

Awareness and Utilization of Electronic Resources by Librarians of the Olabisi Onabanjo University Ogun State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The paper looked at the level of awareness of e-resources and utilization by librarians of the Olabisi Onabanjo University Nigeria. The adoption of e-resources has changed the way the daily routine work is carried out by the librarians to accomplish a variety of functions in the libraries.

The instrument used for data collection is a questionnaire which was administered by the researcher to all the 16 professional librarians of the university. The 16 copies of the questionnaire were returned and found usable. The completed questionnaire was analyzed using frequency counts and percentages. Finding from the study revealed that majority of the respondents attested to the availability of internet/e-mail facilities as the most e-resources used by the librarians. Challenges against the usage of electronic resources by librarian were categorized.

Recurrent power outages with (38%) topping the list, followed by limited bandwidth (25%), insufficient fund (19%), and inability to download information (12%), and network problems (06%). Furthermore, the e-resources were use for more than one purpose: for in-house official duty and information services to the patrons.

As a way forward, the study recommends that the library should invest greater part of its budget into the issue of ICT resources for effective service delivery. The constraints that hindered the effective utilization of e-resources by the librarians should be address by the library management **KEYWORDS:** Awareness: Library utilization: e-resources, Librarians, University.

1. Introduction

The introduction of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) into the Nigerian libraries has brought a great change to the library as a service institution Oduwole(2005).its adoption has led to a better way in which librarians performed their duties on daily basis.

Oyedun, (2007) saw electronic resources as facilities that assist the librarians to offer quick, adequate and efficient services to their clientele. It also helps them to meet the diverse needs of their patrons. Therefore, the utilization of e-resources in academic library in Nigeria assists the librarians in performing a dual role: one to the patrons towards their information needs in the school, while the second is manifested in the daily routine work within the library environment where librarians works as seen in the two service units Readers services and Technical sections of the library. The services of librarians utilising e-resources is manifested in the services they offered within the sections within the library such as Acquisition section, Cataloguing unit, Serial Services, Reference and Bibliographic Services, Current Awareness Services, On-line Public access catalogue, and records units. All these services have been given a great boost by applying the facilities of information and communication technologies to the daily functions of the librarians in the library. The most prominent e-resource facilities in Nigerian academic institutions is internet which Omagbemi, Akintola and Olayiwola (2004)saw as information resource that offered limitless access to global information available on net for those who can annex the resources for their benefit. Through the internet, information is being updated regularly which enable users to obtain quick and efficient services at the appropriate time. Looking at theinternet as learning resources Oketunji(2004) as cited by Odunewu and Omagbemi (2008)stated that this resource add value to the services that the librarians offer for the students and staff within the academic community where the library are found.

2. Historical Background of the University Library

The university library came into existence along with the university in 1983. The university operates a multi-campus system at the inception with the main campus situated at Ago Iwoye and other branches at different zones of the state where the campuses of the university are located. The library according to Odunewu and Omagbemi(2008) operates a complex of libraries in all the branches where the school has its campuses. These locations are:

- Main library, Ago Iwoye,

- Law library, Ago Iwoye.
- Main Campus Branch library, Ago Iwoye
- Branch library, Ijebu Igbo
- Faculty of Basic Medical Science library, Ikenne,
- Sopolu Research Library, Ikenne.
- Obafemi Awolowo College of Health Science, Library (OAHCS) Sagamu
- College of Agricultural Science Library, Aiyetoro.

Each of the campus libraries is headed by a professional Librarian with other supporting staff that works together as a unified team to offer information service to the teaming population of the school.

3. Literature Review.

Many authors have written a lot on the issue of availability and utilization of e –resource by librarians in Nigerian universities. Few of them would be considered under this study.

