



LIBRARY SERVICES AND INFORMATION ACCESS IN A TIME OF PANDEMIC: HOW ARE ACADEMIC LIBRARIANS IN NIGERIA CARRYING OUT LIBRARY SERVICES?

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Abstract

Purpose: *This article evaluates how academic librarians have been able to carry out library services to users without both parties leaving their comfort zones in the era of COVID-19 pandemic; as well as how academic library users (especially Nigerian users as case study) were able to access information from academic libraries while the country was locked down as a preventive measure to the spread of the disease.*

Methodology/Approach: *six research questions guided the study. Survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of one hundred and forty-two (142) comprising of academic librarians and academic library users was used. A structured online questionnaire containing a total of sixteen different weighted questions related to library services and information access in a time of pandemic was developed for the purpose of this study and distributed to both academic librarians and academic library users.*

Findings: *The findings from the study show that institution or academic libraries in Nigeria were locked down during COVID-19 pandemic; that library services are important and vital and shouldn't be halted even when the physical library is locked down. Findings also show that academic librarians adopted virtual library services to meet the information needs of users during the pandemic but they faced a lot of challenges which brought about dissatisfaction of users ranging from limited access to needed information resources and materials; as well lack of engagement of users in the websites and social media pages created by academic librarians to meet the needs of users, which shows that academic librarians in Nigeria weren't prepared for such a situation.*

Originality/value: *Based on the findings, the study recommends that academic libraries and librarians in Nigerian institutions adopt digitalization of library services and ensure that all the services they render in their physical libraries are also digitalized; and as well embark on more trainings of librarians in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) related courses to ensure their readiness for future challenges resulting from either pandemics or other factors that may lead to shutdown of academic libraries.*

KEYWORDS: *Library services, Information access, Academic Libraries, Academic Librarians, Academic Library Users, Nigeria.*

Introduction

The library is the most important body of an institution of learning and the warehouse for storage of information concerning all human activities. Its importance can never be over emphasized. It is a place where people from all works of life get valid information resources on issues concerning life, education, experiences, history, news, health and so on.

Thenceforth, an institution without a working Library would be considered somewhat academically incomplete and inefficient, hence

the need to ensure that Library services are up to date and that users are not disappointed no matter the circumstance. This aim can therefore not be achieved without librarians whose roles now become paramount in teaching, learning and research. In other words, an academic library cannot exist without academic librarians; this is because librarians serve as a link between information resources and library users.

The emergence of a global pandemic "Corona virus" (scientifically called COVID-19) in this 21st century and its resultant effect in shutting down

schools, work places, churches and other sectors of Nigeria's economy and the world economy at large has brought about the need for academic libraries to seek for ways to carry out library & information services to users during the period.

As Umoh (2017) noted; "Library is a social institution established to collect, organize, preserve information resources and disseminate them to people for whom the library is established, in a place conducive enough for the use of the information resources." But with recent developments brought about by a global pandemic Coronavirus (COVID-19), we have come to know that a conducive place is not only physical but can also be digital; hence, the need for libraries to adopt digital or virtual library services, and take their library and information resources online to ensure easy access for users and preservation of health amidst the struggle to reduce the spread of Coronavirus in the country.

Academic librarians are to ensure that academic library users are always satisfied with the flow of information, as most of them are researchers and they need information for their research purposes. They are charged with the duty of providing smooth and quality information access to academic library users even in situations where users cannot access the physical library services. Just as Iwhiwhu and Okorodudu (2012) pointed out, "the satisfaction of library users is a function of the quality product(s) received, the quality of information system and the library services provided to access the information product." Academic librarians therefore need to work hard to keep up with the moving train because times have changed and the world has moved to virtual services. They need to enhance their library services to ensure information access to users even in a period of severe challenges such as COVID-19.

It is not news that the advent of COVID-19 resulted to the shutdown of the world's economy and people being asked by their governments to stay home in order to contain the spread of the disease; hence, schools, churches, work places, and other sectors of the normal lives of people got somewhat suspended and a new normal introduced. The Pandemic has caused organizations and institutions to

readdress their service strategies and procedures as a precautionary move to measure up safety and good health against the deadly virus. Most organizations therefore implored their staff to work from home, while most adopted digital services. Nevertheless, librarians from across the world have also made quality efforts to adjust to this "new normal" with the different library associations {such as International Federation of Library Association (IFLA), African Library and Information Associations & Institutions (AFLIA) and Nigerian Library Association (NLA), to mention a few} taking up the obligation of enlightening librarians on how to apply these new strategies and procedures through webinars and online workshops to ensure that the needed services and right information are made available to library users.

