



Investigating the Impact of COVID-19 Outbreak on Librarianship in the Global South: A Renewed Mission for Libraries and LIS Professionals during and after the COVID-19 Pandemic

Amit Kumar 

Central University of Gujarat, Gandhinagar

ORCID: [0000-0003-3491-8963](https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3491-8963)

Magnus Osahon Igbinovia 

David Umahi Federal University of Health Sciences, Uburu, Nigeria

ORCID: [0000-0001-9104-2991](https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9104-2991)

Dibanjyoti Buragohain 

Mizoram University, Aizawl, India

ORCID: [0000-0001-5421-3659](https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5421-3659)

Kolawole Francis Ogunbodede 

University of Africa, Bayelsa State, Nigeria

ORCID: [0000-0002-5518-7787](https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5518-7787)

Received: 21st May, 2023 - Revised: 22nd October, 2023 - Accepted: 28th October, 2023

DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.4314/glj.v28i2.9>

Abstract

COVID-19 undoubtedly brought about drastic and dramatic change in library service delivery. Libraries adopted several strategies to ensure that their services were continuously offered without significant interruptions. Consequently, this article focused on reshaping libraries after the COVID-19 pandemic. It highlighted the impact of the pandemic on libraries and library professionals. With the adjustment in the pattern of service delivery, the article also examined the new normal caused by the pandemic and possible barriers to adapting to this new normal. The library services, innovations, and experiences of libraries and their professionals during the pandemic were critically examined. The future of libraries is also discussed after the analysis of experts' predictions put forward in various forms.

Keywords: COVID-19; Librarianship; Scholarly Community; Learning Space; and LIS Professionals.

Introduction

The world has never witnessed such an unprecedented situation that spread like a wild blaze and affected humans around the world both socially, politically, and economically; putting lives in jeopardy due to the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). Among the severely affected are the students' community who were forcefully disconnected from their academic activities and, mentally and socially alienated from their academic growth and development (Nishiura, Linton & Akhmetzhanov, 2020). Governments in all parts of the world are struggling to cope with the consequences of the

pandemic. They are working hard to uplift, help and support learners to continue their self-development along with academic progress. By extension, library professionals were extensively using the online mode of teaching, learning, and rendering library services to stay connected with students/patrons.

Although technological advancements have proven to be a boon for libraries to connect with their users, there are still many deficiencies such as the inaccessibility of smart phones, laptops and desktops at the library user end, poor Internet connectivity, lack of electronic information resources, health problems and family issues that pose as obstacles especially in

the Global South. The world has witnessed different dimensions of growth as well as challenges in the learning environment and by extension scholarly community in the last 50 years. However, the COVID-19 pandemic was one of the greatest challenges faced by the world's educational system. COVID-19 is an infectious disease from a novel severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) (Zhong et al., 2020). The World Health Organization (WHO) has declared the first case to be detected in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China (Velayudhan and Idhrees, 2020). The WHO and various renowned authorities around the world had introduced various policies and precautionary guidelines to help combat deadly disease (UNESCO, 2020). Consequently, the pattern and flow of human civilization has drastically been altered as the lockdown, quarantine, self-isolation, social distancing, and usage of personal protection tools have become part of the daily lives of people (Nishiura, 2020). The governments of different nations have set up their respective frameworks and strategies according to their requirements and needs. In the field of education, and by extension, librarianship; the government has also imposed restrictions such as restricting face-to-face instruction and switching to online or virtual learning (Daniel, 2020). Consequently, with the spread of COVID-19 across the globe and closure/restriction in library activities, students around the world are greatly affected due to distortion in their academic activities.

The library as a social and information-based institution has a significant responsibility in ensuring public health and wellness by providing adequate and timely health-related information to its clientele and members of their host communities. In this era characterized by multiple information sources, the credibility and trustworthiness of the source is of great concern (Ali & Gatiti, 2020). It is estimated that there are around 11 different varieties of information sources which comprise of valid information to doubtful information (Ashrafi-Rizi & Kazempour, 2020). Although the pandemic has caused isolation, virtual communication seems to have become the preferred mode of communication in this case (Hollander and Carr, 2020). Consequently, Hu et al. (2020) opined that Google Trends is one of the trendy ways to monitor and keep abreast of public health issues both at the local, national, and international levels. However, libraries have also positioned themselves to provide health-related information and guidance to their host community and the world at large.

