

The Use of Information and Communication Technology on Library Services in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the use of information communication technology on library services in Nigeria. The Specific objectives were to; examine the influence of the usage of ICT on provision of library operations, and to determine the impact of ICT on provision of library users. Descriptive survey design was used in conducting the study. The area of the study is University of Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. The statistics obtained from the libraries showed that there are 12,234 users and 244 librarians. A total of 168 respondents were sampled and 120 used for the study. The study adopted one way analysis of variance (ANOVA). Based on the analysis, the findings revealed that there was a significant influence of the utilization of ICT on library operations. The study revealed that there was a significance influence of ICT on library users. The study recommended that ICT skills should be made an important requirement in the recruitment of librarians in the University library. Also recommended that education should also form part of the university curriculum. Libraries should be funded with sufficient funds so that they will be able to attain modern Information Communication facilities. Finally, management should regularly organize useful training courses, seminars and conferences on Library-based ICT applications and competencies.

KEYWORDS: *Information communication technology, library services, library operations, library users.*

INTRODUCTION

In this 21st century, the development of library information science in Nigeria is dramatically improved with ICT in academic libraries. ICT assists the information professionals need to have knowledge and skills in ICT techniques and handling procedures. In this way, academic libraries must continuously improve themselves with up-to-date computer technologies for knowledge transmission & networks.

ICT plays an important role in academic libraries and their professionals. They use ICT in conventional work as well as services with the help of IT, communication, network and internets. ICT is more essential part of academic libraries now days. Information and Communication

Technology (ICT) is the application of computers and other technologies for easy acquisition, organization, storage, accessibility, retrieval, and dissemination of information. ICT is one of the greatest inventions of mankind which played unprecedented role in changing the landscape of human and organizational activities around the globe including libraries.

ICT has immensely changed the system of traditional library services; that were hitherto laborious, repetitive and boring. Obotu, Chukwuka and Gambo (2019) regard ICT as the acquisition, analysis, manipulation, storage and distribution of information; and the design and provision of equipment and software for these purposes. Omosor and Nelson (2017) posit ICT as computers and other technologies that are used in the acquisition, organization, storage and dissemination of information in libraries.

ICT is a catalyst for generating, processing, storing and disseminating information (Kwofie, Aigbavboa & Thwala, 2020). The convergence of ICT in academic libraries has brought about the maximum utilization of all the technologies that enable the handling of information of various formats within the library. According to Ogunsola and Aboyade (2015) librarians have begun to adopt new designations to reflect their new roles, i.e, information scientists, system librarians, digital librarians and information managers etc.

Uzohue and Yaya (2016) observed that the common theme behind ICT application in the library is to enhance library functions and make service delivery such as selection, acquisition, arrangement, storage, retrieval, dissemination of information relevant to users. It is quite encouraging to see that the call for ICT adoption in Universities libraries in Nigeria is beginning to yield positive result. It is generally known that libraries are centers for learning where the process of acquisition, processing and organization of information resources may take up to six months before the patrons use them. Libraries are expected to upskill their staff in order to enable them to perform better. The present-day university library services are focusing more on deployment of ICT as a result of the changing pattern of information among users.

University libraries in Nigeria are dependent on manual method of performing their routine functions with its attendant inadequacies which surface include low patronage of ICT services. Lack of interest in utilizing ICT on collection management practices, shortage of skilled ICT manpower and good remunerations to retain the few skilled ones, capital investment on information and communication technology equipment, high cost of library software and database connectivity, maintenance and constant epileptic power supply amongst others.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on Ranganathan's Five laws of library science. The Five Laws of Library Science propounded by Ranganathan in 1931 is very much relevant today in the practice of librarianship and information science. Ranganathan (1931) sees the library as an institution that is active in a constantly changing environment and that the institution should change (the library is a growing organism) and adapt itself with the spirit of the time so that it can serve best, those who need it. From all indications, Ranganathan (1931) has provided one of the best theory and practice to make library resources and services accessible (regardless of their format).