"In any pandemic, there are three dimensions to a librarian's role:

- A. To promote public health awareness by creating and disseminating information relating to preventive measures;
- B. To support research team, researchers and faculty by providing information regarding the latest development, research and literature;
- C. To meet the core needs of regular library users" (Ali & Gatiti, 2020).

Therefore, academic librarians should stand against the halting of library services and information access for any reason there may be, even a pandemic.

Objectives of the study

1. To find out the importance of library services even when the library is locked down.
2. To know if academic libraries in Nigeria were shut down during the COVID-19 pandemic.
3. To find out how academic librarians carried out library services during the COVID-19 pandemic.
4. To get information on how academic library users were able to access valid information during the COVID-19 pandemic.

5. To find out if the correct and valid information needed by academic library users were made available during the lockdown.
6. To know the level of access granted academic library users during the lockdown.

Literature Review

Academic librarians in all higher institutions have a lot of duties as regards the smooth functioning of institution libraries, giving quality library services to library users, consistent dissemination of information resources to users and the satisfaction of users for whom library services are established.

One of the vital roles which librarians play across the world is information dissemination; and this is because they have access to valid and factual information. They do not only get information, they as well process it in a way that it would be easier for users to understand them, then they create platforms for hitch free dissemination of these information to users; by so doing, users of academic libraries are given access to a wide range of information.

The wake of COVID-19 pandemic readdressed the normal life people are used to in not just Nigeria but the whole world at large. Hence, people had to learn to adjust to the new normal, and Librarians being at the forefront of information dissemination had more role to play.

Concept of library services

Library services are services that libraries render to their users and these services are organized through the various departments of the library; as Agwu (2004) noted, "the library like other establishments, organizes its activities around departments. This is to ensure efficiency as it affords library management the opportunity to use professionals in carrying out its activities." The academic library performs a lot of services to academic library users to ensure efficiency in teaching, learning and research. As Umoh (2017) defined; "Academic Library is one which is established in institutions of higher learning to support learning, teaching and research activities of the universities and colleges."

In this 21st century, the world advanced in technology and every aspect of life became

virtually inclined and even library services have advanced from traditional to virtual to incorporate information technologies as another medium for library and information services. As Agwu (2004) posited; "this era of electronic and information technology meant that libraries would aggressively sought ways to deploy information technology to enhance access to printed materials in their collection." In recent times, Mbagwu (2020) explains that "the application of ICTs uses and skills in academic libraries has enabled timely and rapid access to information." Bell et al (2008) noted that "institutions are having to rethink the nature of collections, services, and the library as place."

Concept of information access

Information is "any distinct signal element forming part of a message or communication, especially one assembled and made available for use by automatic machines, as a digital computer: usually measured in bits"; according to The New International Webster's Comprehensive Dictionary of the English Language (Deluxe Encyclopedic Edition).

Information simply put is an acquired knowledge about something or somebody.

Information access has to do with the level of right or ability of information approach given to library users. Most Academic libraries have a close access to information while some others have limited access. "Access to the libraries of some universities is absolutely restricted to students, faculty and staff" (Umoh, 2017).

There has been a wide range of research and theories on the level of information access libraries should grant library users; as well as the adoption of virtual services in information dissemination to users; especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. "Librarians are now realizing the potentials of social media such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, Skype, and Google+, and other social media tools found in study, and are making efforts to integrate them into library services" (Chukwuyere et al, 2020).

Mediums of library services and information access globally adopted during the COVID-19 pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic which for some months put a hold on the world's activities thereby resulting to the lockdown of all human activities; affected library services and information access as well. But, academic librarians and librarians from across the world have been working hard to ensure that they meet the information needs of users. Because just like Chigbu & Idoko (2013) posited; "without the library and its librarians, the university would be significantly impacted negatively and challenged as it attempts to function as a center of learning, teaching and research. Therefore, librarians need to be equipped with the necessary tools in order to effectively perform duties and fulfill their roles as part of the academic community and as guardians of scholarly communication, both of which promote optimal individual development." They have been able to achieve this aim to a certain level through the following mediums:

1. **Webinars:** webinars are simply seminars, workshops, conferences, video presentations, meetings and lectures hosted online through video software such as; zoom, google meet, jitsi.org and some others; and attended by an online audience.

