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## SENSITIZATION AND PROMOTION OF INFORMATION LITERACY ON COVID-19 PANDEMIC BY LIBRARIANS IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES IN SOUTH-WESTERN NIGERIA

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# SENSITISATION AND PROMOTION OF INFORMATION LITERACY ON COVID-19 PANDEMIC BY LIBRARIANS IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES IN SOUTH-WESTERN NIGERIA

## Abstract

*The global spread of coronavirus and the associated lockdown by various countries, communities and organizations is worrisome. However, literature has revealed that one of the biggest roles librarians can play in the national response to the pandemic is that of information literacy specialist. This study, therefore, evaluated sensitization and promotion of information literacy on COVID-19 pandemic by librarians in Public University Libraries in South-Western Nigeria. The descriptive survey research design was used for the study. The data for the study was collected from librarians in Public University Libraries in South-Western Nigeria. A total of 315 librarians participated in the study through an online questionnaire due to the COVID-19 pandemic while 233 (74.0%) returned copies of filled questionnaire by the respondents was analysed. Frequency counts, percentages and mean were used to analyse the data collected. Librarians sensitized their communities through various ways on preventive COVID-19 information and used mobile phones and social media very effectively in disseminating preventive COVID-19 information. A significant relationship existed between sensitization and promotion of information literacy on COVID-19 pandemic by librarians. However, librarians were confronted with many challenges in promoting preventive COVID-19 information. It is therefore, recommended that librarians and other information stakeholders should put more efforts on sensitizing their communities about this COVID-19 pandemic, so as to reduce the high level of ignorance about the pandemic in the communities.*

**Keywords:** Pandemic Sensitization, Preventive Covid-19 Information literacy, Librarians, Public University Libraries, Nigeria

## Introduction

A pneumonia-like infection which originated from the city of Wuhan, China was discovered and reported to the World Health Organization (WHO) in December 2019. It was quickly determined as a novel coronavirus otherwise known as COVID-19 caused by Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). The COVID-19 virus was rapidly spreading through the city of Wuhan and to many cities in China. As of today, COVID-19 outbreak has expanded to touch nearly every corner of the globe. Consequently hundreds of thousands of people around the world have been sickened and thousands of others have died of the virus. The virus is new to mankind with no globally accepted cure/treatment yet, since it caught the entire world unprepared.

The WHO (2020) declared COVID-19 outbreak a pandemic on the 11th of March, 2020 because there were up to 118,000 confirmed cases in 114 countries, and 4,291 deaths as a result of the viral infection. Since COVID-19 was declared a pandemic, there remains a growing apprehension and panic across the world regarding the structure of the virus, how it spreads, the most vulnerable group to the virus, testing and treatment of patients to mention only but a few. On Feb 27, 2020, the first case of COVID-19 in sub-Saharan Africa was reported in Nigeria (WHO Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Situation Report–39. Feb 28, 2020). This made

the reality of COVID-19 pandemic hit hard. The fact that, the first case of COVID-19 came from outside Nigeria through an international flight did not make it any easier a pill to swallow. Makoni (2020), reports that Egypt recorded Africa's first case of coronavirus disease 2019. The effects of lockdown and movement restrictions on the economy of African countries and on health delivery services to vulnerable members of society like children who need to take Bacillus Calmette-Guerin (BCG) and measles vaccination was mentioned. "Health systems are severely strained, threatening to reverse progress made with other diseases such as malaria or polio". The need to find solutions to the COVID-19 pandemic in good time therefore cannot be overemphasized.

These informed an urgent need for sensitizing and promoting robust information literacy programmes in curbing the pandemic, because of the increasing number of fake news and unverified information available online, via social media and other mass media platforms about COVID-19 on a daily basis. Among other issues, on the African continent in particular, the effect of the pandemic is scary considering that much is amiss in the health sector in many African countries. According to Nkengasong & Mankoula (2020), "collectively, Africa needs a unified continent-wide strategy for preparedness and response. The strategy must be comprehensive, and member states, donors, and partners should immediately commit to releasing financial resources to support country-customized implementation plans derived from the strategy." They emphasized the urgency of the necessity for Africa to act and act fast to contain the pandemic by getting medical staff adequately trained, and to cascade the health sector pyramid right down to ensure that the pandemic is contained.

