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Library computerization projects in university libraries: A case study of Nimbe Adedipe library, University of Agriculture, Abeokuta and Keneth Dike Library, university of Ibadan

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ABSTRACT

Library computerization projects at Nimbe Adedipe library, University of Agriculture, Abeokuta and Keneth- Dike Library, university of Ibadan were evaluated. The total population of the respondents was 331 which include two university librarians, twenty-two library staff and two hundred users. The data collection instruments used for this study were a questionnaire and interview. The instruments were structured to identify important measurable variables associated with the provision and utilization of library computerized services. Out of 200 copies of questionnaire administered to the users, only one hundred and ninety two were completed and used for the study. The data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics involving tables and simple percentages. Based on the questionnaire survey of the library staff and the interview granted by university librarians, the information technology resources in the university libraries were inadequate for successful implementation of the library computerization project, however, computerized services such as CD-ROM services, internet search online journal subscription proved by the libraries have tremendous impacts on the organization, management and dissemination of information. There was a low number of satisfied users which was an indication that much remain to be done to fully grow the automated information services profiles in the university libraries.

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Introduction

Nigeria global developments have led to the general understanding that the world currently engages in an unfolding revolution-the information revolution. Information revolution is sweeping across the world and global economy is increasingly becoming information and knowledge driven one. (Oyinloye 2004) stated that clearly over fifty years, the amount and content of information have increased both in complexity and in structure.

University libraries have long been recognized as the "heart" of their universities saddled with the responsibility to provide materials and services that will now and in the future best contribute to fulfilling the objectives of the university, which include teaching, learning, research, and cultural development (Ifidon, 1985). Thus, the libraries had to develop and maintain standard books, journals, audio-visual collections and services.

Nowadays, the knowledge base which users of academic library want access to is no longer stored in linear media textbooks, printed material base but rather in a computerized electronic information domain (Omekwu, 2004). With computerization, the basic functions of the university libraries which include acquisition, organization dissemination and maintenance, are better performed. The result of this application of technology is that information delivery is timely, accurate, precise and relevant.

These qualities, which determine a good library, are the dividends of a computerized information system.

Nigeria in her attempt to promote teaching, learning and research in Nigerian universities adopts computerization of library services but fraught with some challenges that lead to great set back in the pace of automation. For successful

implementation and sustenance of the computerization of library services in developing countries such as Nigeria, evaluation of these services is paramount.

Problem statement:

Despite some laudable initiative on library computerization to improve library services and operations in Nigeria universities, the technological transformation of some university libraries still appear to have been very low which is as a result of lack of culture of evaluation to access performance of the computerization library project. This implies that the set objectives of computerizing these libraries have not been fully met. The study therefore evaluates the library computerization projects in two universities in south western Nigerian, with the objectives to

1 Identify the progress made by the selected university library towards achieving the objectives of its library computerization project.

2 To determine the constraints to successful implementation of library computerization projects in the selected university libraries.

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This study attempts to provide answers to the following research question:

- 1 What library services are being computerized in the university library?
- 2 What are the impacts of the library computerized services on the universities.
- 3 Are there adequate IT resources for successful implementation of the computerization project?
- 4 Are the library users satisfied with the automated services provided by the libraries?
- 5 Are the computerized services provided by the libraries relevant to meet user's need.
- 6 What are the constraints to the successful implementation of the computerization projects?

Literature Review

The application of computers in Nigerian universities libraries has of today becomes an acceptable norm, being the most realistic way and means of providing timely, accurate and efficient information services. Much research works have been published on this issue. Among the researchers in this field is Chaya-Devi, (1997) who discovered that the majority of the end-users preferred to search the information on-line rather than the manual method due to the reasons of immediate and global accessibility to information. Oketunji (1998) noted that most notable libraries in Nigeria are advanced in computerization. He also reported that the application of computers to library process is now firmly established in Nigerian libraries, and that it makes it possible to analyse the whole operational system and aid library services as well as decision making at various levels.

