

**AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE NEED FOR LIBRARIES AT
LEPROSARIUM: A CASE STUDY OF EKU TUBERCULOSIS AND
LEPROSY REFERRAL CENTRE.**

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Abstract

The study investigated the need for libraries at Leprosariums. The Eku Leprosarium was studied. The research design adopted was the descriptive survey method using questionnaire. The population of the study was 56. This consisted of all the 46 staff of Eku T.BLC and 10 ex-lepers who live in their colony. Thirty of the population of 46 staff and the 10 ex-lepers who held the minimum qualification of National Diploma and above was sampled because they could read and interpret the questionnaire on their own. Means were used in analyzing the data because they were the best for this kind of study. The study revealed that libraries are needed at Leprosariums because, libraries provide information resources which when well disseminated can help in the reduction of leprosy and its related diseases. It will also educate the leprosarium community as a whole on the causes, symptoms precautions and control of the disease. Similarly, the study recalled that libraries can help the Leprosarium achieve its mission and vision through the provision of information resources. Among other things, it was recommended that the Delta State Government, World Health Organization, sponsoring agencies, philanthropists, politicians and stakeholders, should see to it that libraries are established at Leprosariums.

Introduction

The library is an institution that acquires, organizes, preserves, and makes available the recorded knowledge of man to the users (Clarke, 1999). Similarly, Aina (2004) defines libraries as institutions responsible for the collection, processing and storage of recorded knowledge for the purpose of reading, study, and consultation. Six types of libraries exist namely the National, Public, School, Academic, Special and Private libraries (Obaro, 2018). The National Library is the country's apex library. Academic libraries exist in institutions of higher learning such as universities, colleges of education, monotechnics and polytechnics. School libraries are libraries found in Kindergarten, Primary and Secondary Schools and are presently evolving into school library resource centres. Public libraries are the avenues through which the overall information resources are made freely available to all. Its services are provided for the citizens on the basis of equality of access for all, regardless of age, race, sex, religion, nationality, language or social status. Private libraries are owned by individuals and reflect the particular individual's needs.

Special libraries belong to particular establishments such as government ministries, research institutes, banks and professional bodies. The library that will be needful in Eku Tuberculosis and Leprosy Referral Centre (Eku TBLRC) is a special library (Edoka 2000 and Obaro, 2018).

The Disease Leprosy

Leprosy is a chronic infection caused by the bacteria *mycobacterium leprae* and *mycobacterium lepromatosis*. The symptoms include granulomas of the nerves, respiratory tracts, skin and eyes which result in a lack of ability to feel pain and thus loss of parts of extremities, weaknesses and poor eye sights (Mcmenamin 2011, Ryan, and Ray, 2004). It is spread between people and believed to occur through a cough or contact with fluid from the nose of an infected person, hence in most leprosi-ums are also tuberculosis centers. Leprosy is curable medically with a treatment known as multi drug therapy (MDT). It has also affected humanity for thousands of years (WHO, 2014). It takes its name from the latin word "Lepra" meaning "Scaly"

(Suzuki, Kawashema, Yoshihara and Yotsu 2012). Social stigma has been associated with leprosy and this has been a barrier to early reporting and treatment. The primary external signs are light or dark patches. If untreated it can progress and cause permanent damage to the skin, nerves, limbs and eyes. Transmission occurs during close contact with those who are infected by nasal droplets. The causative agent of leprosy *M. Leprae* was discovered by G.H. Armauer Hansen in Norway in 1873, hence leprosy is also known as Hansen disease (H.D)

Historically, Hippocrates the father of medicine who was among the earliest Greek learned men, who used the Alexandrian Library in Egypt in 460 B.C also discussed about the disease leprosy. Nevertheless, its first effective treatment (promin) became available in the 1940s. In the 1950s dapsone was introduced (Baum, 1997). In the 1960s and 1970s the use of Clofazimine and rifampicine were introduced (Rees, Pearson, waters and Pearson, 1970). Later, an Indian Scientist, Shantaram Yawalker and his colleagues formulated a combined therapy using rifampicin and dapsone and in 1980 the World Health Organisation (WHO) recommended a multi-drug therapy (MDT) combining all the three drugs and these drugs are still used today. (WHO, 2014; Suzuki, Kawashima Yoshihara and Yotsu 2012).

