

ICT Influence on Globalization of Library and Information Services Delivery in Academic Libraries in South West, Nigeria

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Abstract

This paper examines the influence of ICT on globalization of library and information services delivery in academic libraries in south west, Nigeria. Seven public universities were randomly selected from the geopolitical zone of Nigeria. Respondents are library officers and librarians working in the selected university libraries. A total of 130 copies of the questionnaire were administered on the respondents out of which 99 were returned and found useable for the data analysis. Data collected on the study were analyzed using simple percentages. The result reveals that the respondents are fully aware of what globalization entails and the benefits accruing from it to academic libraries; the libraries studied are automated, though only few of them are fully automated; the library softwares used are Koha, Virtual, Alice and Millennium; the most difficult challenges faced by the respondents in the use of ICT among other challenges are erratic power supply and low bandwidth.

Keywords: Academic libraries, Globalization, Information and Communication Technology, Library service delivery

1. Introduction

Academic libraries have long been recognized as an indispensable companion to tertiary education, and the “heart” of universities. They are meant to support the universities to achieve their vision and mission. According to Ogunsola (2004), academic libraries are established to support the educational objectives of their parent bodies, which include teaching, learning, research, and cultural development. To achieve these, the libraries had to develop and maintain more vibrant information resources and services in its easiest, fastest and comprehensive way. These have been made possible with the adoption and integration of information and communication technology into the functions and services of academic libraries.

The advent of information and communication technology has brought about paradigm shift in the way academic libraries now operates. In the last two decade, academic libraries have been affected by changes brought about by information and communication technology. These changes according to Krubu & Osawaru (2010) are still accelerating in this area. In this era of globalization, Information and communication technology (ICT) applications has resulted in a climate of transition and change in academic libraries all over the globe. In other words the advancement of ICT has brought about tremendous changes in the quality and quantity of library and information services delivery. Such changes according to Krubu & Osawaru (2010) are evident in computing technology, communication technology and mass storage technology, they further stressed that these are some of the areas of continuous development that reshape the way that libraries access, retrieve, store, manipulate and disseminate information to users. Other technological advancement areas in the library operations mentioned by Krubu & Osawaru (2010) are electronic databases, online services, CD-ROMs etc.

Chisenga (2006) defined Information and communication technology as a diverse set of technological tools and resources used to communicate and to create, disseminate, store, and manage information, and they encompass a wide range of rapidly evolving technologies including telecommunications technologies, such as telephony, cable, satellite, TV and radio, computer-mediated conferencing and videoconferencing, as well as digital technologies, such as computers, information networks (Internet, the World Wide Web, intranets and extranets) and software applications. ICT applications offer library the opportunity to provide value-added information services and access to a wide variety of digital-based information resources to their patron. The adoption of ICT by academic libraries has led to globalization of library services (Aina, et al. 2010).

The term globalization according to Aina, et al (2010) is used to describe the ability to access information using telecommunication based Internet resources. It provides the ability to create, organize, manipulate and access information from remote locations across the globe in a matter of seconds. Within a relatively space of time the internet has delivered means of bridging the knowledge gap between the developed and developing countries. Okebukola (2002), averred that the need for the globalization of library services in Nigeria arises because no single library can be completely sufficient in terms of its acquisitions. He posits that the networking of libraries (library co-operation and integration) will ensure that network members make up for their own shortfalls with the strengths of others. By implication, collections that are not locally available can be accessed from other

libraries having such collections within the framework of network or library co-operation. The beauty of it is that library patrons in any given library can have access to the resources or information from other libraries, both within and outside the country (where there is interaction) through the use of relevant ICTs.

The objectives of this study therefore are to determine the computerization/automation state of academic libraries in Nigeria; ascertain the library software utilized in academic libraries in Nigeria; find out the benefits of ICT application in academic libraries; determine the level of knowledge of globalization of library services librarians and identify the challenges facing the use of ICT in academic libraries.

1.1 Research Questions

1. What is the level of computerization/automation of academic libraries in Nigeria?
2. What is the library softwares utilized in academic libraries in Nigeria?
3. What are the perceived benefits of ICT application in academic libraries in Nigeria?
4. What is the level of knowledge of globalization of library services by librarians?
5. What are the challenges facing the use of ICT an academic libraries?

2. Literature Review

Globalization in plain term is the synergic affect that come to play when there is connectedness and pulling of ideas and resources from across the world globe. Okiy (2010) see it as a process of leading to greater interdependence and mutual awareness among economic, political and social unit of the world. She further averred that globalization is the “accelerated compression of the contemporary world and the intensification of consciousness of the world as a single entity”.