For Martinez-Alvarez, Jarde, Usuf, Brotherton, Bittaye, Samateh, Antonio, Vives-Tomas, D'Alessandro & Roca (2020), countries in Africa like Burkina Faso and Senegal saw sharp increases in the number of COVID-19 cases soon after the initial cases were confirmed in their countries and though there was no proof that the climatic conditions in African countries would make the spread any less than in other less temperate regions, they believed that it was limited access to international air travel that made the spread seem less in Africa. The urgency for Africa to speed up its response rate to curb the pandemic was expressed.

Ayebare, Flick, Okware, Bodo & Lamorde (2020) commented on COVID-19 triage strategies for low-income settings especially referring to Uganda. They described the adoption of testing methods which were limited to taking temperature, eliminating underlying symptoms of ill health and isolation based on travel history out of the country, or contact with persons recently travelled in to the country.

The word pandemic was loosely defined by WHO as "the worldwide spread of a new disease". According to the US Center for Disease control and Prevention (CDC), a pandemic is a disease that has spread in multiple countries around the world, usually affecting a large number of people. The word is from the Greek word "Pan" meaning all and "DEMOS" meaning people. The WHO Director General made public pronouncement since the advent of the disease that, "many countries continue to face the uphill battle with the COVID-19 spread".

Some countries struggle with lack of capacity, while others struggle with lack of resources. Among the mostly hit with the pandemic is the United States of America (USA), China,

followed by Spain, and Iran in the Middle East. The USA has reported more fatalities above 14,768 in April 9 as the contagion rapidly spreads even as the whole world struggle to contain the spread of the virus. Although, Africa is not recorded to have been badly hit as some of the other continents of the world as at April, 2020, historically, it is obvious that we need to have data on studies of past outbreaks which could help scientists and information providers/librarians to better estimate the trajectory of COVID-19 and identify best measures to slow its spread in Africa.

An influenza pandemic was reported in 1918 and by 2002-2003 there was the SARS outbreak with suggested social distancing measures mainly to slow down the breakout just as the measure employed to control COVID-19. Also there was a Swine flu breakout in 2009, then the EBOLA outbreak in West Africa in 2014, followed by the outbreak of ZIKA in 2015-2016 in central and South America (Sara 2020). While COVID-19, is a virus and not an influenza virus, which requires massive social interventions strategies and non-pharmaceutical control to avert its further spread. Efforts to set serious sensitization machinery in perspective in order to curtail the spread particularly in Africa, where most countries are underdeveloped and developing should be fully functional and not relegated.

Sensitization connotes making people aware about an issue, or situation (Youth Do It, 2019). This can be used as an approach by librarians to increase awareness about the COVID-19 pandemic on a general scale to get people better informed. Also, the American Library Association (ALA) defined information literacy as the “set of abilities requiring individuals to recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information”. From the above definition of information literacy it is glaring that librarians can engage on healthy information literacy programs to educate the people on how to locate accurate information and data about the COVID-19 pandemic, how to evaluate the numerous information available on the pandemic so as to be able to filter the unverified and fake information from the accurate ones, as well as how to use the accurate information for quality decision making.

Librarians by virtue of their training are known to be carriers of information that is clear, accurate and verified which could be used for quality decision making. Therefore, adequate community sensitization in promoting preventive information for COVID-19 by librarians will go a long way in the fight against the growing COVID-19 pandemic. Hence, it is imperative for librarians to step up their primary function in providing preventive information to her teaming community on the ravaging COVID-19 virus.

### **Statement of the problem**

Most nations of the world have ordered their citizens to stay at home and observe other social distancing measures to avert the spread of the novel COVID-19 since it is passed by individuals. However, despite the lockdown observed by most nations of the world sensitization and information literacy programmes can still be carried out with the advent of information communications and technological tools rampant in this digital age. The world is popularly referred to as a global village with the advent of information communication technology (ICT) that has greatly aided swift information dissemination. The study therefore explores the

sensitization and promotion of information literacy efforts of librarians in view of controlling and curbing the spread of coronavirus in Nigeria.

