



THE USE OF THE E-LIBRARY IN UMARU MUSA YAR'ADUA UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

By

Segun Adewole

&

Saddiq A. Batagarawa

University Library

Umaru Musa Yar'adua University, Katsina

ABSTRACT

This study was motivated by the high level of investment and commitment being made by the authorities of the Umaru Musa Yar'adua University (UMYU) and the Library on the provision and development of electronic services to its users. There is the concern to see the justification of this provision through the analyses of the use by the users' community. The vision of the founders of the Library is to run a near perfect electronic Library environment. Data were collected through a structured eight items, 34-question questionnaire, administered on the first 100 users of the e-Library facility of the Library; on the basis of "Administration while stock last". The completed copies of the questionnaire were collected upon completion, on an on-the-spot basis, resulting in a 100% return/response rate. More than 70% of the users are male and 87% are single; 97% are students of the University; with students from the Department of Education being the highest users; 75% and 55% using this facility to do assignments and for research purpose respectively, while Google and Yahoo are the two most used search engines.. Also, 98% of the users are computers literate; but only 42% are very good on the machine, while the remaining 56% are fairly computer literate. Among others, the study recommended that a course on "Use of Computer" be made compulsory for all students of the University so as to achieve a 100% ICT compliant university environment and attain the goal of the Library.

Introduction

Libraries have remained unchallenged in the field of providing information to its teeming users, until recently that the internet and computers overthrew its monopoly. According to Pugh (2010), libraries had been the safe gate keepers of information in all fields of human endeavour. Ugwuanyi and Ezeani (2010) see the fundamental and age long responsibility of libraries as that of acquiring and organizing record of human communication. They have the duty of delivering the information records to their clients and preserving them for future generation. The borders of librarianship are constantly changing with the roles they play in modern day information provision. Weiner (2003) is of the view that libraries are today faced with challenges to their



existence, in view of the modern information needs. Igben and Akobo (2007) opined that there is evidence to prove that libraries in the more developed world are fast losing their users, as only a few people visit the libraries for the traditional services, as what they used the library for can now directly be assessed using their computers to connect to the avalanche of available databases and sites on-line; to locate, order, and download copy of articles or information without moving out of their homes or offices.

In this vein, Estabrook (2004) premised that in order to retain their relevance, libraries have begun to offer services to their communities, even outside the walls of the libraries. There are new ubiquitous libraries referred to as virtual/digital libraries. This is why Akintunde (2004) is of the view that since the last decades, libraries world-wide have undergone significant metamorphosis from purely traditional manual service delivery system to a more dynamic technologically driven system. In the words of Igun (2006), the entry of the internet technology into the information world “is as if the world has developed to real information superhighways” she further asserts that the internet has helped to satisfy peoples’ hunger for knowledge and further research. This is the traditional role of the library. Igben and Akobo (2007) conclude that library automation is a necessity because of the benefits of increasing effectiveness and efficiency of performing basic data handling task in the Library.

The Concept of Electronic Library

Globalizations and information system management have become new phenomenon that has swept through the library divide in the last two decades. In the last ten years, students and teachers in Nigerian tertiary institutions have increasingly demanded and preferred access to electronic sources delivery, and networked information from their respective Libraries. According to Covi and Cragin (2004), electronic service in libraries is one of the greatest technological advances being experienced in the 21st Century. It revolves around advancements in Information and Communication Technology (ICT), which has gone a long way to influence the mode of information gathering, storage, organization and retrieval. The importance of ICT in Nigerian libraries is no longer an issue in contention. Rather, it is how the libraries can ensure their continuous derivation of the benefits from the new opportunities afforded by ICT. In order to bridge the gap that existed between traditional and modern methods of information management practice, the use of ICT in Library operations must therefore be seriously pursued.

According to Nkanu and Okon (2007), Nigerian librarians must accept that the use of the technologies of modern computer based information systems is a major force that has the capabilities of transforming the traditional methods used in cataloguing and classification, indexing, abstracting, etc. According to them, all technologies that process, store and communicate data and information in libraries should be managed as integrated systems and be used as access tools for the libraries’ resources. Gbaje (2007) observes that the implication of transporting library services to the on-line environment for the Nigerian academic Libraries in the digital age are enormous particularly with the dynamic nature of the digital technology which is constantly creating the needs for new skills, work environment and work methods. It is in this vein that Omekwu (2003) suggested that librarians need to have such added qualities as: Competency with search engines and their workings, internet facilities along with their



operations, e-mail and the internet navigational tools; others include; Web browsers and sole formats, and Database software management among others.

