

Full Length Research

Effect of Staff Relationship in Academic Libraries in Managing Spread of COVID-19 Pandemic for Knowledge Management in Nigeria

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In organizations, which academic library is one of them, human relations (HR) is sine-qua-non for growth and development. HR is being used by successful organizations all over the world not only to grow their businesses, but also to make a big impact on the economy of their countries. The population includes all categories of library users at UNIMED, UNIZIK and YABATECH and FCE. Slovin's algorithm for sample size determination was used to pick a sample size of 384 respondents using the multivariate random sampling technique. Data was gathered via a questionnaire. To address the study research questions, the whole data obtained from 351 respondents was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The most important findings are: HR activities in academic libraries' influence on the spread of COVID-19 in the country are low, while the level of management of COVID-19 in the country is relatively poor. Several problems were discovered to confront library users in the utilization of library resources toward the management of COVID-19, and recommendations were provided.

KEYWORDS: Human Relations, Library Services, Users, Covid-19 Pandemic and national Development.

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INTRODUCTION

Organizational growth and development are dependent on human relations (HR).

Human relations are being used by successful companies and institutions all around the world to grow their organizations and institutions, as well as to advance their country's overall economic system. Access to precise and reliable data is essential for national economic development and prosperity. In this regard, libraries perform crucial roles, particularly in tough times like the present. The globe is being ravaged by the COVID-19 Pandemic. COVID-19, also known as the corona-virus, which its different variants has been threatening the human race and existence in a variety of ways, including the social-economic lives of people all over the world, with signs of wreaking havoc on the global economic system and its long-term viability.

Knowledge management is the process of an organization's knowledge and information being created, shared, used, and managed. Wikipedia (2019). In other words, knowledge management is the process of generating, disseminating, and archiving information. In order to properly and efficiently use and handle knowledge and information increase an organization's productivity when you have knowledge, you have power, but when you don't have knowledge, you have nothing. When used and controlled appropriately, it will not loses its power. We currently live in a knowledge-based economy. Knowledge has become one of our economy's most valuable assets. Management of information more information is available, accessible, and correct.

Effective knowledge management systems, according to Green (2020), minimize the costs of efficiency by making knowledge more available, accessible, and accurate. Knowledge management is linked to intellectual capital, as well as the generation and transmission of knowledge, which is entrenched in business operations (Wigg, 1993). Knowledge management encompasses all processes related to information creation, organizing, dissemination, and implementation in order to increase corporate efficiency and produce value.

The systematic study and use of knowledge about how individuals and groups function inside the organizations where they work is characterized as human relations (HR) (Anonymous Publisher, 2012). Human interactions encompass a wide range of activities including individuals, social groups, and organizations.

In fact, human relations are all about individuals, particularly those at work who make their workplaces run well. HR allows corporate human assets to discuss their relationship-building tactics for interacting with the organization's market and colleagues (Dankowski, 2018). Social contacts and networking are at the heart of human relations.

There are a number of methods that librarians and libraries can successfully promote social interaction and foster a collaborative, collegial environment that could aid in the fight against the COVID-19 epidemic, which is endangering the entire world's human social-economic system. Human relations practices are a critical component of having access to high-quality data and accomplishing economic growth and development. Indeed, human interactions have long been acknowledged as a critical aspect in overcoming organizational obstacles and achieving global growth and development. Human relations are crucial in the achievement of organizational goals, especially academic libraries around the world. Academic libraries in economically and socially viable countries are assisting in the transformation of their countries' economic and social well-being through effective and praiseworthy library services, with a focus on human relations.

It is anticipated that the availability of academic library materials be made known to members of the public or its user community, such as students and employees, who often comprise the greatest intellectual group or set of people with significant effect on social change and growth.

Information resources available at the library public relations services' departments and units are a collection of actions focused on putting people first in order to achieve organizational success. It has to do with networking as well as long-term collaborations and partnerships which can emerge via networking; thus, allowing people and businesses to pool resources together in overcoming organizational difficulties (Dankowski, 2018). Libraries/librarians have a wealth of information to impart and are deeply rooted in their community services functions (Ewen, 2019).

There are several reports in the literature questioning the existence of COVID-19 in Nigeria and insincerity in the management of COVID-19 disseminated among many Nigerians. This situation could be linked to issues with human relations. To put it in another way, workplace attitude (human relations) appears to be lacking among librarians in academic libraries in recent times, particularly in developing countries like Nigeria; especially when considering the fact that libraries/librarians have a lot of knowledge to share and are as connected to their communities and people as expressed by Ewen (2019). This form of attitudinal functions and obligations could assist to slow the spread of COVID-19 across the country.