Purpose of the study

The Specific objectives are:

- i. to examine the influence of ICT on provision of library operations.
- ii. to ascertain the influence of ICT on provision of library users

Literature Review

The benefits of utilization of ICTs in libraries are immeasurable, especially given the ways they have impacted on libraries and their users. Information and communication technologies allow the provision of speedy and easy access to information in libraries. The use of telephone, GSM and e-mail facilities ensure the provision of the desired information to library users with much ease.

Haliso (2017) observed that the use of GSM facility in academic libraries has improved their services tremendously through speedy delivery of information, while Fatoki (2015) submitted that the use of GSM has contributed to speedy delivery of documents needed by researchers or students. Telephone and e-mail are vital tools that facilitate prompt handling and fast response to the stream of patrons' reference queries. Fatoki(2015) further stated that now that GSM facilities are available, mobile phones can be displayed at the enquiries desk, while Adedigba (2015) averred that ICTs are applied to library processes and services in order to facilitate easy and quick access to the libraries database records.

Similarly, Kumar and Chitra (2018) explored how SMS technology can impact library services through the use of GSM, e-mail, websites, social media platforms – e.g. twitter, face book, etc. According to the authors, mobile technology is feasible in terms of cost and efficiency to meet the communication needs of all types of libraries and SMS can reach large number of users. They enumerated the advantages of SMS technology in libraries which include: provision of quick, easy access to library services; ability to remind users of overdue books; the prospect of renewing books without physically coming to the library; enable users make reservations of titles needed; enables answering of reference queries (a form of virtual reference service); announcement of library events to the local community, etc.

Public libraries in Nigeria can equally benefit immensely from the use of GSM, telephone, and e-mail facilities in providing effective library services to their patrons when utilized. ICT enables users' self-education and enhances personal growth and development through the resources in libraries. Internet, and its multimedia resources especially, enable users self education and life-long learning. Reading promotion and reader development programmes also facilitate the attainment of this objective.

Eve and Brophy (2010) explored how ICT facilities for public use in Nigeria, public libraries are used in providing a network of access to learning opportunities and services. They discovered that government policies to tackle issues of social exclusion and to stimulate the uptake of life-long learning have prioritized the role of public libraries in being one of the key delivery points for ICT access. In order to prove the value and impact of providing access to ICT facilities and services within public libraries, measures were developed and implemented and they provided

managers, funders, and policy makers with reliable information about the uses made of these services and how they contribute to the government's social agenda.

The introduction of ICTs in public libraries in Nigeria for similar objectives will impact positively on the lives of people. In a related development, Todd and Tedd (2010) described lifelong learning and opportunities in the U.K through initiatives such as the National Grid for Learning and the University for Industry. The paper gave an overview of how public libraries can and are being involved in the process of providing information and communication technology (ICT) training courses for life-long learners.

Rasareko (2019) noted that in developing countries the availability of online information sources is changing the nature of the use of library collections as most libraries are now investing therein. ICTs have the capability of assembling needed resources electronically, thus making research efforts more convenient and efficient (Dowler, 2010). It is an ideal tool for increasing effectiveness and efficiency of service delivery in the library and information world and is seen as an antidote for information explosion.

Ajibola and Tiamiyu (2010) noted that, while ICT have contributed to information explosion they are also tools for containing and exploiting information. This way, according to the authors, ICTs offer new techniques in library operations. In other words, ICT is a blessing to the library profession because it facilitates dissemination of information to library users with much ease compared to the manual or traditional method, which is cumbersome. On the other hand, ICT has also resulted in the generation of colossal information whose accessibility can sometimes be frustrating. Scholars have posited that with the steady acceptance and wide adoption of the new technologies, the potential advantages of ICTs are fast becoming realized.

