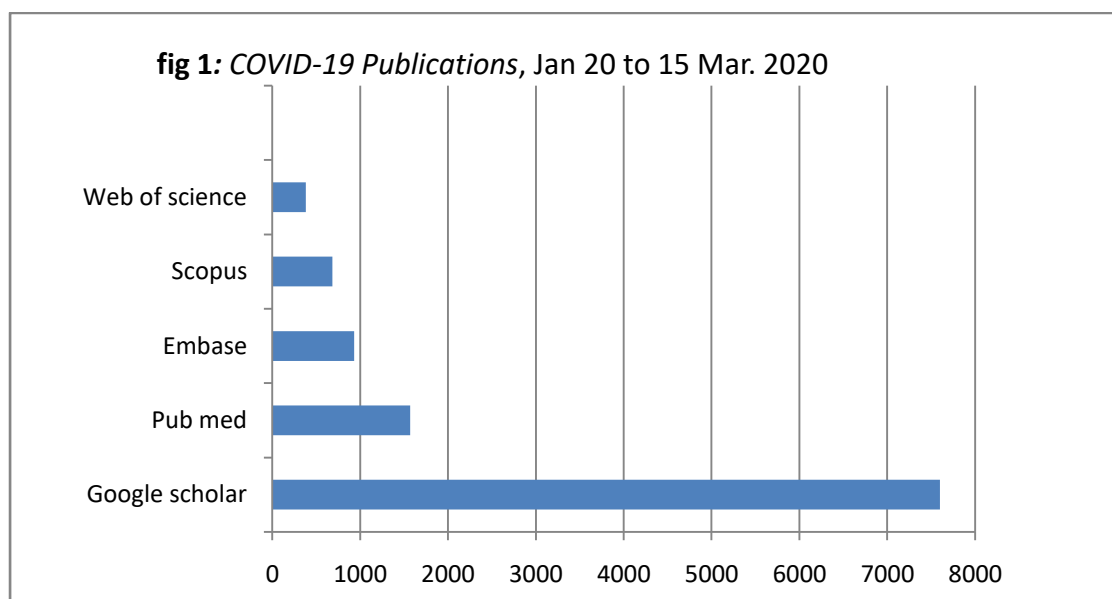


Fig. 1: COVID-19 publications, 20 January, 2020 – 15 March, 2020 derived from various search engines and data bases. Source: Chiara Formigoni (2020)

As shown in the chart above in fig. 1, Google scholar has the largest number of publications with 7600 articles, Pub med with 1570, Embase showing 933, Scopus 686 and Web of science showing the least published number of article 383.

The style used during the COVID-19 pandemic by Librarians mostly in the health science libraries to support researchers and faculty were harvesting useful resources and website providing the latest COVID-19 research evidence. As publishers are offering free access to e-contents on COVID-19, Librarians in most part of the world are using these databases to download information related to the research interests of their researchers, faculty members



and health workers (Yuvaraj, 2020). Librarians using keywords and other tools have the skills to monitor recent publications and provide the most reliable papers to researchers (Yuvaraj, 2020). WHO, Elsevier, JSTOR, Willey online library and many other publishers, researchers have and are creating platforms ranging from; databases, information centres, COVID-19 open research datasets, free to access articles and recorded knowledge materials on past pandemics and epidemics to help solve and tackle the present disasters in the world. For example the Library History Round Table of American Library Association has assembled an exhaustive list of resources related to epidemics or related disasters, and the Society of American Archivists has also put together a compendium of resources of global initiatives taken in response of COVID-19 crisis (Yuvaraj, 2020).

### **1.10 PROVIDING TRADITIONAL LIBRARY SERVICES TO CORE USERS**

As it was well known that during the COVID-19 pandemic which resulted to lockdown virtually world over, the education system shifted mostly in to e-learning from the popular classroom based style, making all class of students to study or school from home. This development automatically required the Librarians to also find a shift in their mode of work and operations, devising effective and efficient ways to help manage their responses and ensure continued access to information for students, academics, researchers and health professional.

For minimal service as spaces were fully closed, Libraries offered the possibility to borrow or return books at a counter or via a book drop, some countries experimenting with drive through pick-up and return of books, other only allowed visitors who have pre-booked, implementing policies quarantine on returned books, implemented plans on offer of e-lending, e-learning or support to remote teaching, finalising and testing measures for all staff to work remotely and allowing staff who can to do so already (IFLA, 2020).

Radford College School Library in Australia has a click and collect services for books, while Lane Cove library in Australia, Godoy Cruz Library, Argentina, The Hague Netherlands and various Portuguese public libraries were doing deliveries, various central libraries in Greece were working with taxi companies to give access to books. Central Library of Osaka Prefecture in Japan offered deliveries by post, while in Ethiopia according to one news story; libraries were been placed on camels to ensure children in lockdown receive access. A Librarian was doing online story time that hits the national news in Pozega, Serbia.

Nonetheless, some have expressed concern about risks associated with deliveries or closed book drops. Clearly in any situation it is important not to risk the health of staff, volunteers or users. There is specific guidance on deliveries, for example, in the materials prepared by libraries connected in the UK, also the state government of Western Australia has provided guidance on safe home deliveries (IFLA, 2020).

