

CHAPTER-17

THE BANE AND BLESSING OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC LOCKDOWN: PERSONAL EXPERIENCE



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ABSTRACT

The aim of this paper is to put together in a concise form, the major experience of the author during covid-19 lockdown. It covers the author's personal challenges, benefits and achievements during the quarantine period. Important steps for actualising great results and the academic social media networking sites were pointed out in this paper. It was concluded that one can actually make the best out of the odd situations.

Keywords: COVID-19 Pandemic, Lockdown, Personal Experience, Bane, Blessing

INTRODUCTION

Federal government of Nigeria, through the Federal Ministry of Health announced the first case of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in Lagos State on the 27th of February, 2020. Shortly after the announcement, some measures were adopted as a timely response for controlling and containing the pandemic. Shutting down of the economy was among

the chief measures that government implemented right in time. This impromptu decision of the government altered people's dreams and goals; I was mostly affected, I guessed!

The Bane of COVID-19 Lockdown

It was on a brilliant morning, sometime in March, 2020 that I received an interesting phone call which I had been waiting for so long. I was given a job offer in one of the universities I cherished so much and I was expected to assume duties in three weeks time. The following day, I started making arrangement for my relocation to the new work station not knowing that unusual realities will ensue (covid-19 pandemic nationwide lockdown). Two weeks later, I received a message from the university that the Federal Ministry of Education has ordered that all the academic programmes should be halted and that students should vacate campus with immediate effect as a response to contain Covid-19 pandemic until further notice. Then, the uncertainty started unfolding!

Few days later, all the public and private institutions, churches, mosques, recreation centres, banks, interstate movement and the entire economy were locked down. Then, everything took a different dimension. I was so worried about the interruption this sudden development had brought to my goals and aspirations as I thought the lockdown was going to last for a short while. After one month, I was still stuck inside the house - no income, no visit to friends, no gym; the only thing I was doing for a complete month was to eat, sleep and watch television.

COVID-19 Lockdown brought a lot of distortions in every facet of my life initially. Within a month period lifestyle changed; house became boring, depression gradually set in, weight increase became obvious and access to meet friends and hangout was shutdown. Well, those were among the very adverse experience I had during the lockdown.

Blessing of COVID-19 Lockdown

A month later, after the coronavirus pandemic lockdown was initiated, I determined to turn the

situation to my advantage by revisiting all the research projects I left undone due to tight work schedules. It was a great opportunity I have never had for a long time. After I took the decision to deepen myself in research activities, I realised how much I could achieve if I utilised the lockdown period judiciously. I remembered that as an academic, researcher, author and poet; all I needed was enough time to research and write as much as I could.

Research Writing Experience during Lockdown

During covid-19 lockdown, I had profound opportunity to improve my research skills. Though research was part of what I almost do frequently, I decided to study each of the stages of research afresh to see if I could learn something different as to enhance my skill. After a thorough study, I discovered new things about research and improved significantly. I was able to conduct research in emerging areas in Library and Information Science including management control system, e-learning, digital libraries, multimedia, information literacy, legal collection etc. Consequently,

during and after the lockdown, some of my research works which I submitted to reputable international peer-reviewed journals were accepted and published. I also had opportunity as an editor and reviewer to a number of international journal publishing firms.

Poem Writing Experience during Lockdown

Coronavirus pandemic lockdown provided me with great opportunities to write amazing poems. I was able to write dozens of poems and entered several poem competitions. I however, won a first runner prize for 2020 Alayians Poem Contest; and still waiting for the result of other ones.

Professional Collaboration Experience with Social Media

As covid-19 restricted workers from coming to office, the only option was to work from home using personal computers. My computer with strong internet connection made it possible for me to connect to colleagues all over the world through social media platforms. I joined professional group in facebook, whatsapp, twitter, linkedIn, google scholar

etc. to enable me get updates on trending issues and swap information with colleagues and friends.

Entrepreneurial Initiative during Lockdown

Covid-19 lockdown brought me so many business ideas and initiatives. It is a well-known fact that “necessity is the mother of invention.” When I faced some economic realities at the initial stage of the lockdown, I created time for myself to think on the way forward. This resulted into several businesses that culminated to various income streams.

Making the Best out of the Odd Situation

It is possible to turn a hell of a situation into a desired paradise. In a quest to make the best out of the odd situation, I found the following helpful:

- Commit your ways to the Lord, trust Him and He will guide you
- Give quality time to whatever you have chosen to do; be patient and focus on the result you want to achieve. Don't allow anyone or anything to distract you. I tried to carry my wife along and let her know what I was up to.

- With regards to writing a research articles, try to choose a topic that would contribute to knowledge. However, before you submit your work for publishing; ensure that you choose the right journal, read the author or submission guideline of the journal and make sure you follow instruction accordingly.
- You can achieve a lot of positive outcomes through social media other than casual chatting. Social media could be used as a learning tool and knowledge expansion mechanism. If you were a researcher, try making use of ResearchGate, Google scholar, Academia.edu etc. they are great providers of scholarly publication across disciplines.
- Pay less attention to television and radio. These two electronic appliances are time killers and can only be used in moderation.
- Regarding income generation, try not to put your eggs in one basket. Don't depend on one source of income. With diversification of

income streams, one would be able to survive situations such as covid-19 lockdown and other emergency situations.

Conclusion

In fact, the six months of lockdown were amazing moments for me. I spent quality times with my family, enjoyed various indoor games and watched interesting movies with my household. The lockdown period was very useful to me as I had ample time to improve my research and writing skills. I also discovered and used more academic and professional social networking sites such as Google scholar, Academic.edu, ResearchGate, Mendeley, Zotero, Refworks, Bibsonomy, CiteUlike, LinkedIn, Instagram, Twitter, etc.

The above mentioned academic and professional social networking sites were so amazing and useful to me for research and professional collaboration. They could be used for locating current scholarly publications, sharing of research outputs and networking with scholars and professionals across disciplines. Therefore, I

recommend them to researchers. In the beginning, covid-19 lockdown seemed like a thorn in my toes but at last, it turned out to be a blessing for me. We can actually make the best out of the odd situations. Despite the fact I wrestled covid-19 pandemic lockdown victoriously, I do not wish to face any other pandemic lockdown in the future.