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Abstracts

Leadership through Transformation: Leading Libraries through a Crisis and Beyond

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Abstract

Based on empirical research on the experiences of librarians during lockdown in South Africa this paper critically engages with theories of transformational leadership during crisis . COVID-19 has been a crisis that has not changed our world but transformed it. Unlike change, transformation is something that radically shifts who we are and how we do things. Transformation is often born in a crisis when the old ways of doing things have to end. Our research has led us to argue that leadership for transformation through crisis has three particular phases, CARE, NEED and RISK. The first phase is about negotiating the crisis and the liminal space when things end and new opportunities have not yet surfaced. During this time a leadership of CARE is required where Communication is dynamic and focused, Assessment is made continually of the situation, Responses are quick and relevant and Empathy is shown to all staff and students. The second phase, or NEED entails Noticing the new needs brought forth by the emerging reality, Evaluating these, Engaging to understand the new reality and Developing relevant interventions. The third phase RISK requires leadership that does not react to, but Reflects on the shifting needs of the university community. It Integrates new ways of working that might include re-designing jobs and empowers staff to develop the new Skills required. Throughout all of this a leadership of transformation through crisis needs to Keep on taking notice, keep taking risks and keep enabling the library and its staff to evolve.

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Strategy for the resumption of on-site operation of the University of Ghana Library System amid the Corona Virus pandemic

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Abstract

The availability of information on the nature and spread of the Corona Virus eased the fear and uncertainties surrounding the pandemic after about three months episodes of total and partial lockdowns in Ghana. This saw the government of the Republic of Ghana gradually easing restrictions imposed on citizenry. After nearly three months (90 days) of the closure of the University of Ghana, and for that matter the Balme Library, a hint from the President on the possible re-opening of schools and stakeholder engagements with tertiary institutions sparked up the interest of librarians in looking out for possible re-opening strategies. A purposeful sample of nine senior members was drawn from the population of Senior Members who support the managerial operations of the library. This sample comprised the Reference Librarian and the Head of the various Satellite Libraries in the University of Ghana Library System (UGLS). Through focus group discussions, using virtual platforms such as Zoom and WhatsApp a plan for the safe occupancy of the Libraries was put together to be implemented should the University be called to resume its teaching activities. This paper examines the strategies employed in developing the strategic plan that was implemented for the safe resumption of on-site operation by UGLS amid the Covid-19 pandemic in June, 2020.

Rendering library services amid the Corona Virus pandemic: a case of the Balme Library of the University of Ghana

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Abstract

The monumental libraries of the past where users could only assess the resources physically have indeed shifted to the virtual use of materials. Libraries of today are truly more than physical building; all over the world, libraries were forced to shut down their physical buildings due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Irrespective of the physical closure, most libraries continued to render invaluable services to their users virtually. The Balme library of the University of Ghana was no exception. Ghana recorded its first suspected Corona Virus case on the 12th of March, 2020. Consequently, the government of the Republic of Ghana ordered the closure of all universities and schools indefinitely on the 16th of March, 2020. Entrenched in a circular signed and distributed by the University's Registrar on the 21st of March 2020 titled 'Update on the closure of University' exempted the University of Ghana Library System and for that matter the Balme Library, from the essential services provided by the University under the circumstances of the pandemic. This led to the physical closure of the Balme Library. The physical building of the Balme Library and all other libraries on the campuses of the university were closed. This notwithstanding, the staff and management of the Balme Library did not relent in providing services to the university community. The library launched deeply into the use of its virtual platforms in providing library services to the university community. This paper provides a catalogue of services rendered to the University community and the public amidst the Covid19 pandemic. These services, among others, include Chat with a Librarian, Off-Campus Access to Databases, Online Chat, Online Databases, Online trainings, article request, institutional repository (UGSpace).