In the era of the COVID-19 pandemic, there is a

tremendous change in the profession of Librarianship. If we look back to the history of past human civilization, the libraries during those periods were found to follow the closed access system wherein the users are not allowed to retrieve the required materials themselves. With time, the users started demanding the librarians or LIS professionals to uptake the new pattern of the open-access system according to the taste of the users (Peters, Jandri, & McLaren, 2020). The emergence of information and communication technology (ICT) has created an in rendering library services. A complete transformation of the entire library system is evidence of the civilization that has crept into libraries. Through this transformation, libraries are developing innovative services that meet the needs of users regardless of the pandemic and related unpalatable conditions. Thus, librarianship as a profession continues to grow during the time of pandemics such as COVID-19. The LIS professionals have stepped up to all the obstacles and continue to provide their services. According to the predicative policy of experts, a new way of disseminating library services is about to be seen. The LIS profession is evolving with the need of the hour. It is therefore necessary to affirm that the library is the backbone of any ancient and modern society, as it is the safest medium where the proper channelization of relevant information is transmitted.

With the adverse effect of COVID-19 on libraries and their rendering of services to their clientele, the library professionals have changed their work patterns. They had aimed to bring the library to the home of users. They have switched online and used all the online tools and equipment to communicate and engage their user community (Tammara, 2020). Thus, amid the pandemic, libraries and LIS professionals innovatively rendered services to their users despite library shutdowns. However, it is common knowledge that the pandemic greatly affected libraries in unimaginable ways and LIS professionals are making an adjustment to the "new normal".

Objective and Methodology of the Study

The specific objectives of this study are to:

- i. Examine the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on librarianship;
- ii. Examine the new normal for librarianship occasioned by the pandemic
- iii. Determine the barriers to adapting the new normal in libraries; and
- iv. Examine library services, innovations, and experiences during the pandemic.

The Impact of COVID-19 on Librarianship

The COVID-19 pandemic affected every component and sector of the society worldwide (Mofijur, et al., 2021), including the educational. Its effect on the academic community will continue to be felt even in the future. Within the educational sector, the pandemic affected the delivery of library and information services, and as such, there was need for professionals to rethink their service delivery mechanism. In discussing the effect of COVID-19 on librarianship, the role of LIS professionals and their reactions should be considered.

A dramatic change in working patterns is witnessed among the LIS professionals during the lockdown period. Most of the professionals had decided to work from home in the closed library environment, and others had chosen to work from the publicly closed library. The concept of 'Work from Home' has become a tag line for most employees, which has become efficient and effective and is believed to remain even after lockdown. Most employees have dedicated some percentage of their work time to their professional development (Bruni, 2020). Preliminary interactions with librarians revealed that some of the libraries have to outsource their services due to the shrinking of the budget of the previous years.

The library professionals in a quick response to the pandemic in relation to their service delivery had to first promise users their continuous delivery of traditional services like interlibrary loans, cataloguing, and reference services among others. In certain libraries in Italy, the loan period was extended, in some circumstances, they even provided home delivery. The library at this point in time has facilitated the online registration for those who wish to be availed of the library services and also provided the document delivery services as an improvement on interlibrary loan. The doors of the library were closed, but the professionals had started to provide the library services in creative ways (Tamaro, 2020).

It was discovered that most library users were using the library online services. The LIS professionals must strategize and think of creative virtual means to deliver services. They can create the latest content on the internet trends to promote services (Arnetoli, 2020; Asta, 2020). The promotional activity should not only comprise e-book content, but also other content like events, exhibitions, tutorials, and streaming to be included in the digital environment. In Italy, librarians have come up with the idea of specialized library services to create awareness among the inhabitants

about the vast number of resources available in the library, i.e., which showcase the Italian cultural heritage starting from archaeology to art history, and from musical concerts and theatre performances to virtual exhibitions (Guiducci et al., 2020).

