

The Directive of Work-From-Home in Wake of COVID-19 Pandemic and the Adoption of E-Learning by LIS Professionals

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ABSTRACT

The adoption of work- from- home system in wake of COVID-19 Pandemic was a strategy to curb the spread of the deadly disease. It became a new normal that was feasible with deployment of Information and Communication Technology state-of-the-art infrastructure to administrative function. Therefore, this study investigated the Directive of Work-From-Home in the wake of COVID-19 Pandemic and the adoption of E-Learning by LIS Professionals in Selected Academic Libraries in Lagos State, Nigeria. The descriptive survey design was adopted for the study, questionnaire was the research instrument. Random sampling techniques was used to select seventy two (72) librarians and library officers from six institutions of higher learning in Lagos State. The response rate were: 14 (19.4%) from Yaba College of Technology, 10 (13.9%) from Lagos State Polytechnic, 14 (19.5%) from Lagos State University, 8 (11.1%) from Celeb University, 19 (26.4) from University of Lagos while 7 (9.7%) from Adeniran Ogunsanya College of Education. The study found out that LIS Professionals in institutions of higher learning in Lagos State possessed low Computer Skills. Though E-Learning was highly accepted by LIS Professionals in Lagos State as a measure for Work-from-Home in the wake of COVID-19 Pandemic. Although, majority of the academic library(s)and LIS professionals were disconnected from their users during the pandemic. The study also found thatthe reasons why majority of LIS professionals in Lagos State are inactive about eLearning is as a result of lack of funds. It was recommended that the school proprietors and library professionals must begin to think differently about eLearning and funds should be made available and manage equitably toward the adoptionof eLearning resources, digitalization of physical resources, database and internet subscriptions and maintenances among others.

Keyword: Directive, E-learning, LIS Professionals, Pandemic, Covid-19.

INTRODUCTION

The outbreak of COVID-19 Pandemic otherwise known as Corona Virus was part of large family of diseases that are common different species of animals, including camels, cattle, cats, bats, monkey among others. SARS-CoV, MERS-CoV and SARS-CoV-2 evolved in bats and have positive-sense RNA genomes of 27.9 kb, 30.1 kb and 29.9 kb (Abdelghany, 2021). They can infect people, cause severe illness and spread from one person to another. The categorizations from United State of America patients are similar to the one that China initially posted, suggesting a likely single, recent emergence of this virus from an animalreservoir (NCDC, 2020).

However, the complete clinical picture with regards to COVID-19 is not fully understood. Reported cases ranged from mild to severe, including illnesses resulting in death. World Health Organization (2020) stated

that a report out of China suggests serious illness occurs in 16% of cases. He added that older people and people with compromised immune systems and certain underlying health conditions such as heart disease, lung disease and diabetes, to name a few, seem to be at greater risk of serious illness.

The novel Corona virus (2019-nCoV, officially known as SARS-CoV-2 or COVID-19) was first reported in December 2019, as a cluster of acute respiratory illness in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China, from where it spread rapidly to over 198 countries and was declared as a global pandemic (World Health Organization, 2020). Against this background, many organizations worldwide directed that workers of their organizations should work from homes equal to World Health Organization (WHO) declaration that the novel corona virus (2019-nCoV) epidemic as a public health emergency of international concern on 30th January 2020 (Makoni, 2020).

The Nigeria government complied with the ruling of the World Health Organization on lock down and social distancing. Nevertheless, the first case of COVID-19 in Nigeria was detected on 27th February 2020, after which a series of immediate interventions were put in place by the Nigeria Government in response to the virus (Adegboye, Adekunle & Gayawan, 2020).

The Governments at the Federal and States level later declared the restriction of public and social gathering. Market places were closed excluding necessary food items and medicine centers (Shehu & Rao, 2020). A total number of 81 COVID-19 Pandemic cases was confirmed by 27th March, 2020 and has escalated to over 2,500 reported cases in the 35 states, including FCT, Abuja as at 4th May, 2020 (NCDC, 2020). As a result, there were total lockdown in commercial cities like Lagos and FCT, Abuja where there are lots of industries and high rate of population density. This was used as a strategy to minimize the spread and the threat of the disease.

Librarians and Information Professionals were not left out of the lockdown, as a result, most of them adopted the online services platforms to provide the needed services to their clientele. Conferences and workshops were hosted online via zoom throughout the period the lockdown by Librarians in Nigeria and around the world to strategies on how to cope with the pandemic and the new normal. There were questions of which technology and what platforms should be adopted.

