



ISSN: 2959-6386 (Online), Vol. 2, Issue 3, December 2023

## Journal of Knowledge Learning and Science Technology

journal homepage: <https://jklst.org/index.php/home>



### Assessment of the Functionality of the Academic Librarians in the Philippines During COVID-19 Pandemic: Basis for Enhanced Guidelines

Ciara Junette O. Carbonilla, Ritzel F. Falculan, Aloisa Vergyl R. Fiedacan, Jennifer S. Morales, Rosemarie Gil B. Sorquia, Michelle O. Carbonilla, Jolly S. Balila, Ma. Carina L. Gasang

---

#### Abstract

With the outbreak of COVID-19, the Philippine government declared a lockdown of cross-border supermarkets and educational institutions, affecting library services around the world. Academic libraries struggle to choose the specific services and methods they offer, from minimal dialogue to user dialogue. This study aims to assess the functionality of academic librarians during COVID-19 pandemic as a basis for enhanced guidelines for academic libraries in the Philippines. Researchers used a qualitative approach, specifically the phenomenological study and interviewed a total of five academic librarians. Participants from the study are from selected Adventist institutions chosen through heterogeneous purposive sampling. Interviews were video recorded, transcribed, and analyzed. Results revealed that COVID-19 pandemic has brought challenges to the libraries such as internet connection issue, budget constraints, usable platforms, and limited online resources, yet they continued their operations and services through via online. Five out of seven librarians consider the COVID-19 as positive because despite the current situation, they continued receiving support from their administrators that speeded up the digitization for their collection.

**Keywords:** functionality, academic library, guidelines, COVID-19, qualitative research

#### Article Information:

**Article history:** Received: 10/09/2023 Accepted: 25/10/2023 Online: 27/11/2023 Published: 20/12/2023

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.60087/jklst.vol2.n3.p162>

**Correspondence author:** Michelle O. Carbonilla

**Email:** [mocarbonilla@aup.edu.ph](mailto:mocarbonilla@aup.edu.ph)

---

#### INTRODUCTION

On December 31, 2019, there was an outbreak of a novel virus called the “coronavirus disease COVID-19” (WHO, 2020) which is a contagious infection with a death rate that is multiple times higher than the seasonal flu. Its symptoms are fever, a dry cough, shortness of breath, and intense exhaustion. It is a global pandemic that has spread within a short time (World Health Organization, 2020). The virus affected several countries around the world including the Philippines. In the middle of March 2020, the Philippine government placed its major cities under lockdown, ordering all educational institutes and business institutions to close. Due to the crucial situation, all social activities were suspended for the safety and benefit of fellow human beings and because of this, most of the country’s schools had to stop all the face-to-face learning activities and the only option to take was the transition to different forms of remote or online learning (Delgado, 2020).

Because of the pandemic, library services around the world were affected. Academic libraries are facing difficulty in choosing which specific services to offer and how to offer them, ranging from minimal interaction and/or no interaction with users. Clearly, any decision to restrict services or close a library is a difficult one and needs to be taken following an assessment of the relative risks (IFLA, 2020). Many directors had to close the physical library locations, increasing investment in digital resources and services. Also making difficult staffing decisions and working staff that depended on the location of the physical library were hit hardest by budget cuts. The librarians had to make these difficult decisions, keeping in mind the welfare of the staff, and balancing the financial stability of the library (Frederick & Wolff-Eisenberg, 2020).

The rapid growth of online classes presented libraries with both obstacles and possibilities, as well as a huge difficulty in transitioning from traditional to library information online delivery. Due to poor internet and mobile data connectivity in rural locations, reference service students and staff have a difficult time accessing the library's online information resources (Baloch & Musyani, 2020; Nakhoda, 2020). Addressing those demands of users might be difficult for an academic library. Academic libraries are attempting to support online classes, fulfill researchers' access demands, adapt online work habits, and acknowledge and accept collective and individual evolving responsibilities. The COVID-19 outbreak made a huge impact, created uncertainty, and forced many people to rethink their habits (Rafiq et al., 2020).

As a developing country, the Philippines is beginning to cope with online educational methods to shift all its employment and educational institutions online. According to Atienza (2003), the library is a knowledge source and research data center in any type. It is a place where library patrons go to get information in various academic fields. As a result, the academic library must be prepared to meet the demands and needs of the users. Gako and Laspiñas (2015) stated that academic libraries have evolved in recent years through open access to materials and services, shifting staffing levels, and service methods. The activities, programs, and initiatives of the library are depicted as resource and service changes to complement the schools' vision-mission.