### **Objectives of the study**

The objective of the study is to evaluate sensitization and promotion of information literacy on COVID-19 pandemic by librarians in Public University Libraries in South-Western Nigeria. The specific objectives are to:

- i. find out librarians' ways of sensitizing their communities on preventive COVID-19 information.
- ii. ascertain the channels of disseminating preventive information literacy on COVID-19.
- iii. identify the promotion activities by librarians' institutions for COVID-19 preventive information.
- iv. identify challenges encountered by librarians in promoting preventive COVID-19 information

### **Research questions**

The following research questions were answered in the study:

- i. In what ways are librarians sensitizing their communities on preventive COVID-19 information?
- ii. What are the channels of disseminating preventive information literacy on COVID-19 information?
- iii. What promotion activities do librarians' institutions adopt for COVID-19 preventive information?
- iv. What are the challenges encountered by librarians in promoting preventive COVID-19 information?

### **Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses were tested in the study at  $P < 0.05$  level of significance:

- Ho<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant relationship between sensitization of information literacy and COVID-19 pandemic by librarians in Public University Libraries in South-Western Nigeria
- Ho<sub>2</sub>: There is no significant relationship between promotion of information literacy and COVID-19 pandemic by librarians in Public University Libraries in South-Western Nigeria
- Ho<sub>3</sub>: There is no significant relationship between sensitization and promotion of information literacy by librarians in Public University Libraries in South-Western Nigeria

### **Literature Review**

Studies on sensitization and promotion of information literacy on COVID-19 pandemic by librarians are limited since COVID-19 is a novel virus. However studies on information literacy have received widespread attention. In this review, the focus would be in line with the objectives of the study.

#### **Concept of information literacy**

Information has turn out to be so vital for decision making in this technological era. The technology world depends upon the information for social, economic, scientific and

technological development. Prior to this period the problem of information was its scarcity however, in this era it has become an abundance of information. The way out of choosing the right information from the abundance of information is information literacy. Information literacy is a basic human right in this age of rapid adoption of technologies and a key attribute for everyone, irrespective of age or experience. Citizens require new competences in order to participate in and contribute to society.

Anyoaku (2016) asserted that one of the most important training needs for medical librarians in Nigeria is in the aspect of information literacy training. This is because it is a vital source of digital literacy for health information users in the hospital setting. She also recommended that the information skills training can be done informally as the librarians attend to the information need of the patrons and during clinical meetings, workshops and seminars organized by the various health professional groups.

IFLA (2015) noted that “increased access to information and knowledge, underpinned by universal literacy, is an essential pillar of sustainable development.” Scott (2012) defines information literacy as “the ability to find, evaluate, and use information efficiently, effectively, and ethically to answer an information need.” Information needs can be; health literacy, information on patient care, on how to search resources to improve on literacy services to healthy living standards of patients and sensitization of preventive measures against the Nations’ dreaded ailment COVID-19.

### **Concept of sensitization**

The key to successful realization of sustainable development goals (SDGs) in Nigeria is advocacy/sensitization of preventive health care for all ages (Nongo and Ode 2018). Therefore, information literacy remains the precursor to averting the spread of COVID-19 virus. Librarianship profession and the dissemination of preventive COVID-19 information literacy could be regarded as health sociology. Magnus in Tinuola (2009) defined sociology as “the scientific study of the social, emotional and cultural elements in human health.” However, it portrays value-system through the dissemination of information using sensitization modules in reaching out to citizens. This pandemic has been envisaged as deadly to humanity. Therefore, Government needs to synergize with other agencies to enhance easy access to health information.

Librarians play critical role in health education by sensitizing on preventive measures to curb various diseases. These roles are characterized essentially as non-partisan by providing health information literacy that allows informed decisions which are non-pharmaceutical control measure to COVID-19.

### **Dissemination of preventive information on COVID-19 by librarians**

Librarians and libraries have not done much in disseminating information about COVID 19 prevention and control. African Library & Information Associations & Institutions (2019) posited that misinformation increases more where there is illiteracy, especially the incompetence to apprehend and evaluate information independently. Africa is lagging behind in world’s benchmark on literacy levels this makes the continent a fruitful ground for misinformation about COVID-19. African Library & Information Associations & Institutions (2019) further posited that this is a wakeup call for librarians as they need to re-educate themselves on the virus, preventative measures and pass on the information in as many spaces as possible especially online platforms since physical gathering is currently prohibited.

