

**UTILIZATION OF ELECTRONIC LIBRARY RESOURCES AND FEE-BASED
LIBRARY SERVICES FOR EFFECTIVE INFORMATION RETRIEVAL BY COLLEGE
LIBRARY USERS**

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Abstract

This paper examines the utilization of electronic library resources and fee-based library services for effective information retrieval by college library users. Library utilization, however, refers to the extent of usage of libraries by users. In conclusion, Fee-based library services, is an improved and advanced way of information services provision, which is not quite long in the college libraries system but it has expanded beyond the usual conventional fee-based information provision and delivery system practiced presently in some college libraries. This study would serve as a relevant source of literature to library users undertaking research work related to this work easy accessibility and availability of the kind of e-resources they need, to the librarians, information professionals, information scientists and other staff. This work would serve as a guide and working document upon which their services can be directed or anchored, the study will reveal to librarians of college libraries the trend relating to electronic library resources, provision, utilization, accessibility and services to new development in the provision of electronic library resources to users.

Introduction

The library landscape has indeed been altered and reshaped by the information and communication technology (ICT) across the globe. Powerful and strong librarians are now quantified by the level of automation, internet connectivity and accessibility to other online databases as well as quality of collections. Information and communication technology (ICT) has thus become the defining parameter for delineating libraries.

College libraries are regarded as one of the most important service departments through which colleges as citadel or center of learning implement library policies and programmes in line with the mission of the colleges. Objectives of the college library is achieved through a systematic acquisition, organization, storage and dissemination of all forms of information for the main purpose of reading, study, research and consultation in all fields of relevance to the entire programmes of the colleges. For effective teaching, learning and research to be carried out in the colleges and for successful accreditation of academic programmes to verify quality assurance of services provider, college libraries as one of the most important facilities to promote education must ensure the provision of relevant quality collections and services (Nkanu, 2016).

The college librarians occupy a central position and play key roles in the college educational system. The college librarians plan and coordinate all the functions of the college libraries that are aimed at satisfying the needs of the users and all these require funding. Funding is needed for the employment of qualified and competent librarians, the constructions of befitting library buildings for accommodating library collections and schools and for purchasing of all needed electronic library resources as well as their organization, storage and dissemination of information to their user' communities.

Colleges library is responsible for providing instant access to digitized information, electronic resources and services with the aid of computer or telecommunication technologies. Electronic library resources acquires, processes, stores, evaluates and disseminates information via electronic means to the audience in need of information. It can serve as a medium for achieving national and community development through provision of relevant information necessary for decision making and policy enhancement. Electronic library resources is a multi-

disciplinary concept that shares various branches of computer science including data management, information retrieval, library science, document management, information systems, the web, image processing, and artificial intelligence.

Electronic library resources has to do with access to information through internet that changed the role of the libraries. Libraries now have both printed document as well as electronic information resources in their collection. The electronic documents can be stored, accessed and disseminated as and when due. More so, the services of the libraries are not confined in local, regional, national and international networks. It has become a global activity. Electronic library resources consist of those electronic products that deliver a collection of data, in text referring to full text basis, e-journals, image collection and other multimedia products and numerical, graphical or time based, as a commercially available that has been published with an aim to being marketed (Dhanavandam&Tamizhchelvan 2012). Electronic library resources may be delivered in CD-ROM, on tape through internet and so on. However, Sukula (2010) defines electronic library resources as an electronic information resource that can be accessed on the web, on or off campus. Users can get the information that he/she needs, whenever it is needed, looking at the definition of electronic library resources. However, it proves that both definition above share similarities and characteristics. Evidently, these have to do with the fact that they are collection made available in different formats, which can be accessed online anywhere at any time. Also they can be retrieved and downloaded on information devices for use at a later date.

Electronic library resources have provided wider access to information in colleges for teaching, learning, and research than the traditional print through the use of information and communications technologies (ICTS) by library users. Electronic library resources are those

electronic information resources and services that users access electronically through computing networks from inside the library or remote to the library. Electronic library resources form one of many formats that the library collects to support its universal collections.