The most important basic objective functions of any library are to offer the best possible service to its users to enable them to make the fullest use of its books and other documents. Based on this basic objective, the common functions of a library are: (1) build a collection of books and other documents in line with the needs of the users, (2) process and organize the collection systematically in the stack room, ensuring their easy location and replacement by subject approach, and (3) provide assistance and services such as lending and reference services to put the collection to the best use (IGNOU Library and Society, 1999). That is why even during this COVID-19 situation, academic libraries are trying to maintain their functionality even though it is facing tremendous changes as demand in providing digital collection and online services to supply and satisfy the users' needs (Cox, 2020). The service that will look appropriate for this situation is reference service for it is a part of library service that is mainly focused on assisting patrons in their search for information in libraries' collections (Li, 2009).

The library functionality always relates to library services particularly to reference service as the "heart of the library" (Das et al., 2009; Ranasinghe, 2012). The American Library Association (ALA) prepared and highlighted these basic six functions of reference services namely supervision, information, guidance, instruction, bibliographic, and appraisal function (Rader, 1980). Universities must meet worldwide educational standards and show better academic principles by upgrading their reference services, skills, and resources by the most recent system, allowing users to access information sources in the workplaces and homes if the library is closed or not physically. Library workers, as traditional custodians of knowledge, are usually aware of the most recent needs of information technology (Sullivan, 2019).

With the issues on the functionality of academic libraries during the COVID-19 pandemic, this study wants to investigate the how's of library functionality (as referred to library services) rendered by the academic libraries during this COVID-19 pandemic using ALA six functions of reference services namely supervision, information, guidance, instruction, bibliographic, and appraisal function that varies from library to library (Rader, 1980) in order to meet the global academic standards during this time of COVID-19 pandemic.

Although few studies have reported using multiple methods to evaluate an entire service of the library, one theory used in the study of Honoree (2017) talks about the Disconfirmation Theory, the most popular and widely used model for studying customer satisfaction and dissatisfaction (CS/D). The concept of the initial theory is required to evaluate the product and buyer's experience based on cognitive standards before purchasing. Expected satisfaction and dissatisfaction are caused by comparison with the purchased product. If the performance is greater than expected to connect for positive settling, customers are satisfied. Customers are dissatisfied when performance falls short of expectations and results in negative reconfirmations. Confirmation occurs when performance and expectations match, leading to moderate satisfaction or indifference.

The 14 Expectations Unconfirmed Paradigm is still the most widely used model and marketers have found that pre-purchase desire as a criterion has been reported to be a stronger predictor than expected in a particular purchase situation. When examining library user satisfaction, information needs were a better pre-purchase criterion to apply to an unidentified model. Another theory by Buckland (1999) talks about a paradox concerning how library services have to do with their adaptability and survival. Feedback on information about what is happening so the organization will be informed, however libraries are often unable to obtain the quantity and quality of feedback that appears to be necessary for adaptation. Hence, one would expect crises and an inability to survive.

### *STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM*

This study focuses on the following research questions:

1. How do academic libraries maintain the basic six functions of reference services in terms of supervision, information, guidance, instruction, bibliographic, and appraisal function amidst the pandemic?
2. What are the challenges encountered by academic libraries in maintaining their functionality amidst the pandemic?
3. What are the positive effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the functionality of academic libraries?

### *METHODOLOGY*

#### Research Design

This study utilized a qualitative research design particularly phenomenology, with no manipulation of antecedents and the data was derived from their recent experience (Myers & Hansen, 2016). Phenomenology's goal is to investigate and describe events as they are consciously experienced, without relying on ideas about their causes or objective reality. As a result, it tries to figure out how people understand their own ideas. Phenomenology breaks down the meaning of a lived experience into its core, allowing for reflection and analysis (Guillem & Patricio, 2017). To focus on the inquiry of what individuals feel and how they interpret various phenomena. This research examines and interprets the experiences of participants in relation to a specific event to comprehend the meaning attributed to the events, this is known as phenomenology (Teherani et al., 2015).

#### Participants

The participants of the study were academic librarians who have undergone the sudden lockdown due to the unexpected outbreak of the COVID-19 virus; ensure library professionals to ascertain ways of working in a rapid time frame while shifting to different platforms wherever possible; and provide adequate remote services to the users of the Seventh-day Adventist higher educational institutions.

Out of the seven selected academic librarians, only five were able to participate while two were disqualified due to a lack of necessary data to be included in the study.

#### Sampling Technique

Homogeneous purposive sampling technique was used in this study. Homogeneous purposive sampling is where the selection is based on the characteristics of a population and the objective of the study, which is the academic libraries in Adventist Higher Education Institutions. The respondents were selected based on the following criteria: (1) Professional librarians in academic libraries, (2) regular workers, and (3) available and willing to participate in the study. The researchers approached the participants in a professional manner by giving them online orientation. They called the participants, introduced themselves, gave short and detailed instructions to set the date for the interview.

The data of this study were obtained using the one-on-one interview. Interviews were conducted to five academic libraries who gave their consent. The researchers assigned a code for the academic libraries prior to gathering.

