Usage and Awareness of E-Resources by Lecturers in Two Selected Nigerian Universities

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Abstract

This research work examines the level of Usage and Awareness of E-resources by lecturers in two Universities in Nigeria; this was done with a view to survey the exposure of lecturers to electronic information resources. The population of the study consists of lecturers from the Federal University, Otuoke and the Western Delta University, Oghara. The questionnaire is the instrument used for data collection. Frequency count and simple percentage was used to analyze the data collected. Results from the study revealed that the respondents were aware of e-resources and that the level of usage is high. E-journals and E-books were identified as the mostly consulted e-resources. It was discovered that the main purpose of using e-resources by the lecturers is for research work and the channel of access of these electronic information resources is through the search engines and the University e-library. Majority of the respondents indicated that they were very satisfied with the level of e-resources used in the University. However, slow internet services, erratic power supply, inadequate computers, lack of online access, lack of technical knowhow and lack of e-resources have been identified as major constraints militating against effective use of e-resources in the selected Universities. Necessary recommendations were suggested.

Introduction

The term e-resources is seen as library's information bearing materials that are in electronic form which include electronic books (e-books); electronic newspapers (e-newspapers); electronic journals (e-journals) as well as Internet resources. However, electronic resources have placed themselves at the top priority in academic and research institutions (Sharma, Singh, and Sharma, 2011). The impact of e-resources on libraries cannot be over emphasized because it has transformed the concept of the library in its totality. Now libraries not only have printed materials but also digital resources. University libraries have witnessed a great metamorphosis in recent years both in their collection development and in their service structures. University libraries are now using technology to improve the management of scholarly information to

strengthen and speed access to scholarly information not held locally like the library consortium (Sharma, Singh, and Sharma, 2011).

According to Dadzie (2007) electronic resources are invaluable research tools that complement the print–based resources in a traditional library setting. Their advantages, according to her include: access to information that might be restricted to the user due to geographical location or finances, access to more current information, and provision of extensive links to additional resources related contents. This rapid emergence and development of electronic information technologies therefore makes it possible to envision radically different ways of organizing the collections and services the library has traditionally provided (Dadzie 2007). While libraries approach a crisis point in financing collection development, these new technologies offer possible ways to mitigate costs and revolutionize ways to access information. In a similar view electronic resources according to Tekale and Dalve (2012) have the following features: available any time of the day; provide hyperlinks; huge information reservoirs; quick information; various search options; easy citations; ease in uploading and updating; ease in storage and dissemination; flexibility; time, space and cost are not major hurdles; ease of archiving.

In Nigeria, the National Universities Commission (NUC) has subscribed to a number of international and local journals and made them accessible in Nigerian Universities through its URL link @www.nigerianvirtuallibrary.com on the internet. In addition, NUC (National Universities Commission), NULIB (Nigerian University Libraries Consortium) and EIFL.NET (Electronic Information for Libraries Network) are partnering to provide electronic resources on the internet towards qualitative teaching/research in Nigerian Universities (Okiki 2012).

Research Questions

- What is the level of awareness of e-resources by lecturers in some selected Universities?
- What is the level of usage of electronic resources by the lecturers?
- What are the e-resources that are mostly consulted by the lecturers?
- What is the purpose of using e-resources by lecturers?
- Where do lecturers access electronic information?
- What is the impact of e-resources on the lecturers?
- What is the satisfaction level with e-resources by the lecturers?
- What are the factors that hinder usage of e-resources by lecturers?

Literature review

Many studies have been carried out on electronic information resources by different researchers. According to Klobas (1995) "electronic information resources are information resources provided in electronic form, and these include CD-ROMs, resources available on the Internet such as e-journals, e-print, and other computer-based electronic networks. Sukula (2010) defines electronic resources as "an electronic information resources that can be accessed on the web, on or off campus. User can get the information that he or she wants, when it is needed". Electronic resources have provided wider access to information in universities for teaching, learning, and research than the traditional print through the use of information and communications technologies (ICTs) by library patrons. "The transition from print to electronic medium, apart from resulting in a growth of electronic information, has provided users with new tools and applications for information seeking and retrieval" (Tsakonas and Papatheodorou, 2006).