Ali & Gatiti (2020) posited that; "some libraries have initiated online webinars and sessions to keep in touch with their users via Google Classroom, Google Hangouts, Skype or Zoom."

In the same vein; COVID-19 pandemic led to different associations of librarians such as; International Federation of Library Association (IFLA), African Library and Information Associations & Institutions (AFLIA), the National Library of Nigeria (NLN), Nigerian Library Association (NLA); and others to schedule and hold webinars to address the importance of ensuring that library services and information access are given to users smoothly and continuously, the pandemic challenges of lockdown notwithstanding.

Some of these webinar topics are as follows;

- a. "Emergency preparedness of African Libraries", held by AFLIA ON 15th June, 2020.
- b. "Library leadership Role in Facilitating post COVID-19 library services Delivery in Africa", held by Library Aid Africa on 15th July, 2020.
- c. "Academic library services during COVID-19", organized by IFLA on 22nd July, 2020.

To mention a few.

2. **Through online workshops and courses:** organizations like AFLIA partnered with an international library body and organized programs for librarians with different courses on current issues which emanated as a result of the pandemic. They ensured that librarians enrolled for these courses through "Coursera". These courses enlightened and equipped with Information Communication Technology (ICT) tools to enable them perform virtual library services, so as to ensure that the main functions of the library and librarians is still performed.

On the other hand, Elsevier; one of the biggest online publishers in the world scheduled different workshops with an outline of vital topics bordering on the COVID-19 pandemic issues and publication procedures. One of the workshops was themed "Aligning yourself to the publishing process", held on 23rd & 24th July, 2020. NLA also organized workshops to address some of these pandemic related issues, they themed their first workshop during the pandemic; "The emerging roles of Librarians during and post COVID-19", which was held on 18th and 19th August, 2020.

3. **Through insightful reports:** important insights were gained from reports given by high ranking librarians from across the world who shared their experiences and work during the pandemic with the aim to inspire, enlighten and abreast librarians all over the world with the right strategies to adopt in keeping afloat the challenges of the pandemic and ensuring that there is no breakdown in the smooth rendering of

library services and information access to users. Through a webinar organized by IFLA with the theme; "Academic Library services during COVID-19" held on 22nd July, 2020, we learnt that;

- a. Academic libraries in Australia, especially in Singapore were never really closed because they have been preparing for such a situation (a situation that may lead to the lockdown of libraries) for about 10-20 years. As Gulcin Cribb (the speaker from Singapore) maintained, they moved all their library activities to virtual (online) environment, and ensured open access abundance to information needed by library users.

This information is in line with Eze & Uzoigwe (2013) who noted that; "there is a clear paradigm shift from manual ways of carrying out information services powered by analog data to electronic ways of accessing and retrieving information powered by electronic gadgets."

- b. Leo F. H. Ma; the head, upper-campus libraries of the Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) said that the physical library of Chinese University was closed in late January, 2020. And from 29th January to 8th April, 2020, their library moved to online services and only staff and students of the institution had access to the library services and information.
- c. The speaker from France; Jerome Fronty who is from National Library of France said that the new policies offered by their libraries are that;
 - i. Resources were made available to users and access was enabled on the basis of pre-registration.
 - ii. E-copies of public domain works, videoconference between Librarians and users, research assistance appointments and so on.

This information gave credence to Yaakobi & Goldenberg (2014) who posited that, "in recent years there has been a significant shift in the nature of social interactions from face-to-face to web based social communication."

- d. Prof. (Dr.) Ramesh C. Gaur; the dean & director (lib&inf.)/Head-Kala Nidhi Division – Indira Gandhi National Centre of Arts (IGNLA) reported that in India, all events in their libraries turned to online mode during the pandemic. Sharing of newspapers were done in Whatsapp groups. They also made provision for a Facebook group for virtual library and information services.
- e. Adetoun Oyelude from Kenneth Dike Library, University of Ibadan, Nigeria; who is a Principal Librarian; Head, Cataloguing session of her library reported that Federal and State Universities' physical libraries in Nigeria are still locked down as at the time of the webinar; which was on 22nd July, 2020. This is because of the ongoing ASUU (Academic Staff Union of Universities) strike action at the time. She explains that with the ease of the lockdown in Nigeria; Private Universities' libraries began to offer skeletal physical library services while the Federal and State Universities' libraries were still physically locked.

