

Provision and Utilization of Online Information Resources in Federal Polytechnic Libraries in North Eastern States of Nigeria

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Abstract

The research work was carried out on the provision and utilization of online information resources. Three (3) research objectives were formulated to determine: The online information resources provided in Federal Polytechnic Libraries in North-East Nigeria, The extent of utilization of the online information resources in Federal Polytechnic Libraries in North-East Nigeria, and the extent of satisfaction with online information resources provided in Federal Polytechnic Libraries in North-East Nigeria. The descriptive survey research design was used in this study. Simple Random Sampling technique and simple balloting were used to select 268 respondents out of a total population of 900 registered users. The questionnaire was used for data collection. The data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics of frequencies and percentages SPSS version 23.0. The study revealed that E-Projects, e-Journals, e-Books, e-Newsletters, and Online Databases were the common online library resources provided by all the Federal Polytechnics in North-East Nigeria. It also revealed that only online databases and e-project resources were found to be much utilized in Federal Polytechnic Libraries. The study recommended that the polytechnic libraries should also improve upon the already existing online library resources as this will further enhance the teaching, learning, and research activities of their institution.; adequate, more relevant and up to date e-resources should be made available to the library users at all times to satisfy their information need.

Keywords: Provision, Utilization, Online Information Resources, Polytechnic Libraries

Introduction

The fundamental objective of Polytechnic education is the training of professional skill workers who are supposed to constitute the workforce of the nation (Abdulsalami and Salami, 2013). Hence, the information resources provided by polytechnic libraries are tailored toward the achievement of these objectives. The polytechnic libraries, therefore, support polytechnic education by providing online library resources to its users. IFLA (2012) described online library resources as those materials that require computer access, whether through a personal computer, mainframe, or handheld mobile devices, e.t.c. Through online library resources, it has been possible to access a variety of information and knowledge

sources in a manner that would be simple, easy, and independent of time, place, and subject disciplines (Adeniji, 2012). Roopa and Krishnamurthy (2015), opined that the provision of these resources is not constrained by the traditional opening hours but can be offered on a 24-hour, seven-days-a-week basis known as 24/7.

There are many advantages to this new medium, and the most considerable benefit is that many users can use electronic library resources. However, despite these benefits, it has been observed that online library resources are being underutilized. Matusiak (2012) asserts that library users, especially students, do not perceive academic libraries as a useful source of digital images and therefore use search engines when searching for visual resources. This study, therefore, assessed the extent of provision and utilization of online resources in Federal Polytechnic libraries, North Eastern, Nigeria.

Problem Statement

Polytechnics in Nigeria are established with the aim of training and providing the middle-level human resources for the different sectors of the Nigerian economy. The Nigerian polytechnic libraries are crucial to the attainment of these lofty objectives saddled on their parent institutions. As such, a tremendous amount of money is being spent on online information resources in many libraries. According to Bhart (2009) and Ogunmoded and Emeahara, (2010), Polytechnic libraries spend a higher proportion of their annual budget on the provision of online information resources. It is, however, disheartening that despite all these efforts, the resources provided are being underutilized. This ugly trend constitutes a severe threat to the attainment of the objectives of polytechnics in Nigeria; because the consequences of this situation are that, it is not justifying the large sum of money spent on the online resources and services by these institutions. Therefore, it has led to colossal financial loss; moreover, the situation has a re-cycling effect on the quality of students being graduated by these institutions, as they are breeding half-backed graduates; this is evident in the overall result of the students. Could it be that these online information resources are not adequately provided, and if they are, why is it that usage is hindered? If usage is not blocked, then could it be that users' are not satisfied with the online information resources and services in the library? Therefore, the crux of this study is to investigate the provision and utilization of online library resources as well as the extent of user's satisfaction with the online library resources in Federal Polytechnic Libraries in North-East Nigeria.

Research questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

1. What are the types of online resources provided in Federal Polytechnic Libraries in North-East Nigeria?
2. To what extent online resources utilized in Federal Polytechnic Libraries in North-East Nigeria?

