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Challenges of full implementation of Koha In University of Jos Library

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This paper appraised the implementation of Koha in University of Jos Library and went further to enumerate and discuss the challenges faced in the implementation of Koha and provided solutions to some of the challenges faced. This research work is based on personal experiences gotten in the course of the researcher's daily work. It was discovered that the library has adopted and used Koha for online library management and dissemination of library services as a means to improving service delivery. The major challenges found, that hinders the full implementation of KOHA in University of Jos Library includes: Poor Internet Connectivity, Lack of Technical Know-How, Un-acceptance of the Library Management system in use, Unwillingness to embrace change, Different Locations of the Library, Non-use of all the Modules. The findings of this study will serve a very useful purpose for University of Jos Library in particular and other libraries across Nigeria.

KEY WORDS: Library Management software, Implementation, Software, Librarians

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INTRODUCTION

Libraries of today must differ in operations and services from those of yesterday as users' needs have changed. The most prominent technological tool used for the management of information resources is the Library Management Software (LMS) which is also called Integrated Library System (ILS). The University of Jos library is a leading light in the use of ICT to deliver services on campus. The library's use of ICT –computers, development and up loading of materials on the Intranet, attracted curiosity by lecturers and students (Akintunde, 2004). The use of library management system has brought about changes in the library scene and has improved library service delivery today. Library Management Software has interfaces for both staff and users where they can search for records as well as where staff can work. Library management systems encompass

all the functions of the library including the manual operations of the library which have been better improved today and aimed at meeting the needs of users.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study tries to achieve the following objectives
1.   Enumerate the experience of University of Jos library in the implementation of KOHA
2.   List and examine the challenges faced in the utilization and implementation of KOHA
3.   Suggest ways to improving the use and implantation of KOHA

LITERATURE REVIEW

According to (kumar et.al, 2014) Library Management System is an application which refers to library systems which are generally small or medium in size. It is used by librarians to manage the library using a computerized system where he/she can record various transactions like issue of books, return of books, addition of new books, addition of new students etc. Furthermore, Library Management System is a computerized system which helps users (librarian) to manage the library daily activity in electronic format. It reduces the risk of paper work such as file lost, file damaged and time consuming. It can help users to manage the transaction or record more effectively and time-saving.

Library Management Systems can either be Proprietary or Open Source. Koha is an open source software that is increasingly been adopted in University Libraries, Public Libraries and schools today in Nigeria.

(Pankaja and Mukund, 2013) define Open source software is a computer software with its source code made available and licensed with an open-source license in which the copyright holder provides the rights to study, change and distribute the software for free to anyone and for any purpose. Open-source software is very often developed in a public, collaborative manner. Open-source software is the most prominent example of open-source development and often compared to (technically defined) user-generated content or (legally defined) open-content movements while they also define Proprietary software- The term proprietary is derived from the Latin word proprietas meaning property. Proprietary Software is computer software licensed under the exclusive legal rights of the copyright holder. Proprietary software is developed by a person or firm who has rights of using existing or developing new tools to create new software. A proprietary software developer sells or provides his creation under some concrete conditions which should be followed in order to avoid any legal issues. In general, these concrete conditions involves usage using software with a purchased license, within the permitted boundaries, no modification allowed, no further re-distributions and no reverse engineering to applied.

KOHA Library Management System

Koha, the first open source integrated library system Originated in New Zealand by Katipo Communications Ltd. and maintained by a team of volunteers from around the globe, the Koha system is a full catalogue, OPAC, circulation and acquisitions system. Koha is a full integrated library system - managing your catalogue, circulation, patrons, acquisitions and providing public access to your library via the internet. Koha is used by public libraries, private collectors, university faculties, not-for-profit organisations, churches, schools and corporations from around the world (Katipo, 2013)

BRIEF HISTORY OF LIBRARY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM IN UNIVERSITY OF JOS

University of Jos library came into inception in 1972 and currently has three (3) branches:

- Bauchi Road Campus Library
- Law Library
- Lamingo Medical Library

University of Jos began the use of Library management system in order to meet up with changes in the library scene and to also promote efficiency and effectiveness in its service delivery. The library has used different Library management systems in the past such as Virtua and Integrated Technical Service (ITS) for windows. Currently University of Jos library uses open source Library Management software called KOHA. University of Jos Library installed Koha Library Management System on the 28th of September, 2013. Currently, we have 44,919 records in the system. The modules in use by the University of Jos Library are the Circulation and Cataloguing Modules. KOHA library management system has been modified by the library and runs on the cloud (library.unijos.edu.ng) and on a Local Area Network (LAN) (196.220.224.10:8000). Following the installation of KOHA Library Management system, University of Jos Library has been able to train its staff on the use of some of the Modules e.g. Cataloguing and Circulation Module, Register library patrons, Migration of Library records from VTLS to KOHA, Itemization of Library Records, and most Importantly save funds which was formerly spent by the University on ITS licensing.