Benefits of a Library to a Leprosarium

Libraries are of benefits to everybody even to lepers. Obaro (2018) has the view that library facilities can help in the reduction of the leprosy diseases through the provision of information materials that will give and announce opportunities of campaigns and immunizations that give health services. The Library information resources will also provide and intimate their users who are the lepers on the causes, symptoms, preventions and control of the disease.

Libraries all over the world always have literacy for all people as a major objective. (Lyman, 1997). They help every child, young person and adult to learn to speak, read, and write. The library can do this for the lepers and their children who live a life of segregation.

The Audio visual section of the library can provide documentary films that can be translated into local languages. They can also provide posters and other forms of illustrations that depict important aspects of the leprosy disease and cure which can be of much benefit in educating the patrons (Baum, 1997).

The basic purpose of the Leprosarium as noted by Skinsnes and Fraizer (2012) include:-

- i. To provide facilities for treatment of leprosy which will keep pace with advances in such treatment as they develop.
- ii. To provide basic facilities for clinical and laboratory research in leprosy.
- iii. To engage in training and teaching activities directed towards disseminating knowledge and treatment skills as related to leprosy.
- iv. To provide for the general welfare, educational growth and spiritual care of resident patients.
- v. To promote the rehabilitation of patients cured of leprosy by every available means.
- vi. To lead the way in attacking society's misconceptions regarding leprosy and its maltreatment of persons suffering from leprosy by means of a programme of dissemination of information concerning all aspects of the disease.

The library can help achieve these purposes because the library serves as an

information agency to both the rural and town dwellers. It also serves as an educational agency as we cannot expect an excellent academic programme in any educational institution without the support of a well-equipped library. The library also serves as an agency for research to extend the frontiers of knowledge. It plays a cultural role, by diffusing the concepts that promote a new cultural rebirth; this it can do by providing reading materials to disabuse the minds of the lepers that they are normal.

Finally, for recreation and aesthetics appreciation the lepers and ex-lepers can gain because the library will provide an avenue for pleasurable reading. This will serve as a source of amusement, and help in the pleasurable occupation of their leisure time, including their families. (Aguolu, 1989).

Statement of Problem

At the outskirts of Eku town along Orogun Road from Sanubi in Ethiope East Local Government Area of Delta State Nigeria is situated one of the centre from where the Nigerian Government and the World Health Organisation (WHO) with the aid of the German Leprosy Relief Association (GLRA) work together to attend and provide medication for tuberculosis (TB), leprosy, Buruli ulcer and HIV cases in the country.

The German Leprosy Relief Association also known as Deutsche Lepra Und Tuberkulosehilfe.e.v. DAHW is a non-governmental, non-profit and non sectoral organization founded in Germany in 1967. In Nigeria, it has its headquarters in Independence Layout in Enugu with branches in Port-harcourt, Umuahia, Uyo, Awka, Yenogoa, Benin City, Abakaliki, Asaba Calabar, Abeokuta, Akure, Ado Ekiti and Owerri. Their vision is to achieve a world free from leprosy and its accompanying deformities, disabilities and social discrimination. A world where poverty related

diseases like T.B, Buruli Ulcer and HIV are under control.

The Eku leprosy settlement was founded in 1952 and in May 1992, was expanded to become the present Delta State TBL referral Centre. To implement the TBL control infrastructure, the Delta State government provided the buildings and staff. The training programme, structure, transport, consultations and medicines were provided by the GLRA under the auspices of the WHO.