Bandeled (2006) defined e-resource as a scientific means of storing, processing, and sharing information through electronic means such as telephone, Satellite equipment, internet and recently introduced e- resources like e-book, e- commerce and e -learning that are popular information resources in the world. The aforementioned facilities can be referred to as the modern electronic information resources adopted to manage and transfer information from one source to the others. Ogunrinde (2006) conceived it as a great relief to librarian's tedious routine services that characterized the manual library service which has been in operation before the introduction of information and communication technologies facilities to higher institutions in Nigeria. These Information facilities assist in the provision of better and efficient service to the users on daily basis. Oketunji (2000)(6) opined that the information technology facilities found in the libraries can be divided into three categories, i.e., computers, storage media, and telecommunication. According to him, each of these facilities works for the transfer of data and information to the expected destination. Highlighting further, Siddiqui (1997) as cited by Oketunji, (2000) gave the following as component of information technology:

- Automation in public access catalogue, cataloguing, acquisition, periodical Control, Circulation, and reference);
- Personal computer application;
- Compact disk read only memory (CD-ROM) and online searching;
- Electronic mail and electronic bulletin boards.
- Electronic conferencing,
- Telefacsimile (fax).

Through information and Communication technology facilities, librarians have been placed in a vintage position of offering efficient service to his users. Ani (2007) stated that ICT has not only made the library profession an attractive service institutions but service-oriented as compared to the traditional service provision which depend on manual method for its existence. In higher institutions where librarians work the facilities has assisted them to locate, store, retrieve, and disseminate information in a better way to users. Similarly Onasote & Adeniji (2007) and Onyeneke (2007) all agreed with the other writers on utilization of I C T in libraries when they observed that the adoption of ICT has changed the way the daily routine work is carried out by the librarians to accomplish a variety of functions in the libraries. Looking at indispensability of this facilities to human endeavor and other disciplines of the world, Okore and Ekere (2008) says that with ICT in Nigeria, librarians can be referred to as navigators who use the resources to acquire useful information at a great speed out of seas of electronic information sources available in the institutions where they are found. Considering the opportunity, the device offered to librarians in academic institutions in Nigeria, Ikupolati (2009) says that with the on-line library, librarians have opportunities to connect to major libraries of the world. Through this avenue they can stay in their library and through the online resources access the needed information from other libraries through international cooperation which libraries entered into to form a consortium. Other benefits as identified by Akinjide & Oyeboade (2007) are that the ICT assists in overcoming barriers of space and time thereby widening access to the needed information. To benefit immensely from I C T's resources, librarians in African higher institutions need to overcome some challenges that hinder effective utilization which Ehikhemanor (1990) and Missen et al (2007) as cited by Okon, (2007) highlights as lack of manpower, fund, poor maintenance of equipment, power and equipment failure, regulatory restriction of communication technologies, expensive or unreliable technologies, and low local content. These benefits for both users and the centre that provide ICT resources in African higher institutions are highlighted as described by Simiyu (1999)

- share experiences through technologies such as the virtual university,
- increase access to higher education through distance learning,
- increase flexibility in what to learn, how to learn, and when to learn,

- Motivate potential learners to engage in higher education
- Train Facilitators like lecturers to improve their competence in using the new technologies in their instructional activities,
- Assist lecturers in producing teaching and learning resources, and
- Train students in computer literacy to enhance their efficiency.

