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Awareness and Utilization of Electronic Resources by Students of Benson Idahosa University Benin City, Edo State Nigeria

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This study aim examined Awareness and Utilization of Electronic Resources by Students of Benson Idahosa University Benin City, Edo State. The study employed a descriptive survey method and questionnaire was the instrument used for data collection. The population for the study comprises of all the registered students of Benson Idahosa University library. A sample size of one hundred and twenty students (120) was selected using purposeful sampling technique. It was revealed from the study that a majority of the students of Benson Idahosa University are aware of e- resources. E-books, e-journals, e-newspaper/magazine and Wikipedia are some of the e–resources students of Benson Idahosa University consult frequently. Majority of the students of Benson Idahosa University acquired their e-resources use skills through personal efforts. A majority of students of Benson Idahosa University use e-resources for research, for study, for examination, for assignment and for pleasure. Lack of ICT knowledge/skills, insufficient ICT facilities, information overload/explosion, difficulties in reading from the screen and lack of time are the major challenges militating against students of Benson Idahosa University use of e-resources. The study recommends that The ICT librarians should try as much as possible to assist the students by educating them on how to use Boolean operators such as AND, OR and NOT to restrict their search when using the general search engines and also persuade the students to develop the habit of using professional or subject databases such as HINARI, AGORA, EBSCO host etc.

Key words: Awareness, E-resources, Students, Benson Idahosa University.

INTRODUCTION

The primary purpose of academic libraries is to support teaching, learning, and research in ways consistent with, and supportive of, the institution's mission and goals. In addition, library resources and services should be sufficient in quality, depth, diversity, and currency to support the institution's curriculum (Okorie & Agboola,

2012). Libraries have transformed into digital and virtual libraries where books, journals and magazines have changed to e-books, e-journals and e-zines (Adegbore, 2011). According to Narayana and Goudar (2005) print medium is increasingly giving way to the electronic form of materials. The scholars posited that internet and the web are constantly influencing the development of new modes of scholarly communication; their potential for delivering goods is quite vast, as they overcome successfully the geographical limitations associated with the print media. Also, the distribution time between product publication and its delivery has been drastically reduced. The Internet is very important for university libraries for efficient retrieval and meeting of information needs since most of them call for more research work. Ohakire and Okwuanaso (2006) maintained that the Internet as an instrument for research and communication has opened up numerous possibilities for resource sharing at local and global levels and information on latest journals, books and transactions can be exchanged directly through the Internet. This has caused many libraries to move towards digital e-resources, which preferably is less expensive and more useful for easy access.

   A number of research studies have been conducted on the use of electronic resources. Shuling (2007) analyzed the use of electronic resources in Shaanxi University of Science and Technology. The sample consists of 909 respondents of all types of library users. The study found that nearly 80 percent of respondents knew little about electronic resources. Nearly half the respondents use both printed and electronic resources, followed by print periodicals. Ali (2005) highlights the use of electronic information services (EIS) among the users of Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) library in Delhi, India. Data was collected from three hundred IIT library users. Results reveal that 95 percent of users have awareness about EIS provided by the library. Dadzie (2005) investigated the use of electronic resources by students and faculty of Asheshi University, Ghana, to determine the level of use, the type of information accessed and the effectiveness of the library's communication tools for information research and problems faced in using electronic resources. Results indicate that 85 percent of respondents used the Internet to access information.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Libraries have witnessed a great metamorphosis in recent years both in their collection development and in their service structure. Advances in computer applications during the past few decades have brought radical changes in the way information is gathered, stored, organized, accessed, retrieved and consumed in academic libraries. This rapid advancement of

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has brought a revolutionary change in the information scenario giving rise to a number of options to the users' to handle different information sources conveniently and effortlessly. The availability and effective use of this modern technology by students in academic libraries remain a major concern to scholars. It against this backdrop, that this study attempts to survey the Awareness and Utilization of Electronic Resources by Students of Benson Idahosa University Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To find out the level of awareness of electronic resources in the library
2. To ascertain the most consulted electronic resources by students
3. To ascertain how students acquired their electronic resources use skills
4. To find out the reasons for using electronic resources
5. To identify the challenges library users face in the use of electronic resources.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What is the students' level of awareness of electronic resources?
2. Which electronic resources are mostly consulted by students?
3. How do you acquire electronic resources use skills
4. What are the reasons for using electronic resources by students?
5. What are the challenges students faces in the use electronic resources?