Obilade (2003) defines globalization as the transformation of a domestic matter to a matter of international concern or regulation. However, the common trend in the various literatures on globalization is the fact that information and communication technology (ICT), which has attenuated the world to a global village, leading to interconnected and interdependent world is an important driving force of globalization. In pursuance of common interest, libraries around the globe have in the past few decades attempted to put heads together to form of library consortia, collaborating and co-operating through their inter library loan system on a voluntary basis to facilitate resource sharing among member libraries (Aina, 2003).

With advances in information and communication technology, and collaboration of libraries through inter – library loan system as well as formation of consortium has become a global reality. The application of ICT in libraries has broadened the scope of librarianship and conferred new roles on libraries. Emojorho (2011) noted that the accelerated adoption and use of information and communication technology (ICT) has resulted in the globalization of information and knowledge resource. In a consortium, the member libraries are linked together through electronic information network. This reduces the costs of acquisition of information materials and still allows users of individual library to have access to a great number of information materials that ordinarily one library may not possess.

Everyday new technological progresses influences the way information is handled in Academic libraries and information centers. The benefit of new technologies is felt by libraries in every aspect. Communication technology, Computing technology and mass storage technology are some of the areas of continuous development that reshape the way that libraries access, retrieve, store, manipulate and disseminate information to users. Technology is changing expectations about how to find, use and share information across the globe and libraries are changing along the way. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) according to Krubu & Osawaru (2010) has brought unprecedented changes and transformation to academic library and information services. Conventional library and information service such as OPAC, current awareness services, users services, reference services, bibliographic services, document delivery, interlibrary loan, customer relations and audio visual services can be provided more efficiently and effectively using ICT. They offer convenient time, cost effectiveness, place, faster and most-up-to-date dissemination and end users involvement in the library and information services process.

The application of communication device such as fax, computer (e-mail), and videoconferencing and more recently mobile phones overcomes obstacles of space and time, and opens new potentials for learning. The use of Internet today has revolutionized access to information for the business world, libraries, education, and individuals. A few of the most popular include e-mail, FTP (File Transfer Protocol), World Wide Web, Usenet, and Telnet. All these technological devices can be considered as backbones of the concept of globalization. Anyasi, et al (2012) pointed out that the internet and its technology continues to have a profound effect in promoting the sharing of information especially in academic world, making possible rapid transactions among businesses and supporting global collaboration among individuals and organizations.

The benefits of ICT in a library system are self evident and overwhelming. Okolo (2002) pointed out that the library needs ICT in order to give efficient services to its users. Not only is the speed of its operation elevated, the degree of its output is equally large. When ICT is applied in the library, there is economy of labour and operating cost. The accelerated adoption and use of ICT means that bibliographic databases, full-text documents, and digital library collections are always available to users (Chisenga, 2004). In a bid to globalize academic libraries and reap the benefits ICT offers, university and other tertiary institutions register and pay for online databases like AGORA, HINARY, AORE, LANTEEAL, AGRIS, BLACKWELL, ELSEVIER, INFORMIT, INTUTE, JSTOR, SCIRUS, SPRINGER, SAGE, EBSCO, EMERALD, CAB etc. These online databases afford researchers access to varied information resources across the globe. It is however interesting to know that the potent force driving the world toward a converging commonality (global village) is information and communication technology (ICT).

The above reviewed literature dwelt on the concept of globalization and its benefits, the role of information and communication technology in globalization, globalization and libraries, and the effect of adoption and application of ICT to library services. This study attempted to investigate the extent to which libraries, librarians and library officers in the South-West Nigeria understand the concept of globalization and ICT. This is the little gap that this study intends to fill.

3. Methodology

A survey design method was employed and questionnaire was used for data collection. The simple random sampling method was used to select 7 out of the 16 public universities in the South-West Nigeria. The sampled public universities comprise 4 federal and 3 state government owned universities in the South-West, Nigeria. Librarians and library officers were selected as respondents for the study. The total sample size of the library officer and librarians in the 7 public universities selected was 130. The selected universities are Federal university of Agriculture, Abeokuta (FUNAAB), University of Lagos (UNILAG), Lagos state University (LASU), University of Ibadan (UI), Olabisi Onobanjo University (OOU), Tai Solarin University of Education (TASEUD) and Ladoke Akintola University of Technology (LAUTECH). A total of 130 copies of questionnaire were administered and out of which 99 were returned and found usable for this study. Data collected on the study were analyzed according to the research questions using descriptive statistics of frequency and simple percentage scores. The analysis was presented in tables.