There are several library networks that have been developed and designed to meet the needs and requirements of different types of users. These library networks were designed to cater to the specific needs of different disciplines such as physical sciences, social and human sciences, economics and management, earth sciences, and many others. Library networks are gaining importance in this momentum. According to the report, it is found that around 30 Italian libraries in different zones from north to south have merged to form a library network during the time of the pandemic. The element of success in the fruitful implementation of the library network is due to the increasing amount of integration among stakeholders and local actors. Different library networks have given teachers a new dimension to support the electronic teaching and learning process in schools, colleges, and higher education institutes (Tamaro, 2020). The author further noted that these networks have gained importance through improving library services by peaceful cooperation and accommodating the different types of libraries for accessing the documents. Adding that the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) has launched a new service known as RSCVD (Resource sharing COVID), to support the libraries at this time (IFLA, 2020).

During the COVID-19 pandemic, LIS professionals not only ensured the delivery of quality services to their patrons but several online programs such as webinars, faculty development programs (FDP), workshops, etc. were conducted as well. Several issues related to librarianship were discussed in these programs and how to deal with perplexing situations so that the quality of services can be ensured during the pandemic time without any break. The pandemic has also affected how librarians approach their jobs and it has increased the necessity for librarians to skill-up in order to provide library services to users through various online channels. Library services are no longer restricted to the 'four-walls' of the library, as users can have remote access to the services of librarians, who should be ever-ready to provide these services using the available infrastructures and technical know-how at their disposal.

New Normal for Librarianship Occasioned by COVID-19

The libraries are reopening in a phase manner across the globe. Library authorities are ensuring that safety and precautionary measures are taken with the utmost care for staff and the community. The opening of some libraries in the world has been limited to loan services, but the other services were still delivered at the need of social distancing. The time has come to think of an innovative way to deliver the existing library services so that the users have live experiences/interactions with services as usual. Libraries at the time of the pandemic have learned many new things. They have learned from this experience that libraries should not limit themselves to only lending services, but should open libraries to communities (Baldi, 2020). A big question arises among academics and LIS professionals as the community is acquainted with the online services; will they feel like returning to the traditional system of library services? The period of COVID has acted as golden opportunity for the interaction between librarians and the academic community. Some surveys are being carried out about the impact of libraries on the users and the need of the users at the time of emergency (Omer, Malani, & Del, 2020). The prolongation of library users has made them stay indoors, which was another great experience for the libraries. It is an important component for library managers and professional librarians that adequately monitor and examine the relationship between library users and library staff. There is a need to address concepts like digital strategy where the strategy is not confined to e-books only. A digital strategy should be concerned with the aim of transforming the existing services with some innovative services (Maheu-Cadotte, et al., 2018). Planners should have a clear mindset while designing and planning the digital strategy. Such strategy should include the development and implementation of electronic library service policy which should clearly stipulate how the library should provide services in an electronic environment, and the obligations of libraries and librarians in providing such services. Also, the strategy should move libraries towards striking a balance between physical and electronic resources acquisition and promoting self-services and touchless interactions between librarians and library users. In addition, the digital strategy should clearly emphasize how digital infrastructures would be acquired and utilized to provide remote and effective library service transactions.

In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic has paved

the way for librarians to know the importance of digitization or electronic resources, since during this pandemic, library users were served with electronic resources so that their information needs were met. So, the new normal for librarianship can be to go for digitization or to acquire e-resources as much as possible to face the pandemic that appears all of a sudden like COVID-19 appeared. In addition, professionals should also remember the safety of patrons who are moving to the libraries to acquit themselves with the latest bundle of knowledge. A rule should be made mandatory for staff and users to follow the guidelines proposed by the World Health Organization (WHO). At the entrance gate, temperature checks and sanitizers should be placed so that staff and users can sanitize themselves before entering the library. Masking should be made mandatory for both staff and users. The staff should sanitize the library almost every day so that the viruses are destroyed when and where available. The railing and toilet should be clean and sanitized on an hourly basis. The books and computers are also to be sanitized according to the library requirements. In short, the entire procedure of SOP (Standard Operating Procedures) laid down by the WHO or health department of the concerned state or parent organization should be strictly followed.