The above and many other reports were presented by speakers from around the world who presented in the said Webinar.

4. **Through virtual services (social media platforms and groups):** as Yaakobi & Goldenberg (2014) noted; "information dissemination studies have shown that social groups are structured around a small number of influential individuals with many friends who enjoy above-average social power and can sway the attitudes, opinions, decisions and actions of other group members." Therefore, it would not be out of place to say that academic library users can be given access to information by academic librarians through social media platforms and groups. Even as Umoh (2017) noted; "the academic libraries provide resources to provide gateway to all future information sources as citizens, as consumers, as professionals, and for recreational purposes." Bearing this in

mind, academic librarians created groups and pages in different social media platforms through which they made available useful and trustworthy information to users thereby ensuring no breakdown of library services during the pandemic lockdown. Some of these social media platforms used by librarians for information dissemination and library services are; Facebook, Facebook messenger, Whatsapp, Twitter, Instagram, Telegram, institutions' websites, meetings in zoom, and so on. These are in line with what Ali & Gatiti (2020) stated; "trustworthy information may be shared with library users through institutional and personal social media accounts and platforms to control rumors and fake news."

Methodology

A survey research design was adopted for this study. The population of the study is made up of 50 academic librarians and 92 academic library users from across the South-Eastern part of Nigeria who were selected as respondents using the availability sampling technique. Data was collected using a structured questionnaire (online) which is made up of two sections; Section A and Section B; where Section A is for academic librarians and Section B is for academic library users. The point of decision fixed at 2.5 since the questionnaire is five-point scale. Any item that attracted a mean of 2.5 and above was regarded as accepted, while any item that attracted a mean of less than 2.5 was regarded as rejected.

Data collected from the questionnaire was analyzed using simple mean frequency distribution.

$$\text{Formula} = \text{mean} = x = \frac{\sum fx}{n}$$

Where X = mean

Σ = summation

X = score of each response

n = total number of responses

Strongly Agree = 4 points

Agree = 3 points

Disagree = 2 points

Strongly disagree = 1 point

Neutral = 0 point

Results

The results of the findings of this study are presented below:

Section A

Findings from the questionnaire developed for academic librarians on the first three objectives of the study is illustrated below:

Personal information;

Gender: for the Female gender, we got 32 respondents;

For the Male gender, we got 18 respondents, this makes it a total of 50 respondents in all, as shown in the diagram below.

Educational qualification; respondents with BLIS/B.Sc, we got 13 respondents

For those with MLIS/M.Sc, we got 14 respondents

For those with PHD, we got 22 respondents

For others, we have 1 respondent; making it a total of 50 respondents in all, as shown in the diagram

Below.

Type of Academic Librarian;

Librarians from university libraries are 40 respondents

Librarians from polytechnic libraries are 7 respondents

Librarians from college libraries are 3 respondents; making it a total of 50 respondents in all, as shown

in the diagram below:

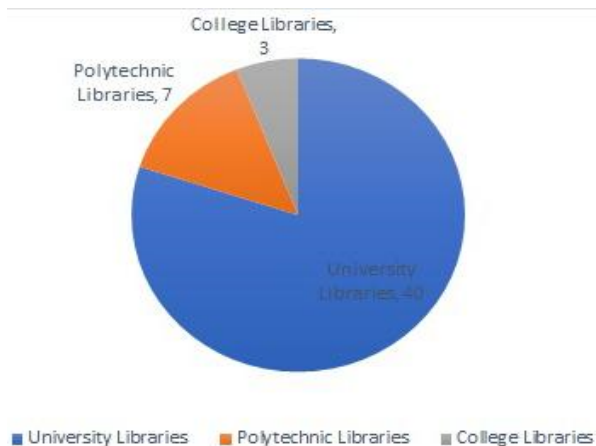
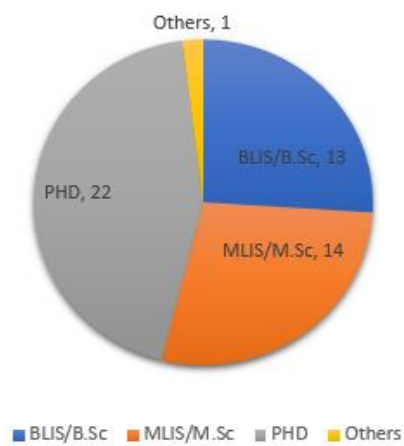
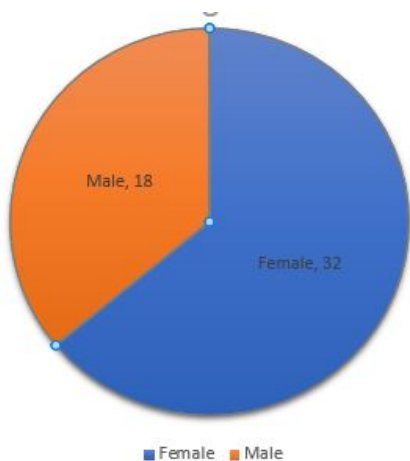