LITERATURE REVIEW

LEVEL OF AWARENESS OF ELECTRONIC RESOURCES BY STUDENTS

Awareness is the key to the best use of scholarly literature. Being aware of availability of a given service does not necessarily mean outright use of that service. Shuling (2007) analyzed the use of electronic resources in Shaanxi University of Science and Technology. The sample consists of 909 respondents of all types of library users. The study found that nearly 80 percent of respondents knew little about electronic resources. Nearly half the respondents use both printed and electronic resources, followed by print periodicals. Ali (2005) highlights the use of electronic information services (EIS) among the users of Indian Institute of

Technology (IIT) library in Delhi, India. Data was collected from three hundred IIT library users. Results reveal that 95 percent of users have awareness about EIS provided by the library. Ajuwon (2003) carried out a study of uptake of ICTs by health science students at the University College Hospital, Ibadan. This study found that 57% of students sampled could not use a computer, that the use of the database was poor, due to lack of awareness, lack of access to computers, insufficient training and the high cost of provision. The study further revealed that 80 (71.4%) Lecturers and 55(78.6%) research scholars were reported in the survey as being aware of e-resources. Awareness of e-resources indicated user knowledge of the availability of the resources, their services and the extent made use of them. Whereas 32 (28.6%) lecturers and 15(21.4% scholars were not aware. Chibini (2011) reveals that majority of the lecturers at Strathmore University known about the existence of e-journals, a very small percentage of them actually use these journals.

ELECTRONIC RESOURCES MOSTLY CONSULTED BY STUDENTS

Electronic journals can be produced in different formats, such as a CD-ROM, which was the first step towards electronic publishing. Late 1988 and early 1990 various journals were published on CD-ROM mostly because of increased storage capacity (Chibini, 2011). Omotayo (2010) carried out a study on the use of electronic journal and reported that 22 (8.98%) respondents use electronic journals daily, 67 (37.35%) respondents use electronic journals weekly, 102 (41.63%) respondents use electronic journals bi-monthly, 34 (13.88%) and 20 (8.16%) used electronic journals monthly and occasionally respectively. Kumbar, Mallinath and Lohar (2005) focused on students attitudes toward digital resources and services. It revealed that the majority of the students are using the digital resources frequently. Adetimirin (2008) report that use of ICT for academic tasks by undergraduates in Nigerian universities was low, with 73.2% of the respondents in the low use category and 21.0% and 17% in the average and high use categories respectively. Egberongbe (2011) revealed from a study of the use and impact of electronic resources at the University of Lagos that the majority of the respondents prefer to use e-journals with 92 (90.6%) lecturers 56(80.0%) and research scholars. E-mail came second with 82 (73.2%) and worldwide web60(53.6%) among lecturers, whereas 36(52%) and 46(65.6%) among research scholars. E-books were used less by both lecturers and scholars in comparison to other online resources.

REASONS STUDENTS USED ELECTRONIC RESOURCES.

Students use electronic resources for diverse purposes as demonstrated in the literature. Obaje and Camble (2008) opined that e-resources are mostly used for literature searches during project/dissertation and thesis writing as well as personal research. Ugboma and Edewor (2008) posit that e-mail is heavily used in provision of the following library and information services for order inquiries, selection of relevant information materials, contacting publishers and vendors. Other services include receiving and answering users' queries as well as receiving and mailing catalogues/bibliographies. Academics at Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, use electronic resources mostly for literature search in research and professional growth (Omotatyo, 2010). Kumar and Kumar (2008) opined that electronic resources is use for study, teaching and for project work. Saka and Abdulrahman (2008) found that library staff in four universities of technology libraries in northern Nigeria e- resources for Internet browsing , e-mail, word processing, information/record storage and for information retrieval.