In the long run, most educational institutions and academic libraries adopted the online learning platforms through social media technologies. With the knowledge of technologies like Whatapps, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Telegram, Google Plus, Yahoo Groups, Zoom, Team View, Skype, Course Management System (CMS) and Learning Management Systems (LMS) among others for interactions, learning and research. As such, some librarians and information professionals were providing services from their homes to their clientele in their comfort zones time and boundary notwithstanding.

This was made possible in some academic library(s) because the dynamic nature of the 21st Century has already positioned most of the libraries in the preliminary level of automation and digitalization of their physical resources. Also, the subscription to online library databases and open access platforms was a step in the right direction. Though information provision and dissemination these days are very challenging and relatively vigorous because of its nature which has made it easy through the use of information communication technologies. Consequently, most 21st Century Librarians has up their games in attending conferences and workshops to keep themselves abreast of the new development in the ICT industry.

The directive of Work-From-Home (WFH), (remote work, distributed teams, and digital nomad) is to ensure that services are statutorily provided to clientele who may be in need of information and services in their various organizations. Not adhering to the directive by the Federal and State Government could stall and affect service rendering organizations including libraries and the entire information professional and even students and researchers academic progress. It is on this backdrop that the researchers investigated the

directive of Work-From-Home in wake of COVID-19 Pandemic and the adoption of eLearning by LIS Professionals in Selected Academic Libraries in Lagos State, Nigeria

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

The main objective of the study is to investigate the directive of Work-From-Home in wake of COVID-19 Pandemic and the adoption of eLearning by LIS Professionals in Selected Academic Libraries in Lagos State, Nigeria

The specific objectives are to:

1. investigate the computer skills possessed by Library and Information Science (LIS) professionals in Selected Academic Library in Lagos State, Nigeria
2. ascertain the acceptance of e-learning as a measure for working from home in the wake of COVID-19 by LIS professionals in Selected Academic Library in Lagos State, Nigeria
3. determine the level of awareness of LIS professionals in the adoption of e-learning and working from home in the wake of COVID-19 in Selected Academic Library in Lagos State, Nigeria
4. ascertain the challenges that affected LIS professionals from implementing e-learning and working from home in the wake of COVID-19 in selected academic library in Lagos State, Nigeria.

RELATED LITERATURE REVIEW

Directive of Work-From-Home in Wake of COVID-19 Pandemic

To work from home refers to works that are performed from 'one's house rather than an office environment (Dey et al., 2020). Working from home become predominant during the Covid-19 pandemic since many countries used it as a physical separation strategy to prevent the outbreak (Dingel & Neiman, 2020).

Abdullah et al. (2020) stated that throughout the last four decades, working from home (WFH) has been referred to by various terms, such as telework, remote work, telecommuting, flexible workplace and e-working. According to Collins & Moschler (2009), telecommuting is a sort of alternative work arrangement in which workers are expected to execute duties ordinarily done in main or central workplaces elsewhere.

The COVID-19 epidemic has had a significant impact on the training and development of the employees since the job is done remotely and supervisory access is limited (Hashim et al., 2020). Educational institutes are also affected by remote learning (Garrote et al., 2020; Purwanto et al., 2020). Academics' work styles have changed as institutions confront an unclear future that may include a return to campus. This "new normal" fundamentally affects conventional job roles and work routines. The utility of technology is crucial to WFH productivity. Proprietors and lecturers were offered teachers technology and software equal to what they use in their on-campus and offices to facilitate the transition and support all facets of academic productivity (Purwanto et al., 2020).

Malaysian National News Agency, (2020) Submitted that Public and private sector employees at management and supervisory levels in areas currently placed under the Conditional Movement Control Order (CMCO), namely Kuala Lumpur, Putrajaya, Selangor, Sabah and Labuan, have been directed to work from home effective October 22nd, 2020. Senior Minister (Security Cluster) Datuk Seri Ismail Yaakob (2020) also said this decision was reached at the National Security Council (MKN) special session on the advice of the Ministry of Health (MoH) to restrict the movement of employees as part of efforts to contain the COVID-19 pandemic.