In other words, the study's main focus is on librarians' attitudes on customer service at work. In essence, the study predicts or is a predictor in Managing the Spread of COVID-19 Pandemic for Knowledge Management based on the type and style of human relations in academic libraries. Thus, in order to determine the level of perception, the study examines human connections in academic libraries as a predictor in managing the spread of the covid-19 epidemic for Knowledge Management in Nigeria, Nigerians' understanding of the existence and management of COVID-19, the level of librarians' human relations qualities toward the management of COVID-19's spread in Nigeria, the extent to which HR in academic libraries influences the management of COVID-19's spread in Nigeria towards Knowledge Management, as well as certain challenges confronting academic libraries in the management of COVID-19's spread; and to know if HR in academic libraries influences the management of COVID-19's spread in Nigeria towards Knowledge Management.

Research Questions

- i. How good are librarians' human relations skills when it comes to controlling the spread of COVID-19 in Nigeria?
- ii. What are the obstacles faced by academic libraries in managing COVID-19's spread in Nigeria in order to achieve long-term national development?

Literature Review

Several studies have previously predicted the importance of human relations in organizations and how they have aided in the achievement of organizational goals; and that people are an organization's most valuable asset. An

organization's or institution's success is determined by the people it relates with, as well as how it mobilizes and motivates them. Organizations, like people oriented institutions, exist in a variety of shapes, sizes, and types. The library is one of these organizations where HR is necessary to achieve organizational objectives, particularly at a time when quality information is essential to curb the spread of COVID-19 in order to expand and sustain global economic growth and development.

Human relations are used to prepare for future organizational success as a result of interactions with the organization's internal and external communities (Dankowski, 2018). Close working relationships are formed via healthy social interactions with coworkers. In organizations, such working interactions translate into a dynamic and synergistic environment at the organizational reference desk, often known as 'tag-team reference'.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A descriptive survey was used in this investigation. The study comprised library users of all categories (staff and students) from the University of Medical Sciences, (UNIMED), Ondo, Ondo State, Nnamdi Azikiwe University (UNIZIK), Yaba College of Technology (YABATECH), and FCE-Federal College of Education (Tech.) Asaba Delta State. Using the multivariate random sampling technique, Slovin's algorithm for sample size selection was utilized to select a sample size of 384 respondents. A questionnaire was used to collect information. The whole data received from 351 respondents (91.4 percent return rate) was analyzed using proper descriptive and inferential statistics to answer the study research questions and in testing a hypothesis at 0.05 significant level to arrive at the study conclusions.

Analysis of Data Relating to Research Question 1

Table 1. Perception of the Level of Librarians Human Relations Qualities in the management of COVID-19 Pandemics in Nigeria towards Knowledge Management.

Items		Very Low Level	Low Level	High Level	Very Low Level	Mean	Total
1. Librarian's approach-ability quality helps in accessing required information in libraries towards the management of the spread of COVID-19 in Nigeria	f %	43 7.2	96 28.3	108 33.1	104 31.5	2.310	351 100
2. Librarian's politeness quality helps in accessing and use of required information in libraries towards the management of COVID-19 in Nigeria	f %	48 9.2	111 34.3	113 35.0	79 21.5	2.432	351 100
3. Librarians good communication skills help in the use of required information in libraries towards the management of the spread of COVID-19 in Nigeria	f %	42 6.8	110 33.9	106 32.3	93 27.1	2.478	351 100
4. Librarian's friendliness quality helps in the access and use of required information in libraries towards the management of the spread of COVID-19 in Nigeria	f %	53 11.2	70 17.9	110 33.9	118 37.0	2.201	351 100
5. Librarians good ethical conducts helps in the use of required information in libraries towards the management of the spread of COVID-19 in Nigeria	f %	80 21.9	80 21.9	81 22.3	110 33.9	2.124	351 100
6. Librarians love of knowledge helps in the access and use of required information in libraries towards the management of the spread of COVID-19 in Nigeria	f %	40 6.0	105 31.9	86 24.3	120 37.8	2.340	351 100
7. Librarians unbiased quality enhances the use of required information in libraries towards the management of the spread of COVID-19 in Nigeria.	f %	42 6.8	113 35.1	85 23.9	111 34.2	2.451	351 100
Cluster Mean / Overall Mean (2.333)							

Source: Field Survey 2021

The descriptive analysis of the Level of Librarians Human Relations Qualities in the Management of COVID-19 Pandemics in Nigeria for Knowledge Management is shown in Table 1. When considering the overall mean rating value of 2.333 on table 3 and the criteria mean value placement at 2.50 (cut-off point) based on the four Likert scaling types used in the study, the overall mean rating on the level of Librarians Human Relations Qualities in the management of the COVID-19 pandemic shows it is low. As a result, we can say that the perception of Librarians' Human Relations Qualities in the Management of COVID-19 Pandemics in Nigeria for Knowledge Management is quite low.