Bayugo and Agbeko (2007) reported on a survey of convenient access to, and use of electronic databases (CDROM and online) with full-text journals and their effect on information seeking behavior of health sciences academics at the College of Health Sciences of the University of Ghana. The survey documented academics preferences of print and electronic resource, and the specific databases and full-text journals. The results showed that Academics were unaware of the two full-text journal databases (HINARI and PERI) available at the Library. Hence they resorted to PUBMED as their source of access to full-text articles. They concluded that most academics now prefer using electronic access to information (CD-ROM/online) to traditional print indexes and abstracts.

Herring (2002) studied the use of electronic information resources in 12 scholarly peer-reviewed electronic journals. The journals represented areas of active interdisciplinary research available through the Web without subscription or registration. A total of 175 articles published from 1999 to 2000 were examined. The 175 articles had a total of 4289 unique references. Over 55% of the articles (97) cited electronic resources. In addition 658 citations, or 16% of the total, were to electronic resources. The 97 articles that referenced electronic information resources had a total of 2584 unique citations, 26.5% of which were to electronic information resources.

Okiki (2012) in his study found that out of 113 respondents, 61 (54%) indicated low level of awareness of e-resources when compared to 52 (46%) who indicated high level of awareness of EIRs. This implies that the level of awareness of e-resources is quite low.

A study by Olarongbe and Ibrahim (2011) shows that e-journals and e-books are more commonly used among the respondents with 169 (91.8%) and 159 (86.4%) respectively. 105 (57.1%) of the respondents use e-newspapers, while e-dictionaries are used by 101 (54.9%) of the respondents. E-reference books are also used by 97 (52.7%) of the respondents. Even though e-magazines, CD ROM, online reference databases and OPAC are in use but they constitute only less than 50% each of the total response with 32.6%, 17.9%, 44.6, and 29.3% respectively. In a similar study Okiki (2012) found that e-journals and e-databases were the most used electronic information resources by the respondents as seen from their responses which are 103 (28%) and 96 (27%), respectively.

Egberongbe (2011) in his study revealed that most users accessed e-journals and search engines to get required information at Unilag library 40(39.6%) lecturers and 33(47%) research scholars preferred to use e-journals whereas 50(45%) Lecturers and 23(33%) scholars made use of search engines to get desired materials, online database were also very popular among research scholars as 14(20%) of them preferred to use them. E-books were used less by both lecturers and scholars in comparison to other online resources. The study as revealed that majority of lecturers used Science Direct 60(53.6%), EbscoHost 32(28.6%) or Agora, 24(21.4%) respectively. On the satisfaction level of e-resources, the study of Egberongbe further revealed that 50(44.6%) of lecturers, and 32(45.7%) of researchers were satisfied with the existing IT infrastructure. This is against 62(55.4%) lecturers and 38(54.3%) research scholars who were not satisfied with the IT Infrastructures. In a similar view Olarongbe and Ibrahim (2011) found that that 50.0% of his respondents were satisfied with e-resources, while 21.2% were very satisfied with e-resources they use in the university. 17.9% and 10.9% of the respondents were neutral and not satisfied on the e-resources they use in the university.

A study by Olarongbe and Ibrahim further showed that the majority 163 (88.6%) of the respondents are using electronic resources for doing research work and 124 (67.4%) for curriculum development in their specialization, followed by 118 (64.1%) of respondent who

were using it for their self-educational development. Whereas, 72 (39.1%) use electronic resources to meet technological growth, 54 (29.3%) of the respondent use it for other purposes. The study also revealed that majority 123 (66.8%) of the respondents access electronic resources through search engines and 108 (58.7%) get access through private subscriptions. Followed by 89 (48.4%) of respondent get access in the e-library of the university. Whereas, 58 (31.5%) and 57 (31.0%) of the respondent get access on the library website and electronic databases respectively.

Okiki (2012) observed in his study that major reasons of using electronic information resources by the Academic staff members of University of Lagos are research activity, Paper writing for publication, and teaching. Majority 113 which represent 37% indicated research activity followed by 104 (34%) for Paper writing for publication, 46 (15%) for teaching, while 30 (10%) for presentation in seminar conference/workshops, and 14 (4%) is for Leisure.

There are many problems militating against the use of electronic resources. The study of Olarongbe and Ibrahim (2011) found that slow internet service (59.8%), lack of constant power supply (47.8%), and lack of online access (42.4%) were major factors hindering the usage of e-resources. Similarly, other constraints like, lack of technical know-how, dislike of reading from a screen and lack of awareness of e-resources are also often affecting the use of e-resources with 27.7%, 27.2% and 22.3% respectively.