Also, the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) (2020) instructed that almost 800,000 industrial sector workers from Kuala Lumpur, Putrajaya, Labuan, Selangor and Sabah will be involved with this directive. This same instruction applies to nearly 200,000 civil servants in those states and territories. Datuk Seri Yaakob (2020) opined this at a press conference on the Recovery Movement Control Order (RMCO) development quoting that “This is now a directive and no more a request. Employers have been told to issue letters for their employees to work from home (WFH),” he also said this at a press conference on the Recovery Movement Control Order (RMCO) developments in Malaysia.

According to the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI), (2020) Employers in conditional movement control order (CMCO) areas have to follow the 10am to 2pm timing for when the maximum 10 per cent of their management and supervisory staff are allowed in office throughout the CMCO period, Miti reaffirmed that only 10 per cent of such management and supervisory staff are allowed to be in the office for three days a week, and with four hours only for each day from 10am to 2pm.

Slattery (2021) agreed that when he think about what the future holds, in one word, it’s different. Weeks of sheltering in place and working-from-home (WFH) have done more to transform the future of work than open office spaces and new digital technology. The interesting thing, as he continued, is that if you think about over the past decade as we’ve had five generations in the workforce, a lot of technology innovation and blending those preferences and ways of work, it created an always-on culture, but it really didn’t transform this nine-to-five workday in the office. I think this, the unfortunate circumstances that surround the pandemic may have a bit of a silver lining in that we’ve had to adopt different management frameworks, different ways of interacting with people. I’ve even seen some put together the new digital etiquette for this work-from-home time. And it’s enabled us to really embrace this, which I think will be huge Slattery (2021)

According Redmond & McGuinness (2020) WFH has both negative and positive impacts on a variety of facets of life. Life domains include work-life balance (WLB), life satisfaction and family satisfaction. They were of the view that WLB may be described in a variety of ways. Work-family conflict, work-family balance, family satisfaction and life satisfaction are all concepts that may be utilized. Collins & Moschler (2009), Oakman et al., (2020) added that WFH was detrimental to the realm of life.

Hashim et al., (2020) stated that multiple studies have shown that e-workers fail to manage their work and non-work time effectively, resulting in an increased inclination to overwork. Others noticed that the borders between work and family life were blurred, which may have resulted in excessive work and a decline in WLB. The author added in several aspects, WFH appears to boost the life satisfaction of childless male employees. Additionally, work life balance has been shown to be favorably connected with life and family satisfaction.

ADOPTION OF ELEARNING

Roy and Kumar (2017) explained that e-learning applications and processes are the web-based learning, computer-based learning, virtual classrooms and digital collaboration which contents are delivered through the internet, local intranet/extranet, audio or video tape, satellite TV and CD-ROM. Igwela & Nsirim (2020) postulated that E-learning can take place at homes, schools or anywhere there is network. They added that E-learning requires a professional who instructs the students on what to do, the students who take the instruction and gives feedback and computer network or collaborative technologies which serve as an interface between the instructor and the learner.

Nwaogu and Ozonuwe (2018) conducted a study on assessing that adoption of mobile learning in Nigeria: the library perspective. The population of their study comprised sampled 200, 300 and 400 levels students of

College of Natural and Applied Sciences and College of Social Sciences, Crawford University, Igbesa, Nigeria and they found that mobile technologies enhance learning, they also discovered that smart phones and laptops were the mobile technologies preferred for mobile learning among the students but the adoption of mobile learning in Nigeria educational system was hindered by lots of challenges.

The findings from the study of Nwaogu and Ozonuwe (2018) shows that the application and use of mobile technology for learning and academic purposes in Nigeria educational system is relatively very low. They suggested that educators, curriculum designers/ planners, librarians etc, should promote the use of mobile technology for rendering and extending academic services,

According to Nwangwu and Obi (2014), multimedia instructional resources assist instructors in conveying message easily from the comfort of their homes to students and facilitate clear understanding of concepts as well as attracting students' interest and attention throughout the duration of instructional activity.

METHODOLOGY

The descriptive survey design was employed for the study and data collection instrument was questionnaire. The population of the study consist of sampled librarians and library officers from six institutions of higher learning in Lagos State, Nigeria. These were Yaba College of Technology, Lagos State Polytechnic, University of Lagos, Lagos State University, Celeb University and Adeniran Ogunsanya College of Education. Random sampling techniques was used to select seventy two (72) academic librarians and library officers from the institutions which formed the population of this study.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

Out of eighty (80) copies of questionnaires administered on respondents, seventy two (72) were retrieved and found useful for the study.