Barriers to Adapting to the New Normal in Libraries

The working patterns and lifestyle of people have been completely transformed due to the pandemic situations. The new pattern and style in the workplaces caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has birthed the new normal to which organizations are adapting. In the case of librarianship also, it is not the first time that librarianship has come across related problem (Lynas, 2020). With the growing concern and significance of libraries services, it has been the history too that librarianship has overcome several issues such as chronic scarcity of funds, insecurity of jobs, outsourcing, lack of legislation, and policies (Agnoli, 2020; Valenza, 2020).

A major factor that acts as a barrier to digital transformation is the digital divide. Libraries are struggling to meet the necessary infrastructure requirement and the devices for users to easily access their required materials (Baldi, 2020). The use of social networks has been very intense now to push the information to a mass audience. Online reading and writing competitions gain huge popularity due to their accessibility and ease of use. The concept of

copyright acts as a barrier to shaping libraries in the new pattern design (Bozkurt and Sharma, 2020). The printed book was not able to digitize due to copyright issues. Although several letters have been written to authorities to overcome the issue of copyright so far, no success has been recorded on the issue. The AIB per leggere project (Born to Read) was created to increase opportunities among the mass audience by video reading 300 books (Cognigni, 2020).

In addition, funds, or rather the monetary aspect, plays a barrier factor for the new pattern of the library. As is known, the entire library system has a limited amount of funds to carry out the different operations of the library. Now at the time of the pandemic, it is an obstacle to pushing forward the different precautionary measures enlisted by the WHO. The library always runs out of budget, and the concept of the new pattern of the library came into existence with financial implications which has become a matter of concern for all the LIS professionals. Governments and parent organizations must put in the necessary effort to overcome such situations. LIS professionals are also expected to explore the necessary collaborations that will enhance library services and motivate learners to keep growing their sphere of knowledge.

Library Services, Innovations, and Experiences during the Pandemic

Several studies have been conducted to examine libraries and LIS professionals during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. This section provides an overview of some of these investigations. Adigun et al. (2020) investigated the role of libraries in the COVID-19 epidemic from a Nigerian point of view. The descriptive research design was used to investigate 139 Nigerian librarians. The study found that Nigerian libraries provide COVID-19 knowledge and education, provide digital content to patrons, organize online streaming programs, and link patrons / citizens with accurate and reliable worldwide COVID-19 data. The survey also indicated that these services are often provided despite the inability of Nigerian libraries to respond adequately to the pandemic. The study revealed that Nigerian libraries can help promote positive social transformation, development, orientation, and reorientation. Libraries can help combat the epidemic by raising awareness of COVID-19 (particularly in rural regions).

James et al. (2020) investigated social media and library services in the era of the COVID-19 pandemic. Research indicated that libraries' use of social media

has boosted their effectiveness in providing library services to people who are isolated and unable to access the usual physical library collection due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The study reinforces the need for library employees to receive frequent training in the use of new tools and social media platforms to ensure that they are IT compliant and, as a result, can use these tools to deliver library services. Hence, innovative service delivery through the adoption of social media platforms is required to push library services to users during the pandemic. Ogunbodede & Wiche (2021) investigated Nigerian academic libraries and online education. With the participation of 80 academic librarians in South-South and South-West Nigeria, a descriptive research methodology was adopted. The online questionnaire was used to obtain data. The frequency count and simple percentages were used to analyse the data. The study results revealed that libraries supported online learning during the shutdown of the COVID-19 pandemic. Online workshops and tutorials were also provided for lecturers on how to use online services, news and service notifications, and links to other open source library resources were also provided. The survey also found that most academic library services were only provided occasionally during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown due to lack of money, epileptic power, lack of government assistance, and inadequate library infrastructure. For effective library service delivery, the research recommended that the government completely fund infrastructure development, recruit professional librarians, and increase welfare packages. All governments should make library development a top priority.