Table 1: Questionnaire Distribution and Rate of Return

S/n	Name of University	State	Year Founded	Sample Size	Ques. Returned	Rate of Response (%)
1.	U.I	Oyo	1948	21	14	66.7
2.	LAUTECH		1990	14	7	50
3.	FUNAAB	Ogun	1988	25	24	96
4.	OOU		1982	17	14	82.4
5.	TASUED		2005	15	12	80
6.	UNILAG	Lagos	1962	24	21	87.5
7.	LASU		1982	14	7	50
Total				130	99	81.1

4. Findings

Demographical information of the respondents

Library officer is the predominant status among the respondents with 47 (47.5%). There were 15 (15.2%) assistant librarian, 12 (12.1%) librarian II, 10 (10.1%) librarian I, senior librarian 11 (11.1%) while 4 (4.1%) principal librarian. The study revealed more respondents with masters' degree than any other category. 12(12.1%) of the respondents were Diploma of library science holder, 29(29.3%) were with first-degree, master's degree holders were 45(45.5%), 8(8.1%) were M.Phil holder and 5 (5.1%) with the PhD. The predominant

working experience of the respondents is 6-10 yrs with 32 (32.3%), < 6 yrs with 27(27.3%), 11-15 yrs with 18(18.2%), 16-20 yrs with 9(9.1%), 21-25 yrs with 5(5.1%), 26-30yrs 3(3.1%) and > 30yrs with 8(8.1%).

Table 2: Demographical information of the respondents

Items		Frequency	%
Job Status	Library Officer	47	47.5
	Assistant Librarian	15	15.2
	Librarian II	12	12.1
	Librarian I	10	10.1
	Senior Librarian	11	11.1
	Principal Librarian	4	4.1
	Total	99	100
Educational Qualification	PhD	5	5.1
	M.Phil	8	8.1
	Masters	45	45.5
	First Degree	29	29.3
	DLS	12	12.1
	Total	99	100
Working Experience	< 6 years	27	27.3
	6-10 years	32	32.3
	11-15 years	18	18.2
	16-20 years	9	9.1
	21-25 years	5	5.1
	26-30 years	3	3.0
	Above 30 years	8	8.1
	Total	99	100

Research Question 1: what is the stage of computerization/automation of academic libraries in Nigeria?

In order to find out the computerization stage in the selected academic libraries, the respondents were asked if their library had been automated or not. 87(87.9%) of the respondents agreed that their library is automated while 12 (12.1%) indicated that their library is not automated. Majority of the libraries studied are partially automated as indicated by 79(79.8%) of the respondents as against 20(20.2%) who indicated full automation. It can be deduced therefore that majority of the libraries are yet to be fully automated. Furthermore, more than half 54(54.5%) of the respondents indicated that the library services are on-line while 45(45.5%) indicated that the library services are not on-line. (See table 3 below).

Table 3: Stage of computerization/automation of academic libraries in Nigeria

Questions	Responses	Frequency	%
Is your library automated?	Yes	87	87.9
	No	12	12.1
	Total	99	100.0
What is the level of library automation in your library?	Full	20	20.2
	Partial	79	79.8
	Total	99	100.0
Are your library services on-line?	Yes	54	54.5
	No	45	45.5
	Total	99	100.0

Research Question 2: what is the library Softwares utilized in academic libraries in Nigeria?

The table below presents the distribution of the selected academic library based on the type of library automation software used. The result showed that Ladoke Akintola University and Federal University of Agriculture Abeokuta use KOHA. For Lagos state University and Olabisi Onabanjo University, they make use of Alice for Window. University of Ibadan and University of Lagos make use of Virtual and Millennium software respectively while Tai Solarin University of Education does not specify any software.

Table 4: Library Management Software Employed

Institution	Library Software
FUNAAB	KOHA
TASUED	Nil
OOU	ALICE
UNILAG	MILLENNIUM
LASU	ALICE
UI	VIRTUAL
LAUTECH	KOHA

Research Question 3: what are the perceived benefits of ICT application in academic libraries?

The table 5 below presents the respondents views on the benefit of ICT in library services. reveals that ICT is most beneficial to library because ICT Provide access to unlimited information , it has made automation of library possible, It Increase range of services offered, it has make Online reference service possible , also access to experienced and expert individuals in various field of discipline have been possible and that they follow the trend of new research opportunities in my area of interest through the use of ICT and lastly ICT has close the gap of time and space in term of collaboration with colleagues outside my university.