Table 1: Name of Institutions and response rate

Institutions	Frequency	%
Yaba College of Technology	14	19.4
Lagos State Polytechnic	10	13.9
Lagos State University	14	19.4
Celeb University	8	11.1
University of Lagos	19	26.4
Adeniran Ogunsanya College of Education	7	9.7
Total	72	100.0

Out of the 72 respondents, 14 (19.4%) were from Yaba College of Technology, 10 (13.9%) were from Lagos State Polytechnic, 14 (19.5%) were from Lagos State University, 8 (11.1%) were from Celeb University, 19 (26.4) were from University of Lagos while 7 (9.7%) were from Adeniran Ogunsanya College of Education.

Table 2: Demographic Information

Religion	Christianity	52	72.2
	Islam	19	26.4
	Others	1	1.4
	Total	72	100.0

Age range	21-30	2	2.8
	31-40	9	12.5
	41-50	31	43.1
	50 & above	30	31.7
	Total	72	100.0
Marital status	Single	14	19.4
	Married	50	69.4
	Widow/ widower	5	6.9
	Separated	3	4.2
	Total	72	100.0

The above table shows that 52 (72.2%) of the respondents were Christians, 19 (26.4%) were Muslims while 1(1.4%) practices other religion. It as well shows that majority of the respondents were between the ages of 41-50 (43.1%) and 51 and above 30 (31.7%). Also, the table shows that 50 (69.4%) were married, 14 (19.4%) were single while 5 (6.9%) were either widows or widowers and 3 (4.2%) were separated.