Analysis of Data Relating to Research Question 2

Table 2. Factors Confronting Academic Libraries in the Management of the Spread of COVID-19 in Nigeria

S/N	Items		SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Total
1	Low level of human relations practices in libraries	f	132	97	50	73	2.971	351
		%	37.5	27.5	14.3	20.7		100
2	Poor publicity of information resources relating to COVID-19 management.	f	101	116	48	86	2.587	351
		%	30.2	36.3	9.2	24.3		100
3	Information search skills and access problems	f	111	113	79	48	2.614	351
		%	34.3	35.0	21.5	9.2		100
4	Poor Internet connectivity problems in libraries.	f	110	106	93	42	2.834	351
		%	33.9	32.3	27.1	6.8		100
5	Access time in most cases is restricted (Insufficient access time) resulting from poor network and power supply in libraries.	f	110	118	53	70	2.741	351
		%	33.9	37.0	11.2	17.9		100
6	I am not competent in accessing library resources that would enhance my understanding of the existence of COVID-19 in Nigeria.	f	108	114	58	71	2.998	351
		%	33.0	35.5	13.1	18.3		100
7	Many Nigerians disbelief the existence of COVID-19 because of lack of proper information	f	110	117	60	64	3.012	351
		%	33.8	36.7	13.9	15.5		100
8	Unreliable/Irregular Subscription to available Databases relating to COVID-19 Data/information due to Poor/inadequate Funding	f	114	148	39	50	3.212	351
		%	32.3	42.2	11.2	14.3		100
9	Poor/inadequate human relations in advertising/promoting available information resources that could enhance COVID-19 understanding and management among Nigerians by librarians.	f	105	112	50	84	3.102	351
		%	31.9	34.6	10.0	23.5		100
10	Poor health information literacy about the COVID-19 virus among Nigerians	f	105	101	88	57	2.877	351
		%	31.9	30.3	25.1	12.7		100
11	Poor Library development leading to inadequate COVID-19 related information services	f	187	111	45	9	2.988	351
		%	53.2	31.5	12.8	2.5		100
12	I am not aware of the existence of information resources that support the understanding the existence and management of the spread of COVID-19 in libraries.	f	107	115	76	53	2.840	351
		%	32.7	35.9	20.3	11.2		100
13	I encounter low level of support from library personnel (s) due to poor human relations problems in libraries (Poor library staff and user's relationship)	f	77	178	27	70	2.548	351
		%	21.9	50.6	7.6	19.9		100

Cluster Mean / Overall Mean (2.871)

Source: Field Survey 2021

The descriptive analysis on Factors Confronting Academic Libraries in the Management of COVID-19 Spread in Nigeria is shown in Table 2. When evaluating the total mean rating value of 2.871 on table 5 and the study criterion mean value of 2.50, the overall mean rating on Factors Confronting Academic Libraries Management of the Spread of COVID-19 pandemic demonstrates they are very many or very high (cut-off point). According to the findings, health information literacy concerning the COVID-19 virus is low in Nigerian university institutions, and library development is lacking, resulting in insufficient COVID-19-related information services at higher institutions. We find that the challenges academic libraries face in managing the spread of COVID-19 in Nigeria is numerous.

FINDINGS

Generally, the study discovered that the perception of the Level of Librarians Human Relations Qualities exhibited toward the management of COVID-19 Pandemics in Nigeria for Knowledge Management is also very low. As a result, the study discovered that the academic libraries face numerous challenges or factors in managing COVID-19 spread in Nigeria.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In light of the aforementioned, the study concluded that COVID-19, like every other pandemic in history, is here to stay. Because most information coming from libraries is usually free of doubt, the human relations (HR) concept is an important variable in library services that could bring about a change in attitude toward the use of library resources among users, especially towards improving understanding of the existence of COVID-19 among Nigerians. Such HR practices in libraries would aid in the successful management of the fatal virus's spread in the country, as well as the country's long-term economic prosperity.

The study therefore recommends that management should take human relations issues in academic libraries seriously in order to improve information services to users and facilitate a shift in attitude/understanding towards the “win, win, notion” fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, among other things, in order to achieve the country's long-term economic development.

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