Table 1: Information on the importance of library services even when the library is locked down:

S/No	Items	SA	A	D	SD	N	$\Sigma f \times$	N	X	DECISION
1.	An academic librarian should ensure that library services are carried out even in situations that have led to the lockdown of academic libraries.	29	10	4	0	7	154	50	3.1	Accepted
		116	30	8	0	0				
2	Librarians have the obligation of ensuring that users get quality information access even in a time of pandemic.	23	21	4	0	2	163	50	3.3	Accepted
		92	63	8	0	0				
Grand mean		208	93	16	0	0	317	100	3.2	Accepted

Table 1 shows the information on the importance of library services even when the library is locked down. The result revealed that academic librarians understand their duty as regards carrying out library services even in

situations that have led to lockdown of academic libraries. The first and second item on table 1 is on the level of satisfaction with the mean of 3.1 and 3.3 respectively which is above 2.5. the

grand mean of 3.2 showed a high response on the items.

Table 2: Information on academic libraries in Nigeria shut down during COVID-19 Pandemic

S/No	Items	SA	A	D	SD	N	$\Sigma f \times$	N	X	DECISION
3.	My institution library was shut down during COVID-19 pandemic.	18	24	4	0	4	152	50	3.0	Accepted
		72	72	8	0	0				
4.	My institution library wasn't Fully closed during COVID-19 pandemic.	4	17	8	11	10	94	50	1.9	Rejected
		16	51	16	11	0				
5.	My institution library was running skeletal services during COVID-19 pandemic.	13	20	8	7	2	135	50	2.7	Accepted
		52	60	16	7	0				
6.	My institution library was already running skeletal services before the pandemic due to the Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU) strike action.	16	8	20	0	6	128	50	2.6	Accepted
		46	24	40	0	0				
Grand mean		204	207	80	18	0	509	200	2.6	Accepted

Table 2 shows the information on Institution Libraries shut down during COVID-19 pandemic. The result revealed that Institution libraries were shut down during COVID-19 pandemic. The first, third and fourth items on table 2 is on the level of satisfaction with the mean of 3.0, 2.7 and 2.6 respectively showing that institution libraries were shut down during the COVID-19 pandemic

with some of them running skeletal services; while the second item on table 2 is on the level of dissatisfaction with the mean of 1.9; showing that respondents answered against institution libraries not being fully closed. This means that institution libraries in Nigeria were fully closed. A grand mean of 2.6 showed a high response on the items.

Table 3: Information on how institution libraries have carried out library services during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown

S/No	Items	SA	A	D	SD	N	$\Sigma f \times$	n	X	DECISION
7	Academic librarians in my Institution adopted a virtual library/digital information services during the lockdown.	4	24	10	6	6	114	50	2.3	Rejected
		16	72	20	6	0				
8	Library services and Information dissemination were ensured through the institution library websites and social media platforms.	9	26	5	4	6	128	50	2.6	Accepted
		36	78	10	4	0				
Grand mean		52	150	30	10	0	242	100	2.4	Rejected

Table 3 shows the information on how institution libraries have carried out library services during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown. The result revealed that academic librarians adopted virtual library services/digitalized information

services during the lockdown. They did this through institution libraries' websites and social media platforms. The first and second items on table 3 is on the level of satisfaction with the mean of 3.0 and 2.6 respectively. This shows that academic librarians adopted virtual library

services during the pandemic and as well moved library services digital. The grand mean of 2.4 showed a low response on the items.