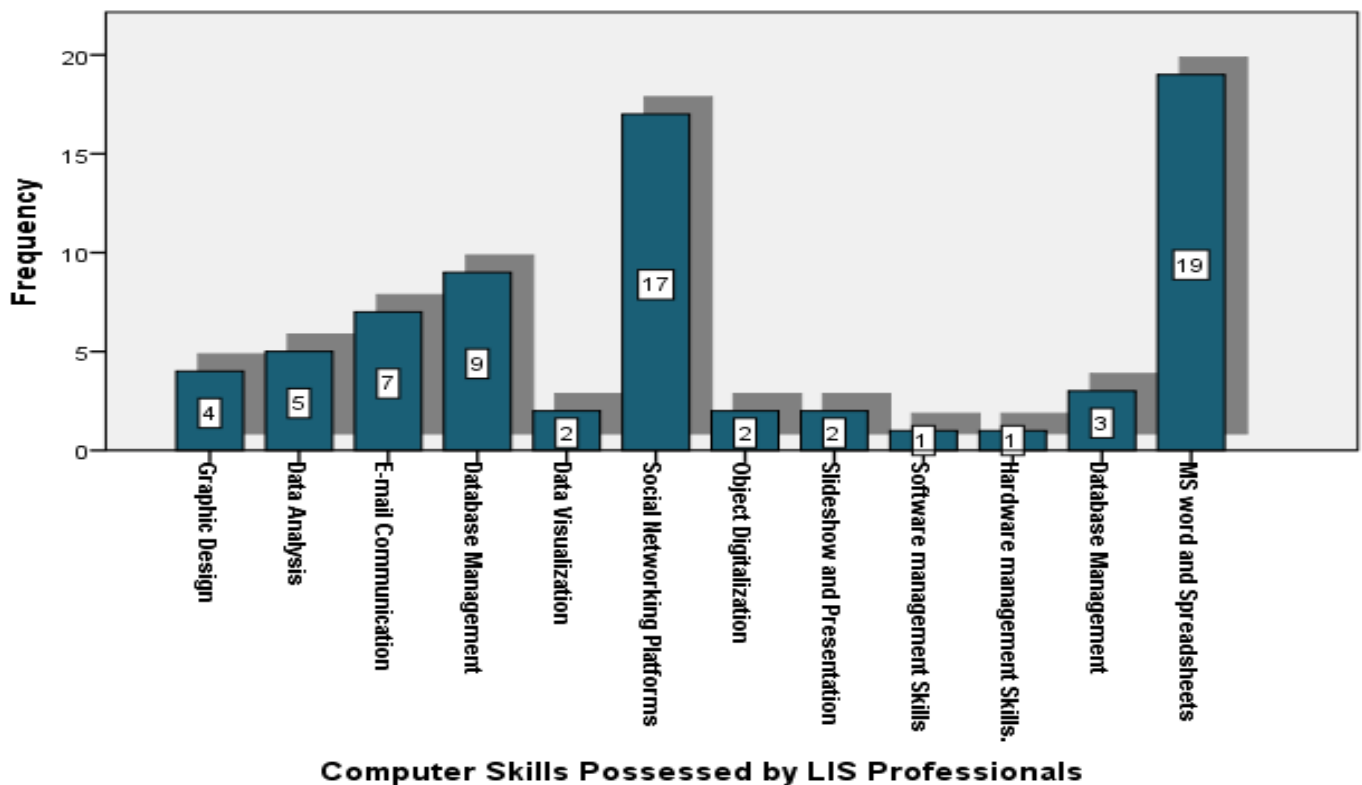


Fig 1: Computer skills possessed by LIS Professionals

The above chart indicates that majority of the respondents were more skilled on MS word and Spreadsheet 19 (26.39%), followed by Social Networking Platforms 17 (23.61%) while Software Management Skills and Hardware Management Skills were 1 (1.39%) respectively. This implies that LIS Professionals in institutions of higher learnings in Lagos State Possess low Computer Skills.

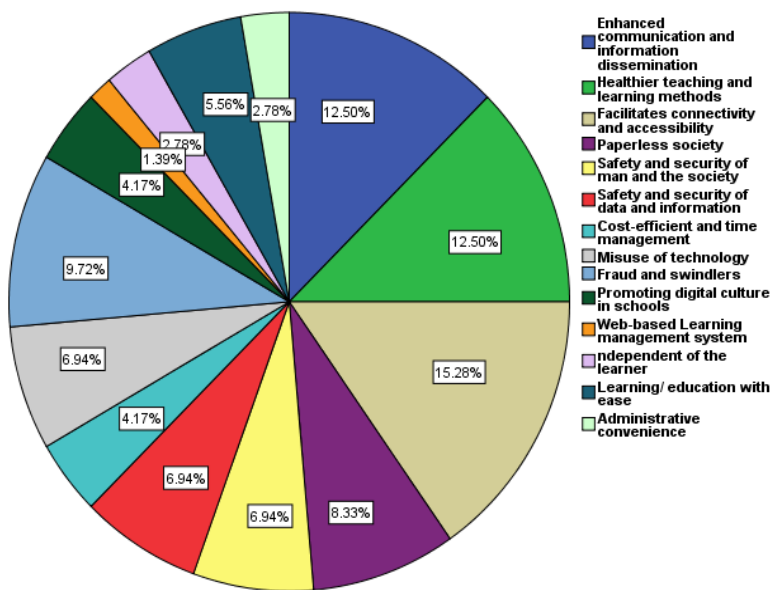


Fig. 2. Acceptance of E-Learning as a Measure for Work-from-Home in the wake of COVID-19 Pandemic.

The above chart indicates that majority of LIS professional in Lagos State accepted eLearning because it facilitates connectivity and accessibility 11 (15.28%), followed by it enhance communication and information dissemination 9 (12.50%) and healthier teaching and learning methods 9 (12.50%). This implies that E-Learning was highly accepted by LIS Professionals in institutions of higher learning in Lagos State as a measure for Work-from-Home in the wake of COVID-19 Pandemic.

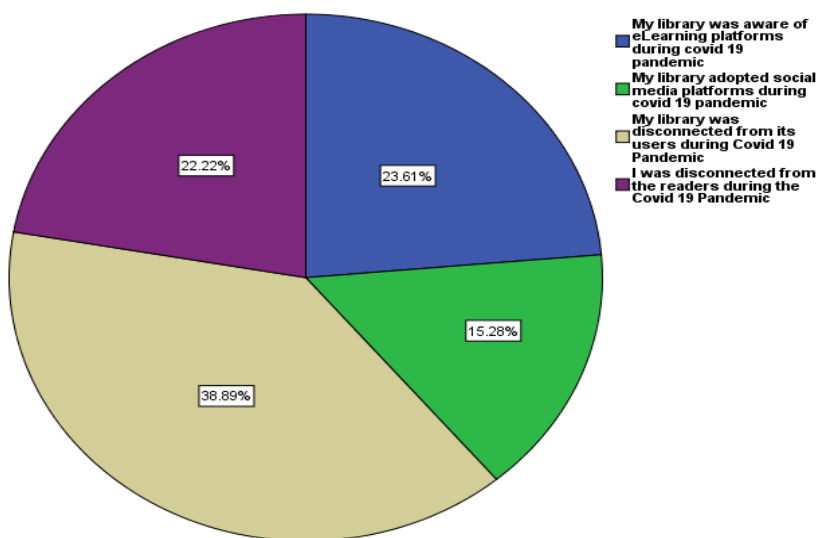


Fig. 3: Level of awareness and adoption of eLearning platforms by LIS professionals in the wake of COVID-19 Pandemic.