Umaru Musa Yar'Adua Univerity, Library

The university library is made up of a very strong central (main) library that houses a collection of relevant and current or near current books and periodicals in all the subject areas of the University programme of studies. There are presently three faculty libraries established to cater for the three existing faculties, viz; Faculty of Education, Humanities and of Natural and Applied Sciences. These libraries are fully electronic with facilities to log on and search the collections of the main library from their locations. A few departments are allowed to operate Libraries called Resource Room. These departments have peculiar needs for a resource room for their programme of study. The departments are Library and Information Science, Economics, Nigerian and African Languages. The main library complements its services with the establishment of an electronic library. It is opened Mondays to Fridays 8:00a.m–10:00p.m. and 9:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m. Saturdays, but closed on Sundays and Public Holidays. The advantages associated with the operations of electronic library services can therefore not be over-emphasized. According to Fallon (2011) the academic Libraries need these advantages than other Libraries because of what they offer, she identified these to include:

- a) Easier citation and faster access to research information,
- b) Access to wider range of literature
- c) Faster browsing of literature which improves research
- d) Opening up of new areas for research
- e) Provision of greater collaborative opportunities among libraries and
- f) Provision of multi-disciplinary research results

It is in the premises of these expectations among others that UMYU and Library Management concentrated effort in the establishment of the e-Library services.

The e-Library of UMYU

The University main Library has an e-Library system comprising of 122 fully connected desk-top and lap-top computers. This facility is located in four separate axis locations of the Library as follows: A 52-seater e-Library is domiciled on the ground floor with desk-top computers, fully connected to the internet. There is a 50-seater facility equally twenty five each on the top floor at the two wings of the library's serials unit. These sets are fitted with lap-tops which are also fully connected to the internet. The fourth e-Library is reserved for lecturers and researchers. It contains 20 laptops located also at the top floor and also connected to the internet. The server for the e-Library is domiciled in the Library.

Objectives of the Study

This study sets out to examine the level of use of the e-Library facilities of the university library with a view to identify any needed areas of improvement that would improve its services to the user community. A number of factors have been selected to examine its effectiveness to the objectives of the establishments of the Library; these includes the gender factor, user class



divide, user computer experience and a number of other factors considered potent for a good e-Library practices.

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive design method using questionnaires to collect data. Since the primary focus of the study was to examine the use of the Library's e-Library facilities, it was decided to administer a total of 100 questionnaires, consisting of 34 questions and answer options divided into 8 structures with focus on: gender and marital status, status in the University, Faculty and Department affiliations, frequency of use, reason for use, use of search engines, motive for use, duration per contact and level of satisfaction among others. The rationale for the number of questionnaires administered was purely convenience. The 100 copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the first 100 users of the e-Library unit on the basis of first come first served until the questionnaires were exhausted. No user was served more than one questionnaire and in-view of the nature of questions asked and in an effort to collect all administered questionnaire, users were waited upon to fill and return before leaving the library. This method resulted in a 100% return rate of the questionnaires. The questionnaires were exhausted in 13 days of administration. The responses from the retrieved questionnaires are collated and analyzed by simple frequency and percentage for analyses. As earlier explained, the sample size of 100 was deliberate for ease of analysis, while the choice of respondents was open to the first 100 users to the 4 operational e-Library locations. The following are the results from the analyzed responses.

