



Assesment of Internet use in the Provision of Information to Students in University Libraries in Nigeria: A Casestudy of AfeBabalola University Library, Ekiti State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The Internet is a giant information super highway that plays a pivotal role in providing the information needs of users in an academic community. This study investigated the assessment of Internet use in the provision of information to students in university libraries in Nigeria: a case study of AfeBabalola university library. The study shows the capabilities of the Internet, the role of Internet in university libraries, benefits and challenges of Internet in meeting the information needs of users. The study finally makes some recommendations in combating the challenges affecting the students' use of Internet in the university library.

Keywords: Assessment, Internet Use, Provision of information, University Libraries

INTRODUCTION

Internet is an information source that is vital to academic performance of students in academic institutions which enables the library to provide information resources beyond the confine of its collections so as to facilitate teaching, learning and research development. Muniandy (2010) observed that the growth of the Internet and the increase of the variety of information disseminated via the World Wide Web have implications for how it is used in education. The exponential growth of information resources is as a result of emergence of computer technology which gave rise to the wide use of the Internet. Internet use in university libraries is germane to students' growth and academic achievement. Tiemo, Bribena and Nwosu (2010) said that patrons are encouraged to use the Internet to advance their research and to reduce frustration and dilemma in search for information resources. Therefore, university libraries should endeavour to provide an enabling environment for effective and efficient use of Internet services to students.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The use of information and communication technology (ICT) is gaining momentum in universities libraries especially now that most universities in Nigeria are adopting ICT in the development and improvement of their services (Oriogu, Ogbuiyi and Ogbuiyi, 2014). Also, Yusuf (2006) maintains that the Internet is an integral aspect of the Information and

Communication Technology (ICT) and is becoming an indispensable tool for quality teaching, learning and research in an academic setting. Its impact on education has been massive, thereby engendering such terms like e-teaching, e-learning, virtual teaching/learning, e-training, and so forth, all developed around Internet application in the field of education. The advent of Internet in academic institutions has greatly increased the growth of research, in which academic communities can have smooth network of different libraries collections. Salako and Tiamiyu (2007) said that the rapid growth of the Internet and the Web is characterized by both digital information revolutions. The digital information revolution and explosion manifest in the ever increasing quantities and array of new electronic information resources provided by computer networks and the Internet, including Web pages, newsgroups, mailing list, electronic archive, networked databases, software application and business services. and knowledge.

. The most popular form of Information and communication technology (ICT) is the Internet which is often referred to as electronic superhighway. This has helped to reduce the world to a “global village”. The Internet is a global network of many different types of computers that are linked together for communication purposes which makes it easy for a user, library, information centers and institutions to access, use and share wide range of information resources. Edoke, (2000) said that the Internet connectivity is the highest level of computer – based information network, sometimes referred to as information superhighway, can be viewed as an immense world – wide linkage of a great number of different types of computers and computer networks. Reitz (2004) vividly defined Internet as:

“ the high-speed fiber-optic network and networks around the world, enabling users to communicate via e-mail, transfer data and program files via FTP, find information on the World Wide Web and access remote computer systems such as online catalogs and electronic database easily and effortlessly, using an innovative technique called packet switching”.

Hence, searching, sharing, accessing and using the Internet are more effectively done by performing keyword searches on tools specifically designed for the purpose - “the Search engines”- which provides a list of relevant results to the search term. The Internet provides diverse electronic information resources such as e-mail, chat groups, file transfer protocol, etc, which provides students with easy access to e-books, e-journals, research materials, and interactive collaboration. Therein, the Internet has become a global source of information resources accessible at any time by anyone from anywhere in the world. It has converted the whole world into a global information society. It has tremendously improved communication and interaction among scientific research community and enabled access to a vast range of latest information. It acts as a powerful supplement to the traditional way of information access. It facilitates electronic and exchange of ideas and information among the scholars all over the world.

The growth of Internet services has greatly increase the rate of information resource availability to university libraries; in that academic communities has gain profitably in the services of the Internet; which has invariably increased the output of research and information resources. Ibegwam (2004) suggested that students’ use of Internet will improve if institutions should put in place training on the use of Internet, provided free Internet services, use VSAT to improve connectivity and increase workstations connected to the Internet. As Internet have many potentials and functions in education, academic institutions needs to develop and improve students Internet skill in order to utilize the Internet resources effectively.

In most developed countries, the implementation of education curricula to develop and improve computing and Internet search skills for problem solving in both teachers and students is already ingrained in school and college life, as confirmed for the United States by the Pew Internet & American Life Project (2005). The study found that US college students were heavier users of the Internet compared to the general population, partly because they have grown up with computers since their early childhood, and partly because the Internet is a part of the college student's daily routine.