#### Instrumentation

Self-constructed interview questions were used to gather data from the academic

Librarians. The guide questions were based on the research questions, and these were validated by experts in the field of Library and Information Science.

### Triangulation

The study used analyst and theory triangulation to minimize the resulting bias of the perception of the librarians in the functionality offered by the academic libraries. The chosen methods independently complement the answers to the research questions. Furthermore, the themes were checked by the research advisor to see its appropriateness.

### Data Gathering

The researchers communicated with the respondents through Messenger, email, and phone call to get their consent to be interviewed. Three agreed to be interviewed through virtual meetings via Google Meet and time of interview were based on the availability of the participants. The participants were given corresponding links. The interviews were recorded, and it lasted for 1-2 hours per participant. The participants were given incentives of GCash load.

Some of the challenges were encountered by the researchers during data gathering. These challenges include time constraint, slow internet connectivity, unavoidable circumstances where some respondents accepted the interview invitation but cannot make it without any prior notice and were unable to send back the questionnaire requested from the researchers and some who preferred sending it back through email rather than actual interview.

### Data Analysis

Researchers used thematic analysis to emerge significant patterns or themes from the raw data with its flexible approach (Nowell et al., 2017). According to Braun and Clarke (2006), it is a multi-step process that involves organizing, identifying, describing, and reporting themes from a set of data. For the present study, the recorded interviews were repeatedly listened to for the purpose of data familiarization.

Initial codes were generated by identifying significant blocks of data through reduction. Similar patterns or blocks of data were gathered carefully to emerge themes that will depict the process of theme development for the study. Proponents of qualitative research claim that thematic analysis is appropriate when the purpose of the study is to examine participants' perceptions, insights, and experiences (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

### *Ethical Consideration*

A letter of consent was sent to the respondent's email or messenger for them to sign before the interview was conducted. The researchers used assigned codes instead of participants' real names, their higher education institutions they represent, as well as the contact details were made confidential. Participants' anonymity were ensured. They were debriefed for the nature and purpose of the study after the interview process had taken place. The consent includes information that they can withdraw anytime whenever they feel uncomfortable even when the interview has begun. Furthermore, permission for the use of a voice or video recorder for a one-on-one interview for transcript was secured. The participants were informed that the recording file will be deleted as soon as it serves its purpose. Their name would remain anonymous and confidential.

### FINDINGS

The researchers analyzed the data and employed coding procedures to identify the main themes of the study. The procedure facilitated identifying the overarching theme that answered the research questions.

#### Maintenance of Academic Libraries Functions (Services)

This section answered the first research question: Librarian's Maintenance of Academic Libraries functions. The researchers the assumption that participants may have different perceptions of the maintenance of academic libraries functions, hence, it was imperative to analyze the different perceptions by identifying the themes and perceptions.

### ***Table 1. Maintenance of Academic Library Functions in terms of Supervision, information, guidance, instruction, bibliographic and appraisal***

<p>Research question:</p> <p>1. How do academic libraries maintain the basic six functions of reference services in terms of supervision, information, guidance, instruction, bibliographic, and appraisal function amidst pandemics?</p>	<p>Themes Generated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Created Messenger Groups</li> <li>• Updated Facebook page and Website</li> <li>• Provide online Consultation for faculty and students</li> <li>• Online Information Dissemination</li> <li>• Library Orientation</li> <li>• Promotion of Library Resources</li> <li>• Updating Bibliographic Materials</li> <li>• Inventory Assessment</li> </ul>
---	---

***Created Messenger Group Chat***

Out of the seven participants, four of them perceived effects of covid-19 pandemic on the functionality of academic libraries under supervision theme by saying that:

“The library is using the library website, FB page, Messenger group chats (by colleges) and the official email to disseminate information” (R4)

“And share it to the messenger also to the GC to the student’s *para yung mga* (so that the) essential information about the library *nandun lahat* (are all there).” (R5)

Most of the respondents use and created group chats to disseminate information to all the library users. Friday et al. (2020) stated that users can connect with their information needs faster and more effectively through social media technologies like Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, and blogs. As a result, utilizing social media platforms will assist in improving the product advertising and consulting services of the library.

***Updated Facebook page and Website.***

‘I created a Facebook page for students to access us still and update them. Unfortunately, noong nakaraan, [it also isn’t as] functional that much’ (R2)

IGI Global (2021) enunciated how the library will provide online students with library resources that enable students to access library material online or have items shipped to their homes. The unanimous perception of the librarians was that despite the limitations that the COVID-19 pandemic has brought, these libraries continued their operations and services through online means such as creating Facebook pages and messenger group chats to provide for their patrons. Other libraries were fortunate enough to offer limited face-to-face services to their patrons inside the campus.

