An Assessment of Electronic Information Resources and Services in Kaduna State University Library, Kaduna - Nigeria

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Abstract: *The electronic resources offer ease of use, wider access, more rapid updating, cost saving over local maintenance and storage, the librarians are finding it difficult to define issues related to policy of collection development and archiving of electronic resources. The electronic resources require continuing management to a far greater degree than print resources do. However, the primary aim of the electronic information resources and services will be to support the institution's learning, teaching, and research, which might change significantly with number of users. This paper has conducted Assessment of Electronic Information Resources and Services in Kaduna State University Library, Kaduna- Nigeria. Recommendations for functional use of Electronic Information Resources and Services in Kaduna State University Library, Kaduna- Nigeria have also been given.*

Keywords: Assessment, Information, Electronic Resources, Services, University Library

1. Introduction

The traditional services rendered by the library include, readers' services, reference services, reprographic services, Current Awareness Services (CAS), Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI) etc. However, the advent of Information Communication Technology (ICT) has expanded the scope of these services and the tools of information delivery. Today we have e-library and virtual library which provide access to electronic books and journals, online references, web-resources, web-catalogues etc. This "Web-eccentricity" poses a lot of challenges to librarians and information scientists as well as the traditional library users. The challenges are both operational and strategic (Idowu, 2009).

Electronic sources of information have introduced changes to the services and operations of modern libraries. Computing trends have enabled low cost digital storage of information, rapid transmission of data across computer networks and sophisticated retrieval, and processing of electronic documents and information. Against this background of increased availability of information and the technological innovations, libraries are developing new and revolutionary methods of providing users with access to ever increasing amount of information. The availability of electronic resources in libraries and their use to retrieve valuable information is the reason for the paradigm shift in the role of the traditional library services to those of an electronic or digital library. A study of electronic information resources and services in library will show the extent to which library are meeting the information needs of users and the extent to which users of digital resources are achieving their goals in doing assignments, teaching and research. (Gwazah, 2011).

To promote electronic information resources and services use, Weingart and Anderson (2000) observed that libraries spend a substantial percentage of their budgets on acquiring and making them available for users. These resources provide access to information far beyond the limits of the libraries' print collections. To effectively use the electronic information resources and services, users must know of their existence. It is the responsibility of libraries that have acquired these resources and offer the services to bring to their customers the awareness of such resources and services. Mutula and Ojedokun (2008) ascertain that digital library resources and services are increasingly being implemented by several agencies – government, private sector, and tertiary institutions, etc because they make research easier for scholars and may ease budgetary constraints associated with the acquisition of print resources. They help to reduce preservation problems or help libraries extend collections into new media. Above all, they help to make information readily available (Gwazah, 2011).

1.1 Background of Kaduna State Library

A library is a repository of knowledge. It is a place where information is collected, processed, stored and disseminated. Writing started centuries ago. An attempt to record and transmit human thoughts and vision led to writing, which is a representation of sound and speech in a meaningful form, from cuneiform to hieroglyphics and presently alphabets. Just as forms evolved, so also the media of transfer over centuries; from clay tablets, to papyrus, then stone, later parchment, after that paper, followed by microforms and now the digital medium. All these achieved within three eras of history- Ancient, medieval and modern times (Idowu, 2009).

The Kaduna State University and university library were established in 2004, during the Ahmad Muhammad Makarfi regime as executive governor of Kaduna state. The university library is the heart of the university academic activities. Its basic purpose is to provide students and staff with information, materials and environment conducive for learning, teaching and research. The e-Library supplements the existing traditional library by adding the ability to share resources from other institutions through subscription to online databases. Not only does it add more resources for

students of KASU, it also allows the students to have access to the same resources at the same time without conflict. Furthermore the materials are always intact and don't suffer the risk of accidental tear and damage (KASU website, n.d.).

2. Statement of the Problem

In the late 20th and early 21st centuries, library automation and the internet revolutionized information access and library operation around the world. The effect on academic institutions has been profound. It enables users to access library resources from sites hundreds or thousands of miles away. Library in academics institutions can now provide information access to off-campus faculty and students wherever they are located. To meet the ever increasing demands for information availability, academics libraries must now subscribe to electronic resources such as e-books, full text journals and on-line bibliographic database in addition to the print formats. While the availability of these electronic resources enables remote access to needed information, concomitantly, they present issues and challenges (Idowu, 2009).