9. Social media platforms used to meet the information needs of academic library users during the lockdown;

Facebook	Facebook Messenger	Twitter	WhatsApp	Instagram	YouTube	Zoom	Institution library websites	Others
22	2	0	24	2	6	20	24	0

The above information shows that academic libraries are not working hard enough to fully incorporate virtual library services. Facebook, WhatsApp, Zoom and Institution library websites seems to be the most used medium of information dissemination while Facebook Messenger, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube is not widely used for information dissemination and other library services and most of them do not have enough engagements which brings about the question; are academic librarians in Nigeria ready to provide virtual library service to users? Because a visit to Institution Library websites and social media pages shows otherwise.

SECTION B

Findings from the questionnaire developed for academic library users on the last three objectives of the study is illustrated below:

Personal information;

Gender: for the female gender, we have 52 respondents

For the male gender, we have 40 respondents; giving a total of 92 respondents in all; as shown in the diagram below:

Type of user: for users who are Librarians, we have 18 respondents

For users who are Lecturers, we have 12 respondents

For users who are Students, we have 50 respondents

For users who are researchers, we have 12 respondents, giving a total of 92 respondents; as shown in the below diagram:

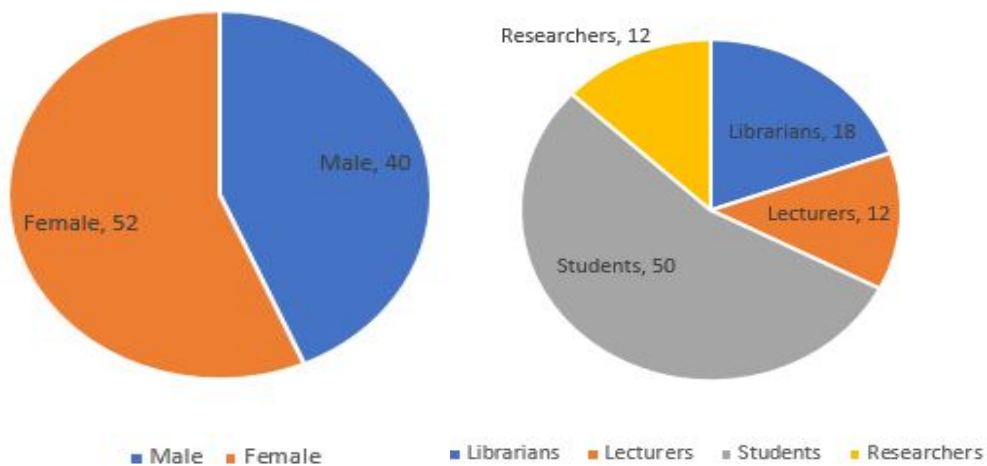


Table 4: Information on how academic library users were able to access information during COVID-19 pandemic

S/No	Items	SA	A	D	SD	N	$\Sigma f \times$	n	X	DECISION
10.	Academic librarians ensured that information reached academic library users even though institution libraries are closed.	2 8	31 93	12 24	7 7	40 0	132	92	1.4	Rejected
11.	I was satisfied with the Information access granted me as an academic library user.	2 8	40 120	12 36	5 5	33 0	169	92	1.8	Rejected
	Grand mean	16	213	60	12	0	301	184	1.6	Rejected

Table 4 shows the information on how academic library users were able to access information during COVID-19 pandemic. The result revealed that academic library users are dissatisfied with the role of academic librarians to ensure that

information reached them and as well dissatisfied with the level of information access granted them during the pandemic; with a mean of 1.4 and 1.8 respectively. The grand mean of 1.6 showed a low response on the items.

Table 5: Information on the availability of the correct information needed by academic library users during the lockdown

S/No	Items	SA	A	D	SD	N	$\Sigma f \times$	n	X	DECISION
12.	Academic librarians ensured that the information I had access to was I needed	2 8	42 126	14 28	3 3	31 0	165	92	1.8	Rejected
13.	Academic librarians ensured that the needed information was made available as soon as possible	5 20	41 123	10 20	6 6	30 0	169	92	1.8	Rejected
	Grand mean	28	249	48	9	0	334	184	1.8	Rejected

Table 5 shows the information on the availability of correct information needed by academic library users during the lockdown. The result revealed that academic library users was dissatisfied with the type of information they had

access to and as well dissatisfied with the level of availability of the needed information during the period of the lockdown, with the mean of 1.8 and 1.8 respectively. The grand mean of 1.8 showed a low response on the items.

