

**USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA TOOLS FOR E-LEARNING DURING THE COVID 19 LOCKDOWN:  
A CASE OF LIBRARY EDUCATORS IN ANAMBRA STATE**

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**ABSTRACT**

*The research work examined the use of Social Media Tools for e-learning during the Covid 19 lockdown: A case of Library Educators in Anambra State. The study has 3 research questions. The study adopted descriptive survey research design. A sample population of 30 library educators was drawn from tertiary institutions from Anambra State. Questionnaire was used to collect data. Data collected were analyzed using mean scores. The study found that the social media tools library educators utilize for e-learning during Covid-19 lockdown in Anambra State were Zoom and Google Meet. The problems in library educators' use of social media tools for e-learning during Covid-19 lockdown in Anambra state were inadequate funding, insufficiency of ICT infrastructure, erratic power supply, high cost of social media tools, high cost of data to use social media tools, and poor support of administrators towards the adoption of social media tools for e-learning. The solutions to the problems of library educators' use of social media tools for e-learning in Anambra State were good funding, sufficiency of ICT infrastructure, subsidized cost of social media tools, and adequate technical support. The research concluded that social media tools have been so helpful and have served as a reliable platform for e-learning and information sharing to library educators during Covid-19 lockdown. The study recommended that library educators need to be skilled in the use of various social media e-learning platforms such as Facebook, Whatsapp, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, Library thing, etc.*

**Keywords: Library educators, Social media tools, e-learning, Covid-19 lockdown**

**Introduction**

Since late 2019, Coronavirus (Covid 19) has been declared a deadly disease. From the time of its outbreak in the city of Wuhan, China, it has spread rapidly to almost all countries across the world (Agim, Oraekwe, Chivuzo & Emenari, 2020). As part of the government effort in battling the pandemic and its

spreading, social distancing, self-quarantine, isolation, and lockdown have become acceptable approaches to curtail the spread of Covid-19 virus. The governments of most countries have ordered total lockdown in all major sectors of their economy. This lockdown has prompted everyone mostly students to stay at homes and this has activated the call for online education and electronic learning (e-learning)

E-learning is an online system of learning. It offers and shares materials in all kinds of formats such as e-mails, slideshows, videos, PDFs, and word documents (Raheem & Khan, 2020). It is also enabled when conducting webinars (live online class), communication with teachers via message and chat forum. With a view of this lockdown, e-learning is being provided through connected networks such as social media.

The term 'social media' emerged due to enormous development of Web 2.0 technology. It has become an integral part of everyday life of average internet users (Voss and Kumar, 2013), regardless of what devices they use to access the internet. Examples of social media tools include the Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, Youtube, Blogs, Wikis, LinkedIn, WhatsApp, Flickr, Orkut among others. These social media tools are currently applied in education and learning by librarians to quicken education and material access for enhanced learning. According to Hamade (2013) the popularity and usage of these social media, especially among lecturers on students and young populations, it has rapidly increased performance.

The utilization of social media tools by library educators for e-learning in this lockdown period has provided an easy means for delivering of learning instructions and resources to students in tertiary institutions. In this view, many library educators have started using social media tools for e-learning activities since this lockdown period. Regrettably, the library educators' utilization of these social media tools have been affected by poor skill set of some library educators, low ICT policy and use of social media tools, poor funding to acquire these social media tools, lack of ICT tools and social media applications as well as inability of some students or library educators to own internet enabled phone to aid their use of these social media tools. These problems are what may have hindered some library educators from moving and adapting to this new normal. Therefore, this research will investigate the use of Social Media Tools for e-learning during the Covid 19 lockdown: A case of Library Educators in Anambra State. As part of its objectives, the study will examine the social media tools used by library educators during Covid-19 lockdown; the problems in library educators' use of social media tools for e-learning; the solutions to the problems in the library educators' use of social media tools for e-learning.