Shared Risk, Built on Trust: Sustaining Local and Shared Transformational Services throughout Crises Across Ontario University Libraries

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Abstract

Canada experienced an epidemic outbreak of the 2003 SARS virus¹, and most Canadian universities developed pandemic contingency plans against that coronavirus, which infected 8,096 globally and killed 7742. The Canadian Association of Research Libraries (CARL), the U.S. and Canadian member library Association of Research Libraries (ARL), and OCUL libraries could share SARS plans—early on that was both a life-saver and provided a foundation for quick organizational response to the SARS-COV-19 pandemic. Working within the same provincial public health directives provided OCUL libraries with a common framework for coordinated action and collaboration. This foundation, coupled with that shared foundation based on trust, has enabled the 50-year-old OCUL consortium to sustain

core library services as well as innovation during an otherwise challenging time. The Ontario Council of University Libraries (OCUL) is a consortium that brings together 21 academic libraries in the province of Ontario, Canada to provide effective and transformative information and research services through the power of working collectively and leveraging diverse individual strengths to benefit the whole³. Three OCUL library directors present perspectives on how the consortium has supported their institutions' sustained services during the pandemic, but also how the consortium serves as a springboard for incremental as well as transformational shared development of ideas that become 1 See <https://www.cdc.gov/sars/about/fs-sars.html> 2 See <https://thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/sars-severe-acute-respiratory-syndrome> 3 Ontario Council of University Libraries (OCUL) mission, vision, values, operating principles: <https://ocul.on.ca/mission-vision>. The consortium provides digital infrastructure, shared services and content licensing. consortial services and programs. These experiences are presented within Gartner's framework of "Run, grow, transform" for aligning digital initiatives with organizational drivers⁴. OCUL provides a flexible model for a significantly diverse group of academic libraries in shared core as well as opt-in services and does so via a fully member funded approach without subsidies. We believe that we go farther when we go together, and stronger, both in functioning as well as the political dimension to our public funders, when we provide these services together. This has allowed us to react in shared ways to different local circumstances during crises. Through the above discussion, this presentation will provide the response of one large academic library consortium to emergency crises, and three quite different member libraries within that consortium, to innovate, discuss and devise a common sustainable crisis management response and framework for shared digital initiatives and safe, graduated reopening of in-person services.

NTU Library's Response to COVID-19: Planning, implementation, and future considerations

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Abstract

Adaptability, keeping calm in high-stress situations, and thinking out of the box are not new requirements for any librarian in our increasingly volatile world. However, nothing has quite put these qualities to the test as much as the COVID-19 pandemic. Being part of a team overseeing frontline library services as well as physical spaces, we have been challenged to keep up with changing government policies and institutional directives in addition to striving to maintain services for our users. From implementing contact tracing

to modifying occupancy of each library to encourage safe distancing, we found new obstacles at every turn which required creative problem-solving to get around, especially with limited resources. Even when the Singapore government imposed a nationwide lockdown, we endeavoured to maintain as little disruption to our users as much as possible by providing online alternatives and modifying processes to discourage unnecessary travel to school, supported by Business Continuity Plans that were put together at the start of the crisis. With the pandemic still wreaking havoc around the world and the university reopening for the new semester, we find ourselves searching for the “new normal” and relooking at upcoming projects in a new light: are we prepared to support more distance learners, what kind of furniture do we need for our newly renovated spaces, how do we make our libraries safer spaces for users and library staff while maintaining our level of service? While by no means a blueprint for success, our presentation will offer a glimpse of the problems we faced, how we kept sane (while remaining of service to users), new practices we have adopted, and our considerations for the future.

Future services from the library and the consequences for what sort of physical premises we need