Presently, Cataloguing of books is done on the local server with only the books that were migrated from the former system on the cloud. Books that are currently
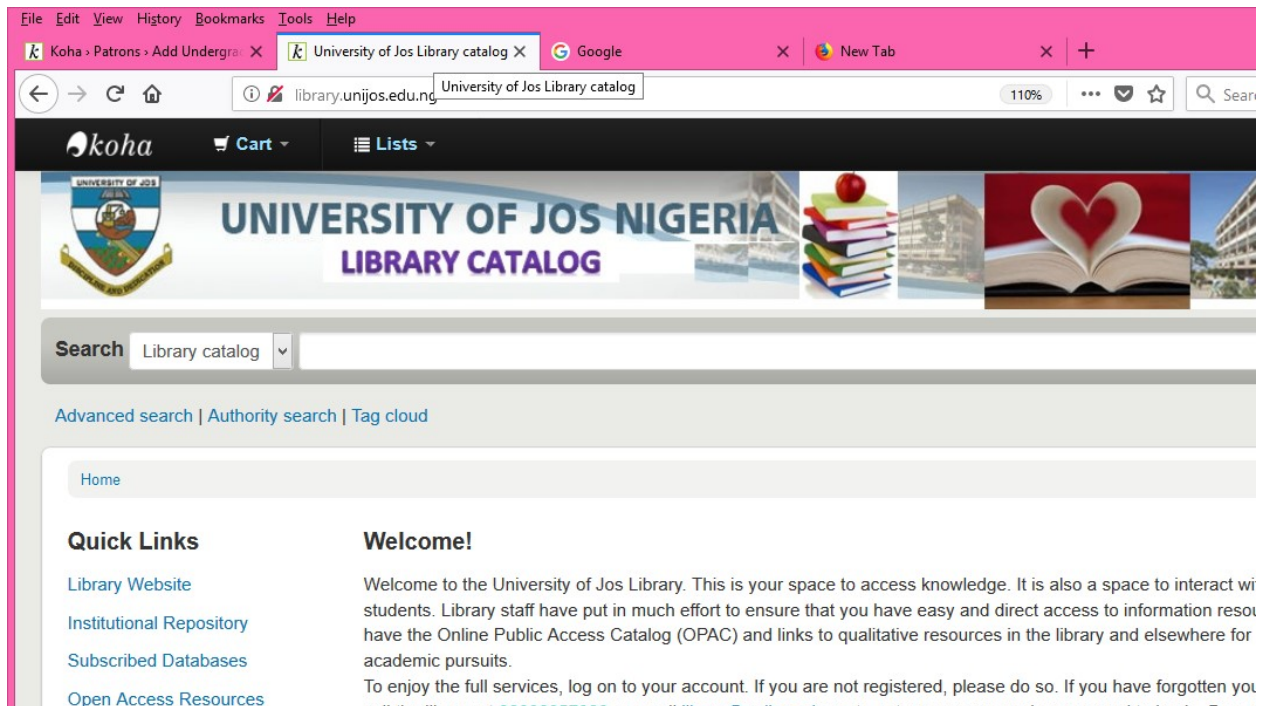
Figure 1. Picture showing University of Jos Online Koha interface

catalogued can only be accessed through the local server. For the circulation Module, only patron's module is been used with majority of the patron's details on the local server and some on the cloud.

In 2015, University of Jos library hosted its library management system (koha) on the cloud and migration of its records was done which included library patron details and library collections. During the migration, half of the patron's details were lost and had to be input manually by staff of the systems unit. For that academic year, most students who came for library validation had to be re-registered or searched for on the local server. Also, library records that had been catalogued and itemized could not be migrated and a lot of records where lost.

Even though the Url was circulated for use, it proved to be inefficient as most of the library patrons could not access it because of low internet bandwidth problems, some patrons claimed to not know about the fact that the library had a library management system in use and as such work continued on the local server. (See Figure 1 & 2)

CHALLENGES FACED BY UNIVERSITY OF JOS LIBRARY

The installation of KOHA brought a sigh of relief for the library as it eliminated the thousands of Naira that was been spent annually on the previous Library management system in use, reduced the waiting time spent in the struggle to renew its subscription, and offered more modules for use. However, the library encountered and is still encountering challenges in the use of KOHA library management system which include but are not limited to the following:

- **INTERNET CONNECTIVITY**- this presents as one of the main challenges to the full implementation of KOHA library management system. The library gets it connectivity from the University ICT directorate who also supplies the rest of the institution. The bandwidth been shared is quite low and as such access to KOHA installed on the cloud is really slow and nearly impossible most of the time. This has made the library depend mostly on its local server to get work done on the Library management system with the local server installed in only one branch of the library and the static IP address known to only a few.