Liman and Shuaibu (2021) conducted a study on the provision of library services during the COVID-19 pandemic. The article argued that adequate information awareness through advocacy programs to mitigate the increase in COVID-19 cases should be maintained by all stakeholders, including libraries. The role of libraries in raising awareness through public health education, and information literacy in Nigeria was discussed. The article advocated strategies with the provision of Internet services, social media, and digital reference services as a means of providing useful resources that would help library users and the public to be aware of the dangers of the COVID-19 pandemic. The article concluded that library services are means to improve users' health awareness through education, information and public enlightenment. The study recommends that libraries catalyze the

promotion of public health through information awareness and dissemination.

In Nigeria, Igbinovia and Okuonghae (2021) examined emotional intelligence and the adherence to COVID-19 preventive measures among librarians. The cornerstone model was used to investigate emotional intelligence (EI) as a predictor of the adherence to the preventive measures of COVID-19 by Nigerian librarians. To explore librarians in Nigeria, a survey research design of the correlation type was used. The questionnaire was used to collect data and had an overall Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient of 140.86, indicating that it was suitable for the study. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the responses. According to the findings, adherence to COVID-19 preventive measures and EI was high. The four cornerstone components of EI all demonstrated strong positive associations with COVID-19 preventive measures compliance. The EI dimensions also provided a 17.3% linear prediction of adherence to the preventive intervention of COVID-19. The spread of the COVID-19 pandemic can be stopped by strictly following its preventive procedures. The emotional intelligence of librarians encourages such adherence to the library. Consequently, part of the experience of libraries and LIS professionals after the COVID-19 pandemic is the need to develop their emotional intelligence which is required to adhere and help users adhere to the preventive measures required for the 'partial opening' of the library amid the pandemic.

Idachaba et al. (2021) studied social media platforms and effective library services delivery in the COVID-19 era. The research adopted a descriptive survey design. The study includes the two universities in Benue State (JS Tarka University Makurdi and Benue State University, Makurdi). With a population of 156 library personnel from the two selected universities, a simple random sampling technique was used. The sample size for the study was 10 from each selected university, giving a total sample size of 20 respondents. The instrument used for this study was a structured questionnaire. The reliability of the instrument was established using the Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient as a measure of the internal consistency of the instrument. The reliability coefficient achieved was 0.77. The instrument was administered personally to the respondents by the researchers. To minimize the loss of the questionnaire, all completed copies of the questionnaire were collected on the spot. The study found that the social media platforms that distributed information during the COVID-19 era

are Facebook, Twitter, Blog, WhatsApp, MySpace, LinkedIn and Wikis. The study also found that social media platforms disseminated information to a great extent and people utilized those platforms every hour for information during the COVID-19 era. Finally, the study recommended that safety measures should be implemented to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. Although the study sample size is unjustifiably small, the results suggest of innovations and the experience of libraries and LIS professions during the pandemic.

Tammaro (2021) examined the new normal as experienced by Italian public libraries as aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. Although these libraries were not prepared for the pandemic (nor ready to completely shut down), they expanded their digital services through digitization. As such, they increase the deployment and use of digital collections and remotely registered library users to benefit from library services. The transition to digital library services required the need to improve the digital capacity of users by developing their digital literacy skills, bridge the digital divide, and combat educational 'poverty'. The opportunity offered by technologies (particularly digital tools and the Internet) in providing remote library services and improving them become the new normal for these libraries. However, the COVID-19 experience in this library came with a long-lasting financial impact.

Alajmi and Albudaiwi (2020) conducted research on how public libraries are responding to the COVID-19 epidemic. A data set of 9,450 tweets produced by 38 public libraries in New York City between December 2019 and April 2020 was analyzed. According to the study, 85.5% of tweets were related to routine library communications, such as library service updates, book recommendations, suggested readings and activities, celebrations of specific occasions or individuals, and notices of upcoming events. Meanwhile, COVID-19 was mentioned in 14.5% of tweets sent between January and April 2020. During the shutdown, NYC public libraries displayed information on remote library services, as well as calming and socially encouraging comments, and information about financial, health, and food-related help available to the community. The study revealed that throughout the epidemic, NYC's public libraries mainly did their business as usual, providing a critical sense of normalcy to the people they serve during those difficult and tense days. This sense of calm and normalcy could have an impact on soothing users

psychologically and emotionally while complying with all the specified preventive measures required for library operations during the pandemic.