### **Literature Review**

Social media are seen as group of online and electronic tools such as blogs, social networking sites, and video-sharing sites. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) sees social media as a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user generated content. Social media are networked information services, designed to support in depth social interaction, community formation, collaborative opportunities and collaborative work (Bruns & Bahnisch cited in Chhiato, 2018). Swaminathan, Harish & Cherian (2013) divided social media into blogs, networking sites (e.g. Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter) and community websites (e.g. Wikipedia and YouTube). These social media tools can enhance e-learning

E-learning is seen as the delivery of learning instructions through the use of computer devices or social networks. E-Learning can be defined as the use of computer and internet technologies to deliver a broad array of solution to enable learning and improve performance (Ghirardini, 2011). E-learning is defined as "learning experiences in synchronous or asynchronous environments using different devices (e.g., mobile phones, laptops, etc.) with internet access. E-learning is a system of computer based learning; web- based learning, virtual education opportunities and digital collaboration to facilitate learning instructions (Raheem & Khan, 2020). In these environments, students can be anywhere (independent) to learn and interact with instructors and other students" (Singh & Thurman, 2019). E-learning can be termed as a tool that can make the teaching-learning process more student-centered, more innovative, and even more flexible if social media tools are used.

Social media tools such as Facebook, Whatsapp, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, Pinterest, Podcasts, Flickr and blogs, Instant Messaging (IM), Rich Site Summary (RSS), Zoom, GoogleMeet, Library thing, Ning, etc. as a web-based channel of information dissemination and learning is rapidly permeating all aspects

of education. These social media tools are rapidly becoming the most preferred means of establishing educational, social/professional networks among library educators, while it is also being used to progress e-learning and communicate with students and other remote users particularly in the academic community. In the educational sector, particularly in universities, and colleges, social media tools have served as the platform for e-learning. This is mostly suited for individuals to interact, disseminate, and share information among themselves (Sahu, 2013). Library educators and other academic staff in tertiary institutions are now realizing the potentials of social media such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, Skype, and Google+, and are making efforts to integrate them into an e-learning tool.

A study by Atuloma and Onuoha (2011) revealed that Facebook is the most commonly available site used by academics. Blogs and wikis are ideal sources for e-learning and to disseminate news and information. Blogs for instance are tools to reach out to students. There are libraries and library educators who use Twitter to connect themselves with important information sources (Milstein, 2009). These social media tools help establish a cordial e-learning relationship with learners while attracting them to acquiring relevant social media skills. Social media tools have increased the e-learning activities as library educators and other academic staff in tertiary institutions use most especially Facebook and Twitter to connect, communicate as well as collaborate with students in an innovative way. Ezeani and Igwesi (2012) add that social media tools sites are two way transparent communications that encourage a feedback mechanism; connecting people with shared interest. Social media tools are not only being available for promoting e-learning programs but they are also used for enhancing learning skills among students. To enhance e-learning form academic staff in tertiary institutions available platforms such as meebo and twitter has been developed for students to use and to ask questions in “real time and this is assisting in promoting learning.

Due to the outbreak of Covid 19 and the imposition of lockdown, tertiary institutions have long started considering the relevance of social media in educational service delivery. This they can achieve by providing necessary support that will improve the usage of social media tools for e-learning. This can enhance a quick and fast online communication which afforded library educators and other academic staff in tertiary institutions to be in tandem with their students in this lockdown period. From the various studies conducted in both the developed and developing nations of the world, it is apparent that social media are being used as platform of information delivery (Harinarayana & Kaju, cited in Otulugbu, 2019). Therefore, the availability of social media tools in tertiary institutions act as e-learning resource while supporting collaboration between students and teaching staff.

As a result of the development of social media tools and applications for e-learning, library educators are supposed to apply Facebook and other social networks in providing e-learning activities that will aid new learning pedagogy for effective engagement and learning without physical contact. Library educators can use e-learning methods to reach learners in rural and remote areas. Utilization of Twitter or Facebook to teach a group of people is considered to be a relatively cheaper mode of education in terms of the lower cost of transportation, accommodation, and the overall cost of institution-based learning. Since rapid developments in technology have made distance education easy (McBrien, Cheng & Jones, 2009), library educators’ can use these social media tools for e-learning which provides easy accessibility where a learner can schedule or plan their time for completion of courses available online. The library educators’ adoption of these e-learning methodologies gives rise to blended learning and flipped classrooms; and this type of learning environment can increase the learning potential of the students. This will provide the students an opportunity to learn at their own pace, anytime and anywhere, thereby developing new skills in the process leading to life-long learning.