Lars Egeland, University director Oslo Metropolitan University

Oslo Metropolitan University has two campuses – one outside the City Center, and the main campus in the City Center. The University is the result of a lot of mergers of different polytechnics. As a result of that, we have three libraries in the city center, with the maximum distance of 300 meters. The last few years we have experienced an increasing pressure on resources in the library. The number of students has increased by 50% but the funding of the library has not increased. As the director of the library, I wrote a paper two years ago proposing that we co-locate the three libraries. This was a controversial proposal for many reasons: - The rectorate saw a co-locating as a possible mean to further reduce the staffing in the library, and this triggered the library staff who wanted more resources to give better services. - Many feared that a centralized library would mean that we would lose the students as users, because they were used to finding working areas in the library in the same building where they had most of their classes. The paper was discussed with the rectorate and the deans. Some of the deans started to ask whether we at all would need a physical library in the future. The decision from the rector was that we should make a report on the future need for library services, and based on this, we could propose a structure for the library services at campus. Representatives from the faculties, unions, students and library took part in the project. The report was delivered to the rector in June this year. In the meantime the University has decided on a campus policy based on that the whole campus should be used by the students, they should no longer have their classes in only one building. In the work on describing future library services, we used a Danish report delivered by Oxford research in 2019 to the Danish ministers for education and for research. In addition, we conducted a big survey among our own students and staff. The report was

finished during the COVID-19 lockdown. What changes can we foresee of the pandemic? The rectorate thinks we must prepare for more home office work, and reduced need of offices on campus. A survey among the students shows that they think that there has been a reduction in interactivity in the teaching, which is opposed to the institutions policy for more blended learning. What are the implications for the library? Is it a possibility to be a physical hub for interactivity? Will the library be a more important place for social learning as more of the lectures will be given digitally? In my presentation I will focus on the conclusion of the Library report which ended up recommending one centralized library. I will present some implications from the COVID-19 pandemic on the need for physical premises, and I will comment on the process in the library staff with fears and possibilities for the future and good objections during the process.

The Botswana International University of Science and Technology (BIUST) Library embraced social capital to navigate through the COVID19 crisis

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Abstract

The Government of Botswana imposed a strict social distancing measure with effect from April 2nd 2020. The BIUST Library walk-in services were suspended from 27th March 2020 until 15th June 2020. The library continued to offer highly altered services through phases that were informed by both the health protocols, institutional vision and global trends in library and information service provision. This was done through the support of different internal and external institutional stakeholders. The lock down started with a 28 day state of emergency, which was characterized with lots of uncertainties and multiple information gaps. During and after the lockdown, the university resolved to shift all academic services and other related functions to online platforms. In response to the emerging trend, the library team continued to dialogue with entities needed to help in retooling the functional roles that existed before the pandemic to be able to cope with the effects of the new demands.

The library drew from the existing relationships with the providers of electronic resources who demonstrated an ethical and moral responsibility by easing access to their services. The professional associations also connected the library with more resources and other support systems. The use of different communication strategies also strengthened the bonding social capital that existed both within the library team and with other stakeholders.

This paper demonstrates how the library harvested on the existing social capital to manage service provision while observing the World Health COVID19 social distancing protocols. It demonstrates a shared leadership which anchored on collective responsibility of a network of people and entities who played different roles in supporting library governance or administration; realignment of operations while also balancing professional ethics with

health regulatory protocols. The paper most importantly applauds the networks for having enhanced library confidence and motivation in the COVID19 crisis time.

- The narrative will adopt a guideline as below:
- Social capital in library management
- Understanding Social Capital
- BIUST library before COVID19
- Drawing on social capital to navigate the crisis
- BIUST library user needs during and after the lockdown
- Shifting the library to the “new norm”
- Library’s national and International networks
- Support of electronic information service providers
- Lessons for library business continuity strategy

Sliding Doors – parallel conflicts and opportunities for library futures

Margie Jantti

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University of Wollongong Library, Australia

The world has changed irrevocably, influencing the purpose, relevance and shape of library services, resources and experience now and into the future. Our capacity for resilience, change and innovation is being tested like never before and success will be determined by our ability to create trajectories for ‘new’ core services. We must pressure test our capacity to imagine and shake free inhibiting ideas and structures that once were markers of library success.

The experience of COVID-19 has revealed and amplified user and technological discontinuities, a swathe of non-traditional competitors, new distribution channels for information and knowledge as well as for education and research. Successful libraries will excel in their ability to provide contactless, seamless and highly personalised yet automated services that are truly location and device neutral; concede to the escalation in the outsourcing of the curriculum and learning experience changing the purpose and scope of undergraduate resources and services; the concept of lifelong, subscription based learning will be the norm; and learning will be increasingly flexible and not tied to traditional calendars requiring further agility. The notion of safe spaces will influence the design, amenity and utility of the physical and digital manifestation of libraries.