In Nigeria, leprosy is surrounded by many taboos. It is also regarded as a supernatural punishment and victims are most times expelled from the communities. These, including lack of sufficient information affect the rehabilitation of the cured patients. The World Health Organisation (2014), Global Leprosy Situation (2012), Rodrugues and Lock Wood (2011) all reported that in 2012, the number of chronic cases of leprosy was 180,000 globally down from 5.2 million in the 1980s. The WHO (2014) also reported that the number of new cases was 230,000 in 16 countries with India accounting for more than half. It also has on records that in the past 20 years, 16 million people worldwide have been cured of leprosy and about 200 cases are reported per year in the United States. In 1995, 2.3 million people were estimated to be permanently disabled because of leprosy. India has the greatest number of cases with Brazil Second, and Myanmar third (WHO, 1995). In 2000, WHO also listed 91 countries in which leprosy is endemic. India, Burma, and Nepal had 70% of the cases. In 2002, 763,917 new cases were detected worldwide. World Leprosy Day was started in 1954 to draw awareness to those affected by leprosy (McMenamin, 2011). People with leprosy often encounter discrimination. The level of disfigurement dictates the level of stigma and ostracism they receive in Africa and in Nigeria in particular, this is worst. These individuals even after healing are still

discriminated against. They cannot go to the same market with the “normal” people. They cannot interact with them and they need information like any other person. Information disseminated in libraries can help the lepers become aware of the causes, symptoms, precautions and control of the disease. Thereby helping GLRA and WHO achieve their vision of a world free from leprosy and its accompanying diseases and that is why this study is set to investigate the need for libraries in leprosarium in order to help them achieve their missions.

Purpose of the study

The general purpose of this study was to investigate on the need for establishing a library at Leprosarium. Specifically, the study was designed to:-

Highlight on the benefits of a library in Eku Leprosarium.

Identify ways the library can help the Eku Leprosarium achieve their mission.

Research questions

The following research questions were postulated for the study:

What are the benefits of a library to Eku Leprosarium?

What are the ways the library can help the Eku leprosarium achieve its mission?

Limitation

During the course of the study, the researcher had to make several trips to Eku Leprosarium before she could get the permission to carry out the research from the Director of the Leprosarium. Similarly, there were challenges in meeting with the lepers in their colony to collect data from them. Also, travelling to Ossiomo Leprosy settlement in Edo state was tedious. All these limited the study.

Scope

The scope of this study is Eku Leprosarium in Edo East Local Government Area of Delta State Nigeria.

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The population of the study comprised of 10 ex-lepers and 46 permanent staff of the Eku Leprosarium as illustrated below.

Table 1: Designations and Qualifications of the Population

S/N	Designations	No	Qualification
1.	Medical Doctors	1	Graduate (MBBS)
2.	Hospital Administrator	1	B.Sc.
3.	Confidential Secretaries	2	B.Sc., HND
4.	Pharmacist	1	B.Pharm
5.	Laboratory Technologist	1	HND
6.	Technician	1	OND
7.	Accountant	1	B.Sc
8.	Auditor	1	B.Sc
9.	Nurses	6	B.Sc
10.	Community Health Extension workers	3	OND
11.	Medical records	1	HND
12.	X-ray technician	1	HND
13.	Social Welfare	1	B.Sc
14.	Health Assistants	8	OND
15.	Store keeper	1	WASC
16.	Security guard	2	FSLC
17.	Work Superintendent	1	B.Sc
18.	Craft man	1	FSLC
19.	Welder	1	WASC
20.	Plant operator	1	WASC
21.	Carpenter	1	FSLC
22.	Messenger	3	WASC
23.	Clerical Staff	1	WASC
24.	Field labourers	5	FSLC
25.	Ex-Lepers	10	OND and Above
TOTAL		56	

The population of the study was 56 comprising of 46 staff and 10 ex-lepers. Out of the 46 staff that made up the population 30(53.26%) were chosen for the sample. Also, 10 ex-lepers (17.8%) who also had the National Diploma (ND) qualifications and above were randomly chosen from over 50 ex-lepers from their colony to make up the sample for the study. This is because all the respondents are holders of OND and above and as such are in the better position to understand and fill the questionnaire used for the study.