Table 6: Information on the level of access granted academic library users during the lockdown.

S/No	Items	SA	A	D	SD	N	$\Sigma f \times$	n	X	DECISION
14.	Academic librarians ensured open access to information for library users.	4 16	38 114	2 6	0 0	48 0	136	92	1.5	Rejected
15.	There was a closed access to Information for academic Library users.	19 76	47 141	7 14	2 2	17 0	233	92	2.5	Accepted
16.	There was limited access to Information for academic Library users.	17 58	48 144	8 16	0 0	19 0	228	92	2.5	Accepted
	Grand mean	160	399	36	2	0	597	276	2.2	Rejected

Table 6 shows the information on the level of access granted academic library users during the lockdown. The result revealed that users are dissatisfied with the level of information access granted them with the mean of 1.5. Academic library users agreed that there was a close and limited access to information made available to them with the mean of 2.5 and 2.5 respectively. The grand mean of 2.2 showed a low response on the items.

Discussion of Findings

The results presented in the previous session are discussed below.

Library services are important and vital and should never be interrupted even with the physical academic libraries shut down as in agreement with Iwhiwhu & Okorodudu (2012) who noted that; “the importance of information resources in any library cannot be over-emphasized. Libraries whether public or academic are established to provide relevant and up to date information resources to its users.”

Institution or academic libraries in Nigeria were completely shut down during the COVID-19 pandemic, because the country was on ‘lockdown’ including all sectors of the economy.

Academic librarians adopted virtual library services to meet the information needs of users during the pandemic, still there were a lot of challenges that brought about dissatisfaction of users because academic librarians in Nigeria weren’t prepared for such situation. Ali & Gatiti (2020) however noted; “during a pandemic the library must also continue to support its regular users.”

Some of the social media pages and websites created by academic librarians as a medium of information dissemination to users weren’t fully equipped.

Academic library users are not satisfied with the level of information access available to them, as valid and relevant information and research materials during the pandemic were somewhat limited during the pandemic lockdown, as against Umoh (2017) posited; “to facilitate academic success, academic libraries must provide access to a broad range of information resources.”

Academic library users maintained that there wasn’t efficiency in the information resources made available to them during the pandemic lockdown. This is against the notion made by Okike (2020); “Librarians have to reach user populations and their need for up-to-date relevant information.”

Implication of the study

The study findings presented show that Academic Librarians faced certain challenges in creating and maintaining new strategies for library services; such as adopting virtual library services and moving completely digital to meet the information needs of academic library users who still expressed dissatisfaction towards the level of information access granted them during the course of the COVID-19 pandemic.

From the research findings, it can be concluded that academic librarians need to do more as regards library services and information access to users.

Recommendations

The researchers made the following recommendations;

1. Academic libraries and librarians should fully adopt digital library services and ensure that all the services they render in their physical libraries are also digitalized, and to a large extent, grant academic library users an open access to information.
2. Academic libraries and academic library management should involve the use of virtual services in meeting the information needs of academic library users; they should ensure that their institution library websites and social media accounts are efficient and interactive.
3. Government and higher institutions’ management should organize trainings for academic librarians in ICT related courses to fully equip them and ensure their readiness for challenges resulting from either pandemics or other factors that may lead to the shutdown of academic libraries.

Conclusion

The main objective of academic libraries is to meet the learning and research needs of students, lecturers, researchers and other academic library users. This objective shouldn't be halted for whatsoever reason, not even a pandemic. It is clear that there has been a short fall of the core duty of academic librarians to ensure that library services are consistently carried out and information access fully guaranteed for academic library users. This is because of how unexpectedly the COVID-19 pandemic hit the world and as such academic libraries in Nigeria who are not ready for such situations were faced with certain challenges; some of which they were able to device means to control or manage. But still, it is clear that academic library users are dissatisfied with the little academic librarians could do and this is a serious implication for academic libraries and academic librarians.

Despite these challenges, librarians and academic librarians are working hard to give quality library and information services to library users.

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