Furthermore, during the COVID-19 pandemic, Wang and Lund (2020) looked at the announcement information offered by public libraries in the United States. From February 14 through April 12, 2020, a content analysis of library notifications about the COVID-19 pandemic was conducted. More than 90% of the libraries declared that they would close due to the pandemic and 98% said that programs would be discontinued. COVID-19 and basic hygiene practices were discussed in almost half of the libraries. Within the period in view, the substance of several bulletins altered, illustrating the fast evolution of the pandemic. According to this study, libraries do play a vital role in providing accurate information on pandemics to COVID-19 customers. Despite acknowledging the role of libraries in disseminating health-related information during the pandemic, public libraries in the United States and their personnel experienced difficulties in maintaining the usual service delivery to users.

Guo et al. (2020) investigated how Chinese academic libraries responded to the COVID-19 outbreak. The study revealed that more than 94% of Chinese academic libraries made COVID-19-related information available on their websites; most of them changed their service focus to partly or entirely online, including remote access, free electronic resources, virtual references accessible 24 hours a day, online research support services; and printed materials were replaced with e-books for convenience.

Chisita et al. (2022) examined academic library services in Zimbabwe after COVID-19, using qualitative research. Data was collected through snowballing and interviews. The researchers connected queries with research objectives. The interview schedule contained open and closed questions to obtain more details from the participants. The survey showed an increase in online information access, particularly library webpages, electronic books, and journals. Following campus closures, remote use of the online library increased. When users learned that electronic materials were as beneficial as print, their perceptions improved. The study's findings suggest how librarians might adapt their services to the COVID-19 epidemic. The report provides a starting point for additional research on the influence of COVID-19 or previous pandemics on library service delivery.

Discussion: The fight must go on

The above discourse has illustrated the impact of Covid-19 on librarianship, the innovations and experiences that come with it, followed by the new normal. It can be argued that the COVID-19 pandemic has paved the way for new librarianship to deal with emergencies such as COVID-19 and other related disasters. It has allowed professionals and learners to work both in the fully digital environment and to develop skills and knowledge with cutting-edge technologies. The ongoing pandemic environment has taught professionals and learners to self-reflect and come out in a much better way so that pandemics like COVID-19 can be faced without any break in teaching, learning, and library service delivery. The self-retrospect for both LIS professionals and learners includes the following:

i. Learning through Online Services

The online learning platform has become a common phenomenon in the 21st century, where the concept of MOOC and open learning has emerged (World Bank, 2020). The growing technology and evolving services have compelled the LIS professionals to adopt the modern technology which has been a great asset in the time of emergencies such as COVID-19 (Hodges, et al., 2020). Working from home has become a viable option for LIS professionals in cases of emergencies when they cannot be physically present at their workplaces. Patrons access the required materials remotely from anywhere in the world. Modern libraries are equipped with the latest technology where the application of Artificial Intelligence is at the forefront. Technology has improved scholarly communication among the scholars and the research community. It is beyond doubt that technology has improved library services and made it easier for the patron to access information. There are some issues related to online services that include lack of adequate knowledge about the latest software application for professionals, lack of Internet services in the Global South, and the older generation may find it less comfortable to access information through online platforms.

ii. Technological Issues

The technological dimension has changed drastically with time. The technological revolution has forced LIS professionals to learn and acquire knowledge of trending hardware and software applications, which is a mandatory skill necessary for teaching and learning methods (Marshman & Larkins, 2020). When the case of the practical application of ICT

skills in teaching and learning arises, many problems are seen to arise. The same can also be observed in the term of online library services. In the Global South, the technological problems related to online library services include scarcity of mobile devices in the hands of students, lack of computer and Internet facilities, lack of adequate knowledge and skills to use the online facilities provided by the library, insufficiency of software application to access the required materials while retrieving online resources from the library website or its portals, issues related to data security of the library, and many more.

iii. Understanding Issues

Another important challenge that has been noticed in terms of the delivery of online library services is the psychological issues of users who are stakeholders of the library. In addressing such issues, the LIS professionals have embarked on user studies, needs' assessment, information seeking behavior, information literacy, and many others, to understand the mindset of library users. As the incidence of pandemics increases in the modern times, it has become difficult to obtain such studies in the library. The LIS professionals while designing and developing the online content for the library users go through the trial and error method as they cannot afford to have a deep understanding of the requirements of the users. Satisfaction is considered an important segment of library services. At the time of an emergency such as the COVID-19 pandemic, it is difficult to determine or measure the level of user satisfaction. Hence, it poses a threat or challenge to librarianship in having a psychological understanding of the users.

