

Factors Affecting Covid 19 Information Needs of Teachers in Oguta, LGA Imo State, Nigeria

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Abstract -The general purpose of this study is to investigate the factors affecting Covid 19 information needs of teachers in Oguta, LGA Imo State, Nigeria. The survey research design was used for this study using questionnaire as an instrument for data collection. This study covered the entire population of 178. Out of these, 155 copies of the questionnaire representing 87.1% were duly completed and returned for analysis. The findings this study showed that teachers need Covid 19 information to keep them abreast of new developments in the society. The findings also showed that age, gender, academic discipline and rank significantly affects Covid 19 information needs of teachers in Oguta LGA. Imo State, Nigeria. This study recommended that there should be budgetary allocation by the government for the development of school libraries in the state. If the money is made available to the school libraries, they will be able to buy as many current books and journals as expected. The Internet services as an area in the school libraries should be adequately equipped for active utilization by the teachers in meeting their information needs. This study also recommended that teachers should be allowed to participate in selection of school library materials for acquisition.

Key Words: Covid 19, Information Needs, Challenges, Teachers, Nigeria.

Introduction

Information is news or knowledge communicated through the spoken or written word, facts or data. It can also mean knowledge gathered through reading or through instructions. Information exists as an idea in people, data in computer files or in various other forms. These ideas are conveyed and used for the achievement of specific purposes. Information is messages transmitted orally or written or as data presented in a document (Ebbighausen,

2011). According to Kulcu (2008), information is the meaningful organization of data and knowledge integrated within a more extensive information store, which can be applied or used.

However, information must possess an intrinsic quality of utility to qualify for information. Thus, the value or meaning attached to information being that it must serve a purpose. To be informative, there must be that quality or ability to reduce uncertainty and doubt and at the same time increase the knowledge of the user before the use or receipt of the information. To achieve this, information must be accurate, timely, easy to access and relevant to the user. Information must improve and increase the state of knowledge of the user.

Imeremba (2007) sees information as processed data, structured to be of value in planning, decision-making, and execution of projects or monitoring of programmes and evaluation of public and private sectors' programmes of a given nature. The author remarks that information may be communicated through interpersonal channels and the sources may be documents or any other material. Information may be stored in physical systems organized to provide textual, numerical, sound or image. Information could mean any data that have been processed and shaped into a form that is meaningful and use full for human beings. It is used to arrive at a particular decision and also used in making sound decisions for the success of any organization Information is a highly priced resource in an organization and nothing else is as universal or versatile as information. According to Unagha (2011), information reduces uncertainty, aid to monitoring and control, a means of communication, as a memory supplement and an aid to simplification.

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). The disease was first identified in December 2019 in Wuhan, the capital of China's Hubei province, and has since spread globally, resulting in the ongoing 2019–20 coronavirus pandemic. Common symptoms include fever, cough, fatigue, shortness of breath, and loss of smell. While the majority of cases result in mild symptoms, some progress to viral pneumonia, multi-organ failure, or cytokine storm. The time from exposure to onset of symptoms is typically around five days but may range from two to fourteen days. The virus is primarily spread between people during close contact, often via small droplets produced by coughing, sneezing, or talking. The droplets usually fall to the ground or onto surfaces rather than remaining in the air over long distances. People may also become infected by touching a contaminated surface and then touching their face. On surfaces, the amount of virus declines over time until it is insufficient to remain infectious, but it may be detected for hours or days. It is most contagious during the first three days after the onset of symptoms, although spread may be possible before symptoms appear and in later stages of the disease. The standard method of diagnosis is by real-time reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction (rRT-PCR) from a nasopharyngeal swab. Chest CT imaging may also be helpful for diagnosis in individuals where there is a high suspicion of infection based on symptoms and risk factors; however, guidelines do not recommend using it for routine screening.

Recommended measures to prevent infection include frequent hand washing, maintaining physical distance from others (especially from those with symptoms), covering coughs, and keeping unwashed hands away from the face. In addition, the use of a face covering is recommended for those who suspect they have the virus and their caregivers. Recommendations for face covering use by the general public vary, with some authorities recommending against their use, some recommending their use, and others requiring their

use. Currently, there is not enough evidence for or against the use of masks (medical or other) in healthy individuals in the wider community.

Every human being no matter his level of education sophistication, affluence and location needs and selects information from the environment which he applies to the solution of a problem or satisfaction of a want as the case may be (Uhegbu, 2007). In the light of the above background, this study therefore, seeks to investigate the factors affecting Covid 19 information needs of teachers in Oguta, LGA Imo State, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions are formulated to guide the study.

- What are the Covid 19 information needs of teachers in Oguta LGA, Imo State Nigeria?
- What are the factors affecting Covid 19 information needs of teachers in Oguta LGA, Imo State Nigeria?
- What are the possible solutions to the factors affecting Covid 19 information needs of teachers in Oguta LGA, Imo State Nigeria?