IFLA (2020) posted an article on COVID-19 and the global library field. The article explains the main aspect of the virus in clear terms. The article highlighted topics related to understanding Covid-19 and its spread, library closures around the world, managing different approaches to restrictions, staying safe at home and work, providing services remotely managing remote working, reassigning library resources, actions by associations, national libraries and library partners and communicating with users in different languages. It is glaring that IFLA is doing a lot in dissemination of preventive information on COVID-19. Kennedy (2020) affirmed that as new knowledge about COVID-19 emerges and as the number of reported cases spreads, the association of research libraries are partnering with scholars and senior administrators in federal agencies, cities, and higher education to ensure their expertise and the information they provide is available for consumption by the public to keep them informed.

### **Promotion activities by institutions on preventive COVID-19 information**

Promotion activities carried out by institution can go a long way in sensitizing staff and students with methods of preventing the COVID-19 virus. Wang, Cheng, Yue, and McAleer (2020) studied risk management of COVID-19 by universities in China. The findings of the study revealed that Chinese universities have made significant progress to emergency risk management. Such contributions have been made primarily in the following areas: alumni resource collection, medical rescue and emergency management, mental health maintenance, control of staff mobility and innovation in online education models. Through the support of these methods, Chinese universities have played a positive role in the prevention and control of the epidemic situation.

Also, University of Birmingham (2020) stated that the University of Birmingham and researchers across Birmingham Health Partners are collaborating to produce regular COVID-19 briefings based on the latest literature to support clinical colleagues and disseminate key information to the public. Nnamdi Azikiwe University (2020) has added a column on its webpage titled COVID-19 alert. Under COVID 19 alert, topics related to information about coronavirus disease, how to protect yourself, case summary in Nigeria on COVID 19 are all explained to keep the public informed with accurate information on how to protect them.

### **Ways of sensitizing the communities by librarians on preventive COVID-19 information**

The Online Computer Library Center (OCLC) (2020) asserted that librarians in libraries of all types, geographic locations, and sizes are learning the facts about this public health crisis and helping to inform their patrons. Librarians can inform their patrons on what steps may need to be taken on COVID-19 prevention and control, sanitize their collections, and post hand-washing reminders in the library (OCLC, 2020). Caren (2020) affirmed that the Massachusetts Department of Public Health's coronavirus page and the Boston Public Health Commission's coronavirus page will be kept up to date and will include location-specific information to keep the community better informed.

On a similar note, Every Library (2019) asserted that one of the biggest roles that librarians can play in the national response to COVID-19 is that of information literacy specialists. Librarians can fill the gap as trusted sources of information as well as a shield against misinformation rampant in this digital age. Johns Hopkins Sheridan Libraries (2020) posited that Johns Hopkins University is actively monitoring the COVID-19 pandemic, with particular focus on the health and well-being of the University community, as well as on the continuity of University operations. The Hub's COVID-19 information page is updated daily, and all members

of the academic community are advised to check back regularly for current information (Johns Hopkins Sheridan Libraries, 2020).

### **Challenges encountered by librarians in promoting preventive COVID-19 information**

Literature affirmed that the major challenge of COVID-19 information is determining which is fake or real. This assertion is affirmed by the World Health Organization Director Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus that fake news spreads faster and more easily than this virus, and is just as dangerous (Patel, 2020). Similarly, Vanderslott (2020) posited that confusingly some fake news also contains a mixture of correct information, which makes it difficult to spot what is true and accurate. Fake news may also be shared by trusted friends and family, including those who are doctors and nurses (Vanderslott, 2020). Specifically, there is no sufficient literature on challenges encountered by librarians in promoting preventive Covid-19 information. Therefore this study is necessary for filling the gap in literature with exceptional reference to Nigeria.

### **Methodology**

The study adopted a quantitative methodology using descriptive survey research design. The population of the study comprised 315 Librarians in public (federal and state) universities in South-western Nigeria. The sample used for the study was total enumeration of all the librarians in the universities. A total of 315 copies of questionnaire was distributed to all the librarians between April 2 and April 30, 2020. This was carried out through an online survey which became necessary due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The questionnaire contained questions on respondents' demographic characteristics and multiple choice questions on the objectives of the study. A total of 233 (74.0%) copies of questionnaire was filled and submitted by the respondents for analysis. The descriptive statistics of frequency counts, percentages, mean and standard deviation for the research questions 2 was used. The hypotheses 1 to 4 were tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC).

### **Findings of the study**

The demographic characteristic of the respondents were analysed using descriptive statistics and the results are presented in Tables 1, 2 and 3.