According to Ali (2005), a sizeable number of users (almost 60%) are facing numerous problems while using electronic information resources, such as lack of knowledge about the resources, lack of trained staff and inadequate terminals. He also identified 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 information and communications technology (ICT) services. Further, Wills (1990) also concur to these problems when he identified insufficient number of terminals available for use despite high demand and inadequate electricity supply; lack of information retrieval skills for exploiting electronic resources, thus making the level of usage of resources by students very low. In his study, he found that 57% of students sampled could not use a computer, that the use of database was poor, due to lack of awareness, lack of access to computers, insufficient training and the high cost of provision.

It is against this background it seems to become necessary to assess the electronic information resources and services in Kaduna state library so that the research can give the actual available electronic information resources, services, level of use, adequacy of provision the resources, and problems associated with the standard of e-resources and services.

3. Objective of the Study

The purpose of research is to discover answers to questions through the application of scientific procedures. The main aim of research is to find out the truth which is hidden and which has not been discovered as yet. Though each research study has its own specific purpose, we may think of research objectives as falling into a number as undertaking in line with the following objectives:
1) To identify the category of available electronic information resources and services in Kaduna state University library.

2) To evaluate the adequacy of the provision of electronic information resources and services in relation to needs of users among the Kaduna State University library.
3) To explore the level of use of various electronic information resources and services provided by the Kaduna state University library.
4) To find out the problems associated with the electronic information resources and services in Kaduna state University library.

4. Research Question

The following research questions will be answered
1) What is the category of available electronic information resources and services in Kaduna state University library?
2) What is the adequacy of the provision of electronic information resources and services in relation to needs of users among the Kaduna State University library?
3) What is the level of use of various electronic information resources and services provided by the Kaduna state University library?
4) What are the problems associated with the electronic information resources and services in Kaduna state University library?
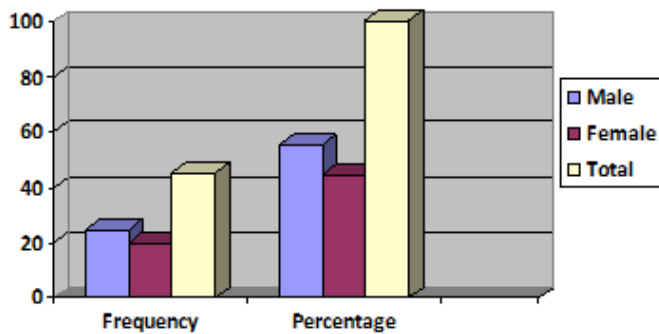
5. Methodology

The survey study was carried out in Kaduna state University Library. The staff and student have been used as sample for the study (random sampling); the data gathered were analyzed using tables, frequencies and percentages for better understanding and interpretation of findings. Ndagi (1984) defines survey research as a research concerned with the collection of data for the purpose of describing and interpreting existing conditions, prevailing practices, beliefs and attitudes on ongoing process. The paper is also organized according to the research questions and objectives of the study. Out of 50 questionnaires 45 were returned successfully by the respondents, Basic details about the participants in the survey are shown in bellow Tables. The demography of respondents revealed that the ages between 15 – 30 had the highest percent distribution of 50(35.71 percent) respondents; followed by ages 31-40 with 39 (27.85 percent). Ages 41-50 is represented by 30(21.42 percent) respondents and the least representation were the 51 and above years with 21(15 percent) respondents. Below are the details of the result:

Analysis and Interpretation of Data

Table 6.1: Gender Status of respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	25	55.55
Female	20	44.44
Total	45	100

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Almanacs	1	2.22
Bibliographies	1	2.22
Directories	2	4.44
Institutional Repository	2	4.44
Total	45	100

As the above table shown that 25 respondents (55.55 percent) were male staff, while 20 respondents (44.44 percent) were female staff

Respondents were asked to indicate the electronic information resources and services available. The results revealed that e-journals had a score of 6(13.33 percent); e-books, online database, online public access (OPAC), Scholarly websites, and photocopy, printing and scanning each score 5 (11.11 percent) respondents. The result reveals that full text databases score 4 (8.88 percent) while directories and institutional repository each score 2 (4.44 percent) respondents. Rest of the resources and services that are CD-ROM Searching service, Current Awareness Services (CAS), Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI), Multimedia, e-dissertation, Almanacs and Bibliographies each score 1 (2.22 percent). This low score might be as a result of lack of awareness about electronic resources and services provided by e-library due to ineffective methods of communication.