- **TECHNICAL KNOW-HOW**- Technical know-how was needed for Installation, customization, migration of records and use of KOHA. This proved problematic as most of the library staff had never heard of KOHA, leading to errors, duplication of work, loss of records etc.
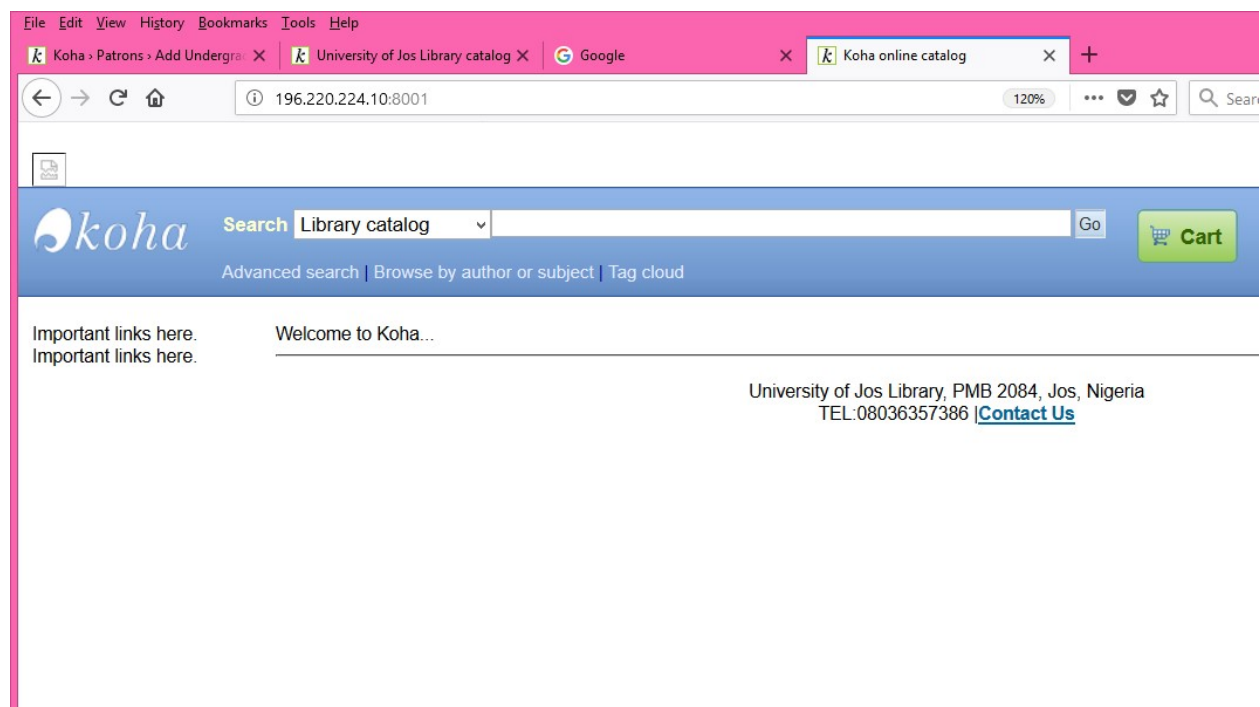
Figure 2. Picture showing University of Jos Koha interface on the Intranet

- **UNACCEPTANCE OF THE LIBRARY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM IN USE**- this manifested as competition among some library staff, with some providing alternative systems even after the installation of KOHA.

- **UNWILLINGNESS TO EMBRACE CHANGE**- KOHA requires the use of computers and more modules than the previous library management system in use. Library staff who are not computer literate, protested the use of this system as well as the changes from traditional ways such as manual patron registration to computerized patron registration.

- **DIFFERENT LOCATIONS OF THE LIBRARY**- the library currently has three branches at different locations. With the local server in use, only one branch library currently has full access to KOHA. As such, patron registration, OPAC use is done only in one branch library.

- **NON-USE OF ALL THE MODULES**- currently only two modules are being used by the library and this has hindered the full implementation of Koha

- **LACK OF TRAINING (FOR BOTH LIBRARY STAFF AND USERS)**- training and re-training of library staff is not done frequently and this should be done to improve the skills of staff and students who need to access KOHA.

- **CUSTOMIZATION**- customization of KOHA is somewhat difficult owing to the fact that there is little or no knowledge of computer programming.

- Lack Of Infrastructure

SOLUTIONS

- Workshops should be organized for members of staff to sensitize them on the importance of Library management system
- The library should be encouraged to form a koha user group to intercept problems as they arise.
- **Internet Access**- the library should be able to provide its own internet access domiciled in the library and independent of what it gets from the ICT directorate.
- Library staff should be encouraged to explore new technologies.
- All modules of KOHA should be in use.
- Training and re-training of library staff and users should be done regularly.

● Awareness creation should be carried out on a regular basis to sensitize library patrons as well as staff of the library on the presence and functionality of Koha.

CONCLUSION

KOHA is a software that is cost-effective and designed to meet the diverse needs of users and is today widely accepted for use in different libraries especially in Nigeria. The Implementation of KOHA in University of Jos Library is expected to improve its service delivery to its patrons as soon as successful implementation is fully met. The paper therefore recommends that the solutions as enumerated above should be implemented.

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