Nwalo (2002) discussed a great deal on the compelling need for libraries in Africa to computerize their operations. He also reported that as publishing goes more and more electronic in the 21st century, many primary journals and secondary services previously acquired by libraries through subscription to hard copies can only be accessed through the internet. As such, any library that is not linked to the internet would; as it were, be automatically isolating its users from the best of the world's current literature for higher education and research. Abolaji, (2000), stated that significant and wide spread efforts at computerizing library services in Nigeria started in the 1990s but efforts at library computerization in the universities were stalled by the supposed lack of funds and expertise. A survey of libraries in Nigeria was conducted by Akande (2001) and it was revealed that computers were used to automate technical services, to provide efficient reference and information services, to network operations such as cataloging, authority control, inter-library loan and compilation of bibliographies. Kamal (2002) opined that the use of information communication technology is growing in Nigerian librarians.

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on networking so as to ease the sharing of bibliographic records through the electronic form. He advocates for Online National Bibliographic Network (ONBN). Egberongbe (2003) reported that library computerization in Nigerian university libraries is gaining ground. A number of academic institutions have introduced computers in their libraries. Library software systems are being used for a number of functions ranging from the provision of specialized information services such as selective dissemination of information and searches of electronic databases available on CD-Roms.

Madu (2004) defined evaluation as the assessment of the value of the system. He pointed out two ways in which an automated system can be evaluated, which are the benefits the effectiveness. Saracev et.al (2000) also pointed out that the evaluation of automated services in libraries is a complex undertaking, which is conceptually and pragmatically challenging.

A number of studies have used different methods and instruments for evaluating different types of automated systems in university education. Oberskiet *al.*(2000) evaluated the challenges of online delivery of course materials to support the work-based learning process of managers in small and medium companies by higher education institutions in Finland, Italy, Spain and Scotland. They found that internet or work-based learning do seem to allow learners greater flexibility in the manner in which they can study, but that like any open and distance education, learners also requires motivation and skilled management of time and space as in face-to-face delivery of courses. Ryan *et al* (2001) were of the opinion that, evaluating academic digital libraries is crucial in understanding how the library meets users' requirements especially for academic and research purposes.

Borgman *et al.*(2001) evaluated the Alexandria Digital Earth Prototype for use in undergraduate education, using surveys, interviews, and classroom observations. They mainly investigated which components of the simulation would be useful; they also assessed learning outcomes by comparing an experimental group and control group on a series of tasks.

Procedure

This study was carried out during the 2009/2010 school year. It involved three set of respondent viz the university librarian, library staff and the library users drawn from different faculties of University of Ibadan, Ibadan and University of Agriculture, Abe-okuta. A survey method was employed for the study. The total population of the respondent was 331 which include 2 university librarians, twenty-two (29) library staff and two hundred (200) users. The data collection instruments used for this study were a questionnaire and interview. The instruments were structured to identify important measurable variables associated with the provision and utilization of library computerized services. A random sampling technique was adopted for the study. Out of 200 copies of questionnaire administered to the users, only one hundred and ninety two (182) were completed and used for the study. The data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics involving tables and simple percentages.

Findings

When the university librarians were interviewed to identify the computerized task in their libraries, it was found out that university of ibadan has three of its services automated while university of Ilorin automates two of its services. None of the library is fully automated, however, service such as CD-ROM,

internet search, on-line journal subscription etc are being provided to the user.

5.1 Library software used by the institutions based on the interview granted by the university librarians, the two university libraries have changed from TINLIB to library software such as KOHA and VLS.

The study analyzed the IT knowledge of the library staff as well as their experience with library automated services. The result shows that 59% had low IT knowledge, 31% had moderate knowledge and 10% had higher IT knowledge.

Table 5 evaluates the adequacy of IT resources in the selected university libraries. The result reveals that 7% of the respondents strongly agreed that the selected university libraries have adequate resources required for implementation of the library computerization project, 24% agreed while 69% disagreed. This implies that the selected university libraries do not have adequate resources required for implementation of library computerization.