***Provide Online Consultation for Faculty and Students***

Out the seven participants, two of them perceived effects of covid-19 pandemic on the functionality of academic libraries under information theme is shown in their remarks:

“The library is using the library website, FB page, Messenger group chats (by colleges) and the official email to disseminate information” (R3)

“Students may send any concerns and inquiries through messenger or ‘Tawk.To’ application embedded in the library website anytime. Information about the library resources is readily available on the website, they may visit it anytime

and be available 24/7. The library ensures that responses to inquiries during office hours are given immediately. Inquiries sent during off-hours of the library will be responded to the following day.” (R4)

“I made a e-electronic library guide...I posted it in the fb page. And share it to the messenger also to the GC to the students...they also message us, through messenger asking for available e-books...we will tell them if we don't have it really at hand, but we can report to them some links, some links to this open access website so they can visit there...” (R5)

Literature corroborates the perception of the librarians that the pandemic made it hard for libraries to communicate with the students directly. And as stated by IFLA (2020) in the provision of guidance due to restrictions and closure of the library, they have guided their patrons using online communication through social media and through their official website. Some communicate with the students through the teachers or through a student representative. Respondents 4 and 5 provide online consultation to give the users information needs.

### ***Online Information Dissemination***

Out of the seven participants, four of them perceived effects of covid-19 pandemic on the functionality of academic libraries under information theme as shown in their remarks:

“Through social media and through their teachers” (R1)

“... we posted posters for them *tapos* we inform them [*Posters are posted*] on the bulletin boards. And then actually during the pandemic almost everyone was not active for the online ...For the students on the inside they can really access the information. [Just a few students, its either they chat us of what they need, then we picture and scan, there. There are some e-resources that are linked to the website]” (R2)

“Updated bulletin board for students on campus; send Text Messages through text brigade; utilize MVC web page. The library is integrated in the system, where electronic resources can be accessed online.” (R3).

Information from the library is disseminated to the patrons online using their respective Facebook pages and messenger groups. Some libraries have a section on their website to address the concerns of their patrons while others still use text messaging aside from the online chat exchange.

Medawar and Tabet (2021) indicated that users received assistance via LibChat, Library Aware, LibAnswer, writing consultation, and online research after the library became virtual. Since that was the only method to help the users, online support was provided.

### ***Library Orientation***

Out of the seven participants, five of them perceived effects of covid-19 pandemic on the functionality of academic libraries under instruction theme by saying that:

“We make use of social media and you know during faculty meetings by Zoom online or like this Google meet also...So, we don't actually have virtual library. We orient them, we send them the link, the code, the password, so that they will be able to have access, and they can also send that link to their students, for the students also to be able to access remotely.” (R1)

“Facebook live... We have a Facebook page; our e-resources are linked to the website of the school but we don't have virtual library” (R2)

“Through zoom and face-to-face orientation” (R3)

“The library provides library instruction during department/college forum and class, (the) is provided upon request of the college dean/department chair/teacher. Anyone may request an orientation. The booking form is available on the library website. (R4)

“...through zoom meeting, google meet, and also using the promotional videos, and the step-by-step process on how to acquire, how to borrow, how to use...” (R5)

Libraries provide instruction to their patrons generally through library orientation.

Because of the pandemic, these libraries have oriented their patrons through Zoom or Facebook live. Respondent 4 has a specific procedure for their orientation, which can be requested and scheduled by a department for the library to arrange a virtual orientation.

The growth of online library instruction has increased because of the potential to provide important topics to a wide number of learners. Various libraries have started to collaborate, providing online instruction and evaluation resources. It's a more time-efficient and cost-effective option than having them administer their own instruction (Cooperman, 2018).

### ***Promotion of Library Resources***

Out of the seven participants, two of them perceived effects of COVID-19 pandemic on the functionality of academic libraries under bibliographic theme by saying that:

“The library promotes its collection, activities and services through the library website, FB page email and chat groups.” (R4)

Respondent 4 was the only one who constantly promoted their collection to their users, albeit respondents 1, 2, 3, and 5 were not able to promote their materials due to no platforms to use or have not bought new materials. Solomon (2013) stated that librarians must be conversant with different types of social networking services and utilize them to promote the services and collections of the library since social networking is a rapidly developing trend for receiving and sharing information (Steiner 2012).

### ***Updating Bibliographic Materials***

“...we suggested them the google scholar ...we didn't have much updated bibliographic because of financial situation as well as the protocols.” (R2) Information drive— Check the course outline and update the bibliographic lists, integrating the new and current materials. We reproduce the material, and the number of copies will be determined based on the number of students enrolled in that particular class.” (R3)

“Annually or as needed. The library normally updates bibliographic materials every year since most of the professional courses are offered every year. The library assists faculty when they ask for any assistance. They are also assisted when they attend library orientation. The library may provide tutorials to all faculty upon request” (R4)

Respondents 3 and 4 had a hard time with their bibliographic acquisitions due to financial constraints therefore the online resources that they provided to their patrons were free online educational resources. The other libraries communicate

through teachers and by referencing course syllabi.