CHALLENGES STUDENTS FACES IN THE USE E-RESOURCES

Many university libraries in Nigeria have not been able to acquire collections comprehensive enough to meet the needs of their users due to inadequate funding of the universities. The 10% of allocations meant for the library as stipulated by the National University Commission (NUC) has not been adhered to in many Nigerian universities (Nnadozie & Nnadozi, 2008). Popoola (2008) submits that the inability of university libraries to meet the information requirements of some library users might have forced them to use personal collections when conducting research. Lack of time is the main reason given for not using electronic resources. Unfamiliarity with computerized searching comes next (Rehman & Ramzy, 2004). Chisenga (2004) carried out a survey of the use of ICTs in ten African Public Library Services. The survey found that, although most libraries had internet connectivity, very few were offering web-based information services to their users. The study however, identifies four barriers to the effective provision of electronic resources in those libraries, namely: lack of strategic planning: lack of adequate or reliable funding; lack of use of Internet to provide information services to users and a lack of consistent training for users in new ICT services.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a descriptive survey design to examine the Awareness and Utilization of Electronic Resources by Students of Benson Idahosa University Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria Questionnaire was administered to students in the digital library. The population for the study comprises of all the registered students of Benson Idahosa University library. Purposive sampling technique was adopted for the study, only the students that were found in the library within the period of the study were used for the study. A total number of one hundred and twenty students (120) were found in the library within the period of the study and were subsequently used for the study. The questionnaire entitled "Awareness and Utilization of Electronic Resources by Students of Benson Idahosa University Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria Questionnaire (AUERSQ)" was chosen as the instrument for data collection. The questionnaire was made up of two parts. The first part consists of demographical data such as students' level and gender. The second part consisted of structure statements or items aimed at eliciting information or data on the Awareness and Utilization of Electronic Resources by Students of Benson Idahosa University. The data obtained from the copies of questionnaires retrieved from respondents were analyzed using frequency counts and simple percentages.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 reveals the gender distribution of the respondents with 66(55%) females and 4(45%) males. This is an indication that female students utilizes the digital library that than their males counterparts.

   Table 2 is on educational levels of the respondents. Thus, 54(45%) 400 level, 26(21%) 500 level, 18(15%) 3000 level,14(12%) 200 level and 8(7%) 100 level. It is obvious from the study that final year students (400 and 500 levels) uses the e-resources more than students in other levels.

Research Question one

What is the students' level of awareness of e-resources in the library?

Table 3 shows the students' level of awareness of e-resources in the library. A majority of the respondents have high level of awareness of e- resources with 86(72%), while others have average level of awareness with 34(28%). This is an indication that a majority of the respondents are aware of the availability of e-resources in their school library. This study corroborates the study

of Ali (2005) who highlights the use of electronic information services among the users of Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) library in Delhi, India. Data was collected from three hundred IIT library users. Results reveal that 95 percent of users have awareness about electronic information service provided by the library. However, this study contradicts that finding of Shuling (2007) who analyzed the use of electronic resources in Shaanxi University of Science and Technology with a sample size of nine hundred and nine (909) respondents of all types of library users. The scholar revealed that nearly 80 percent of respondents knew little about electronic resources. It can be concluded that a majority of the students of Benson Idahosa University are aware of the availability of e-resources in their library. This high level of awareness could be attributed to massive publicity by the library during orientation programme organized by the university authority for the newly admitted students and teaching of use of library as a compulsory course for all 100 level students.

Research Question two

Which electronic resources are frequently consulted by students?