Therefore, to the librarians, ICT is a significant development that provides tools for managing the avalanche of information resources at their libraries. The library management that has the desire to satisfy numerous users can now utilise the internet for the right information for predetermined users, thereby, satisfying their information needs. However, a librarian with diverse talents and training who is flexible, competitive, and assertive, intellectually committed and equipped with technical and managerial competencies will be able to meet the challenges of the future library scene and excel in effective information services delivery to his immediate community. Another aspect of ICT that is very popular in African tertiary institutions where the librarians utilized for their advantage is CD-ROM; with this facility library patrons have access to a lot of information both at local and global level. One of the reasons why CD-Rom has become accepted as a learning resource that the librarians use in major libraries in Nigeria to offer services to patrons is that the information stored in it cannot be changed, or overwritten or erased. They are not susceptible to viruses, as to retrieval of information from it, the software are user friendly than the on-line command language which may be complicated and require technical expertise for effective use Mosunro (1996), Oguntuase (2004), Oduwale and Sowole (2006) all posited that CD-ROMs enable users to search bibliographical databases on their own with little or no assistance by librarians. Referring to the successful story of information resources like encyclopedias that is available on CD-ROMs devices Okorie, (2010) observed that in future the resources will be more accepted in the library. Apart from the identified e-resources facilities identified above there are software packages that librarians adopt in their in-house routine work, the software packages that are commonly used by librarians as identified by Imo, (2010) are Alice for Window, CD-ISIS, E-lib GLAS, Tin-lib, SLAM, X-Lib and Virtual. These software packages are adopted by the librarians to render services such as instant access to books, identification of the books each user has borrowed and taking stocks of library holdings in a systematic way. Chimeke, Longe, Umar, and Shaib (2007) saw these resources as an aid to both librarians and users in getting the needed information to meet their respective information needs. The adoption of these resources will assist to address the challenges associated with the traditional methods of library services and give the Librarians opportunity to offer library services to users in a manner that would be simple, easy and independent of time, place and subject disciplines. Librarians now provide information services to users in a new and better means. They also offer personal help to users who utilized the resources at the library. Other routine area where librarians use e-resources is in the area of interlibrary loan where service delivery can be carried out through electronic network whereby resources can be shared among many users within Local Area Network (LAN) or Wide Area network (W. A. N). Apart from interlibrary loan we also have on-line Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) which librarians utilized to offer to users the opportunity to access the library collections without the usage of catalogue boxes. This OPAC according to Alabi and Inuwa (2010) is the library database where library users can have accessed to the resources of the library through online computer terminals in the library. In summary, there is no area of library work that librarians have not been able to apply the e-resources in their daily operation to aid their performance.

4. Problem Statement

This study examines the extent to which the utilization of e-resource has affected the daily routine work of the librarians with the aim to promote job performance to enhance job satisfaction as a result of application of information communication and technologies facilities into the library routine services.

5. Objective of the Study

The objectives of the study are as follows:

- Identify the automated e-resources available at the university,
- Identify the category of librarians using the e-resources,
- Identify the duration of the usage of electronic resources,
- Identify the problems associated with the automated electronic resource, and
- Determine the extent to which librarians are satisfied with the e-resources of the university.

6. Research Questions

- What are the various e-resources available at the university?
- What are the challenges before librarians in using the e-resources?
- What is the duration of the usage of the various automated electronic resources?
- Do the librarians use e-resources in performing other routine work in the library?

7. Methodology

A survey design was adopted for the study. The population of the study consists of sixteen (16) professional librarians. The instrument used for the study is a questionnaire which was administered to the total population of professional librarians at the university library. Thus 16 questionnaires were administered to the respondents in the library. The 16 copies representing (100%) were returned and found usable.

8. ANALYSIS OF DATA

Table 1: Category of Respondents by Cadre

Cadre of the respondents	Frequency	Percentages
Librarian 11	06	38
Librarian 1	03	19
Senior librarians	04	25
Principal librarian	02	12
Deputy university librarian	01	06
TOTAL	16	100

The Table 1 revealed that majority of the respondents were from the cadre of Librarian 11 (38%) followed by senior librarian (25%), while the librarian 1, Principal librarian and Deputy Librarian with (19%), (12%), (06%) respectively. From the above, it can be deduced that all librarian in the university utilized the e- resources for routine work

Research Question 1: What are the various e-resources available at the school?

Table2: Respondents opinion on the e-resources available in the school

I C T resources	Frequency	Percentages
CD-ROM Resources	01	06
e-books	02	12
e-journals	03	19
OPAC	02	12
Internet/e-mail facility	04	25
e-Magazine	01	06
Charts	03	19
TOTAL	16	100

Majority of the respondents from the Table 2 attested to the availability of internet/e-mail facility (4 or 26%), e-journal and charts (03 or 19%), OPAC and e-book (02 or 12%), CD-ROM and e-Magazine (01 or 06%) as the e-resources commonly available for librarians use in Olabisi

Onabanjo university library. This finding was in agreement with the works of Ilorah, Nwofor and Onwudijo, (2007) that identifies the various e-resources available at the higher institutions in Anambra state of Nigeria.