As we navigate towards the post COVID-19 and digitalisation era, horizon services and experiences could include: individualised learning and support companions; virtual, augmented learning experiences providing simulated experiences independent of the physical campus; culturally safe and inclusive practices with regards to spaces and

collections; curation of the increasingly machine enabled research endeavor. Functions once the domain of libraries will be increasingly integrated into shared service channels. Blurred identities will create friction and opportunities as collaboration is a necessity to optimise increasingly scarce resources.

How Can We Help? Librarians as Online Learning Experts

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Abstract

Our role, as librarians and information experts, has continuously evolved over the last decade allowing us to fit into the ever-changing educational environment. Recently, as a response to the Covid-19 crisis, academic librarians found themselves wearing a new hat - online learning experts - not by training but by virtue of experience. Our latest transformation was dictated by the emergency pandemic crisis that took the world into a new dawn: an imposed online learning reality that requires instructors and students to adapt and expand their skill-set overnight. Librarians realized that to soothe the current situation and ensure continuity of the curriculum, it is necessary for instructors and students to master the use of online resources, create clear communication paths, engage with the content and among each other, and develop new assessment techniques. To this end, librarians rushed into supporting this transformation and providing guidance: we set up live, just-in-time, training for faculty on how to create and develop their online lessons using LMS; we created a repository of hands-on activities and discussion topics to help faculty engage students; we curated online materials for faculty courses, attended the live sessions and facilitated class discussions; we designed assignments and research projects to assess students' retention of learning outcomes and demonstration of acquired skills. Our contribution to academia has never been as critical as it is right now, and our commitment to make knowledge accessible - be it topic-related or skill-related - is stronger and driven by the added value of our expanding role. This presentation will discuss the new role we embraced, the challenges we overcame, and the future directions that librarians and library managers should plan for and implement as main partners in, and contributors to, the success of the new online learning world order.

Looking Past the Crisis: Positioning Canadian Research Libraries for Greater Success After the Pandemic

Vivian Lewis, University Librarian, McMaster University, Hamilton, CANADA

Canadian research libraries are responding to the pandemic with well-orchestrated programs to meet the needs of remote learners and scholars. The cumulative impact of these various initiatives is encouraging senior leaders and community members to take a fresh new look at their research libraries. The Library is suddenly no longer viewed simply as the trusted caretaker of legacy print collections, but as a key player on the University's crisis management team. Though no one wants the pandemic to continue, Canadian directors are working hard to leverage this sudden burst of corporate confidence to advance the Library's role on campus long after the crisis is over.

This session will highlight the strange, but perhaps not surprising, nature of this new-found lustre. The presenter will examine the characteristics of the research library's service models and professional values that make us well suited to responding to this crisis. She will also illustrate how the pandemic has not dramatically changed the directions Canadian research libraries are heading in. (The movement to convert increasing proportions of the Library's general collections and services to digital models is a prominent fixture of just about every research library's strategic plan.) The global health emergency is forcing research libraries to move faster than they ever dreamed possible – but along paths they always intended to go.

This session will describe some of the innovative strategies being used by Canada's largest research libraries to reengineer the delivery of collections, services and expertise during the pandemic – and in doing so, to dramatically change the Library's positioning on campus. The presenter will document notable programs offered at individual research libraries as well as the scaffolding role played by the Canadian Association of Research Libraries (CARL) in terms of digital access and open science, workforce development and community building.

The session will flag the issues Canadian research libraries continue to grapple with, as well as the aspirations of where they hope to be when this is all behind us.

Participants should hopefully come away with some concrete ideas for advancing their own crisis response agenda. More importantly, they should leave inspired to assert the Library's critical importance, both to managing the immediate crisis and to supporting the University's larger research and teaching missions after the crisis is over.