Mabawonku and Okwilagwe (2014) acknowledged that technology is fast gaining recognition in library and information service delivery and is being increasingly used in library activities. A study by Agaba (2015) investigated the utilization of electronic information resources by academic staff of Makerere University library (Kenya). The findings revealed a number of factors affecting electronic information resources utilization and the problems academic staff face. Major conclusions were that despite a number of factors inhibiting use of these resources, a number of staff are aware of the availability of these resources and some use them. The computer has huge memory and can store vast amount of information. These, coupled with external storage hard disks, have provided libraries the leverage not only to save space but provide efficient service to their patrons. Furthermore, resources on the Internet permit librarians to provide value added information services to their clientele (Achonna and Yaya, 2018).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The descriptive survey design was used in conducting the study. Survey research is used for collection of standardized information from a sample that is considered as representative of a particular group or population. Hence, the research design is appropriate for the study because it generates the relevant and useful data from a sample that is representative of the population for generalization. The area of the study is University of Uyo in Akwa Ibom State. The statistics obtained from the libraries showed that there are 12,234 users and 244 librarians. A total of 168

respondents were sampled and 120 used for the study. The study adopted one way analysis of variance (ANOVA).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Hypothesis one

There is no significant influence of ICT on provision of library operations. The dependent variable in this hypothesis is library operations while the independent was influence of ICT. The utilization of ICT was categorized into low, moderate and high based on respondents mean score on utilization of ICT sub scale. Respondents who scored below the mean regions were categorized as low, those who scored within the mean region were categorized as moderate and those who scored above the mean region were categorized as high. Based on this the influence of utilization of ICT on library operations was computed using One way analysis of variance (ANOVA). The result revealed that the calculated F- value of 3.28 was found to be greater than the critical F-value of 3.14 needed for significance at 0.05 level of significance with 2 and 159 degree of freedom. With this result, the null hypothesis was rejected and it therefore means that there is a significance influence of ICT on library operations in University of Uyo. Given the significant F- value, a post hoc test was conducted using Fishers least significance difference (LSD).

Hypothesis two

There is no significant influence of the usage of ICT on provision of library users. The dependent variable in this hypothesis is library users while the independent was usage of ICT. The usage of ICT was categorized into low, moderate and high based on respondents mean score on usage of ICT sub scale. Respondents who scored below the mean regions were categorized as low, those who scored within the mean region were categorized as moderate and those who scored above the mean region were categorized as high. Based on this the influence of ICT on library users was computed using One way analysis of variance (ANOVA). The result is as presented revealed that the calculated F- value of 3.14 was found to be greater than the critical F-value of 2.47 needed for significance at 0.05 level of significance with 2 and 159 degrees of freedom. With this result, the null hypothesis was retained, it therefore means that the usage of ICT on library users. The result revealed that the calculated F- value of 3.14 was found to be greater than the critical F-value of 2.47 needed for significance at 0.05 level of significance with 2 and 159 degrees of freedom. With this result, the null hypothesis was rejected; it therefore means that there is a significant influence of ICT on users in University of Uyo. Given the significant F- value a post hoc test was conducted using Fisher least significant difference (LSD) multiple comparison.

Summary of the study

The main purpose of this study is to investigate the usage of information and communication technology (ICT) on library services in University of Uyo library Literatures on the major variables were reviewed. Survey research design was adopted for the study. A total of 168 respondents were sampled and 120 used for the study. A well validate structured questionnaire was used for data collection. Data collected were analyzed using one way analysis of variance (ANOVA). The results of the analysis revealed that:

- 1 There is a significance influence of ICT on provision of library operations.
- 2 There is a significance influence of ICT on provision of library users.

Conclusion

Based on the findings obtained from this study, it was concluded that usage of ICT significantly influence library operations. The findings led to the conclusion that usage of ICT significantly influence library users. ICT plays an important role in academic libraries and their professionals. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is the application of computers and other technologies for easy acquisition, organization, storage, accessibility, retrieval, and dissemination of information. ICT is one of the greatest inventions of mankind which played unprecedented role in changing the landscape of human and organizational activities around the globe including libraries. ICT has immensely changed the system of traditional library services; that were hitherto laborious, repetitive and boring.. It is concluded that ICT is a catalyst for generating, processing, storing and disseminating information.

Recommendations

In the light of the conclusion drawn on this study, it was recommended that:

1. ICT skills should be made an important requirement in the recruitment of librarians in the University library
2. Education should also form part of the university curriculum. Libraries should be funded with sufficient funds so that they will be able to attain modern Information Communication facilities.
3. Management should regularly organize useful training courses, seminars and conferences on Library-based ICT applications and competencies.

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