Research Question 2: What the challenges before Librarians in using the e-resources?

Table 3: Problems librarian faced in usage of e-resources in the library

Problems	Frequency	Percentages
Facilities and network problems	01	06
Recurrent power outages	06	38
Insufficient fund	03	19
Inability to easily download information	02	12
Limited bandwidth	04	25
Total	16	100

The major problems identified by the users of electronic resources were categorized. The findings revealed that recurrent power outages with (38%) topping the list of the challenges faced by the librarians in utilization of e-resource in their university, this is followed by limited bandwidth, (25%), insufficient funds (19%), inability to download information, (12%) and network problems (06%). The above finding corroborate the work of Adetoun and Kolawole (2010) where they identified some hindrances that the academic staff in south west universities faced in using e-resources.

Research Question 3: What is the duration of the usage of the various automated electronic resources?

Table 4: Duration of usage of E-resources by the respondents.

Respondents Cadre.	Regularly	Very often	As need arise
Librarian 11	4 (25%)	2 (12%)	-
Librarian 1	6(38%)	10(63%)	2 (12)
Senior librarians	1(06%)	3(19%)	1(06%)
Principal librarian	1(06%)	1(06%)	-
Deputy University librarian	-	-	-

From the Table 4, all the librarians used the various e-resources at their libraries regularly or very often in their daily service provision, while the respondents from the cadre of Librarian 1 and Senior librarian utilized the e-resources as the need arise. This finding is similar to the finding of Ani, Onasote&Adeniji and Onyeneke (2007) that observed that ICT are used at different times by users in the library to accomplish a variety of functions.

Research Question 4: Does the librarians use the e-resources to conduct their research and perform routine work in the library?

Table 5: Respondents views on usage of e- resource for research and routine work in the library.

I C T Resources	Use	Not use	No responses
Article Search	50	39	11
L.C online catalogue	40	35	25
Research topic	45	25	30
Internet(e-mail & charting)	60	25	15
OPAC/electronic-theses search	28	22	50

From the Table 5, majority of the respondents used Internet/ e-mail (60%) as the most online resources for their daily routine and research work, article search (50%) Research topic, L.C online catalogue and OPAC/electronic theses search (45%, 40%, and 28%) respectively. The finding from the study revealed that the librarians makes use of the e-resources for more than one purpose either for in -house official duty or for the patrons who approached the librarians for guidance on their study.

9. Conclusion and Recommendation.

The traditional method of “brick and mortar” libraries services need to give way to new method not limited by geographical or other barriers. The fact that we live in knowledge-based society with the need for universal access has made it imperative for the library to redefine its role and mode of service delivery. The librarians with e- skills are more likely to utilize the electronic information resources more than those that lack the required skills. Moreover through electronic resources services access to electronic Journals, books, dissertation and theses, course material and patents are some of the important sources of that are now available for 24 hours which is flexible and convenience to use by multiple users that ensure faster delivery. Any university library without a functional ICT connectivity will eventually become extinct and obsolete. Ajayi (2003) comment further that any industry that sidelines ICT has simply signed a “death warrant” on its continued relevance. The e-resources provide a forum for library users’ flexible learning arrangement which allows the patrons to learn at their own pace and such a freedom would provide opportunity for many learners at the same time to utilized library resources. Some scholars believed that in this age of Information Technology people without adequate knowledge of these facilities would be left behind in the issue of life hence the slogan “computer knowledge basis for existence in this current dispensation.

As a way forward the study recommends that the library should invest greater part of its budget into the development of I C Ts resources for better service delivery. The management of the library should address the constraints that hindered the effective utilization of e –resources by the librarians in Nigerian libraries. For effective utilization of the facilities regular training and retraining should be put in place for both librarians and users.

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