Effective Information Retrieval

Information retrieval (IR) is concerned with searching for information within databases. There is an overlap in the usage of the terms data retrieval, document information retrieval, and text retrieval, but each also has its own body of literature, theory, praxis and technologies. Effective Information retrieval with libraries, repository of knowledge began to change into recorded form. With the quantity of new information being generated is such that no individual can hope to cope with this information explosion and at the same time make them available to users. This led to the use of information retrieval with minimum cost in time, labour and money.

Information retrieval, according to Unagha (2010), is the process of searching some collections of documents in order to identify those documents which deal with a particular subject. Reitz (2004) defined information retrieval as the process, methods and procedures used to selectively recall recorded information from a file of data. In college libraries, searches are made typically for a known item or for information on a specific subject, and the file is usually a human readable catalogue or index, or a computer-based information storage and retrieval system, such as an online catalogue and bibliographic database. In the design of such systems, a balance must be attained to facilitate this literature searching activity may legitimately be called an effective information retrieval system.

Akanwa (2017) he noted that retrieval tools are crucial for retrieving information for educational outcomes. However, Edom (2012) stated that, information retrieval are simple mechanisms or apparatuses that help users of library to locate, retrieve and use the needed documents from the library or information from a book or document. In addition, he outline different kind of tools to include: bibliographies, indexes and abstracts, catalogue, computer filing or websites, subject index, title index, directories, OPAC (online public access catalogue) CD-ROMS (Compact Disks Read only memories), online databases, internet search engines and so on. Interestingly, at present users have various kind of retrieval tools at their disposals to help them to access and to retrieve the information they need or required e.g. Phone, Smartphone's, I Pad, Nokia phone, Androids phones with good internets browsers. Consequently, to surmount the problems of retrieving information certain skills are required or needed to selectively retrieve accurate and sufficient information stored in documents instead of all the information that may not be relevant for the students 'needs.

Encouragingly, Gui (2007) buttressed, that the skills for retrieving information required by the users include; the skills to navigate, select, evaluate and re-use information. He said these skills involve the ability to handle the different retrieval tools that abound. This is made possible if the users are exposed and encouraged to exploit all through various users' orientation and education programs available to them and ready available for use. Furthermore, effective utilization of the library resources and electronic resources by library users to a great extent depends on the- on the conduciveness and adequacy of the facilities of the entire library environment. Any college library where these facilities are inadequately provided could result in low level of use by the library users. However, the absence of variables such as adequate

retrieval tools and conducive, serene and adequate facilities within the library environment must be checked to enhance full utilization of the library and its resources.

Effective information retrieval is concerned with the adequate exploitation and extraction of information and other contents of documents from different information sources (Akanwa, 2017). Effective Information Retrieval is covered through explanations of database technologies, bibliographic formats, catalogue and metadata, subject analysis, vocabulary control, abstract and indexing to user interfaces, evaluation of information retrieval systems and information retrieval in a web context, file organization, user requirements, interface design, natural language processing, digital libraries, web search engines and search engines optimization, evaluation of the retrieval effectiveness and experimental research (Chowdhury, 2010). However, there are some expanded sections on developments in metadata standards, such as the Functional Requirements Of Bibliographic Records (FRBR), automatic indexing, information retrieval on the web, XML markup and retrieval and citation analysis, which made changes in information retrieval and serve as a primer to users or readers on the basic technical aspects of computerized information retrieval. Besides that, automatic indexing and file organization for example goes into considerable detail about alternative methods of term weighting and about how inverted files and alternative text retrieval structures work. More so, searching and retrieval includes not only information about query formulation and search strategies but also an explanation of vector processing.

Although information retrieval also covers some traditional tools such as classification schemes and subject headings at some length, it does not fully articulate the rationale for recent developments, including Functional Requirements of Bibliographic Records (FRBR), and the

proposed new cataloguing code Resource Description and Access (RDA). Missing is a deeper interest in exploring how metadata schemes and interface design interact in an effort to solve retrieval problems. For example, cataloging and metadata contains screen shots of a faceted catalogue display but relatively little analysis of how such displays utilize MARC (machine readable catalogue), metadata originally designed for a different environment. Similarly, the compilation of citations of resources on digital publishing, open access publishing, scholarly communication, and related topics are available as an open access bibliography.