Table 4 reveals e-resources frequently consulted by the respondents. Thus respondents opinion on the e-resources frequently consulted include e- books came first with 96(80%), e- journal came second with 88(73%), followed by e- newspaper/ magazine with 79 (66%) and Wikipedia with 68 (57%). E-books, e-journals, e-newspaper/magazine and Wikipedia are some of the e–resources students consult frequently. However, the average percentage of the respondents that agreed to all the listed items of 458(65%) is high. This study corroborates the work of Kumbar, Mallinath and Lohar (2005) that focused on students' attitudes toward digital resources and services. Their study revealed that majority of the students is using the digital resources frequently. This study is in contradiction with the work of Adetimirin (2008) who posited that the use of ICT for academic tasks by undergraduates in Nigerian universities was low, with 73.2% of the respondents in the low use category and 21.0% and 17% in the average and high use categories respectively. The finding of this study implies that majority of the students used e-resources for study (e-book), for research (e-journal), for information and pleasure(e-newspapers/magazine) and for reference (Wikipedia).

Research Question three

How do you acquire electronic resources use skills?

Table 5 reveals how acquired e- resources use skills. Itis

Table 1: Gender Distribution of the Respondents.

Sex	No	%
Male	54	**45**
Female	66	**55**
Total	120	**100**

Table 2: Level of the Respondents

Level of the respondents	No	%
100 level	8	**7**
200 level	14	**12**
300 level	18	**15**
400 level	54	**45**
500 level	26	**21**
Total	**120**	**100**

Table 3: Students level of awareness of e- resources in the library

Levels of awareness	No	%
High	86	72
Average or moderate	34	28
Low	--	---
Total	**120**	**100**

Table 4: Electronic Resources frequently consulted by the Students in the Library

e-resources	N	A	%	D	%
e-Journal	120	88	**73**	42	**35**
e-Newspaper/magazine	120	79	**66**	51	**43**
e-Books	120	96	**80**	34	**28**
e-project/dissertation/thesis	120	54	**45**	76	**63**
Online dictionaries	120	51	**43**	67	**56**
Wikipedia	120	68	**57**	58	**48**
Government publication	120	22	**18**	98	**82**

Average percentage of agreed =458(65%)

Table 5: How Students Acquired Electronic Resources Use Skills

How students acquired their e-resources use skills	No	%
Personal efforts	46	**38**
Computer Training centre	36	**30**
ICT courses in school	23	**19**
Apprenticeship	15	**13**
Total	120	**100**

Table 6: Reasons Students Used Electronic Resources

Reasons students uses e-resources	N	A	%	D	%
For pleasure	120	68	**57**	52	**43**
For examination	120	76	**63**	44	**37**
For study	120	89	**74**	31	**26**
For assignment	120	86	**72**	34	**28**
For visitation	120	28	**23**	92	**77**
For research	120	92	**77**	28	**23**

Average percentage of agreed = 439 (73%)

conspicuous from the study that majority of the respondents acquired e- resources use skills through personal effort with 46(38%). From computer training centre came second with 36(30%). Through ICT courses in school came in distance third with 23(19%) and through apprenticeship came last with 15(13%). This study vividly indicates that a majority of the students acquired their e-resources use skills through personal efforts and self-sponsor ICT training.

Research Question four

What are the reasons for using electronic resources by students?

Table 6 reveals the reasons for using e- resources. Thus respondents' opinion on the reasons for using e-resources includes for research first with 92(77), for study second with 89(74) and for assignment came third with 86(72%). Others are for examination with 76(63%) and for pleasure with 68(57%). It is obvious from the study that students use e-resources for research, for study, for examination, for assignment and for pleasure. The average percentage of the respondents that agreed to all the listed items of 439(73%) is relatively high. This study agrees with Kumar and Kumar (2008) who opined that electronic resources is used for study, teaching and for project work. The study to a large extent conforms to Ansari and Zuberi (2010) that opined from their study that e-resources are mostly used for research, to prepare lectures note and for gaining subject knowledge.