**Table 1: Frequency distribution of respondents by gender**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Male	121	51.93
Female	112	48.07
Total	233	100.0

Results on frequency distribution by gender reveals that majority of the respondents were males 121 (51.93%), while females constituted 112 (48.07%). This showed that more males participated in the study than females.

**Table 2: Frequency distribution of respondents by age**

<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
20-30 years	43	18.5
31-40 years	74	31.8
41-50 years	68	29.2
51-60 years	48	20.6



Total	233	100.0
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Table 2 shows that 43(18.5%) librarians are between 20-30 years of age, 74(31.8%) are between 31-40 years, 68(29.2%) are between 41-50 years, and 48(20.6%) are between 51-60 years. The finding shows that there were a large number of people of productive age who participated in the study.

**Table 3: Frequency distribution of respondents by years of work experience**

Years of work experience	Frequency	Percentage
0-5 years	62	26.6
6-10 years	52	22.3
11-15 years	44	18.9
16-20 years	32	13.7
21 years and above	43	18.5
Total	233	100.0

Table 3 shows that 62(26.6%) librarians had between 0-5 years of work experience, 52(22.3%) had between 6-10 years, 44(18.9%) had between 11-15 years, 32(13.7%) had between 16-20 years, and 43(18.5%) had 21 and above years of work experience. The inference drawn from the Table is that, the highest number of respondents 62 (26.6%) are at the entry-level of years of work experience.

### Answers to research questions

The four research questions in the study were analyzed and the results are presented below.

**Research Question 1:** In what ways are librarians sensitizing their communities on preventive COVID-19 information?

**Table 4: Librarians' ways of sensitizing community on preventive COVID-19 information**

Ways of sensitizing community	Frequency	Percentage
Providing information about preventive actions and updates about the impact of Covid-19	76	32.6
Offering tips for staying healthy	61	26.2
Connecting the community to accurate and reliable information	50	21.5
Sharing resources and information via library websites	46	19.7
Total	233	100.0

Table 4 shows the respondent's ways of sensitizing community on preventive COVID-19 information. The finding reveals that providing information about preventive actions and updates about the impact of Covid-19 had 76(32.6%), offering tips for staying healthy had 61 (26.2%),

connecting the community to accurate and reliable information had 50(21.5%), and sharing resources and information via library websites had 46 (19.7%).

The finding corroborates the assertion of the Online Computer Library Center (2020) that librarians in libraries of all types, geographic locations, and sizes are learning the facts about this public health crisis and helping to inform their patrons. The result of this study is also in support of the opinions of scholars, Nongo and Ode (2018) on advocacy/ sensitization of preventive health care for all ages; Every Library (2019) and Johns Hopkins Sheridan Libraries (2020), who averred that one of the biggest roles that librarians can play in the national response to COVID-19 is that of information literacy specialists.

**Research Question 2:** What are the channels of disseminating preventive information literacy on COVID-19 information?

To establish research question 2 respondents were asked to indicate their levels of agreement with the information using scales: Very effective, Effective, Moderately effective, Ineffective and Very ineffective as provided in Table 5.

**Table 5: Channels of disseminating preventive information literacy on COVID-19**

S/N	Channels of disseminating preventive information	1	2	3	4	5	$\bar{x}$	S.D
1	Online forum	75 32.2%	91 39.1%	61 26.2%	3 1.3%	3 1.3%	2.00	0.87
2	Internet	72 30.9%	96 41.2%	54 23.2%	9 3.9%	2 0.9%	2.03	0.88
3	Instant Messaging Platforms	63 27.0%	101 43.3%	59 25.3%	8 3.4%	2 0.9%	2.08	0.86
4	Social Media Platforms	103 44.2%	91 39.1%	33 14.2%	6 2.6%	-	1.75	0.79
5	Library Web	24 10.3%	51 21.9%	68 29.2%	76 32.6%	14 6.0%	3.02	1.09
6	Blog Post	17 7.3%	36 15.5%	58 24.9%	98 42.1%	24 10.3%	3.33	1.08
7	SMS	62 26.6%	87 37.3%	47 20.2%	28 12.0%	9 3.9%	2.29	1.10
8	Mobile Phones	113 48.5%	74 31.8%	31 13.3%	8 3.4%	7 3.0%	1.81	0.99
9	Emails	31 13.3%	73 31.3%	65 27.9%	53 22.7%	11 4.7%	2.74	1.09