It is worthy of note that the use of social media and social networking applications such as Zoom, GoogleMeet, Group discussion using Facebook Live, Twitter, Whatsapp, Instagram among others can serve as a useful communication and teaching tool for library educators in developing countries. If the situation persists and lockdown is extending, using social media tools for e-learning activities will be a better option. Library educators’ utilization of the social media tools and e-learning applications will surely improve the students to get online skills that will enhance their virtual learning methods and on other end librarians library educators can do comprehensive assessments as well using such platforms

Notwithstanding the huge advantages of social media tools towards e-learning activities, there have been a number of issues that have affected their application and usage for e-learning mostly during this lockdown period. Most library educators lack proper awareness in the use of social media tools for e-learning activities. They are not well knowledgeable about its advantages hence their poor application. Also, there is a low bandwidth which is peculiar to developing countries when using these social media tools for e-learning. Most of the public universities lack a proper virtual education system and there is non-availability of recorded virtual lectures in most universities. There is a lack of proper virtual education set-up with trained library educators and it has proved to be very challenging for students to access recorded/live lectures via e-learning platforms. Most library educators lack the skills in the use of computers facilities and social media tools and this has posed a challenge for them to adopt e-learning methods. These issues are part of the reasons why there is a low-level preparedness among the students concerning the usage of Learning Management Systems (Parkes, Stein & Reading, 2014) and other e-learning process

As part of efforts to enhance the utilization of social media tools for e-learning by library educators, there is the need to sponsor them for new training on social media tools and e-learning processes. This will increase their skills in the use of social media tools for e-learning. There is need to fix the technical difficulties through prerecording video lectures, testing the content, and always keeping Plan B ready so that the teaching-learning process cannot be hampered (Yekini, Adigun, Ojo & Akinwale, 2020). Online courses should be made dynamic, interesting, and interactive so as to motivate and bring out the interest of the students in complying with this novel innovative approach to learn in this lockdown period. Library educators should make the e-learning process to be well structured so that students can easily adapt to this learning environment. Facebook, Whatsaap and Twitter should be well applied in support with various group forums such as zoom, webinar to communicate with students. Students should be well trained on the use of social media tools for e-learning activities so as to enable them practice their skills. Also, the issue of network should be enhanced and improved so that logging process and connection will not hinder the library educators from reaching the target audience who may find it difficult to connect

### **Methodology**

The study adopted descriptive survey research design. Using the purposive sampling technique, a sample population of 30 library educators was drawn from Anambra State. Questionnaire was used to collect data. A total of 30 copies of the instruments were distributed, returned and found usable. Data collected were analyzed using mean scores. The instrument was structured on a four point scale. The decision rule for the mean score is 2.50.

**Analysis of Findings**

**Table 1: Mean ratings on the available social media tools library educators utilize for e-learning during Covid-19 lockdown in Anambra State**

S/NO	Available social media tools library educators use for e-learning during Covid-19 lockdown	Mean	Decision
1	Facebook	2.21	Disagree
2	Whatsapp	2.01	Disagree
3	Twitter	2.09	Disagree
4	Instagram	2.42	Disagree
5	YouTube	2.34	Disagree
6	GoogleMeet	3.03	Agree
7	Zoom	3.11	Agree
8	Flickr	2.61	Disagree
9	Instant Messaging	2.12	Disagree
10	Blogs	2.05	Disagree
11	Rich Site Summary (RSS)	2.22	Disagree
12	Library thing	2.41	Disagree
13	Ning	2.01	Disagree

In Table 1, the available social media tools library educators utilize for e-learning during Covid-19 lockdown in Anambra State are Zoom and Google Meet with a mean score above 2.50. However, the library educators do not utilize Facebook, Whatsapp, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, Pinterest, Podcasts, Flickr, blogs, Instant Messaging (IM), Rich Site Summary (RSS), Library thing, and Ning for e-learning during the Covid-19 lockdown

**Table 2: Mean ratings on the problems in library educators' use of social media tools for e-learning in Anambra State**

S/NO	Problems in library educators' use of social media tools for e-learning	Mean	Decision
1	Inadequate funding to procure social media tools for e-learning	3.14	Agree
2	Insufficiency of ICT infrastructure	2.82	Agree
3	Poor confidence of library educators in the use of social media tools	2.05	Disagree
4	Erratic power supply	3.12	Agree
5	Poor maintenance culture	2.10	Disagree
6	High cost of social media tools	3.15	Agree
7	Low usage literacy of social media tools by students	3.02	Agree
8	Poor ICT policy	2.70	Agree
9	Lack of technical support	2.82	Agree
10	High cost of data to use social media tools	2.91	Agree
11	Lack of incentive to change educator's readiness to adopt social media tools	3.10	Agree
12	Low students' acceptance and attitude to the use of social media tools	3.00	Agree
13	Poor training of educators in use of social media tools for e-learning	2.90	Agree
14	Poor library educators' attitude towards use of social media tools	2.85	Agree
15	Poor support of administrators towards the adoption of social media tools for e-learning	2.71	Agree