3. To what extent do users satisfied with online information resources provided in Federal Polytechnic libraries in North-East Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study were to determine:

1. The online resources provided in Federal Polytechnic Libraries in North-East Nigeria.
2. The extent of utilization of the online resources in Federal Polytechnic Libraries in North-East Nigeria?
3. The extent to which users are satisfied with online information resources provided in Federal Polytechnic libraries in North-East Nigeria.

Literature Review

Iyishu, Nkanu, and Ogar (2013) described online library resources as any Information resources in electronic format, ranging from simple text-based files such as word-processed files to highly sophisticated web-based resources such as databases, websites, and emails. While Thanuskodi, (2012), described it as electronic information source ranging from an electronic periodical to CD-ROMs, from the mailing list to databases, all of them have a common feature of being used and sometimes modified by a computer. According to Choi (2006), the resources include digital books, digital images, graphics, textual and numeric data, digitized films, audio-video clips, and the like.

Aina (2003) opined that access and usage of online library resources could only be from a computer and a closely related device such as Microcomputers, Mainframe, Mobile Phones, and many others. These are the means through which individuals or groups could use and or access electronic resources via a local or remote area network. According to Tenopir, (2003), till recently, libraries used to furnish the information needs of users employing their vast print sources, however, due to the impact of ICTs, this arena is fast changing. Electronic information resources are provided in electronic form, and these include the CD-ROM database, online databases, online journals, OPACs, Internet, and other computer-based electronic networks (Shuling, 2007).

Mashhadi and Han (1996) noted that the information and communication revolution, which resulted in the advent of the Internet, had been a formidable tool of information exchange that has obliterated distance and time and accelerated the process of creating a global community of inquiry. Shuling (2007) analyzed the use of electronic resources in Shaanxi University of Science and Technology. The study found that nearly 80 percent of respondents knew little about electronic resources. Ray and Day (1998), on the other hand, conducted their research to determine the level of use of electronic resources and how students feel about various issues surrounding electronic resources. The findings of their study are that 91 percent of respondents acknowledged access to a networked computer.

In the context of developing countries, Okello-Obura and Magara (2008) investigated electronic information access and utilization. They found that users derive many benefits from online library resources by gaining access to a broader range of information and improved academic performance as a result of access to quality information. However, in the Nigerian context, Oduwale and Akpati (2003) investigated the accessibility and retrieval of electronic information. They found that electronic information cuts across all members of the University community that it was, to a greater extent, easy to use. Ojo and Akande (2005) examined student's access, usage, and awareness of electronic information resources, which they discover that the level of utilization of electronic information resources is not high. However identified was a lack of information retrieval skills for exploiting electronic resources, thus making the level of usage of resources by medical students very low.

The level of users' satisfaction with online-based resources is of the utmost importance to librarians and information professionals. There are various degrees of users' satisfaction with Online - based resources. Arif and Mahmood (2010) examined the satisfaction level of users with the central library collection and services at Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU), Islamabad, Pakistan. The respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the present library's online databases. Waldman (2003) reported high usage of the library's OPAC by students at City University of New York.

Similarly, Falk (2003) reported the rapid growth and use of e-books in schools, colleges, and universities in developing countries. Ashcroft and Woo (2004) also mentioned the potential advantages of e-books, including easier access, speedy publications, space-saving, and lower costs. Various studies have also been carried out on the use of e-resources by students, and research staff of institutions of higher learning. Most of these studies reported high usage of e-resources (De Vicente *et al.* 2004; Falk, 2003). High usage was attributed to several factors including the freely available access, the ease of use, and its currency.

Rani and Chinnasamy (2014), carried out a study on the utilization of electronic resources by the students. The study investigated the influence of e-resources service and satisfaction on the usage of electronic resources by the students in self-financing colleges affiliated to Madurai Kamaraj University, Madurai. The result of the finding shows that Out of 216 respondents, the Level of opinion regarding the Satisfaction of E resource systems, most of the respondents have an unbiased view and excellent idea regarding the satisfaction level. Saika and Gohain (2013), conducted a study on user's satisfaction on online information resources in Tezpur University (India). The finding shows that the majority of 71 (44.65%) of the respondent were satisfied, while 63 (39.62%) of the respondent were highly satisfied with the online database resources.