Table 6 presents that 14% of the respondents strongly agreed there is adequate trained manpower to handle computerized services in the selected libraries followed by of the respondents who agreed, those who agreed have the highest percentage of 59%, thus, this implies that the selected university libraries in South-western Nigeria have adequate trained manpower to handle library computerized services.

It is shown in table 7 that the respondents who strongly agreed that library management trains the staff on IT use has the least frequency, 3 (10%), followed by those who agreed, 11 (38%). those who disagreed received the highest frequency of 15 (52%). This reveals that much effort has been made by the library management to train their staff on the use of IT.

This table shows that 14% of the respondents strongly agreed that their workstation temperature is conducive for work. 41% agreed while 45 %disagreed. This implies that the Workstation temperature and furniture for work at the selected University libraries in South-Western Nigeria is averagely conducive.

Table 11: Shows the users' access to the library automated service and the result revealed that only 17% of the respondent have regular access to the computerize service in their library while 83% do not have regular access to the services.

Table 12: indicates that's 28% of the respondent are satisfied with the computerized services offered by the selected libraries, while 72% are not satisfied. Thus, confirming that the computerized services in these libraries are inadequate to meet the users' satisfaction.

Table 14 provides a clear picture of the respondents perception of constraints to the provision and utilization of library automated services. It is revealed inadequate financial assistant received the highest frequency followed by problem with the use of available software, inadequate IT resources, logistic problem, lack of policy guidelines ,lack of culture of evaluation to access performance of the computerized library project, in that order.

Discussion

Much progress has not been recorded by the selected university libraries towards successful implementation and sustenance of their computerized services. None of the two universities under study has all its library services fully automated. The libraries claimed not to have access to the internet, due to ineffective internet service provider (ISP). To a large extent, the existence of University Wide Area Network

(WAN) and a Local Area Network (LAN) within the library determines the success of computerization of library services. Based on the submission of the librarians, TINLIB software is used by Nimbe Adedipe library, UNAB while Keneth Dike Library, university of Ibadan has replaced it with KOHA and VLS.

Based on the questionnaire survey of the library staff and the interview granted by university librarian, their information technology resources, university library were inadequate for successful implementation of the library computerization project, however, computerized services such as CD-ROM services, internet search online journal subscription and so on proved by the libraries have a tremendous impact on the organization, management and dissemination of information. There was a low number of satisfied users which was an indication of the great amount of work that remain to be done to fully grow the automated information services profiles in the university libraries under study. The library users do not have regular access to the computerized services which is a great set back in pace of automation. Moreover, much effort has not been made by the library management to train their IT staff which hindered the successful implementation of the library computerization project of the two universities. It is very important that enough staff with adequate computer literacy be readily available, if any computerization programme in the library is to be successful. The IT environment of the libraries claimed to be conducive but the IT resources are inadequate, this constitutes a serious bottle-neck to computerization.

The library computerization project was not viable in the selected university due to inadequate funding, logistic problem, lack of policy guideline and lack of culture of evaluation to access the performance of the computerized library in that order.

Conclusion

This study has attempted to evaluate the library computerization projects in two selected universities in South Western, Nigeria. In this respect, and on the basis of the data collected during the survey of the universities, one can conclude overall that. Automated services in the selected libraries were far from adequate and that, none of the libraries has its services fully automated the few computerized services in the libraries had assisted in effective and efficient accomplishment of the mission of the universities there is no adequate trained man power to handle computerized services in the selected libraries the library users were very dissatisfied with the level of automated and services and in the libraries. Major obstacles militating against the automated services in the libraries include inadequate funds, electricity supply, problem of software, telecommunications connectivity, as well as lack of culture of evaluation to assess performance of the computerized library projects. Findings from this study shows that Nigeria university libraries are still at the developing stride in the pace of automation, for developing and sustaining library automated services in Nigerian universities, it is highly recommended that ICT development plan should be evolved to cater for short, medium and long-term automation requirements. In addition to this, there should be specific annual budgetary allocation from the university to the library for developing and maintaining ICT infrastructure, each library should develop sustainable strategies for generating fund.