An 18 item questionnaire was the instrument used for data collection. It had 2 parts: Part "A" and "B". The Part "A" had 2 items on demographic information of the respondents while part "B" contained a 16 item on the issue under discussion. The questionnaire was given to three experts, two in librarianship and one in measurement and evaluation from the Delta State University Abraka, for content and face validity. The Internal consistency of the instrument was ascertained with a questionnaire administered to 20 ex-lepers at their colony in Ossionio Leprosy Settlement in Orhionmwon local government area of Edo state.

The data collected were subjected to Cronbach Alpha which yielded coefficient value of 0.82. The data collected were analyzed using means. The questionnaire was structured on a 4 point rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA), 4 points; Agree (A), 3 points; Disagree (D), 2 points; and Strongly Disagree (SD), 1 point. The criterion mean was 2.50 therefore mean scores of 2.50 and above, were accepted whereas below 2.50 were rejected.

The interpretation and analysis of the data are presented below:-

Results

Results are presented according to research questions.

Research question one

What are the benefits of a library in Eku Leprosarium?

Item statement

Table 2: Benefits of Establishing a Library in Eku Leprosarium

N = 46

	ITEM STATEMENT	SA	A	SD	D	MEAN	REMARKS
1.	Eku Leprosarium need a library	32	07	-	01	3.75	Accepted
2.	The library will help in the reduction of diseases through the provision of information materials.	25	10	02	03	3.42	Accepted
3.	The library will help in the improvement of health services through announcing to the users via information materials on opportunities of campaign and immunization	28	10	-	02	3.60	Accepted
4.	The library will inform and educate the Leprosarium and lepers on the causes, symptoms, prevention and control of the disease	40	-	-	-	4.00	Accepted
5.	It will also assist the staff on information about leprosy so that it can be curtailed.	38	02	-	-	3.95	Accepted
6.	The library will also help to retrieve and package information in a format that will easily be adopted by leprosariumand their staff.	20	08	08	04	3.10	Accepted

7	The library will help both the lepers, ex lepers and their families and children get literate: learn to speak, read and write.	30	08	01	01	3.67	Accepted
8	The Audio-visual Section of the library can provide documentaries that can be translated into local languages and other forms of illustration that can depict the important aspect of leprosy and its cure.	25	10	03	02	3.45	Accepted
9	The library can serve as an agency for recreation and aesthetics.	40	-	-	-	4.00	Accepted

From Table 2, the results show that Leprosariums need libraries. The respondents agreed on the identified benefits of libraries to a Leprosarium as:- the reduction of the disease through the provision of information materials that will be read by the lepers, ex lepers and staff of the Leprosarium.

These information materials will also educate them on the causes, symptoms, preventions, and control of the disease. The library among all things will serve as an agency for recreation and aesthetics. They will also provide documentaries that can help them understand the important aspects of the diseases.

Ways Libraries can help the Leprosariums achieve their missions are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3: Ways Libraries can Help Leprosariums Achieve their Mission.

	ITEM STATEMENT	SA	A	SD	D	MEAN	REMARKS
1.	The provision of resources for clinical and laboratory research	35	05			3.87	Accepted
2.	Engaging in training and teaching activities directed towards disseminating knowledge and treatment skills	30	05	03	02	3.62	Accepted
3.	To provide for educational growth of the lepers.	40				4.00	Accepted
4.	To promote the rehabilitation of patients cured of leprosy by the provision of their information resources	28	10	01	01	3.62	Accepted
5.	Through the information resources, the Leprosarium will engage in advocacy against society's misconceptions regarding leprosy and the stigmatization of lepers.	35	05			3.87	Accepted
6.	Organisation of health services through orientation, seminars, and workshops on leprosy disease and other related diseases.	35	04		01	3.82	Accepted
7.	Provision of information on the causes, symptoms and prevention of leprosy and other related diseases	30	05	02	03	3.55	Accepted

Table 3 shows how libraries can help the Leprosarium achieve its mission. The respondents who are the staff of Eku Leprosarium agreed that libraries could help the Leprosarium in achieving their mission especially through the provision and dissemination of their information resources.