Sani and Tihamiyu (2005) have observed that automated information services (including Internet access services) in Nigerian federal universities began to accelerate as from early 1990s, when the World Bank intervened with a loan to improve the institutional capabilities of the Nigerian universities. Hence, Oyedun (2007) conducted a study on the Internet use in the Library of Federal University of Technology Minna, and observed that, most of the respondents claimed that through the Internet services in the library, they have improved considerably in their academic performance. Jagboro (2003) carried out a study of Internet in Nigeria universities where opinion of 73 respondents was sought for on the use of the Internet, two-third of the respondents indicated that they used it for e-mail to get research and course materials. Therefore, they recorded low level of utilization of the Internet was attributed to low level of connectivity and the high cost of cybercafé facilities. Also Salaam (2003) in a survey of the use of Internet services in Nigeria university libraries found that access to Internet services in the libraries was restricted to staff only.

The Internet revolution is not just limited to finding information but also to fostering relationships that bring people together. Daraman (1997) highlighted the advantages of Internet to academics and Information specialist as follows:

- The Internet permits accessibility to bibliographic records of millions of books as well a detail of academic work and libraries around the world;
- Internet allows one to communicate with any professional colleague around the world for the process and development of professionalism;
- with abundant information resources in the internet, the libraries can provide better access to their patron by giving them access to information that will be difficult to locate ;
- on the internet valuable information in electronic format, libraries, books, journals, magazines and newsletters are made available;
- as reference resources, the internet provides a wealth of up-to-date information in bound volumes etc.

However, in order to effectively use the Internet for research and academic purposes, university libraries should endeavour to provide efficient Internet connection so as to enable students, lecturers and researchers to greatly exploit information resource to meet their academic needs.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The introduction of Internet in the university libraries has made great changes in the provision and retrieval of information resource. Therefore, for academic institutions to grow in research and attain global recognition, it must fully develop and maintain effective Internet connectivity in order to facilitate smooth access and use of Internet by students. It is observed that most students do not adequately make use of the Internet for academic purpose. However, this study investigated the assessment of Internet use in the provision of information to students in

university libraries in Nigeria: A case study of AfeBabalola university library, Ado Ekiti, Ekiti State, Nigeria.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The main objective of this study is to investigate assessment of Internet use in the provision of information to students in university libraries in Nigeria. They specific objective to the study are to:

- ascertain the level of knowledge of Internet by students in the university library;
- determine the frequency of use of Internet by students in the university library;
- determine the purpose of using Internet in the university library;
- ascertain the extent of Internet services in the university library;
- ascertain the benefit of Internet use to students;
- find out the challenges that hinder effective Internet use by students in university libraries in Nigeria.

METHODOLOGY

Survey research method was adopted for the study and structured questionnaire was used to collect data. A total of hundred (100) students of AfeBabalola university library users were sampled, out of which ninety seven (97) was completed for analysis using frequency counts, simple percentage, mean, standard deviation, to answer the research questions. Thus, Random sampling technique was used to administer the questionnaire.

ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

S/N	Statements	Options	Frequency	Percentage
1	Level	100 level	68	70.1
		200 level	6	6.2
		300 level	13	13.4
		400 level	6	6.2
		500 level	4	4.1
2	Gender	Male	35	36.1
		Female	62	63.9
3	Age	15-18 years	74	76.3
		19-21 years	22	22.7
		Above 25 years	1	1.0

TABLE 1: Demographical Variables

Table 1 shows the demographical Variables of the respondents below:

Level: 68(70.1%) are 100 level, 6(6.2%) 200 level, 13(13.4%) 300 level, 6(6.2%) 400 level, while 4(4.1%) 500 level. Gender: 35(36.1%) are males while their female counterparts are 62(63.9%). Age: 74(76.3%) are between 15-18 years, 22(22.7%) 19-21 years, while 1(1.0%) are above 25 years.

Items	Frequency	Percentage
Beginner	12	12.4
Average	63	64.9
Expert	22	22.7
Total	97	100.0

TABLE 2: Level of Internet knowledge of the respondents

Table 2 above shows that 12 (12.4%) are beginner, 63(64.9%) average and 22(22.7%) are expert in the knowledge of the Internet.

Items	Frequency	Percentage
Daily	49	50.5
Weekly	34	35.1
Monthly	2	2.1
Twice monthly	1	1.0
Never	11	11.3
Total	97	100.0

TABLE 3: Frequency of the use of Internet

Table 3 shows that 49(50.5%) of the respondents use the Internet Daily, 34(35.1%)weekly, 2(2.1%), monthly, 1(1.0%) Twice monthly, while 11(11.3%) indicated Never.