Methodology

The study adopted the quantitative research method and descriptive survey research design. The total population for this study was 900, and the sample size is 269, which was determined using Morgan's Table of sample size based on 95% confidential level and 5% confidential interval (margin error). A Simple Random Sampling technique was used for this study to select the 269 sample population. A self-constructed structured questionnaire and an Observational Check List was also developed and used to collect requisite data from the target population, which was subjected to statistical analysis. SPSS version 23.0 statistical software package was used to arrive at appropriate statistical analysis. The Data gathered were analyzed using descriptive statistical tools, namely frequencies, percentages, mean, and standard deviation. Also, given the four-points rating scale, the calculated mean was 3.0. Any item with a mean score of 3.0 and above was considered positive. An item with less than 3.0 and below will be considered negative.

Results and Discussions

Table 1: Response Rate

Questionnaire Distributed	Questionnaire Returned	Questionnaire Not Returned
269 (100%)	258 (96%)	11 (4%)

Source: Field Survey, 2018

As shown in Table 1, the research was conducted on the sample size of 269 respondents, out of which 258 respondents completed and returned the questionnaires making a response rate of 96% While 11 questionnaires were not returned, which represents 4%. The response rate corroborates with that of Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), who states that a response rate of 50% and above is positive for statistical reporting.

The types of online resources provided in Federal Polytechnic libraries

Table 2: Types of Online Resources Provided

S/N	Online Library Resources	Availability			
		FP Mubi	FP Bauchi	FP Damaturu	FP Bali
1	e-Project	✓	✓	✓	✓
2	e- Journals	✓	✓	✓	✓
3	e-Technical report	✓	✗	✗	✓
4	e-Reference materials	✓	✓	✓	✓
5	e- Conference paper /e- Conference proceedings	✗	✓	✓	✓
6	e-Books	✓	✓	✓	✓
7	e-Newsletters	✓	✓	✓	✓
8	e-Thesis/ e- Dissertation	✓	✓	✗	✗
9	Online Databases	✓	✓	✓	✓
10	e-manuscript	✗	✗	✓	✓

Key: FP = Federal Polytechnic. **Source:** Field Survey, 2018

Table 2 revealed that the online information resources provided at the Federal Polytechnics in North-East Nigeria. The result indicates that all the Federal Polytechnics Provide e-Project, e-Journals, e-Books, e-newsletters, and Online Databases. In addition to the e-resources provided above by all the polytechnics, only Federal Polytechnic Damaturu provide e- Conference papers, while Federal Polytechnic Mubi and Bali provided the e-Technical report. Federal Polytechnic Bauchi and Bali succeeded in provided e-Conference proceedings, Federal Polytechnic Mubi and Bauchi provide e-Thesis, only Federal Polytechnic Bauchi provide e- Dissertation, While, Federal Polytechnic Damaturu and Bali Provide e-manuscript. This indicates the similarity in terms of provision of e-project, e-Journals, e-Books, e-newsletters, and online Databases to all the Polytechnics. On the other resources, so many disparities observed, which indicate the concern of scholars on that particular resource or the availability to acquire such online resources by the Federal Polytechnic Libraries.

Findings from the study revealed that E-Project, e-Journals, e-Books, e-Newsletters, and Online Databases are the common Online Library Resources provided by all the Federal Polytechnics in North-East Nigeria. Despite the benefits of online library resources, it is evident from the result of this study that online information resources are in short supply, thereby buttressing an earlier submission by Gbaje (2007). This result leaves the impression that the libraries covered in this survey lack the financial wherewithal to acquire online library resources needed by their library users. This inadvertently substantiates the report of Urhiewhu (2015) regarding the paucity of funds to acquire information resources in electronic form in Nigerian libraries. However, there is the preponderance of computers, photocopiers, and internet servers in the libraries investigated. This supports the observation of Nwachukwu and Asom (2015) that computers and other electronic systems remain the doyen of research and ICT utilization in Nigerian libraries.