Conclusion

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the whole gamut of information service delivery in the Global South. Libraries in this area have adjusted their mode of operations and service delivery pattern to continuously meet the information needs of users amidst confronting circumstances and emergencies. The LIS professionals have maintained consistency in the dissemination of their different services to their customers in the time of emergencies such as COVID-19 pandemic. With the application of modern information and communication technology (ICT), libraries have continued to be the knowledge hub of the community offering specialized information services. They operate within their capacity to overcome the challenges and barriers faced in providing library

services during pandemics. The LIS professionals now have greater tenacity to overcome any hurdle that could mitigate their service delivery to users. They have always strived to maintain the dignity and status of the librarianship profession by following the five laws or principles of Ranganathan. In doing so, they become more committed to simple but innovative ways of meeting the information needs of users even during a pandemic.

References

- Adigun, G. O., Okuonghae, O., Mamudu, P. A., Suleiman, I., & Haliru, R. A. (2020). Interrogating the Role of Libraries in the Fight against COVID-19 Pandemic: The Nigerian Perspective. *International Journal of Knowledge Content Development & Technology*, 10(4), 47-64.
- Agnoli, A. (2020). Biblioteche e oltre. Occorre un New Deal, «Agcult, 1.
- Alajmi, B. M., & Albudaiwi, D. (2021). Response to COVID-19 pandemic: where do public libraries stand?. *Public Library Quarterly*, 40(6), 540-556.
- Arnetoli, C. (2020). L'esperienza del coordinamento regionale DigiToscana MLOL ai tempi del Coronavirus. *Bibelot: notizie dalle biblioteche toscane*, 26(1).
- Ashrafi-Rizi, H., & Kazempour, Z. (2020). Information typology in coronavirus (COVID-19) crisis; a commentary. *Archives of Academic Emergency Medicine*, 8(1).
- Asta, G. (2020). Regione Toscana: la cultura in soccorso dell'emergenza COVID. *Bibelot: notizie dalle biblioteche toscane*, 26(1).
- Baldi, G. (2020). Le biblioteche al tempo del Coronavirus. *Almanacco Bibliografico*, 54, 1-2.
- Bozkurt, A., & Sharma, R. C. (2020). Emergency remote teaching in a time of global crisis due to CoronaVirus pandemic. *Asian Journal of Distance Education*, 15(1), i-vi.
- Bruni, S. (2020). La formazione professionale al tempo del Covid-19. *Bibelot: notizie dalle biblioteche toscane*, 26(1).
- Chisita, C. T., Chiparousha, B., Tsabetse, V., Olugbara, C. T., & Letseka, M. (2022). Remaking academic library services in Zimbabwe in the wake of COVID-19 pandemic. *The Journal of Academic Librarianship*, 48(3), 102521.
- Cognigni, C. (2020). Emergenza Covid-19: la risposta delle biblioteche pubbliche,“.
- Daniel, S. J. (2020). Education and the COVID-19 pandemic. *Prospects*, 49(1), 91-96.