Key: 1 = Very effective, 2= Effective, 3= Moderately effective, 4= Ineffective, 5= Very ineffective

The result presented in Table 5 shows that out of all the channels of disseminating preventive information literacy on COVID-19, Mobile phones ranked highest with 113(48.5%), Social media platforms had 103(44.2%), Online forum had 75(32.2%), Internet had 72(30.9%), Instant

Messaging Platforms had 63(27.0%), SMS had 62(26.6%), Emails had 31(13.3%), Library Web had 24(10.3%) and Blog Post had 17(7.3%).

Although, there is dearth of information on how librarians and libraries disseminate information about COVID 19. However, the overall responses in this area were, again, understandable in view of the fact that the respondents rating mobile phone as the most very effective could be attributed to the fact that cell phones are accessible, simple to utilize, convenient and user-friendly.

**Research Question 3:** What promotion activities do librarians' institutions adopt for COVID-19 preventive information?  
The result is presented in Table 6.

**Table 6: Promotion activities institution adopted in promoting preventive information for COVID-19**

Promotion activities	Frequency	Percentage
Providing access to collections and services remotely	64	27.5
Exhibitions	18	7.7
Providing online story times	38	16.3
Ask a Librarian reference service	50	21.5
Seminar and workshops	27	11.6
Newspaper	15	6.4
Advocacy on COVID-19 pandemic	21	9.0
Total	233	100.0

The result presented on Table 6 shows that providing access to collections and services remotely had 64(27.5%), Ask a Librarian reference service 50(21.5%), Providing online story times had 38(16.3%), Seminar and workshops had 27(11.6%), Seminar and workshops had 21(9.0%), Exhibitions 18(7.7%) and Newspaper had 15(6.4%).

The findings of Wang, Cheng, Yue, and McAleer (2020) established that Chinese universities have made significant progress to emergency risk management. Similarly, based on literature, University of Birmingham (2020) and Nnamdi Azikiwe University (2020) are producing regular COVID-19 briefings and disseminate key information to the public.

**Research Question 4:** What are the challenges encountered by librarians in promoting preventive COVID-19 information?  
The result is presented in Table 7.

**Table 7: Challenges encountered by librarians in promoting preventive COVID-19 information**

Challenges encountered	Frequency	Percentage
Lack of adequate research information on the COVID-19 pandemic	105	45.1
Lack of timely information on the COVID-19 pandemic	58	24.9
Lack of timely information on latest development on COVID-19 pandemic	51	21.9
Ignorance in the community	19	8.2
Total	233	100.0

Table 7 shows the challenges encountered by librarians in promoting preventive COVID-19 information. The finding reveals that, lack of adequate research information on the COVID-19 pandemic had 105(45.1%), lack of timely information on the COVID-19 pandemic had 58(24.9%), lack of timely information on latest development on COVID-19 pandemic had 51(21.9%) and Ignorance in the community had 19(8.2%).

The result is in conformity with that of the World Health Organization Director Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Patel (2020) and Vanderslott (2020) who affirmed that the major challenge of COVID-19 information is determining which is fake or real.

#### Test of hypotheses

The results of the three null hypotheses tested in the study at 0.05 level of significance and the results are presented as follows:

**Hypothesis 1:** There is no significant relationship between sensitization of information literacy and COVID-19 pandemic by librarians in Public University Libraries in South-Western Nigeria

**Table 8: Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) showing the relationship between sensitization of information literacy and COVID-19 pandemic**

Variables	Mean	Std. Dev.	n	r	p-value	Remarks
Covid-19 Pandemic	12.8584	2.66873	233	.649*	.0001	Sig.
Sensitization of info. literacy	21.0472	3.04314				

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 8 shows that there is a significant relationship between sensitization of information literacy and COVID-19 pandemic by librarians in Public University Libraries in South-Western Nigeria ( $r = .649$ ,  $n = 233$ ,  $p (.0001) < .05$ ). Hence, sensitization of information literacy influenced COVID-19 pandemic in the study. Hence, the hypothesis is rejected.