Library users

Library users are the patrons or clientele that uses the library always and often for their learning, studying, teaching and research. They include; students, lecturers, (Academic staff) college administrators, non-academic staff ,researchers, and other members of the college communities within and outside the college or institution whose businesses are affiliated to the institution in one way or other. The library users are very critical in the use of electronic library resources, thus, the librarians 'role towards the library users needs to be friendly, pleasant, courteous and in an efficient manner. Librarians are expected to study and understand the library users profile and provide a variety of library resources and services to them both in print and electronic formats. Aina (2004) defined library users as an embracing term that broadly includes all those that avail themselves of the services of the library to meet their information needs at all times. These terms could be used interchangeably to include patrons, client, readers or consumers at different library settings.

Traditionally, library users have been classified into groups. Whitakers (1993) classified them into general readers, subject readers, special readers, and non-reading users. While, Nwalo

(2003) grouped them into specialists, students, disadvantaged majority, and the indisposed. In addition, Aina (2004) grouped users into children, pupils, students, adults, professionals, researchers, policy-makers, artisans, hearing and visually handicapped, and physically handicapped. Skill is the basis for categorizing users in this paper. The categories include: Unskilled user/ computer illiterate user, Semi-skilled user/ semi-computer literate user, Skilled user/ computer literate user, Unskilled User/ Computer Illiterate User. Interaction between librarian and users will require the use of ICT in the 21st century library. The unskilled library user will not even be able to ask the librarian for guidance without the use of ICT. Unskilled users will not be able to use the resources of the library because of lack of ICT skills. This category of users includes those people who use library products through the third party that have ICT skills. To support this above, Adomi (2010) state that basic ICT skill is essential to be able to access and apply information. Widespread ignorance and misconception about ICT use amongst users is a major inhibitor to library development in Nigeria. He further stated that for this category, ICT is not familiar, distant and mysterious. This category also include those that are not aware of the existence and importance of ICT.

Semi-Skilled/ Semi-Literate User: This category of users can use technological devices to access the library with little or no support. This category of users can effectively use the basic search facilities such as the basic search engine (information literacy), but cannot effectively use the advanced search engine features and operators which have the capacity to retrieve only relevant information from the library's collections.

Skilled User/ Computer Literate User: This category has the following qualities: 1. Knowledge of how to analyze information need (information literacy). 2. Knowledge of how to use basic and

advanced search engines effectively. 3. Knowledge of how to formulate queries and keywords effectively. No doubt this category consists of those who have undergone ICT training and have acquired relative experiences in the use of technological innovations as they relate to information retrieval. This group of users can obtain virtually all their information need as quickly as possible. In other words, this category includes those people that are able to break their information needs into searchable units, translate them into keywords, search for them using basic or advanced search technologies, and retrieve up-to-date, relevant, and adequate information.

Utilization

Utilization is regarded as the use of something for a particular purpose. Library utilization, however, refers to the extent of usage of libraries by users. In view of this, users of colleges make use of the library for academic materials, assistance and guidance, teaching and learning, for their research and study. Information utilization is the actual putting into appropriate use of acquired information. Users expectations are high when it comes to searching for information as such they feel frustrated when their expectations are not met. Therefore, their information needs should be understood in order to provide corresponding services. Most Importantly, Oluwatobi (2014) asserted that utilization of electronic library resources discovered that users use electronic library resources to a high extent. In line with this, an evaluative study of information resources and services conducted by Bitagi and Garba (2014) revealed that factors such as inadequate funding of the college libraries were found to be militating against the provision and utilization of electronic library resources and services. Therefore, utilization of

electronic library resources is essential for the justification of the existence and survival of any library user.

Fee-based library service is an organized process-based practice, aiming at providing services that are monetized or priced (Ogar, Nkanu and Ekanem, 2014). It is also, an information service provided by the college library in exchange for monetary payment. The nature of the college library and the information centre determines the type of services the college library renders concerning the needs of the users. In addition, fee-based services would help college library users to appreciate the services that are rendered by the libraries and information professionals in library and information centre. Furthermore, fee-based services will improve and encourage the librarians and the college library, this is because the patronage of library use will be high. On the other hand, Issa, M'Bashir and Saka (2012) defined fee-based library services from the business perspective as a daily employment, profession, occupation and frequent task which are put as a set of organized tasks done by the individual with the sole aim of gaining a lively hood for subsistence or profit-making. In terms of business it gives a description of a set information need for college library users' demand on a stipulated fee. Fee-based services involves a monetary value on the information services provision and delivery contrary to the former practices way of the information given in the college libraries.