Table 5.2: Electronic Information Resources and Services Available in e-library

Available resource & services	Frequency	Percentage
E-books	5	11.11
E-Journals	6	13.33
E-dissertations	1	2.22
CD-ROM Searching service	1	2.22
Current Awareness Services (CAS)	1	2.22
Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI)	1	2.22
On-line databases	5	11.11
Online public access catalogues (OPAC)	5	11.11
Full- text databases	4	8.88
Scholarly websites	5	11.11
Photocopy, printing & scanning	5	11.11
Multimedia	1	2.22

Table 6.3: Adequacy of acquiring Electronic Information Resources to the e-library

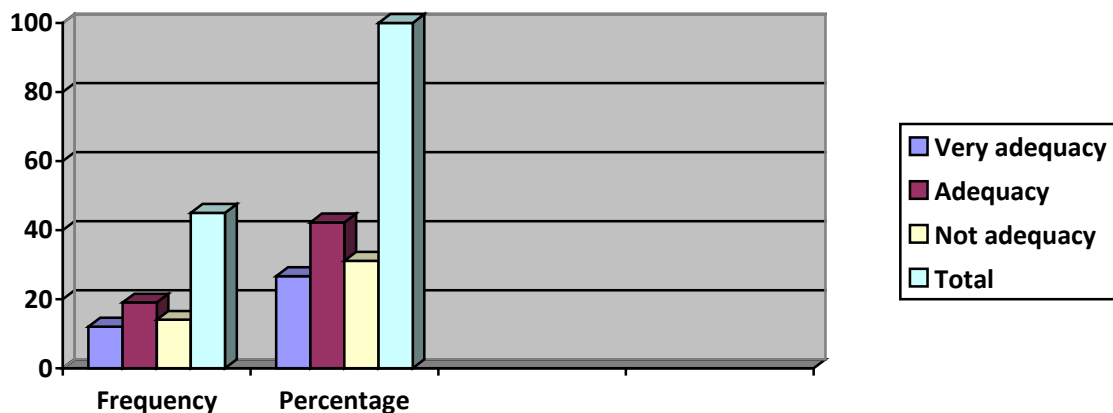| Adequacy	Frequency	Percentage
Very adequate	12	26.66
Adequacy	19	42.22
Not adequacy	14	31.11
Total	45	100

Table 6.3 makes it clear that 19 (42.22percent) respondents say there is adequacy of acquiring Electronic Information Resources to the e-library followed by the respondents say not adequacy 14 with (31.11percent), while very adequacy 12 with (26.66 percent) respondents.

Table 6.4: Access to e-resources

Access to e-resources	Frequency	Percentage
Directly	23	51.11
Through the library assistance	8	17.77
Through the e- librarian	14	31.11
Total	45	100

In order to understand how the users have access to e-resources participants were asked and made appropriate answer. The above result indicate that the users have access to e-resources directly with score of 23 and (51.11 percent) respondents, followed by who say through the e- librarian with 14 (31.11percent) respondents, while 8 (17.77 percent) for who say through the library assistance.

Table 6.5: The level of use of various Electronic Information Resources and Services

Available resource & services	Frequency	Percentage
E-books	6	13.33
E-Journals	4	8.88
E-dissertations	1	2.22
CD-ROM Searching service	0	00
Current Awareness Services (CAS)	1	2.22
Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI)	1	2.22
On-line databases	3	6.66
Online public access catalogues (OPAC)	4	8.88
Full- text databases	5	11.11
Scholarly websites	5	11.11
Photocopy, printing & scanning	8	17.77
Multimedia	1	2.22
Almanacs	1	2.22
Bibliographies	1	2.22
Directories	1	2.22
Institutional Repository	3	6.66
Total	45	100

Participants were asked to indicate the level of use of various electronic information resources and services. The results revealed that photocopy, printing and scanning had a score of 8 (17.77 percent); e-books score 6 (13.33 percent), full text databases and scholarly websites each score 5 (11.11) respondents. E-journals and online public access (OPAC) each score 4 with (8.88 percent) while online database and institutional repository each score 3 (6.66 percent) respondents. Current awareness services, selective dissemination of information, directories, e-dissertations, multimedia, almanacs, and bibliographies each score 1 with (2.22 percent) respondents, while CD-ROM Searching service score 0 (0 percent).