Literature Review

According to Owalebe, Jimoh and Okpoh (2010), information is needed because it affects people's lives. People need information to obtain answers to specific question. It is a gap in person's knowledge, when experienced at the conscious level as a question, give rise to a search for an answer. Tackie and Adams (2007) investigated artists and art historians teaching in five liberal arts colleges and three universities, results showed that they need information for teaching. According to Opaleke (2013), information needs stem from a vague awareness of something missing and as culminating in locating information that contributes to understanding and meaning. To Olowonefa and Musa (2011), information need is a requirement that drives people to seek information. Information needs stimulates from a lack in knowledge, data or inadequacy to satisfy a goal or objective. Line (1974) opines that information needs is generally seen as describing what an individual ought to have to his or her work. He expresses that information needs is the information a user ought to have. Line acknowledges that several angles from which information needs can be considered abound and they include subject contents, level of the users (public) and the processing of resources of information. This means that information needs of teachers can be effectively provided when you have the knowledge of the subject contents, the level of teachers who will make use of information as well as how best to process the source of information for easy accessibility to the teachers.

According to Dinet (2016), several variables affect information seeking behavior of an individual. Some of them include contextual variables, resources variables, and individual's variables. Emotions form a part of the individual variables that play a key role in the determination of information seeking behaviour of an individual. Matteson (2017) investigated the correlation between anxiety and performance of learners in information search tasks, the role emotional factors on information retrieval and literacy. The author observed that the psychodynamics of individual's information behavior depend on their personality and social competence. Consequently, the emotional status of the individuals can contribute towards several outcomes such as search process problems, information adjustment problems, and personal information. The process of identifying information need,

locating the relevant information, making sense of the information, and using the information is associated to a plethora of emotions.

An empirical study conducted on undergraduate students identified a set of micro and macro level events that resulted in either negative or positive emotions. The events causing emotions such as sadness, fear, alienation, joy, and surprise affected the teacher's ability of searching for information and completing their assignments. A parallel study evaluated the socio-emotional development of high school students and their information literacy competence. The study found that emotional resilience and socio-emotional maturity affected the information literacy competence of the students (Lisa 2017).

According to Matteson (2017), emotional intelligence entails the ability of an individual to monitor their emotions and feelings while discriminating them and using the information to guide one's actions. The author further states that emotional intelligence involves the perception of emotions, use of the emotions to facilitate thinking, understanding the emotions, and managing the emotions. According to the authors, individuals portray varying capability of processing information based on their emotional nature. Kuhlthau (2017) highlights the specific emotions associated with the process of search for information. According to the author, uncertainty is the principle emotions for information seeking. The author defines uncertainty as the cognitive state that causes effective symptoms such as lack of confidence and anxiety. Anxiety and uncertainty characterize the initial phases of the process of searching for information. The effective indications of uncertainty, confusion lead to vague and imprecise thoughts regarding a problem or topic.

However, a shift to focused knowledge leads to a decline in uncertainty and increase in confidence. Kuhlthau (2017) asserts that the uncertainty associated with a gap in meaning, limited construct or lack of understanding initiates the information seeking process. Complex situations associated with information search were linked to uncertainty. Heinstorm (2005) relates the effect of emotions on information seeking behavior to personality traits. The author uses the five factors model to explain the five main emotional factors that affect high levels of neuroticism indicate a high probability of experiencing negative emotions while low levels of neuroticism indicate emotional stability. Neuroticism heightens the probability of developing emotions such as anxiety. Highly neurotic individuals have a high likelihood of becoming sad, temperamental, unstable and worried. The vagueness of information frustrates a highly neurotic person during the initial search. Essentially, neuroticism leads to nervousness and negative affectivity during the search for information.

Methodology

The descriptive survey research design was used for this study using questionnaire as an instrument for data collection. The questionnaire was titled "factors affecting Covid 19 information needs of teachers' Questionnaire" (**FACINTQ**). A total of 178 copies of the questionnaire were distributed to respondents. Out of these, 155 copies of the questionnaire representing 87.1% were duly completed and returned for analysis. No sample size was drawn from the population, this is because the population of the study is small and accessible. The census method was used to ensure that opinions of all the teachers in Oguta LGA, Imo State, Nigeria were captured for the study.

Analysis

Research Question 1:What are the Covid 19 information needs of teachers in Oguta LGA, Imo State Nigeria?

Table 1: Mean Values of Covid 19 Information Needs of Teachers in Oguta LGA, Imo State Nigeria

Covid 19 Information Needs of Teachers	SA	A	D	SD	X
I need Covid 19 information for examination questions	86	35	26	8	3,3
I need Covid 19 information for research work	67	72	9	7	3.3
I do not need Covid 19 information for recreational purposes	72	39	33	11	3.1
I do not need Covid 19 information for current affairs	24	18	68	45	2.1
I need Covid 19 information for self development such as current affairs, general awareness and personal health	63	45	25	22	3,0
Significant mean value = 3.0					

Table 1 shows the mean responses on Covid 19 information needs of teachers in Oguta LGA, Imo State, Nigeria. Results revealed that I need Covid 19 information for examination questions (X=3.3), I need Covid 19 information for research work (X=3.3), I do not need Covid 19 information for recreational purposes (X=3.1), I do not need Covid 19 information for current affairs (X=2.1) and I need Covid 19 information for self development such as current affairs, general awareness and personal health (X=3.0). The grand mean of 3.0 shows that teachers in Oguta LGA, Imo State, Nigeria need Covid 19 information to keep them abreast of new developments.