Table 1. Population of the study

Institution	University librarian	Library staff	Users
UNLIBADAN	1	17	100
UNAB	1	12	100
TOTAL	2	29	200

Table 2. Copies of questionnaire completed by the respondents

Institution	Questionnaire library staff	Completed library staff
UNLIBADAN	17	97
UNAB	12	85
TOTAL	29	182
%	100%	91%

Table 3. Computerized services in the Libraries

	INSTITUTION	
Services	UNLIBADAN	UNAB
Acquisition	Yes	Yes
Cataloguing	Yes	Yes
Circulation	Yes	No
Serials	No	No
References	No	No

Table 4: Respondents (staff) IT knowledge and experience with library computerized services.

Respondents (staff) IT knowledge and experience with library computerized services.			UNLIBADAN	UNAB	TOTAL
	Low IT knowledge	Frequency % within institution	6 _{35%}	3 _{25%}	9 _{31%}
Moderate IT Knowledge	Frequency %	10 _{59%}	7 _{58%}	17 _{59%}	
High IT Knowledge	Frequency %	1 6%	2 _{17%}	3 10%	
TOTAL	Frequency %	17 100	12 100	29 100	

Table 5: evaluation of IT resources required for successful implementation of computerized services.

Your library has adequate resources for implementation of computerization project			UNLIBADAN	UNAB	TOTAL
	Strongly agree	Frequency % within library	1 6%	1 8%	2 7%
Agree	Frequency %	5 29%	2 17%	7 24%	
Disagree	Frequency %	11 65%	9 75%	20 69%	
Total	Frequency %	17 100	12 100	29 100	

Table 6: Adequacy of trained manpower to handle computerized services

Your library has adequate trained manpower to handle computerized services			UNLIBADAN	UNAB	TOTAL
	Strongly agree	F %	3 18	1 8	4 14
Agree	F %	11 65	6 50	17 59	
Disagree	F %	3 17	5 42	8 27	
Total	F %	17 100	12 100	29 100	

Table 7: Training of staff on IT use

Your library mgt. Train the staff on IT use			UNLIBADAN	UNAB	TOTAL
	Strongly Agree	F % --	2 12	1 10	3 10
Agree	F % --	6 35	5 42	11 38	
Disagree	F % --	9 53	6 50	15 52	

Table 10: Evaluation of operational environment for IT staff

Work station conducive work.			UNLIBADAN	UNAB	TOTAL
	Strongly Agree	F %	2 12	2 16	4 14
Agree	F %	7 41	5 42	12 41	
Disagree	F %	8 47	5 42	13 45%	
Total	F %	17 100	12 100	29 100	

Table 11: Users' access to the library computerized services (N=182).

Regular access to the library computerized services			UNI.IBADAN	UNAB	TOTAL
	Yes	F	18	13	31
	%	19	15	17	
No	F	79	72	151	
	%	81	85	83	
TOTAL	F	97	85	182	
	%	100	100	100	

Table 12: Users' satisfaction with the library computerized services.

Users' satisfaction with the library computerized services			UNI.IBADAN	UNAB	TOTAL
	Satisfied F		23	28	51
% within.....		24	57	28	
Not satisfied F		74	57	131	
% within.....		76	85	72	
TOTAL F		97	85	182	
% within.....		100	100	100	

Table13: Constraints to the provision and utilization of computerized services in selected university libraries.

constraints to the provision and utilization of computerized services in selected university libraries	Constraint	Frequency				Total	TOTAL				TOTAL
		SA	A	D	SD		SA	A	D	SD	
	Inadequate fund	20	9	--	--	29	69	31	--	--	100
	Inadequate IT recourses	12	17	--	--	29	41	59	--	--	100
	Logistic problem	6	8	5	10	29	21	28	17	34	100
	Problem of software	12	6	8	3	29	41	21	28	10	100
	Lack of policy guidelines	3	8	15	3	29	10	28	52	10	100
	Lack of culture of evaluation to access performance of the computerized library project	6	10	9	4	29	21	34	31	14	100

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