- Guiducci, C., Lambroni, G., & Storti, C. (2020). Florentine state public libraries at the time of the Coronavirus. *Bibelot: news from Tuscan libraries*, 26 (1).
- Guo, Y., Yang, Z., Yang, Z., Liu, Y. Q., Bielefield, A., & Tharp, G. (2020). The provision of patron services in Chinese academic libraries responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. *Library Hi Tech*.
- Hodges, C. B., Moore, S., Lockee, B. B., Trust, T., & Bond, M. A. (2020). The difference between emergency remote teaching and online learning.
- Hollander, J. E., & Carr, B. G. (2020). Virtually perfect? Telemedicine for COVID-19. *New England Journal of Medicine*, 382(18), 1679-1681.
- Hu, D., Lou, X., Xu, Z., Meng, N., Xie, Q., Zhang, M., ... & Wang, F. (2020). More effective strategies are required to strengthen public awareness of COVID-19: Evidence from Google Trends. *Journal of global health*, 10(1).
- Idachaba, J. A., Vehe, E.T., Columbus, U. (2021). Social media platforms and effective library services delivery in COVID-19 era. *Inter. J. Acad. Lib. Info. Sci.*, 9(9), 455-462.
- IFLA (2020). Resource Sharing during COVID-19 (RSCVD) Tool Launched. Retrieved from <https://www.ifla.org/news/resource-sharing-during-covid-19-rscvd-tool-launched/>
- Igbinovia, M. O., & Okuonghae, O. (2021). Emotional intelligence and abidance to COVID-19 preventive measures by librarians in Nigeria. *International Information & Library Review*, 1-16.
- James, F. Chidozie, O. & Chukwuma, L. N. (2020). Social media and library services: A case o f COVID-19 pandemic era. *International Journal of Research and Review*, 7(10), 230-237.
- Liman, Y. A. & Shuaibu, U. (2021). Provision of library services during COVID-19 pandemic. *Library and Information Perspectives and Research*, 3(1), 71-81. <https://doi.org/10.47524/lipr.31.9>.
- Lynas, M. (2020). What's behind the latest COVID Conspiracy theory? Alliance for Science. Published 6th April, 2020.
- Maheu-Cadotte, M. A., Cossette, S., Dubé, V., Fontaine, G., Mailhot, T., Lavoie, P., ... & Mathieu-Dupuis, G. (2018). Effectiveness of serious games and impact of design elements on engagement and educational outcomes in healthcare professionals and students: a systematic review and meta-analysis protocol. *BMJ open*, 8(3), e019871.
- Marshman, I., & Larkins, F. (2020). Modelling individual Australian universities resilience in managing overseas student revenue losses from the COVID-19 pandemic. Centre for the Study of Higher Education. The University of Melbourne.
- Mofijur, M., Rizwanul Fattah I. M., [...], and Mahlia, T.M.I. (2021). Impact of COVID-19 on the social, economic, environmental and energy domains: Lessons learnt from a global pandemic. *Sustainable Production and Consumption*, 26, 343-359. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2352550920313567?via%3Dihub>
- Nishiura, H., Linton, N. M., & Akhmetzhanov, A. R. (2020). Serial interval of novel coronavirus (COVID-19) infections. *International journal of infectious diseases*, 93, 284-286.
- Ogunbodede, K. F., & Wiche, H. I. (2021). Nexus of Nigerian Academic Libraries and Online Education in the Pandemic Era. *International Information & Library Review*, 1-9.
- Omer, S. B., Malani, P., & Del Rio, C. (2020). The COVID-19 pandemic in the US: a clinical update. *Jama*, 323(18), 1767-1768.
- Peters, M. A., McLaren, P., & Jandrić, P. (2020). A viral theory of post-truth. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 1-9.
- Tammaro, A. M. (2020). COVID 19 and Libraries in Italy. *International Information & Library Review*, 52(3), 216-220.
- Tammaro, A. M. (2021). The new normal: public libraries in Italy post covid-19. *International Information & Library Review*, 53(1), 63-68.
- UNESCO .(2020) Coronavirus Impacts Education, Guidance Note on Education Systems' Response to COVID-19.
- Wang, T., & Lund, B. (2020). Announcement information provided by United States' public libraries during the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic. *Public Library Quarterly*, 39(4), 283-294.
- World Bank .(2020) Guidance Note on Education Systems' Response to COVID19.
- Zhong, B. L., Luo, W., Li, H. M., Zhang, Q. Q., Liu, X. G., Li, W. T., & Li, Y. (2020). Knowledge, attitudes, and practices towards COVID-19 among Chinese residents during the rapid rise period of the COVID-19 outbreak: a quick online cross-sectional survey. *International journal of biological sciences*, 16(10), 1745.

Corresponding Author

Maguns Osahon Igbinovia
infor.migbinovia@gmail.com