A study of Egberongbe (2011) revealed that the majority of the respondents 181 (98.4%) stated that e-resources aids research. Similarly, 158 (85.9%) indicated that e-resources improve teaching ability, and 157 (85.3%) stated that it helps the development of the educational system. However, 131 (71.2%) respondents stated fostering relationship among academics, while 128 (69.6%) expressed it brings academic to the fore-front of their profession. Others indicated access to current up-to-date information and broadening of horizon is the benefit of using electronic resources.

Oduwole and Akpati (2003) carried out a study on use of electronic information resources at the University of Agriculture Library in Abeokuta, Nigeria; his study also identified lack of ICT and power supply outage as constraints to use of electronic resources. In the same vein, Watts and Ibegbulam (2006) surveyed some of the barriers to the use of electronic information resources

available at the Medical Library of College of Medicine, University of Nigeria, Nsukka. Their findings exposed that lack of an adequate ICT (information and communication technology) infrastructure and affordable online access, absence of in-depth ICT skills and information searching skills among library staff, and cost of using the cybercafé are barriers to the use of electronic resources.

A study by Okiki (2012) shows that slow internet access (29%), erratic power supply (30%) and too much of information overload (23%) were major factors. Other less constrains factors were dislike reading from computer screen (13%) and non-availability of relevant electronic information resources to information needs (5%). Though, some respondents remarked that the Library supposed to provide more Internet access ports as well as wireless environment.

In order to ensure that electronic information services are most effectively utilized, Bartle and Walton (1996: 1) suggest that an institution should;

- Be committed to electronic information sources provision
- Provide suitable access to electronic information sources for all staff and students
- Provide effective and timely training for academic staff and students
- Ensure that hardware and software are compatible and reliable

Method

The survey research design was adopted in conducting this research. Questionnaire was the instrument employed for data collection. The study population comprises of one hundred and fifty three (153) lecturers from the Federal University, Otuoke and the Western Delta University, Oghara. The questionnaire was the instrument used for data collection. A total of 153 copies of questionnaire were distributed and 150 were retrieved and found usable. The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics. The results are presented below.

Finding and Discussion

Response Rate of the Respondents

No. of questionnaire administered	No. of questionnaire retrieved
184(100%)	150 (81%)

The researcher was able to retrieve 150 (81%) out of the 184 (100%) questionnaire administered. Thus, indicating a high response rate.

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents According to Institutions

Tertiary institutions	Frequency
Federal University, Otuoke	83 (45%)
Western Delta University, Oghara	101 (54%)

Table 1 shows the distribution of the respondents from the sampled institutions. It revealed that 83 (45%) of the respondents are from the Federal University, Otuoke while 101 (54%) of the respondents are from the Western Delta University, Oghara. This shows that majority of the respondents are from the Western Delta University**.**

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents According to Teaching Experience

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
1-2yrs	47	31%
2-3yrs	38	25%
3-4ys	39	26%
4-5ys	26	17%

Table 2 shows the distribution of respondents according to their teaching experience. Majority 47 (31%) indicated that they have 1-2yrs teaching experience. This is followed by 39 (26%) who have 3-4yrs teaching experience

Table 3: Distribution of Respondents According to Educational Qualification

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
PhD	52	36
M.sc	90	60
Bsc	8	5

Table 3 shows the distribution of respondents according to educational qualification. Majority of the respondents 90 (60%) possess M.Sc degrees. This is followed by 52 (36%) who possess PhD degrees respectively

Table 4: Frequency of Electronic Resources Use

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Weekly	47	31
Monthly	34	23
Daily	52	34
Occasionally	19	13

Table 4 shows that majority of the respondents 52 (34%) used e-resources on a daily bases. This is followed by 47 (31%) respondents who use e-resources on weekly bases.

Table 5: Level of Awareness of Electronic Resources

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Aware	132	88
Unaware	18	12

Table 5 shows that majority of the respondents 132 (88%) indicated that they are aware of e-resources while 18 (12%) indicated that they were unaware of it. This study is in agreement with

that of Okiki (2012) who found that out of 113 respondents, 52 (46%) indicated high level of awareness of EIRs.