Analyses and Discussion

Gender of Users

Under the bio-data section, 73 of the respondents are male, while the remaining are 27 female. That 73% of the e-Library users are male was expected in view of the total number of male to female ratio among both staff and students of the University. Secondly, only a few of the female students live on-campus. This has an adverse effect on the use by this group of users, as they tend to hurry in for lectures and also hurry out off-campus with less or no time to visit the e-Library for extra-search activities. Keying in on the effect of marital status on the use of the e-Library, particularly of the female students users did not produce any peculiar result. The analyzed data reveal that only 13% of the users are married (3 females and 10 males). A use duration analysis of this set of users did not produce any strange result either. This finding is presented as follows:

Table 1 – Marital Status

Status	Frequency	Percentage
Married	13	13
Single	87	87
Total	100	100

Users' Status

Table 2, which is on the users' status in the university confirms the justification for the establishment of a reserved e-Library facility for senior staff, particularly the teaching staff. The table below speaks for itself:

Table 2 – Users Status

Status	Frequency	Percentage
Lecturers	2	2
Non-Academic	1	1
Students	97	97
Others	-	-
Total	100	100

Only 3% of the users are non-students, as 97 of the respondents are students of the University. Two lecturers and one senior technical staff were the only non-students users who patronize the e-Library during the 13 days of the administrations of the questionnaires. One reason that may account for this low turn-out is the fact that most of the lecturers have personal lap-top used within their offices, and also may not be too willing to expose their computer usage incompetence before their students. It is however confirmed that staff, teaching and non-teaching rarely use the Library generally. The three non-students user used the facility reserved for this category of users which is not fully known to lecturers and staff of the university.

Table 3: Distribution of Respondents by Faculty

Faculty	Frequency	Percentage
Education	28	28
Humanities	26	26
Natural & Appl. Sciences	46	46
Total	100	100

There are presently 3 faculties in Umaru Musa Yar'adua University. As expected, the highest numbers of e-Library users are from the Faculty of Natural & Applied Science, while the least users belong to the Faculty of Humanities. The detail effect of the faculty representation is shown in the departmental profile, where surprisingly department of Education has the highest score of 23%. Detail of this is presented as table 5:

Table 4: Distribution of Respondents by Departments

Department	Frequency	Percentage
Education	23	23
Library & Inf. Science	5	5
Economics	9	9
Arabic & Isl. Studies	4	4
History	7	7
Nigerian languages	5	5
English	1	1



French	0	0
Geography	17	17
Physics	4	4
Chemistry	4	4
Biology	9	9
Math & Computer	12	12
Total	100	100

Table 4 above shows that the Department of Education has the highest percentage score of 23%, while no student or staff of the Department of French used the e-Library during the period of this study. Education department has the highest students' population and a section, the score therefore is understandable. Geography Department incidentally has the highest score in the Faculty of Natural and Applied Sciences with 17% and Economics in the Faculty of Humanities with 9 scores.

Use Duration per Contact

Respondents were asked to state their use duration per contact with the e-Library and the result obtained revealed that most of the users spend between 1-2 hours on the computer each time they visited the e-Library. They are 66% of the users. Users that spend less than 1 hour per contact, and 5 hours and above have 10% each. The detail is in table below:

Table 5: Distribution of Respondents by Use Duration Per Contact

Duration/Hour	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 1 hour	10	10
1-2 hours	66	66
3-4 hours	14	14
5 hours and above	10	10
Total	100	100

Frequency of Use

Closely tied to the users' duration per contact is the frequency of visit to the e-Library. The table shows that students who visit the facility on a daily basis are more, pooling 36% while those with weekly visits had 31%. The table 6 explains further.

Table 6: Frequency of Use

Frequency	Frequency score	Percentage
Daily	36	36
Weekly	31	31
Monthly	3	3
Irregular	30	30
Total	100	100

Computer Experience

Respondents were asked to state their level of computer experience on the scales of “None, Fair, Good”. It is observed that two of the respondents without previous computer experience visited the e-Library for the first time, both of them female students. The analysis shows that most of the e-Library users have “Fair” knowledge of the computer (56%). The detail of this analysis is presented in table 8.

Table 7: Computer experience

Experience	Frequency	Percentage
None	2	2
Fair	56	56
Good	42	42
Total	100	100

The table above shows that users with “Fair” and “Good” computer background are 98% of the user of the e-Library facility. However, only 42% really have good computer background and skills, as the 56% group cannot be said to be good on the system. It is therefore desirable to mount a computer training programme for all students to improve the computer skill of the Library users. Further training will advance the skill of those with “Fair” experience to “Good”.

Users’ Motives

Seven motives were listed for selection by users why they use the facility. Because of the possibility of having multiple motives, users were allowed to tick as many as applied to them. 75% of the users use the e-Library to solve assignment, 55% use it for research purpose and only 5% of the users visit the facility for games and recreation (further details will come under discussion), but the table below explains further.