Table 5: Perceived Benefits of ICT in Library Services

Benefits	Responses							
	SA		A		D		SD	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Provision of access to unlimited information	56	56.6	38	38.4	5	5.1	-	-
ICT has made automation of library possible	55	55.6	40	40.4	4	4.0	-	-
Increase range of services offered	44	44.4	51	51.5	4	4.0	-	-
Online reference service	43	43.4	52	52.5	3	3.0	1	1.0
Access to experienced and expert individuals in various field of discipline	38	38.4	53	53.5	8	8.1	-	-
Through the use of ICT, it is possible to access other libraries collections	39	39.4	57	57.6	3	3.0	-	-
ICT has close the gap of time and space in term of collaboration with colleagues outside my university	43	43.4	49	49.5	6	6.1	1	1.0

Library services offered with ICT

The table below presents the library services offered using ICT. The table reveals that only online searching were been operated using ICT as indicated by (83.8%) as against (16.2%) who indicated “No”, This proof that library services like Registration of users, charging and discharging, SDI services etc were been handle using manual method.

Table 6: Distribution of library services offered with ICT

Library Services	Responses			
	Yes		No	
	Freq	%	Freq	%
Registration of User	43	43.4	56	56.6
Charging and Discharging	29	29.3	70	70.7
SDI services	26	26.3	73	73.7
Current awareness	39	39.4	60	60.6
Users Notification	29	29.3	70	70.7
Reference Services	30	30.3	69	69.7
Library Co-operation	29	29.3	70	70.7
On-Line Searching	83	83.8	16	16.2
Digitization	42	42.4	57	57.6

ICT and Globalized Library Services

The table below presents the respondents views on whether ICT can enhance attainment of globalization of library services or not. 94(94.9%) response indicate that improvement in the use of ICT can enhance

globalization of library services whereas 5(5.1%) response indicate otherwise. More so, respondents were asked whether they know what globalization of library services entails or not. 97(98.0%) indicate “Yes” while 2(2.0%) indicate “No”. From the data presented below it can therefore be concluded that ICTs are important tools for enhancing globalization of library services. Furthermore the data shows that what globalization of library services entails is not new to librarians.

Table 7: ICT and Globalized Library Services

Statement	Responses		
	Parameter	Frequency	%
Does ICT can enhance globalization of library services	Yes	94	94.9
	No	5	5.1
	Total	99	100.0
I know what globalization of library services entails	Yes	97	98.0
	No	2	2.0
	Total	99	100.0

Research Question 5: What are the levels of Knowledge of ICT and Globalization Possessed by Librarians?

The respondents’ knowledge of ICT and globalization were investigated. The findings showed that 99(100.0%) opined that globalization is a world in which people interact with their colleagues around the globe via ICT such as social media, 99(100%) agreed that globalization is a world where exchange of information messages and activities are coordinated through variety of ICT facilities, 93(93.9%) agreed that globalization is a global village where world problem have become inter connected and urgent solution can be offered, while 6(6.1%) disagree, in addition, 97(98%) of the respondents agreed that globalization is a world where information professional will be able to communicate not only as global community but also create global information marketplace with opportunities to participate in exchange while 2(2.0%) disagree More so, 93(93.9%) agreed that globalization is Information re-engineering and management are made easier through electronic importation of professional skills and ideas while 6(6.1%) disagree. furthermore, 97(98%) of the respondents agreed that globalization has improved scholarly communication to academics libraries through ICTs while 2(2.0%) disagreed.

Table 8: Respondents’ Knowledge of ICT and Globalization

Statement	Responses							
	SA		A		D		SD	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
A world in which people interact with their colleagues around the globe via ICT such as social media	55	55.6	44	44.6	-	-	-	-
A world where exchange of information messages and activities are coordinated through variety of ICT facilities	50	50.5	49	49.5	-	-	-	-
A global village where world problem have become inter connected and urgent solution can be offered	41	41.4	52	52.5	5	5.1	1	1.0
A world where information professional will be able to communicate not only as global community but also create global information marketplace with opportunities to participate in exchange	49	49.5	48	48.5	2	2.0	-	-
Information re-engineering and management are made easier through electronic importation of professional skills and ideas	44	44.4	49	49.5	4	4.0	2	2.0
Globalization has improved scholarly communication to academic libraries through ICTs	48	48.5	49	49.5	1	1.0	1	1.0

Research Question 6: What are the challenges of ICT use in Nigeria?