Some Libraries did set up an online Ask-a-Librarian reference services, establishing a chat function on their website. South Africa, have reinforced their activities on social media, including new regular 'ask a librarian' sessions and had call in hours during the lockdown. Setting up Facebook pages as well as setting up opportunities to contact Librarians remotely. Some university libraries are using e-mails to provide access to resources and respond to questions from students as well as through messaging services, through WhatsApp, YouTube and many more. In Iran, Libraries were reported to have agreed to recognise each other's cards in order to allow people to use libraries closest to them.

With so many services on offer, Librarians and Libraries in a number of countries have been able to work with newspapers, radio stations and other communication channels in order to raise awareness. Some services and activities may be impossible, for example with staff unable to come to work to carry out preservative activities.

### **1.11 CONCLUSION**

Core library services should continue even in lockdown. Hence Libraries and Librarians should have disaster preparedness plan to ensure they are well prepared for any Library closure. One of the biggest shift in education have being that of meeting the global educational need during this pandemic which made most colleagues and universities world over to shift to online and distance learning. Yet the role of Libraries and Librarians remain the same, essentially to support patrons in the mission and goal of achieving their higher education. Libraries had to switch order from print books to e-books. This study has extensively looked into and discussed new and innovative ways of carrying and rendering library services to patrons; regular users, health workers, professionals, faculty and researchers. With Academic Librarians in different countries applying different strategies in the way they render these services, the author calls on particularly public universities in Nigeria to model on the discusses and recommendations highlighted in this study to help reposition library services in times of, whatsoever type or kind of lockdown that may face the academic community in the future.

### **1.12 SUGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

As the world still struggles with full return from the devastating effect of COVID-19 pandemic it is important for library professionals in Nigeria to make policies that will help Academic Librarians to be well prepared in a more reformed way in rendering needed core library services even in the wake of lockdown. Some of this recommendations if given some attention will definitely improve how the communities responds to the present pandemic situation and help better people's response and attitude in the event of likely future outbreak, and making the Librarians' work more interesting and easier, most importantly in assisting health, medical and research professionals who are working at all time to make our society safe.

1. At times as was in the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic that led to closing of physical facilities, Librarians and other library staff should work from home unless completely necessary and where staff are coming into work, ensuring they do so respecting rules around social distancing. Librarians who already can should work from home remotely and those who cannot should be appropriately trained to do so. In this age, key to the library profession is to see that all library staff is able to work remotely. Also patrons should be trained in digital literacy. Clearly not all users are already familiar with digital tools; Libraries should develop training materials for users to help them make the most of these possibilities.
2. Updating library guide line at times like this is also essential (that is keeping guide lines up-to-date). Libraries should have official social media accounts and other digital communication platforms which are known and used by the patrons as Librarians are advised to know how to use numerous social media platforms. These will aid the Librarians in offering proper information literacy on digital platforms, sharing COVID-19 information with community, referencing services, and easy operability of messaging services. Social media platform is the most use, easy to use and manage, fastest to disseminate and retrieve information online platform, so this made it the most used during the COVID-19 lockdown.

3. Raising awareness on digital offers, both on the front pages of library websites and through putting up posters in the windows of library buildings, posting news and updates on the library website, promoting use of digital libraries and other tools including potential investment in more e-content and licences. Building a COVID-19 response web page to keep your community updated as the situation evolved, while also taking time to review existing web pages to make certain the information was accurate and appropriate in the new environment. Remote access to e-resources should be made very much available.
4. At times such as this Librarians should check for free resources from publishers and share with users, especially to medical professionals, faculty members and researchers, supporting medical and faculty researchers with latest medical journals, assisting teaching staff to upload content on learning management systems. The use of information management skills is very important for Librarians to enable them in using these skills for supporting health and social services, hence Librarians should be active on the Library Management Systems (LMS) and be trained to use various management systems to enable them assist patrons online. Librarians must see that they work more extensively with teaching staff in instruction activities.
5. Offering of amnesty on borrowed physical books, activating e-borrowers card and increasing the number of e-books users can borrow at any given time.
6. Improvement in digitisation capacity, encourage, formulate policies and campaigns that will allow for increased submissions of digital contents to the Institutional Repositories, increase partnership with electronic database providers or publishers, ensuring that all staff have the skills and tools to work remotely if possible and ensure that services can be provided digitally.
7. Institutions should support Librarians with internet connectivity at home, institutions should invest in the ICT infrastructure for libraries, and there is the need for institutional support for Librarians to help them properly position themselves in delivering virtual services at lockdown(s). Institutional support for more innovations from Librarians and ICT staffers must be taken into good cognisance. Provision of high speed internet connectivity, free Wi-Fi or internet services for Librarians at all times, while where possible to the entire university community and to the surrounding community at lockdown.
8. Making library space and equipment available for other activities such as printing personal protective equipment is advised.
9. Libraries to set up phone and online Ask-a-Librarian reference services, and messaging services. Offering telehealth services is another good idea.
10. The government and school management should increase library funds and budget. There is also the need for the government to look into enacting a Library Stabilisation Fund Act.
11. Librarians can take up additional roles during pandemic lockdowns like helping kids to learn remotely, helping people who have lost their jobs to use the library to connect with employers for new opportunities and more.

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