Jennings (2013) stated that since the library provides so much information online, many users may access it through services such as Google or Google Scholar without realizing that the library paid for it. Instead, it seems to be publicly accessible on the Internet. Obviously, that is not the case. The library must do a better job of branding the services so that the customers understand that the library is the source of the content. If the library does not, it reinforces the myth that the knowledge which visitors need is accessible for free online, leading them to doubt the library's importance.

### ***Inventory Assessment***

The librarians' perceptions were similar to the study by Saunders (2020) which stated that accessed information must be evaluated, the libraries make sure that their collection is up to date by evaluating it through inventory assessment (R1) and survey (R5). Respondents 3 and 4 have similar evaluation of their library resources during the selection and deselection process following the set criteria in their CMP. Respondent 2 was not able to evaluate their collection.

They testified:

"...it is my priority. To be able to evaluate our collection regularly. I always visit the list and then I try to assess inventory. Before I go to any book fair or at the start of every school year, I try my best to make an inventory of our collection. But of course, since our budget is limited, we make the programs that are being even evaluated or accredited in that particular year our top priority" (R1)

"Will measure based on the standard, check that the collection is relevant to the present demand. Look and listen! Look at the present demand and check if collection is capable to meet the need. Listen and work with teachers/administration, update collection to meet the current need." (R3)

"As far as last year naman, nagkaroon ako ng yung survey ko nga (I conducted a survey) through online, okay naman yung mga responses nila (their responses were okay) and I take down notes, tinake down ko yung mga suggestions nila, ano yung mga commendations nila for the services (I took note of their suggestions and what their recommendations were for the services), ang problema lang talaga namin dito (our only problem here) is the physical. Yung computer namin we lack of that. Tapos internet connection is also one ang problema namin (We lack computers, and one of our problems is the internet connection). In terms naman sa books, hindi naman ganon ka-problem kasi kahit limited lang yung copies, nagu-update naman po kami tapos the teachers now are also downloading naman po sila they're becoming resourceful also (In terms of books, it isn't a big problem because even if the copies are limited, we still update it and the teachers are resourceful by downloading), they are not really relying fully on the library books because they themselves have this e- resources." (R5)

### *Challenges of Academic Libraries Services*

**Table 2. Challenges of Academic Libraries Services**

<p>Research question:</p> <p>2. What are the challenges encountered by academic libraries in maintaining their functionality amidst pandemic?</p>	<p>Themes Generated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internet Connectivity</li> <li>• Limited/lack of platform</li> <li>• No Provision of Data based subscription</li> <li>• Budget Constraints</li> <li>• Lack of online resources</li> </ul>
---	---



### ***Internet Connectivity***

The participants had similar problems concerning internet connectivity. In the article published by Wickramanayake and Muhammad Jika (2018), one of the challenges for students is inconsistent internet connectivity. Especially in rural areas, where students and faculty have a difficult time accessing the library's online e-resources. The next statements were answers of the participants.

“...for supervision here *ang hirap kasi* (It's hard because) both are here [workers] and *walang* work from home (for supervision here is hard for both are here [workers] and there's no work from home).” (R2)

“The limitations set by the pandemic posted challenges to the libraries in terms of supervision as they are not able to orient students altogether at one time as respondent 1 has expressed. Respondent 3 enumerated a few challenges, such as students' motivation, internet connection and their availability to participate in scheduled activities.

“Users prefer the hard copy, Users are still adjusting using electronic materials, slow connectivity, no connection.” (R3)

### ***Limited/lack of Platform***

It is highlighted by Mandrekar and Rodrigues (2021) that many university library websites give broad and insufficient information on their web pages, making them inaccessible to the general public since they are not updated on a regular basis. To give the academic user community the necessary, helpful, and appropriate information, the library website should be well-structured, and the problems surfaced based on the following answer: These were indicated in the statements below:

“...because we don't have online databases, the challenge is, how can I provide them with online resources that, you know, that would be accessible to them, but for free..” (R1)

“Collaboration with other libraries, especially this time, is necessary in order to provide materials to the researcher (which you don't have).” (R3)

Not having a functional website for the library as well as an automated system is a challenge to respondent 1. Respondent 3 was challenged by the uncertainty of the students' being able to understand the instructions since they received no feedback.

### ***No Provision of Data based subscription***

Libraries want to provide online resources to their patrons that are free but have no online databases. Yatin et al. (2018) said this can become a problem for any library giving online services as it is focused on teaching users how to find information and to make use of online databases to identify appropriate resources for in-depth service. The following are statements from the participants:

“Since we don't have the link also and we don't have online databases then. We cannot do much more. You know, the challenge really there is for us to be able to—how can we be able to come up with a good online automation system that can be available to them online that they can access anywhere and databases that they can use for their classes.” (R1)

“Internet connectivity, no budget, not willing to embrace change of mode of learning.” (R3)

This situation was difficult for the respondent 1. It was a challenge for respondent 3 to collaborate with other libraries to provide materials that they don't have to their researchers.