Fee-based library services, is an improved and advanced way of information services provision, which is not quite long in the college libraries system but it has expanded beyond the usual conventional fee-based information provision and delivery system practiced presently in some college libraries. Furthermore, fee-based library service is an organized routine based practice aiming at providing special services to college library users that are monetized or priced

(Ogar, Nkanu & Ekanem, 2014). Interestingly, there are some vital key fee-based information services in the information business which include: corporate and institution charge-back information services, free-lance librarian, information broker, information consultants, information specialist, library consultant, researchers, free-lance indexers and abstractors, information retailers, information on demand companies, free-lance cataloguers and classifiers and others who provides library and information services for a fee. Although the above -named items may not be seen as information services in a real sense, there are information providers that can be employed, which can constitutes sole agents on which fee-based library services can be generated in the college libraries. Despite, the huge benefit associated with fee-based library services in the college libraries, they also face many challenges.

Challenges of Utilization of Electronic Library Resources and Challenges face by fee-based library services

The inability of college library to meet the information requirements of some library users might have forced them to use personal collections when conducting teaching, learning and research. Shortage of time is also reason for not using electronic resources; unfamiliarization with computerized searching; poor or lack of internet connectivity which very few where offering web – based information services to their users. However, this article identifies some barriers to the effective utilization of electronic resources by college libraries which includes: Lack of strategic planning, Inadequate or reliable funding ,Lack of use of internet to provide information services to users, Lack of consistent training for users on new ICT services Inadequate staff in the library and lack of assistance from the librarians, Inadequate

computers in the library is a barrier to the effective usage of library and Unfitting attitude of some staff in the library. The above problems identified are serious challenge to the utilization of electronic library resources for effective information retrieval by college library users.

The numerous challenges acting as a barrier among which are lack of policy framework on fee-based library policy, insufficient professional and non-professional staff, lack of autonomy for library to initiate policies and programmes on fee-based library services and implement them.

Conclusion

The changing trend of users need and attitude to information is gradually forcing librarians or information professional to surrender to the collection and development of electronic resources. Although users have the right to know more about the utilization of electronic resources for effective information retrieval. However, with the growing needs of users and the proliferation of electronic resources, college libraries are moving away from print documents to e-resources. Thus, it makes the college libraries to redesign their collection development policies and its implementation drive, and gives equal opportunity to access and utilize information. In addition, the contents of the college library is no more restricted to traditional printed resources such as books, magazines or journal, but to online resources and other electronic driven material. The creation of access to these electronic library resources will ease the utilization of electronic library resources for effective information retrieval. It is expected of the college library to be fully utilized by its users, in order to enhance and facilitate, teaching, learning and study.

In Nigeria today fee-based library services are of current practice, there exist a few in college libraries because of the insufficient well-defined policy on which this practice can be anchored, many college libraries already provide limited information services to their users (Igyuve and Ashaver, 2014). Some areas where fee-based library services are already in existence in the college libraries are fines for late returns of borrowed materials, document delivery, journal article delivery, inter-library loans, computer searches service, personal assistance i.e customer services skills, reprographic services, bindery services, internet services, current Awareness of information services, selective dissemination of information services, information literacy services among others. The shift of emphasis from free based library services to fee-based library services and from traditional to electronic library resources offers many opportunities for librarians to provide their users with different kind of information resources variety formats on fee-based library services. The paradigm shift provides opportunities for library users to look for information in varieties ways or formats. It opens business opportunities for the college libraries and the librarians to charge fees on the services they give to their users to meet their information needs.

Recommendation

1. This study would serve as a relevant source of literature to library users undertaking research work related to this work easy accessibility and availability of the kind of e-resources they need.
2. To the librarians, information professionals, information scientists and other staff, this work would serve as a guide and working document upon which their services can be directed or anchored

3.The study will reveal to librarians college libraries the trend relating to electronic library resources, provision, utilization, accessibility and services to new development in the provision of electronic library resources to users.

4.The study may likely to be invaluable to Nigeria library Association (NLA) and Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria (LRCN) to sensitize librarians on the usage or provision of electronic library resources.

5. This paper would help the colleges review and formulate library policies in line with the policy framework related to fee-based library services in the college library.

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