Research Question 2: What are the factors affecting Covid 19 information needs of teachers in Oguta LGA, Imo State Nigeria?

Table 2: Mean Values of the Factors Affecting Covid 19 Information Needs of Teachers in Oguta LGA, Imo State Nigeria

Factors that Affect Covid Information Needs Teacher	SA	A	D	SD	X
My age affects my Covid 19 information needs	86	43	16	8	3.4
My gender does not give me the opportunity to search Covid 19 information I need	26	13	62	54	2.1
The curriculum of my academic discipline affects my Covid 19 information needs	75	52	17	11	3.2
My rank does not affect my Covid 19 information needs	86	45	17	7	3.4
My research areas affect my Covid 19 information needs	67	48	35	5	3.1
Significant mean value = 3.0					

Based on the significant mean value of 3.0 as shown on Table 2, my age affects my Covid 19 information needs (X=3.4), my gender does not give me the opportunity to search Covid 19 information I need (X=2.1), the curriculum of my academic discipline affects my Covid 19 information needs (X=3.2), and my rank does not affect my Covid 19 information needs (X=3.4). However my research areas affect my Covid 19 information needs have mean value of 3.1. It can be seen from the analysis that age, gender, academic discipline and rank significantly affects Covid 19 information needs of teachers in Oguta LGA. Imo State, Nigeria.

Research Question 3: What are the possible solutions to the factors affecting Covid 19 information needs of teachers in Oguta LGA, Imo State, Nigeria?

Table 3: Mean Values of the Possible Solutions Affecting Covid 19 Information Needs of Teachers in Oguta LGA, Imo State, Nigeria

Suggestions for Improvement	SA	A	D	SD	X
More current and relevant journals in the library attracts my Covid 19 information search	84	56	8	7	3.4
More current and updated textbooks attracts my Covid 19 information search	72	65	13	5	3.3
Upgrading on Internet services attracts my Covid 19 information search	60	42	31	22	2.9
Provision of study spaces in the cyber cafe does not attracts my Covid 19 information search	36	22	52	45	2.3
Information should be package in a known language	64	47	33	11	3.1
Significant mean value = 3.0					

Table 3 shows the mean responses on the possible solutions to the factors affecting Covid 19 information needs of teachers in Oguta LGA, Imo State, Nigeria. More current and relevant journals in the library attracts my Covid 19 information search ($X=3.4$), more current and updated textbooks attracts my Covid 19 information search ($X=3.3$), upgrading on Internet services attracts my Covid 19 information search ($X=2.9$), provision of study spaces in the cyber cafe does not attracts my Covid 19 information search ($X=2.3$), and information should be package in a known language ($X=3.1$). Generally, with the significant mean of 3.0, evidence from the analysis shows there are possible solutions to the factors affecting Covid 19 information needs of teachers in Oguta LGA, Imo State.

Findings

Finding on Table 1 revealed that teachers need Covid 19 information to keep them abreast of new developments in the society. The findings are in line with Tackie and Adams (2007) who investigated artists and art historians teaching in five liberal arts colleges and three universities, results showed that they need information for teaching. Findings as shown on Table 2 revealed that there are several factors affecting Covid 19 information needs of teachers in Oguta LGA, Imo State. These factors are but not limited to age and rank. The findings are in line with (Matteson, 2017) who investigated the correlation between anxiety and performance of learners in information search tasks, the role emotional factors on information retrieval and literacy. The author observed that the psychodynamics of individual's information behaviour depends on their personality and social competence. Consequently, the emotional status of the individuals can contribute towards several outcomes such as search process problems, information adjustment problems, and personal information. Findings also revealed that more current and relevant journals in the library attracts my Covid 19 information search, information should be package in a known language and among others were among the possible solutions,

Conclusion and Recommendations

Teachers who are very active in their duties are happy when they are able to access new knowledge. The new knowledge keeps them abreast of new developments in their fields of study and subsequently brings about quality teaching and research. Teachers in this study

need current and quality information resources to meet their information needs, which are mainly teaching and research. It is therefore recommended as follows:

- The recommended that there should be budgetary allocation by the government for the development of school libraries in the state. If the money is made available to the school libraries, they will be able to buy as many current books and journals as expected. The Internet services as an area in the school library should be adequately equipped for active utilization by the teachers in meeting their information needs.
- The school library should give more attention to the provision of more current journals, updated textbooks and electronic sources of information.
- There should be provided a separate department/section for the teachers. This will show a good sign of academic support on the part of the school library.
- Teachers should be allowed to participate in selection of school library materials for acquisition.

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