In Table 2, the problems in library educators' use of social media tools for e-learning during Covid-19 lockdown in Anambra state are inadequate funding to procure social media tools for e-learning, insufficiency of ICT infrastructure, erratic power supply, high cost of social media tools, low usage literacy of social media tools by students, poor ICT policy, lack of technical support, high cost of data to use social media tools, lack of incentive to change educator's readiness to adopt social media tools, low students' acceptance and attitude to the use of social media tools, poor training of educators in use of social media tools for e-learning, poor library educators' attitude towards use of social media tools, and poor support of administrators towards the adoption of social media tools for e-learning. However, poor confidence of library educators in the use of social media tools, and poor maintenance culture are not part of the problems library educators' face in their use of social media tools for e-learning in Anambra State

**Table 3: Mean ratings on the solutions to the problems of library educators' use of social media tools for e-learning in Anambra State**

S/NO	Solutions to the problems of library educators' use of social media tools for e-learning	Mean	Decision
1	Good funding to procure social media tools for e-learning	3.01	Agree
2	Sufficiency of ICT infrastructure	3.07	Agree
3	Confidence of library educators in the use of social media tools	2.85	Agree
4	Good power supply	2.78	Agree
5	Proper maintenance culture	2.71	Agree
6	Subsidized cost of social media tools	3.11	Agree
7	High usage literacy of social media tools by students	3.12	Agree
8	Effective ICT policy	2.54	Agree
9	Adequate technical support	2.92	Agree
10	Subsidized cost of data to use social media tools	3.11	Agree
11	Adequate incentive to change educator's readiness to adopt social media tools	3.09	Agree
12	High students' acceptance and attitude to the use of social media tools	2.60	Agree
13	Regular training of educators in use of social media tools for e-learning	3.02	Agree
14	Positive library educators' attitude towards use of social media tools	3.19	Agree
15	Good support of administrators towards the adoption of social media tools for e-learning	2.75	Agree

In Table 3, the solutions to the problems of library educators' use of social media tools for e-learning in Anambra State are good funding to procure social media tools for e-learning, sufficiency of ICT infrastructure, confidence of library educators in the use of social media tools, good power supply, proper maintenance culture, subsidized cost of social media tools, high usage literacy of social media tools by students, effective ICT policy, adequate technical support, subsidized cost of data to use social media tools, adequate incentive to change educator's readiness to adopt social media tools, high students' acceptance and attitude to the use of social media tools, regular training of educators in use of social media tools for e-learning, positive library educators' attitude towards use of social media tools, and good support of administrators towards the adoption of social media tools for e-learning.

**Conclusion**

With the pronouncement by the government directing schools to switch to e-learning due to COVID-19 pandemic, the inadequacies of library educators in utilizing e-learning in schools have been exposed. Social media tools have been so helpful and have served as a reliable platform for e-learning and information

sharing to library educators. Some library educators and their learners, who were vulnerable due to obstacles that militate against effective use of social media tools such as the non-availability of e-learning resources like e-content, e-library, dedicated e-learning portal, and steady power supply have now been acquainted and resourceful in their teaching task. Library educators are expected to sit up and maximize the benefits of these social media tools for e-learning activities. Library educators cannot be passive in the application of social media tools for e-learning unless they have no intention to fulfil their missions and objectives. Therefore, the utilization social media tools such as Facebook, Whatsapp, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, Pinterest, Podcasts, Flickr and blogs, Instant Messaging (IM), Rich Site Summary (RSS), Zoom, GoogleMeet, among others can serve as a useful communication and teaching tool for library educators during the lockdown period.

### **Recommendations**

With a view of the Covid-19 lockdown imposed in the educational sector, the following recommendations are provided in a bid to ensure the library educators use of social media tools for e-learning:

- i. Library educators need to be skilled in the use of various social media e-learning platforms such as Facebook, Whatsapp, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, Library thing, etc.
- ii. Power supply, bandwidth availability, e-library, and customize e-learning platform should be adequately provided to enhance exploration of e-learning resources
- iii. The library educators and their students needs to be provided with regular training on the use of social media tools and e-learning resources
- iv. There should be a quick review of ICT policy to favor educational institutions, students, and library educators towards acquiring relevant ICT skills
- v. There should be proper motivation of library educators by their institution to enable them effectively utilize these social media tools for e-learning

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