Table 8: Users Motives

Item	Frequency	Percentage
Solve Assignment Problem	75	75
Research	55	55
Mail Search	20	20
Publications	10	10
Database management	6	6
Games and recreation	5	5
Teaching/Self-development	-	-

Use of Search Engines

Respondents were also asked to choose from an offered list of search engines their most preferred. Table 9 below shows that Google was the most preferred search engine (preferred by 62% of the respondents) followed by Yahoo (18%), the least being Lycos (3%).

Table 9: Preferred Search Engines

Preference	Frequency	Percentage
------------	-----------	------------



Google	62	62
Yahoo	18	18
Inforseek	3	3
Alta Vista	8	8
Excite	6	6
Lycos	3	3
Others	-	-
Total	100	100

Website Visitation

The Library subscribes to more than a dozen websites and other free-access ones. Users are aware of these databases and their passwords and user id(s) are on display for their usage. The table below is the result of the use of the websites.

Table 10 – Distribution of Respondents by Website visits

Websites	Frequency	Percentage
Oare	12	12
Bioline	14	14
Agora	6	6
Plos	8	8
Ebscohost	8	8
Hindawi	10	10
Sciencedirect	17	17
Wikipedia	11	11
Others	14	14
Total	100	100

Table 11 is the data in respect of the respondents' preference of website. Science direct has the highest score of 17% as the most visited website from a list of 10, with its contemporary Bioline ranking next with 14%. Agora is the least patronized website. This is so because of the coverage of the latter which is predominantly Agriculture, which is not on the University list of programmes.

Level of Satisfaction

Respondents were asked a final question as to their level of satisfaction with the e-library services. Majority of them agreed that these are "Good" (63%) with only 3% indicating "low" satisfaction level as presented in Table 11.

Table 11 – Level of Satisfaction

Level	Frequency	Percentage
Good	63	63
Fair	35	35
Low	2	2
Total	100	100



Discussion

The findings of the study on the use of the e-Library services of the Umaru Musa Yar'Adua University Library supports the establishment of the facility as a veritable service of providing necessary information for teaching, research and learning to both teachers and students. Most of the e-Library users are students of the various Faculties of the University (97%); Education students, being the highest users of the facility within the student community. This is not strange in view of the number of sections or units within the Department of Education. This is coupled with the fact that Education Department has the largest students' population in the University. The Natural and Applied Sciences Faculty produced the highest score at the Faculty level. This return is expected in view of the presence of the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science in this Faculty, even through the Geography Department recorded the highest score from the Faculty. However, two of the three staff members that used the e-Library are from the Mathematics and Computer Science Departments.

The issue of the low staff usage of the e-Library has been explained earlier. Most lecturers' offices are wired to run their personal lap- top Computers, and the internet facility is extended to cover the entire University environment. It is therefore convenient for them to work within the comfort of their offices. The low patronage of the e-Library by female students can be explained in two ways; the population of male in the University is higher than the female for both staff and students. Secondly, the socio-cultural setting of the Katsinawa protects the female from undue contact with the male. The 23% level of use was actually achieved during the last 5 days of the questionnaires administration, when the two e-Library facilities at the top floor were created. This gave the female users some kind of protection from the crowd of male users who crowd the main e-Library at the ground floor.

Respondents overwhelmingly chose Google as their preferred search engine. This is obviously so because of the user friendly posture of this engine. In studies on the use of search engine among postgraduate students of the University of Ibadan, Salako and Tiamiyu (2007) found Google to be the most used search engine. One reason that can be advanced on the side of Google is supported in the motive of users table (table 9) wherein it was discovered that 75% of the users solve assignment problems with the e-Library services. Google focus more on research information when compared with search engine like yahoo that tends to cover thinly every information area and it is versatile for academic purpose. To solve assignment requires detailed search which Google readily gives. However, Google and Yahoo were the two most used search engines by users of the e-Library with 80%; which are well known to the users.