Discussion

From the findings it is obvious that Leprosariums need libraries. The study also revealed that libraries will help in the reduction of leprosy and other diseases associated with leprosy like tuberculosis through the provision of information materials. Also these information resources can help in the improvement of the health conditions of the lepers. As an information center it will also help educate the lepers on the causes, symptoms, prevention and early control of the disease. This view is supported by Lyman, (1997) and Obaro, (2018) when they wrote that “the library information resources will provide and intimate their users who are the lepers on the causes, symptoms prevention and control of the disease called leprosy and its related diseases”.

The relevance of libraries in helping the Leprosarium to achieve its mission cannot be over emphasized. From the study conducted, it was also found out that the library will help both the lepers, ex lepers and their families who live in their colonies around the hospital premises get literate, learn to speak and write good English, and also serve as an agent for recreation, education and aestheticism. This view corroborates the position of Skinenes and Fraiser (2012) when they wrote that a Leprosarium should provide for the general welfare, educational growth and spiritual care of resident patients. Spiritual books domiciled in the library can also help their spiritual growth.

The library will also help in the improvement of health services of the users who are mainly lepers through announcing to them the opportunities of campaign and immunization via their information materials, which will also assist the staff on information about leprosy, so that the disease can be curtailed. The Audio-visual section of the library can also provide documentaries that can be translated into local languages and other forms of illustrations that can depict the cure of leprosy.

These views were supported by Lyman, (1997) and Bolum, (1997) who opined that the Audio-visual section of the library can provide documentary films that can be translated into local languages, also Posters and other forms of illustrations that can help with the cure of leprosy. Similarly, the information resources will help the lepers and the staff of the Leprosarium to engage in advocacy, against society's misconceptions regarding leprosy and the stigmatization of lepers which is one of the core vision of the Leprosarium as corroborated by Skinsnes and Fraizer (2012) when they wrote that, one purpose of establishing Leprosarium is to lead the way in attacking society's misconceptions regarding leprosy and its maltreatment of persons suffering from leprosy by means of a programme of dissemination of information concerning all aspect of the diseases.

Conclusion

The mission and vision of Leprosarium is to have a world free from leprosy and its accompanying deformities, disabilities and social discrimination. A world where poverty related diseases like tuberculosis, Buruli ulcer and HIV are under control. The study has clearly shown that libraries are needed in the achievement of this vision

and mission because libraries are agents of growth both education and spiritual. They are also agents of recreation and aesthetics. Information is power. Establishing a library in Eku Leprosarium will benefit the staff, lepers and ex-lepers of the Leprosarium because the information materials if utilized will help in the reduction of the leprosy disease. It will also inform and educate them on the causes, symptoms, prevention and control of the disease.

This will help the Leprosarium achieve their core missions and visions which include rehabilitation of patients to provide facilities for treatment of leprosy and the provision of basic facilities for clinical and laboratory research in leprosy. From the findings, it can be deduced that a library is relevant in a Leprosarium and are also needed in the achievement of the visions and missions of establishing a Leprosarium. Conclusively lepers and ex-lepers also need this information through the establishment of libraries.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made for the study.

Eku Leprosarium and other Leprosariums need libraries. This is because the libraries will inform, educate, and announce to the users who will be the staff of the Leprosarium¹, lepers and ex-lepers through the information resources on the cause, symptoms, prevention and control of the disease.

The establishment of the library will help Leprosariums achieve their missions and vision of a world free from leprosy and its accompanying deformities, disabilities, and social discriminations because through the information resources, they will engage in advocacy against society's misconceptions regarding leprosy and the stigmatization of lepers.

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