### ***Budget Constraints***

Aside from the internet connection being a challenge, the lack of a financial budget for online resources were also one of the difficulties that they faced. Respondent 1 lacks a good online automation system, respondent 3 encounters patrons that are not prepared to accept the new mode of learning. Seventy-five percent of directors have cut their budgets, with most cuts falling between one and nine percent for the fiscal year 2020-2021. There is evidence that directors have been subjected to budget constraints, requiring them to delay expenditures whenever feasible, in the 20% of libraries where the year's budget was not decided at the time of the poll. Most library directors are unsure whether their budgets will recover during the pandemic based on Frederick

and Wolff-Eisenberg (2020).

The following are the transcription from the respondents

“...the challenge is that for us not being able to do it personally. We rely only on the list provided to us, by our, you know, by our suppliers. And also, it takes time...and sometimes the problem is the teachers also cannot do it right away because you see they’re also busy with their classes so they can choose...we don’t have money, we don’t have budget.” **(R1)**

“The financial...*yung mga (it's the)* strict guidelines, internet connection ” **(R2)**      “Budget constraints.” **(R3)**

***Lack of Online Resources***

Although Rand and Shepard (2020) indicated that due to COVID-19, academic libraries have been expected to operate in a completely remote environment and develop online services. Departments that used paper-based systems and local digital storage were taught how to use cloud computing. Subsequently, with the innovative cooperation of library teams, certain libraries were able to design systems to deliver the most resources to patrons.

“Not all teachers give the library the chance to give library orientation in their classes. Some needed library materials are not available electronically or digitally. Some library users do not know how to use the OPAC and other databases in the library.” **(R4)**

“...the library physical itself is being changed just to address the safety protocols inside the library. And challenges, let’s say, library programs because it is done virtually as what I have said before it has been quite challenging specially during the live...Organizing your library activities, *siyempre yung (of course the)* internet connection...To sustain the reference services, yes, it’s also a challenge...” **(R5)**

Table 3 presents the positive effects of COVID-19 Pandemic to the Academic libraries.

**Table 3. Positive Effects of COVID-19 Pandemic**

<p>Research question: 3. What are the positive effects of COVID-19 pandemic on the functionality of the academic libraries?</p>	<p>Themes Generated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support from the administration</li> <li>• Convenience</li> </ul>
---	---

***Support from the Administration***

Support from the administration was a good motivation for the academic librarians. The following statements are transcripts from the participants:

“I can be able to persuade now the administration to purchase online databases and at the same time to make; to purchase, to acquire a library system for us to be able to automate our library, you know, and the students can be able to have access to our resources, anytime or anywhere they are. ” **(R1)**

“Due to COVID-19, the library was able to have the support of the administration, update its collection and was able to subscribe to electronic resources” **(R3)**

***Convenience***

This COVID-19 opens the window to online library services and resources. Because of COVID-19 pandemic librarians learned digitization and mastered the use of technology in the delivery of online library services. The head librarian can manage and supervise the library operations through the use of technologies such as computers, the

internet and communication applications such as Zoom, Google Meet, Microsoft Teams while some of the library personnel were in 'Work from Home' modalities. For the appraisal, online resources are given priority. Online resources can be accessible worldwide via the internet. This will allow users to use the library without going to the physical library. This will keep the library users safe" (R4)

According to the respondents,

"...aside *dun sa* (those on) physical rest, we go back to our backlog, *yung mga nabacklog namin na* (our backlogs on) technical jobs *na di namin napapansin tapos* (that we haven't noticed) we organize, *naoorganize namin ang* (we organized the) library *ngayon ng maayos* (now properly) ...*naprepare na namin yung mga data, inu-update na namin* (we already have prepared and update the data .." (R5)

Unitedly, all the respondents perceived that the COVID-19 pandemic speeded the need for libraries to learn digitization but they could only provide to their patrons through online means, they had the support from the administration to acquire online resources. As mentioned by ALA (2020), it is the librarians' duty to help provide the information needs of the patrons albeit the pandemic through these sources. This allowed the library's resources to be accessible to their patrons anytime and anywhere. Pragajibhai (2020) cited that even during a pandemic, websites are an excellent way to disseminate statistics to the public and provide people with the information they need.