University students are known to visit most e-resources for games and recreation. The table 9 on users' motive shows a conflicting posture whereby only 5% of the users claim it to be their motive of visit. The fact of the matter is that users of the e-Library in Umaru Musa Yar'Adua University are barred from visiting sites that contain movies, sporting, pornographic or Face book. However, 5% of the users still managed to visit these restricted sites, students being what they are. Most of the users attest to the satisfactory use of the e-Library, as 63% and 35% claim their level of satisfaction to be "good" and "fair" respectively. The point being made is that the facility has assisted them particularly to solve their assignment motive of visitation in the first instance, hence it is a successful facility that is worth the while and cost.



Conclusion and Recommendations

The findings of this study show clearly that the culture of e-Library's patronage has come to stay among the students of Umaru Musa Yar'Adua University. To make it more beneficial, the creation of a separate facility away from the crowded one has added a pep to its acceptability, particularly for the female users. The reservation of one of these upstairs for "Female" only would boast the use by the female users. There is clear evidence that computer experience has a thing to play in the use of the facility, as 52 of those that ticked "fair" computer experience, which is also 52% of the respondents, spends between 1-2 hrs per each visit to the e-Library. The 34 users who spend between 3-5 hrs and above per visit ticked "Good" computer experience. The implication of this is that more experienced or "Good" computer users find more time with the computer. It is therefore necessary to encourage students to acquire basic computer literacy, as longer stay on the system enhances expertise and depth of information and knowledge, and is a catalyst to acquiring knowledge easily in view of the prevailing atmosphere of ICT. A course on 'use of computer' should be mounted and made compulsory for all students of the University. Its establishment has therefore been justified from this study. The findings also provide comfort on its establishment, as majority of the users have often use it to "solve assignment" or for "Research". Electronic Library facility is a necessary medium that will enhance teaching, learning and research, and thereby enhance the total academic programme of the University. The high resource for its establishment and maintenance is therefore justifiable.

REFERENCES:

- Pugh, L. (2010). *Change management in information service*. 2nd ed. Aldershot, England: Gower. 13
- Ugwuanyi, R. N. C. & Ezeni, C. N. (2010). *Transitional from Conventional Libraries to Electronic Libraries in Nigeria: Problems and Prospects*.
- Weiner, S. G. (2003). *Resistance to Change in Libraries: Application of Common theories*. *Portal: Libraries and the Academy* 3(1), 69-75.
- Igben, M. J. & Akobo, D. I. (2007). *State of ICT in Libraries in Rivers State, Nigeria*. *African Journal of Library and Information Science*. 17(2) 135-143.
- Estabrook, L. S. (2004) *The changing Role of Libraries: Encyclopedia Britannica*. Deluxe Edition, C.D.
- Akintunde, S. A. (2004). *Libraries as tools for ICT Development*. Paper presented at the 42nd Annual National Conference and AGM of N.L.A. October, Akure, Ondo State.
- Igun, S. E. (2006). *Use of Internet Resources in a Nigerian University Community*. *Global Review of Library and Information Science*. 2, 21-30.
- Covi, M.L. & Cragin, H. M. (2004). *Reconfiguring Control in Library Collection development: A Conceptual Framework for assessing the shift towards electronic collection*. *Journal of the American Society and Technology*. 55(4). 312-325.
- Nkanu, W. O. & Okon, H. I. (2010). *Digital Divide; Bridging the gap through ICT in Nigerian Libraries, Library Philosophy and Practice*.
- Gbaje, Ezra C. (2007). *Provision of On-line information Services in Nigerian Academic Libraries: Nigerian Libraries*. 40, 1-4.



- Omekwu, C. O. (2003). Information Professionalism in the Digital age: *Journal of Library and Information Science*. I (2), 95-105.
- Fallon, Mary pat. (2011). The status of the Irish research e-Library. *World Libraries* Vol. 18(2).
- Salako, O. A. & Tiamiyu, M. A. (2007). Use of Search Engines for Research by Postgraduate Students of the University of Ibadan, Nigeria. *African Journal of Library and Information Science*, 17(2), 103 – 115.
- Ranganathan, S. R. (1963). *The Five Laws of Library science*, 2nd Ed. New York: Asia Publ. House P. 326.
- Paw Internet and American Life Project (2005). Search engine Users. Available at <http://www.pewinternet.org/pdfs>
- Cax, John (2009). Irel Impact Survey: Summary of Findings. April 2009. <http://www.irelibrary.ie.about.aspx>. Accessed on 23, Dec. 2010.