The data collected as shown in table 7, revealed that a total of 94(94.9%), 91(91.9%), 87(87.9%), 85(85.3%), 83(83.8%), 70(70.7%), 64(64.6%) and 62(62.6%) of the respondents agreed that Erratic Power supply, Low internet band width, Low level of Automation, Lack of Technical Knowhow, Non-Availability of ICT facility tools, Technophobia, Time Constraint and Lack of Awareness were the challenges faced by librarians in the studied university libraries respectively, while 5(5.1%),8(8.1%), 12(12.1%), 14(14.1%), 16(16.2%), 29(29.3%), 35(35.4%) and 37(37.4%) of the respondents disagreed that Erratic Power supply, Low internet band width, Low level of Automation, Lack of Technical Knowhow, Non-Availability of ICT facility tools, Technophobia, Time Constraint and Lack of Awareness were challenges in the use of these ICT. Findings thus proof that erratic power supply in the country Nigeria and low internet bandwidth are the most difficult challenges of ICT use in Nigeria.

Table 9: Challenges of ICT use in Nigeria

Challenges	Responses							
	SA		A		D		SD	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Technophobia	26	26.3	44	44.4	21	21.2	8	8.1
Time Constraint	21	21.2	43	43.4	29	29.3	6	6.1
Erratic Power supply	68	68.7	26	26.3	5	5.1	-	-
Low level of Automation	35	35.4	52	52.5	10	10.1	2	2.0
Lack of Awareness	22	22.2	40	40.4	28	28.3	9	9.1
Lack of Technical Know how	27	27.3	58	58.6	13	13.1	1	1.0
In-Availability of ICT facility tools	38	38.4	45	45.5	14	14.1	2	2.0
Low internet band width	56	56.6	35	35.4	5	5.1	3	3.0

5. Discussion of Findings

From the findings of this study it can be averred that nearly all the libraries sampled are automated, though only few of them are fully automated. This finding corroborated the opinion of Ogunsola (2010) when he posited that Nigerian universities are now gradually being automated. The findings also revealed that the library’s services in most of the sampled libraries are on-line. The types of library software deployed in computerization/automation process are Koha, Alice, Virtual and Millennium.

The responses given by the respondents as regards the usefulness of ICT to their library services clearly depict that ICT have impacted a great deal on the operations and services of the university libraries understudy. This finding corroborates the findings of Krubu & Osawaru (2010). Their study reported that majority of the libraries uses ICT for on-line searching, registration of users, charging and discharging, SDI services, current awareness, users’ notification, reference services, and library co-operation. However, less than half of the libraries studied carry out digitization.

The librarians’ knowledge of globalization is impressive. They are fully aware of what globalization entails and the role played by ICT in globalization of information and library services.

Challenges of ICT use in Nigeria university libraries studied are erratic power supply and low bandwidth as the most prevailing challenges among others. Okonedo, et al. (2013); Anyasi, et al. (2012); Krubu & Osawaru (2010); Atulomah & Onuoha (2011) had reported these challenges in their respective studies.

6. Summary of findings

All the libraries studied have embarked on adoption and utilization of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for their functions and services. However, some of them are partially automated and all of them are yet to fully provide online services to their users. The library management softwares used by the libraries are Koha, Millennium, Alice and Virtual. Tai Solarin university of Education has no library software yet.

Almost all the librarians agreed that improvement in the use of ICT can enhance globalization of library services and; ICT has impacted enormously on the functions and services of academic libraries in Nigeria. These positive impacts are however constrained by numerous challenges.

The challenges of ICT use as indicated in the study are erratic power supply, low internet band width, low level of automation, and lack of technical knowhow, non-availability of ICT facility tools, technophobia, and time constraint and lack of awareness.

7. Conclusion and Recommendations

Without doubt, from the result of this study, it has been seen from all indications that Information and Communication Technology (ICTs) in library and information services have been beneficial and it has enhanced access to information resources with little or no restrictions. Globalization of information services have been facilitated by ICT as there is access to information at remote locations and round the clock. These benefits of ICT have made academic libraries in Nigeria to deploy ICT into their function and services in order to attain globalization. Information and communication technologies have been the central and driving force for the globalization process. To further improve the level of benefits that academic libraries studied can achieve, the following recommendations are proffered.

- (i) Efforts should be made to fully automate the functions and services of the library. Efforts should also be put in place to continuously improve on the automation programmes of the libraries.
- (ii) The libraries should establish and maintain functional website to make available to users their services.
- (iii) The problem of low bandwidth can be addressed through acquisition of V-sat and other telecommunication equipment devoted to the libraries alone.
- (iv) The problem of poor power supply can be ameliorated through provision of alternative power supply such as electricity inverters, solar power energy, and sound proof generators.
- (v) The issue of technophobia and techno stress among the personnel should be taken care of through assurance of job security, and prompt attention to their health needs.
- (vi) Adequate publicity should be given to library services in the library and online services. This will take care of the problem of low patronage and lack of awareness.
- (vii) Skilled technicians should be employed to solve the problem of system breakdown and inadequate maintenance.

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