## CONCLUSION

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic has brought a sudden and fundamental change in the provision of library services due to the strict physical social distancing and blockades imposed by the government. The Internet and web technologies have generated an unprecedented new environment that enables libraries to amplify their services during these difficult and uncertain times. The concept and practice of libraries that access electronic resources remotely is one of the user-friendly methods many libraries have chosen during a pandemic and the number of resources available have been more accessible. Even after the school campuses are opened, the librarians have more planning to do. To supervise the situation, it is imperative for librarians to reassess all existing services and redesign them to match the government's protocols. If there is no improvement in the situation over the next period, the library may lose its purpose in providing users' needs and the information resources they want. The points described in this paper provide evidence to serve as the basis when improving the services' existing features planned after COVID-19. Numerous academic libraries are still struggling to build a powerful electronic platform to provide access to services, as most libraries offer minimal services due to budget constraints, adopting a tech-leading or hybrid approach will help the gap of the library working to guide and disseminate reliable knowledge to users with less difficulty. This study suggests that libraries should be merging as a new kind of knowledge set that can play an important role in helping our country navigate into the new normal.

Based on the results of the study, an enhanced guidelines were drafted and will be recommended for library use.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

This study presented the experiences of librarians including the benefits and the possible issues that they have in their self-perceptions. Based on the findings and conclusions, the researchers would like to present the following recommendations:

1. Some of the libraries have no provision for database subscription. The library endeavors to provide online databases by having a subscription to e-resources to sustain the information needs of the users. The need to supervise the databases for usage users is recommended.
2. Due to the increased demand for online resources by users, internet connection and provision have become a problem. To address this issue, the administration is advised to provide libraries with a budget to increase their current bandwidth connection speed and upgrade an adequate number of routers to avoid lagging, the library will need to supervise these via their computer section.
3. It is evident that the library's collection should meet the current needs of the community by providing reliable, up-to-date, and other information sources to update its status and statistics. It will benefit the libraries to focus on appraising their resources on key subject areas that need to be built, particularly online due to physical restrictions from the pandemic.

4. The shortage of library orientation and instruction due to the lack of a platform touse, libraries recommend utilizing open sources to conduct a virtual orientation for users to be aware of the library's collection and services.
5. The library has outdated and non-functional library websites and which leads to a problem in communicating between the users and the librarians. The library creates and continuously updates a well-structured website.
6. The library's limited lack of online resources is a significant barrier to the students accessing information. There is a need to find a way to collaborate with other libraries, so the students are able to access other e-resources.
7. For further study, since there is a scarcity of literature regarding library services during the pandemic, it is suggested to conduct more research on this topic with more references on the functionality. Otherwise, research results may be hindered.

## REFERENCES

American Library Association. (2020, April). *Coronavirus pandemic (2019–2020)*.  
<http://www.ala.org/tools/future/trends/coronavirus>

Atienza, L. P. (2003). *Basic communication and thinking skills for college freshmen*. Bulacan: Trinitas Publishing.

Baloch, S. M., & Musyani, Z. (2020, July 8). *Pakistan's great digital divide*. The Diplomat.  
<https://thediplomat.com/2020/07/pakistans-great-digital-divide/>.

Braun V., & Clarke, V. (2006) Using thematic analysis in psychology, *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77-101, DOI: 10.1191/1478088706qp063oa

Buckland, M. K. (1999). *Library Literature*. Berkeley Library.  
<http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/Literature/Library/Services/chapter4.html>

Cooperman, L. (2018). Creating and Sharing Online Library Instruction. *Reference & User Services Quarterly*, 57(3), 218-218. <https://www.proquest.com/openview/0fc8f5cf63b2a9cd03a0b303590ec92d/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=40834>

Cox, C. (2020). Changed, changed utterly. *Inside Higher Ed*.  
<https://www.insidehighered.com/views/2020/06/05/academic-libraries-will-change-significant-ways-result-pandemic-opinion>

Das, T. K., Gurey, P. & Saha, N. C. (2009). *Evaluation of current trends in reference services in lieu of a model: A case study of central library*. [http://crl.du.ac.in/ical09/papers/index\\_files/ical-86\\_171\\_368\\_1\\_RV.pdf](http://crl.du.ac.in/ical09/papers/index_files/ical-86_171_368_1_RV.pdf)

Delgado, A. S. (2020). The Library's Core Roles Remain Constant. *Digital Libraries in the Philippines*.  
<https://www.goethe.de/en/kul/bib/ser/lib/eiv/21984924.html>

Frederick, J. K., & Wolff-Eisenberg, C. (2020). *The Impact of COVID-19 on Academic Libraries*. IthakaS+R.  
<https://sr.ithaka.org/blog/the-impact-of-covid-19-on-academic-libraries/>

Gako, L. D., & Laspiñas, M. L. (2015, March). Functionality of an Academic Library Using Standard for Philippine

Academic Libraries Model. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education, Arts and Sciences*.

[https://www.academia.edu/16717491/Functionality\\_of\\_an\\_Academic\\_Library\\_Using\\_Standard\\_for\\_Philippine\\_Academic\\_Libraries\\_Model](https://www.academia.edu/16717491/Functionality_of_an_Academic_Library_Using_Standard_for_Philippine_Academic_Libraries_Model)

Guillem, J.G., & Patricio, A.J. (2017). Life of an Only Child: A Qualitative Study. *Adventist University of the Philippines*.