S/N	Statements	Never	Somewhat	Yes	Mean	Std
1	For project\research work	5 5.2%	2 2.1%	90 92.8%	2.88	.46
2	For course assignment	9 9.3%	2 2.1%	86 88.7%	2.79	.59
3	Learning more about a subject	10 10.3%	11 11.3%	76 78.4%	2.68	.65
4	For term paper	23 23.7%	25 25.8%	49 50.5%	2.27	.82
5	For seminar presentation	31 32.0%	19 19.6%	47 48.5%	2.16	.89
6	For entertainment	29 29.9%	30 30.9%	38 39.2%	2.09	.83

TABLE 4: Purpose of use of the Internet

Table 4 shows the rating of the items on the purpose of use of the Internet as follow: For project\research work (Mean =2.88) was ranked highest in the mean score rating and was followed by For course assignment (Mean =2.79), Learning more about a subject (Mean =2.68), For term paper (Mean =2.27), For seminar presentation (Mean =2.16) and lastly followed by For entertainment (Mean =2.09).

S/N	Statements	D	SD	A	SA	Mean	Std
1	Internet services in the library is accessible	17 17.5%	1 1.0%	42 43.3%	37 38.1%	3.02	1.05
2	Internet services in my university library are very functional	16 16.5%	5 5.2%	40 41.2%	36 37.1%	2.99	1.05
3	Internet services in the library is satisfactory	24 24.7%	2 2.1%	51 52.6%	20 20.6%	2.69	1.06
4	There is high regulation of internet services	25 25.8%	5 5.2%	53 54.6%	14 14.4%	2.58	1.03
5	Internet connectivity is very consistent	27 27.8%	7 7.2%	48 49.5%	15 15.5%	2.53	1.06
6	There are no Internet connectivity in the library	48 49.5%	34 35.1%	11 11.3%	4 4.1%	1.70	.83

TABLE 5: Extent of Internet services in the University Library

S/N	Statements	D	SD	A	SA	Mean	Std
1	Internet use has improved my online searching and retrieval skills	11 11.3%	%	30 30.9%	56 57.7%	3.35	.96
2	Internet use has increased my use of the online resources	12 12.4%	%	40 41.2%	45 46.4%	3.22	.96
3	Use of Internet has aid the transfer of my academic work to my lecturers with ease	22 22.7%	2 2.1%	44 45.4%	29 29.9%	2.82	1.10
4	Internet use has contributed to my group discussion with course mates	20 20.6%	1 1.0%	52 53.6%	24 24.7%	2.82	1.03

TABLE 6: Benefits of Internet use to the Students

Table 6 shows the rating of the items on benefits of Internet use to the students below: Internet use has improved my online searching and retrieval (Mean =3.35) was ranked highest in the mean score rating and was followed by Internet use has increased my use of the online resources (Mean =2.99), Use of internet has aid the transfer of my academic work to my lecturers with ease (Mean =2.82) and lastly followed by Internet use has contributed to my group discussion with course mates (Mean =2.82),

S/N	Statements	Never	Somewhat	Yes	Mean	Std
1	Low access speed	25 25.8%	45 46.4%	27 27.8%	2.02	.74
2	Download of materials takes time	31 32.0%	33 34.0%	33 34.0%	2.02	.82
3	Delay in Internet connectivity	36 37.1%	36 37.1%	25 25.8%	1.89	.79
4	Power outage	46 47.4%	34 35.1%	17 17.5%	1.70	.75
5	Unaware of how to find relevant information	56 57.7%	31 32.0%	10 10.3%	1.53	.68
6	High cost access	67 69.1%	17 17.5%	13 13.4%	1.44	.72

TABLE 7: Challenges encountered on the use of the Internet

Table 7 shows the rating of the items on Challenge encountered by students. It revealed that low access speed (Mean =2.02) ranked highest in the mean score rating and was followed by download of materials takes time (Mean =2.02), delay in internet connectivity (Mean =1.89), power outage (Mean =1.70), unaware of how to find relevant information (Mean =1.53) and lastly followed by high cost access (Mean =1.44).

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings shows that female students 62 (63.9%) formed the majority of the respondents. This is against the study of Ford, Miller and Moss (2001) who found that female students intended to experience more difficulty in finding information online.

The study revealed that 64 (64.4%) of the respondents have average knowledge of the Internet and mostly use the Internet on daily and weekly basis. However, majority of the respondents use the Internet for research, course assignment and learning more about a subject. It also revealed that Internet services in the library are accessible, functional, satisfactory and

consistent. Based on the benefit of Internet use, the study shows that Internet has improve students online searching and retrieval skills, access to online to online resources, improve FTP and group discussion

with course mates. Finally the respondents indicated that the only challenges they encounter on using the Internet are low speed access and time taking to download materials.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Internet is a giant information super highway that plays a pivotal role in meeting the information needs of users in an academic community. Gatenby (2003) asserts that the greatest phenomenon of recent years has been the explosion of the Internet. However, university libraries are fast embracing the digital driven environment because of its necessity in education. Therefore, university libraries should endeavour to develop and improve their Internet services to students in order to create an enabling environment for learning and research.

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