Table 6.6: Problem associated with the standard of Electronic Information Resources and Services

Problems	Very high problem		high problem		Problem		Not problem		Undecided		Total	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
E-library patron	8	17.77	11	24.44	23	51.11	2	4.44	2	4.44	45	100
Funding	28	62.22	10	22.22	5	11.11	00	00	1	2.22	45	100
Lack of IT Knowledge	21	46.66	12	26.66	9	20	0	00	3	6.66	45	100
Infrastructure	9	20	10	22.22	11	24.44	8	17.77	7	15.55	45	100
Management	5	11.11	7	15.55	5	11.11	23	51.11	5	11.11	45	100
Security	13	28.88	5	11.11	15	33.33	7	15.55	5	11.11	45	100

In order to understand the Problem associated with the standard of Electronic Information Resources and Services participants were asked and the above table made it clear that 23 (51.55 percent) respondents say there is problem E-library patron, followed by 11 (24.44 percent) for high problem, while 8 (1.77 percent) for some that score for very high problem, rest of the option that are not problem and undecided each score 2 (4.44 percent) respondents. On the Funding issues, 28 (62.22 percent) respondents score very high problem, followed by 10 (22.22 percent) respondents who score to high problem. Problem score 5 (11.11 percent) respondents while undecided score 1 (2.22 percent) and rest of not problem score 0 (0 percent). Lack of IT knowledge 21 (46.66 percent) respondents score very high problem, followed by 12 (26.66 percent) respondents who score for high problem, while 9 (20 percent) respondents score to problem, undecided score 3 with (6.66 percent) respondent and rest of not problem score 0 (0 percent). Infrastructure 11 respondents (24.44 percent) score for problem, followed by 10 (22.22 percent) respondents who score to high problem. Very high problem score 9 (20 percent) respondents, while not problem score 8 (17.77 percent) respondents, rest of the option that is undecided score 7 (15.55 percent) respondents. Management 23 respondents (51.11 percent) score for not problem followed by 7 (15.55 percent) respondents who score to high problem. Undecided, problem and very high problem each score 5 (11.11 percent) respondents. Security 15 respondents (33.33 percent) score for problem followed by 13 (28.88 percent) respondents who score to very high problem. Not problem score 7 (15.55 percent) respondents while rest of undecided and high problem each score 5 (11.11 percent) respondents.

6. Conclusion

E-Library technology is becoming an essential enabler of library services. With the advent of technology, especially e-reference, e-journals, e-books, current awareness, online database, full text data base and online public access, the possibilities seem limitless but it is no ways diminishes the role of human interaction rather enhances it. Electronic information services have become increasingly important in providing assistance and reference services to the users in Kaduna state University Library. The traditional functions of the Reference –desk service are still provided But taking advantage of the other new technologies, many changes are certainly going to occur in the coming times for e-library because the electronic environment is so fluid, digital reference services will require ongoing adaptations in the way the librarians work

7. Recommendation

1) It is recommended that academic librarian at various levels should encourage and enhance the acquisition of skills required for the use of e-resources. Also, universities should instill in their students the concepts and importance of e-resources usage.
2) University library should provide access to subscribe electronic resources, free web based resources, locally digitized resources and open access resources. To help address the cost electronic resources and proprietary software, the Kaduna state government of Nigeria should encourage the use of open source software and open access electronic resources.
3) There should be special annual budgetary allocation within university e-library for developing and maintaining ICT infrastructure in university. University should develop sustainable strategies for financing the development and operation of automated information systems and services.
4) In order to improve the on-the-job performance of the automated services and electronic information resources personnel, regular training of staff through seminars, workshops, conferences, refresher courses and in-service training should be institutionalized as part of the development plan for electronic information resources personnel.
5) Periodic formative and summative evaluation of electronic information resources and services should be institutionalized within the university library in order to continually improve the implementation, operation and cost-effectiveness of electronic information resources and services in consonance with evolving global technological opportunities for university education.
6) Strategies for maintaining of ICT resources and electronic information resources and services should be given adequate attention in the planning and implementation of ICT programmes and projects. University should implement and monitor strategies for promoting good system maintenance practices.

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