The extent of utilization of online resources in Federal Polytechnic Libraries.

Table 3:Extent of Utilization of Online Resources

S/N	Items	HU	U	MU	NU	M	St. Dev	Decision
1	e-Project	39	64	57	98	2.83	1.144	Positive
2	e- Journals	109	59	50	40	2.08	1.114	Negative
3	e-Technical report	79	56	68	55	2.37	1.079	Negative
4	e-Reference materials	72	53	52	81	2.56	1.164	Positive
5	e-Books	43	89	81	55	2.56	1.054	Positive
6	e-Newsletters	76	79	52	51	2.31	1.045	Negative
7	Thesis/Dissertation	51	77	77	53	2.52	0.97	Positive
8	Online Database	51	64	72	73	2.65	0.973	Positive
9	e-Manuscripts	37	35	28	33	2.41	0.936	Negative
10	Conference paper/ proceedings	40	14	33	29	2.01	1.305	Negative

Source: Field Survey, 2018

Keys: Highly Utilized = HU; Utilized=U; Moderately Utilized = MU; Not Utilized= NU

From table 3, the findings revealed the utilization of online information resources in Federal Polytechnic libraries. Base on the information obtained, users utilized online information in respect to e-project (M=2.83, SD=1.144) with more than mean 2.50 score benchmark (positive), e-Journals (M=2.08, SD=1.114), e-Technical report (M=2.37 SD=1.079), e-Reference materials (M=2.56 SD=1.164), e-Books (M=2.56 SD=1.054), e-Newsletters (M=2.31 SD=1.045), e-Thesis/Dissertation (M=2.52 SD=0.97), Online Database (M=2.65 SD=0.973) e-Manuscripts (M=2.41 SD=0.936), and Conference paper/ proceedings (M=2.01 SD=1.305) with less than mean score 2.50 benchmark (Negative). The result indicates that e-project, e-reference materials, e-books, e-thesis/dissertation, and online database are positively utilized in regards to the mean 2.50 score benchmark and decision base on the higher score recorded on such online information resources. This implies that all the users of federal polytechnic libraries utilized these resources to some extent. Concerning e-Journals, e-Technical report, e-Newsletters, e-Manuscripts, and Conference paper/ proceedings under-utilization negatively reported with less than a mean 2.50 score benchmark. This under-utilization could be due to inadequate provision for the needed information resources on a large scale, or the quality of the information or the techniques attached to retrieving such information. Online materials have become increasingly available through the Internet and, thereby, directly to the end-user. Materials can be read online or downloaded in a variety of formats, including PDF, Microsoft Reader, and HTML. From the "collection" point of view, providing identification and access to the free sites brings with it many issues (Cotter, 2002).

The findings from the study showed that only Online Database and e-project resources are found to be Very Utilized in Federal Polytechnic Libraries, North-East Nigeria. These findings are at variance with the report of Ajuwon et al. (2003), who had earlier surveyed the uptake of ICTs by health science students at the university college hospital, Ibadan. The finding showed that 57% of students sampled could not use a computer, that the use of databases was reduced due to lack of awareness among other factors. Their findings were later upheld by Okike (2012), who recorded 55% awareness and by implication corresponding average level of usage of subscribed electronic information resources by academic staff members of the University of Lagos. Although university investment on e-resources has a tremendous impact on teaching, research, and scholarship, practical utilization of available resources will, however, depend to a large extent on marketing, training, and liaison between the library management and user community. In summing up this imperative, Fatoki (2005) stressed that providing current awareness services to an ICT has driven target academic community requires dynamic, innovative and adequate communication technologies

The extent to which users are satisfied with online resources provided in Federal Polytechnic Libraries