**Hypothesis 2:** There is no significant relationship between promotion of information literacy and COVID-19 pandemic by librarians in Public University Libraries in South-Western Nigeria

**Table 9: Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) showing the relationship between promotion of information literacy and COVID-19 pandemic**

Variables	Mean	Std. Dev.	n	r	p-value	Remarks
Covid-19 Pandemic	12.8584	2.66873	233	.759*	.0001	Sig.
Promotion of info. literacy	3.4635	2.1192				

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 9 shows that there is a significant relationship between promotion of information literacy and COVID-19 pandemic by librarians in Public University Libraries in South-Western Nigeria ( $r = .759$ ,  $n = 233$ ,  $p (.0001) < .05$ ). This implies that, promotion of information literacy influenced COVID-19 pandemic in the study. Hence, the hypothesis is rejected.

**Hypothesis 3:** There is no significant relationship between sensitization and promotion of information literacy by librarians in Public University Libraries in South-Western Nigeria

**Table 10: Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) showing the relationship between sensitization of information literacy and COVID-19 pandemic**

Variables	Mean	Std. Dev.	n	r	p-value	Remarks
Promotion of info. literacy	3.4635	2.1192	233	.255*	.0001	Sig.
Sensitization of info. literacy	21.0472	3.04314				

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 10 shows that there is a significant relationship between sensitization and promotion of information literacy by librarians in Public University Libraries in South-Western Nigeria ( $r = .255$ ,  $n = 233$ ,  $p (.0001) < .05$ ). Hence, sensitization of information literacy influenced promotion of information literacy by librarians in the study. Therefore, the hypothesis is rejected.

### Implications for practice

The practical implications of the study included that the study provided different ways of sensitizing the communities on preventive COVID-19 information through various channels in the libraries. The libraries also promoted activities for COVID-19 preventive information as well as the challenges encountered by librarians in promoting preventive COVID-19 information in Nigeria. Libraries should as a matter of policy have electronic databases as part of their collections. If they do not have, they should form consortia that would make such possible in

emergency. Information literacy education must be conducted by libraries via all possible methods whether academic, special, research or public library.

### **Social implications**

Health and hygiene conditions of all libraries should be stepped up. They are public spaces and as such should be given priority in safety measures provision. All users have to follow WHO non pharmaceutical preventive protocols before accessing library facilities physically. Library staff and library management need to draw up policies that empower and enable their staff to work from home with adequate infrastructure provided for such. Policies governing use of library, archives and museum facilities should be reviewed to reflect continuous sensitization and information literacy program which will be reviewed and improved upon going forward. Partnership between libraries and health workers should be built, or Medical libraries and their staff could step up by getting training and training others, or, librarians and Faculty (for Academic Librarians) could collaborate more with those in the sciences bringing up more of their research which the library would showcase more. Library management should as a matter of urgency draw up a standing task force committee on the COVID-19 pandemic with elaborate modus operandi on sensitization and supervision of the libraries.

### **Conclusion**

Librarians in Public University Libraries in South-Western Nigeria had diverse ways of sensitizing community on preventive COVID-19 information. They also used different channels for disseminating preventive information literacy on COVID-19 information. In addition, the librarians' institutions adopted different promotion activities on preventive information for COVID-19. Nevertheless, they were confronted with many challenges as identified by the study.

The results of this research maintain that sensitization and promotion of information literacy had statistically significant effect on COVID-19 pandemic by librarians. This conclusion was based on the fact that the results of the three research hypotheses were virtually the same with statistically significant relationship between them. On the whole, the study affirms that sensitization and promotion of information literacy had a significant effect on COVID-19 pandemic by librarians in Public University Libraries in South-Western Nigeria.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the findings of the study, the followings recommendations are made:

1. Librarians should improve more on the ways they sensitize their communities on preventive COVID-19 information. By sharing resources and information via library websites and also featuring a blog post in order to provide more reliable and genuine information, this can be achieved.
2. There is need for libraries to provide more promotion activities on preventive COVID 19-information such as provision of memos and official bulletins to staff through emails and encouraging people in the community to wash hands regularly and other medical advice.

3. Librarians should be given all the necessary support to provide adequate research information on the COVID-19 pandemic because there is lack of adequate research information on the pandemic.
4. Librarians and other information stakeholders should put more efforts on sensitizing the community about this pandemic, so as to reduce the high level of ignorance about the pandemic in the community.
5. Lastly, more study on the challenges and possible solution on preventive COVID-19 information would be desirable.

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