The above chart indicates that majority of the academic library(s) were disconnected from their users during the COVID19 Pandemic 28 (38.89%). 17 (23.61%) of the respondents were aware of eLearning platforms. 16(22.22%) of the LIS professionals agreed that they were disconnected from the readers while 11 (15.28%) agreed that their library adopted social media platforms. This implies that majority of the academic library(s) and LIS professionals in Lagos State were disconnected from their users during the directive of work-from-home in the wake of COVID 19 pandemic.

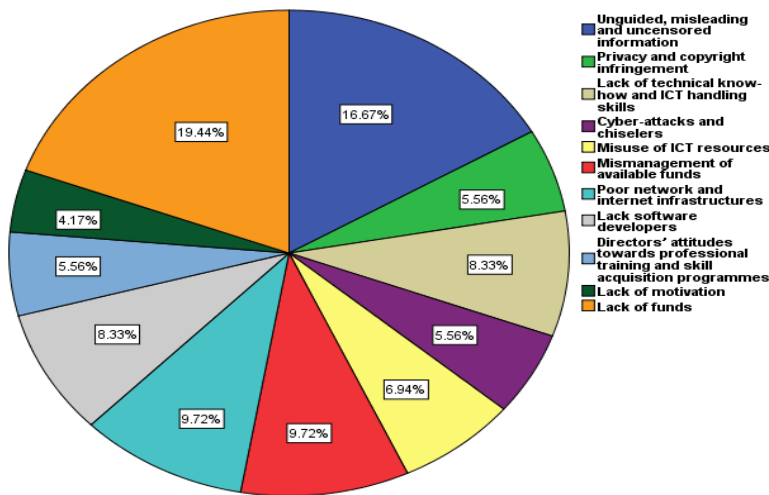


Fig. 4: Challenges against the implementing E-Learning in the Wake of Work from Home COVID-19 Directives

The above chart indicates that the major challenge against the implementation of eLearning by LIS professional **in the wake of Work-from-Home COVID-19 Directives in Lagos State** was Lack of funds 14 (19.4), unguided, misleading and uncensored information 12 (16.7%), mismanagement of available funds and poor network and internet infrastructures were 7 (9.7%) respectively. This implies that the reasons why majority of LIS professionals in Lagos State are inactive about eLearning is as a result of lack of funds.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

It was found that:

1. LIS Professionals in institutions of higher learning in Lagos State possess low Computer Skills.
2. E-Learning was highly accepted by LIS Professionals in institutions of higher learning in Lagos State as a measure for Work-from-Home in the wake of COVID-19 Pandemic.
3. Majority of the academic library(s) and LIS professionals in Lagos State were disconnected from their users during the directive of work-from-home in the wake of COVID 19 pandemic.
4. The reasons why majority LIS professionals in Lagos State are inactive about eLearning is as a result of lack of funds.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Working-From-Home was the only indisputable means of organizational survival during the COVID-19 pandemic but in the long run, many employees finds it challenging to separate between professional routines and personal activities at home. The effect of COVID-19 pandemic and the directive of global lockdown is still negating most individuals and organizations today, especially in the educational sectors and most learners are suffering personally, psychologically and economically.

However, to ensure and maintain a sustainable educational system in institutions of higher learning in Lagos State, it is recommended that the school proprietors and library professionals must begin to think differently about eLearning. Funds should be made available and manage equitably toward the adoption of eLearning resources, digitalization of physical resources, database and internet subscriptions and maintenances.

Conclusively, online and mobile learning should be encouraged as it is the only way to remain relevant in the global information age. Library professionals should strive to use all the mobile apps and social media interactive platforms to the advantage of their profession. They should be encouraged to acquire basic skills on computer software and hardware components.

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