IGNOU Library and Society. (1999). Types of Libraries and Their Functions. *Libraries: Basics and Contexts*. <https://egyankosh.ac.in/bitstream/123456789/34898/1/Unit-2.pdf>

IFLA (International Federation of Library Association and Federation). (2020, October 13). Key Resources for Libraries in responding to the Coronavirus Pandemic. *COVID-19 and the Global Library Field*. <https://www.ifla.org/covid-19-and-the-global-library-field/>

Jennings, E. (2013). *The relevance of academic libraries in the twenty-first century*.

[https://minds.wisconsin.edu/bitstream/handle/1793/65093/jennings\\_relevance\\_libraries.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y](https://minds.wisconsin.edu/bitstream/handle/1793/65093/jennings_relevance_libraries.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y)

Li, W.C (2009) *A history of reference services in the national library of china, 1928-2000*. IFLA.

<https://www.ifla.org/past-wlic/2009/90-chun-en.pdf>

Mandrekar, B. K., & Rodrigues, M. C. (2021). Importance of web based services during the pandemic: a critical analysis of the content of college library Website. *Library Philosophy and Practice*, 1-14.

Medawar, K., Tabet, M. (2021). Library collections and services during Covid-19: Qatar National Library experience. *Alexandria*. 20(10), 1-13. doi:10.1177/0955749020986377

Myers, A., & Hansen, C. (2016) *Experimental psychology* (7th ed.). Cengage Learning.

Nowell, L. S., Norris, J. M., White, D. E., & Moules, N. J. (2017). Thematic analysis: Striving to meet the trustworthiness criteria. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 16(1).

<https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406917733847>

Pragajibhai, B. V. (2020). Digital Resources linked with university library website: An evaluative study. *Shikshan Sanshodhan : Journal of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences*, 3(5), 159-162.

DOIs:10.2018/SS.2581.6241/202005034

Rader, H. B. (1980). Reference Services as a Teaching Function. *Library Trends*, 29, 95-103.

[https://www.ideals.illinois.edu/bitstream/handle/2142/7126/librarytrendsv29i1i\\_opt.pdf?sequence=1](https://www.ideals.illinois.edu/bitstream/handle/2142/7126/librarytrendsv29i1i_opt.pdf?sequence=1) Radford, M. L., Costello, L., & Montague, K. (2020). Chat Reference in the Time of COVID-19: *Transforming essential user services. information practices*, 264-270.

[https://www.ideals.illinois.edu/bitstream/handle/2142/108820/paper\\_185.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y](https://www.ideals.illinois.edu/bitstream/handle/2142/108820/paper_185.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y)

Rafiq, M., Batool, S. H., Ali, A. F., & Ullah, M. (2021). University libraries response to COVID-19 pandemic: A

developing country perspective. *The Journal of Academic Librarianship*, 47(1), 1-10.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.acalib.2020.102280>.

Ranasinghe, W. M. T. D. (2012). New trends of library reference services. *Professor Jayasiri Lankage Felicitation*, 2012. <http://eprints.rclis.org/28672/1/New%20Trends%20of%20Library%20Reference%20Services.pdf>

Rand, A. D., & Shepard, B. R. (2020). A Systems Perspective of Academic Library Technology Use during the COVID-19 Pandemic. *Quarterly Review of Distance Education*, 21(3), 59-63.  
<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1210893.pdf>

Saunders, L. & Wong, M. E. (2020). Instruction in libraries and Information Centers. *Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License*. <https://dx.doi.org/https://doi.org/10.2>

Sullivan, M. C. (2019). Libraries and Fake News: What's the problem? What's the plan?. *Communications in Information Literacy*, 13(1), 91-113. <https://doi.org/10.15760/comminfolit.2019.13.1.7>

Teherani, A., Martimianakis, T., Stenfors-Hayes, T., Wadhwa, A., & Varpio, L. (2015). Choosing a Qualitative Research Approach. *Journal of graduate medical education*, 7(4), 669–670. <https://doi.org/10.4300/JGME-D-15-00414.1>

Wickramanayake, L., & Muhammad Jika, S. (2018). Social media use by undergraduate students of education in Nigeria: A survey. *The Electronic Library*, 36(1), 21-37. <https://doi.org/10.1108/EL-02-2017-0023>

World Health Organization. (2021). *Coronavirus disease (COVID-19)*. [https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus#tab=tab\\_1ara](https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus#tab=tab_1ara)

Yatin, S. F. M., Kanan, N. F., Kamarudin, S., & Zainuddin, Z. (2018). Reference Sources: The Future and Implication of Reference Services in Academic Library. *International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development*, 7(3), 278–290.