Research Question five

What are the challenges students faces in the use electronic resources in the library?

Table 7 shows the challenges militating against students' use of e-resources. Lack of ICT knowledge/ skills came first with 96(80%). Insufficient facilities came second with 87(73%). Others are information overload/explosion with 81(68%) and Difficulties in reading from the screen

Table 7: Challenges Students Faces in the Use of Electronic Resources in the Library.

Challenges	N	A	%	D	%
Lack of time	120	76	63	44	37
Insufficient ICT facilities	120	87	73	33	27
Unskilled ICT librarians	120	35	29	85	71
Difficulties in reading from the screen	120	78	65	42	35
Epileptic power supply	120	46	38	74	62
Lack of ICT knowledge/ skills	120	96	80	24	20
Poor network/ Bandwidth	120	55	46	65	54
Information overload/explosion	120	81	68	39	32

Average percentage of agreed = 497(62%)

with 78 (65%). It is conspicuous from the study that lack of ICT knowledge/skills, insufficient ICT facilities, information overload/explosion, difficulties in reading from the screen and lack of time are the major challenges militating against students of Benson Idahosa University use of e-resources. The average percentage of the respondents that agreed to all the listed items of 497(62%) is high. This study agrees with Popoola (2008) who submits that the inability of university libraries to meet the information requirements of some library users might have forced them to use personal collections when conducting research. Rehman and Ramzy(2004) added that lack of time and unfamiliarity with computerized searching are some of reasons given for not using electronic resources.

SUMMARY OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

i.   This study reveals that a majority of the students of Benson Idahosa University are aware of e- resources.
ii. E-books, e-journals, e-newspaper/magazine and Wikipedia are some of the e–resources students of Benson Idahosa University consult frequently.
iii. It was discovered from the study that a majority of the students of Benson Idahosa University acquired their e-resources use skills through personal efforts.
iv. A majority of students of Benson Idahosa University use e-resources for research, for study, for examination, for assignment and for pleasure.
v.   The study reports that lack of ICT knowledge/skills, insufficient ICT facilities, information overload/explosion, difficulties in reading from the screen and lack of time are the major challenges militating against students of Benson Idahosa University use of e-resources.

CONCLUSION

Advances in computer applications during the past few decades have brought radical changes in the way information is gathered, stored, organized, accessed, retrieved and consumed. Print resources are increasingly giving way to the electronic materials. Students are now aware of the availabilities of e-resources in the library. A majority of these students acquired e- resources use skills through personal efforts. E-books, e-journals, e-newspaper/magazine and Wikipedia are the e–resources these students consult mostly in their library. The reasons they consult these e-resources is to enable them carryout research, they use e-resource to study, to prepare for examination, to solve their class assignment and for pleasure. However, students encountered some challenges in the use of e-resources. The challenges as reported by a majority of the students in this study are lack of ICT knowledge/skills, insufficient ICT facilities, information overload/explosion, difficulties in reading from the screen and lack of time.

RECCOMENDATIONS

I.   University management should provide and equip the library with adequate and sufficient ICT facilities that would accommodate as many as possible students at the same time.
II. ICT course in the university should be introduce in first semester of 100 levels to all the students irrespective of faculty or department and should be practically oriented to get the students ready for e-resources usage.
III. Students should try as much as possible to embark on personal ICT training by registering with road side computer schools to compliment the ICT courses in the university in order to equip themselves with all the necessary knowledge/skills needed to utilize e-resources.
IV. Students should design their reading time table in such a way that time must be allocated for visiting the library for the purpose of using e-resources.
V.   The ICT librarians should try as much as possible to assist the students by educating them on how to use Boolean operators such as AND, OR and NOT to restrict their search when using the general search engines and also persuade the students to develop the habit of using professional or subject databases such as HINARI,AGORA, EBSCO host etc.

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