Table 6: Level of Usage of Electronic Resources

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Used	135	90
Unused	15	10

Table 6 shows the level of usage of e- resources. Majority 135 (90%) indicated that they are use e-resources while 15 (10%) agreed that they don't use it. This study is in conformity to that of Bayugo and Agbeko (2007) who found that most academics now prefer using electronic access to information

Table 7: E-resources that are mostly consulted

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
E-books	32	21
E-journals	52	35
E-newspapers	28	16
CD Rom	17	11
E-Dictionaries	12	8
Online reference databases	9	6
OPAC	-	-

Table 7 shows the e-resources that are mostly consulted in the library. Majority indicated e-journals and e-books 52 (35%) and 32 (21%) respectively. E-newspaper 28(16%), this is followed by CD Rom 17 (11%). This study is in agreement to that of Olarongbe and Ibrahim

(2011) who found that e-journals and e-books are more commonly used among the respondents with 169 (91.8%) and 159 (86.4%) respectively.

Table 8: Purpose of Using E-Resources

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Research work	70	47
Paper writing for publication	32	21
Teaching	23	15
Seminar / Workshop presentation	12	8
Leisure	4	3
Entertainment	10	7

Table 8 shows the purpose of using e-resources. Majority indicated 70 (47%) that major purpose of using e-resources is for research work. This is followed by paper writing for publication 32 (21%). This study is in conformity to that of Okiki (2012) who observed that the major reasons of using electronic information resources by the Academic staff members of University of Lagos are research activity, Paper writing for publication, and teaching.

Table 9: Access to Electronic Information Resources

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
University e-library	22	15
University library website	13	9
Search engines	93	62
Private subscription	13	9
E-database	9	6

Table 9 shows that majority of the lecturers 92 (62%) indicated that they access electronic information resources through the search engines. This is followed by the university e-library 22 (15%). This study is in agreement to that of Olarongbe and Ibrahim (2011) whose study revealed that majority 123 (66.8%) of the respondents access electronic resources through search engines and 108 (58.7%) get access through private subscriptions

Table 10: Impact of E-Resources on Academic Staff's Teaching and Research

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Aids research	81	54
Improve teaching ability	35	23
Brings academic to the forefront of your profession	9	6
Helps the development of the education system	16	11
Helps to foster relationship among academics	9	6
Others	-	-

Table 10 shows that majority of the lecturers 81 (54%) indicated that it aid research, this is followed by improving teaching ability 35 (23%). This study is in conformity to that of A study by Olarongbe and Ibrahim (2011) showed that the majority 163 (88.6%) of the respondents are using electronic resources for doing research work.

Table 11: Satisfaction Level with E-Resources

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Very satisfied	91	61
Unsatisfied	40	27
Do not know	19	13

Table 11 shows that majority of the lecturers 91 (61%) indicated that they are very satisfied with the level of e-resources used in the University while 40 (27%) were unsatisfied with it. This study is in agreement to that of Olarongbe and Ibrahim (2011) found that that 50.0% of his respondents were satisfied with e-resources

Table 12: Factors that Hinder Usage of E-Resources by Lecturers

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Lack of e-resources	12	8
Lack of technical know how	7	7
Slow internet services	51	34
Lack of online access	7	5
Inadequate computers	19	13
Lack of materials relevant to your field	10	7
Erratic power supply	44	29

Table 12 shows the factors that hinders the use of the electronic resources. Majority 51 (34%) indicated slow internet services, followed by 44 (29%) who indicated erratic power supply. This study is in conformity to that of Okiki (2012) which shows that slow internet access (29%), erratic power supply (30%) are among the problems militating against effective use of e-resources. In a similar vain, Oduwole and Akpati (2003) carried out a study on use of electronic

information resources at the University of Agriculture Library in Abeokuta, Nigeria; his study also identified power supply outage as constraints to use of electronic resources

Conclusion

The study concludes that electronic information resources are highly desirable and it has lead to increased productivity of work, learning, teaching and research. Hence it has diversified the ways of communication, storage and retrieval of information, demands of users and information management system in the University libraries.

Recommendation

- The Internet services of the selected Universities should also be improved upon, so as to facilitate easy access to the available e-resources
- The libraries in the selected Universities should re-orientate their lecturers on how to access electronic information resources subscribed to by the University
- Lecturers should be provided with computer plus Internet access in their respective offices.
- The University library should provide more of online journals and electronic resources.
- The University Library should find an alternative way to generate power supply such as a standby generator, inverter or solar energy system

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