Table 4:Extent of Satisfaction with Online Resources

S/N	Items	VS	S	MS	NS	M.	St. Dev	Decision
1	e-Project	73	72	44	51	2.65	0.973	Positive
2	e- Journals	99	59	60	40	2.08	1.114	Negative
3	e-Technical report	79	56	68	55	2.37	1.079	Negative
4	e-Reference materials	72	81	52	53	2.56	1.164	Positive
5	e-Books	77	53	77	51	2.52	1.054	Positive
6	e-Newsletters	76	79	52	51	2.31	1.045	Negative
7	Thesis/Dissertation	55	81	89	43	2.56	0.97	Positive
8	Online Database	98	57	64	39	2.83	1.144	Positive
9	e-Manuscripts	30	35	28	40	2.41	0.936	Negative
10	Conference paper/ proceedings	43	14	30	29	2.01	1.305	Negative

Source: Field Survey, 2018

Keys: VS=Very Satisfied MS=Moderately Satisfied; US=Under Satisfied; NS= Not Satisfied

From table 4, the findings revealed the utilization of online information resources in Federal Polytechnic libraries. Base on the information obtained, users satisfied with the online information in respect to e-project (M=2.65 SD=0.973) with more than mean 2.50 score benchmark (positive), e-Journals (M=2.08, SD=1.114), e-Technical report (M=2.37 SD=1.079), e-Reference materials (M=2.56 SD=1.164), e-Books (M=2.52 SD=1.054), e-Newsletters (M=2.31 SD=1.045), Thesis/Dissertation (M=2.56 SD=0.97), Online Database (M=2.83 SD=1.144) e-Manuscripts (M=2.41 SD=0.936), and Conference paper/ proceedings (M=2.01 SD=1.305) with less than mean score 2.50 benchmark (Negative). The result is on agreement with the extent of utilization, which most of the items reported in the actual utilization are the same resources being satisfied by the users. This is in agreement with Bhatia & Vohra (2007), who support the satisfaction of online information resources and services such as reference desk services, database services, and e-journals. These services always defend the well equipped with Internet facility, so some factual or other information can be delivered quickly to the users. Today libraries are providing various nodes of online information resources for users, and they can come and search or browse their needed information which can give better access to a wider range of information, cost-saving as the e-services is bought through consortiums, better utilization of users' time and equal access to e-resources (Bhatia & Vohra, 2007)

In the area of satisfaction, this study reveals that the library users from the surveyed polytechnics are only satisfied with the database and e-project. This low satisfaction with the information resources could be the reason for the underutilization of online information resources. Ijiekhuamhen, Aghojare, and Ferdinand noted this (2015), could be as a result of new technology, databases, and more innovative systems for accessing information which has made the library more complicated and challenging for users. Therefore it is worthy to note that users'

satisfaction with library resources depends to a large extent on the efficiency and effectiveness of libraries and their personnel. As such, librarians must endeavour to have adequate information resources and manned by knowledgeable information professionals.

Researchers are discussing how these various challenges are being tackled so that Nigerian libraries can benefit from online information resources. For Daniel (2014), achieving this will involve energetic, technical, and content development as well as equipping libraries with the right staff, with the right skills, and working within the right structures. Jacobs (2014) also adds that Nigerian university libraries must identify and exploit alternative funding and collaborative opportunities to ensure that they can promote research and education within their institutions towards socio-economic development.

Conclusion

Many libraries across the world have either transformed or are in the process of migrating to online platforms. This has improved the quality, diversity, and accessibility of electronic information resources to the different user communities. The emergence of e-resources has considerably widened access to library services beyond the immediate location of any library with the requisite technologies. Whereas libraries in the advanced Western societies have embraced and implemented electronic-driven information resources, the result of this study had shown that Nigerian Polytechnics are still at the rudimentary stages. The online resources are either insufficient or are entirely lacking. In some cases, these e-resources would be available but inaccessible.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of this study:

1. The study recommended that Polytechnic Libraries should provide adequate online library resources that would meet the information needs of their users. Furthermore, the Polytechnic Libraries should also improve upon the already existing online library resources as this will further enhance the teaching, learning, and research activities of their institution.
2. There should be a holistic user education programme by the Polytechnic Libraries, designed to equip library users with the prerequisite skills on computer application, internet access, networking, database searches, and information retrieval. The essence is to ensure that library users can optimally utilize the online library resources.
3. Adequate, more relevant and up to date e-resources should be made available to the library users at all times to satisfy their information need.

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