

APPLICATION OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT) IN THE MANAGEMENT OF LIBRARY SERVICES IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

The paper explores the use of information and communication technology (ICT) in the management of library services in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. The application of ICT has become imperative for effective and part service delivery in the management of modern library resources. The advent of ICT is indeed a boost to the development of library services as it assists in building databases, developing networks, providing better services to their users and peeling marketing opportunities Information and communication technology can be applied in academic libraries in cataloguing, classification, and OPAC systems among others. It is believed that weak the application of ICT in the management of library services there will be tremendous improvement. Hence library professionals should apply different technologies to enable, its user communities to get the right information at the right name. The piper however that there should be an improvement in the capacity building of librarians to enable them to cue in this cost of technological advancement.

Keywords: Information Commutation Technology Management, Library Services

Introduction

Education in the 21st" century has transcended from the traditional approach to the modern ways, which hinged on the application of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) into every sphere of educational management, it is imperative to state that the application of KT in library services would go a long way in satisfying the information requirement of students and is emergence greatly impacted on the quality of the information provided through libraries. It also enables adequate management of library services to library users from all disciplines. ICT in libraries is a generic term, which refers to the technologies that are used to collect, store, edit and communicate information in various formats (Rail, 2018) Similarly, Igwe (2011) posited that ICT in the application of technologies consisting of hardware software network and media for collection, storage processing transmission and presentation of information in textual, pictorial and multimedia formats

The use of ICT to improve access to digital information is narrowed down to the digital divide, which helps to improve the quality of education in our tertiary institutions. The integration of ICT in libraries is a way of improving on information services made available in libraries. We are in an era where students need to access timely information with ease, and the only way, this can be done is through the use of ICT to library services. Adebayo, Ahmed and Adeniran (2018) affirm that timely and effective use of ICT in library services can assist in building up a society and providing information which is very paramount to the development of various sectors of the nation's economy, Libraries are therefore, playing a crucial role of facilitating access to global information and knowledge acquisition, using information and communication technology. There is no doubt that integration of ICT into the management of library services can bring greater benefits to university libraries Naahmeve and Ozioko (2011) inferred that ICT remains an enabling tool for the provision of timely and current library and information services needed to drive any nation forward.

Globally, the nature of teaching and learning in tertiary institutions is rapidly changing due to increasing interaction from more accessible telecommunication networks, therefore access to communication networks is very crucial and fundamental in our institutions, if we must be at the same page with the global community, we need to embrace new information technologies.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

The concept of ICT has been given various definitions by different scholars. According to Nwanakezi and Ugonna (2011), ICT is a whole range of technologies involved in information processing, which receives, records, transmits, and retrieves information. Ivowi in Nwanekezi and Ugonta (2011) describes ICT as handling and processing of Information using electronic and telecommunication devices such as computers cameras, telephones etc. Esu (2018) referred to ICT as the creation, processing, storage, retrieval and transmission of data and information. Considering the definitions above, it is important to summarize information and communication technology as the application of technologies consisting of hardware software, networks and media for the collection, storage, referral, processing, transmission and presentation of information in pictorial or multimedia formats. In the library, ICT refers to the application of computers and other technologies to library practices, such as acquisition, storage, organization and dissemination of information (Adebayo et al. 2018). ICT holds out the opportunity for information dissemination and improvement in the management of the education system.

Management of Library Services

Management refers to the organization of human and material resources to achieve set goals while library services are those services rendered to users of library facilities. Management of library services, therefore, is the coordination of human and material resources to ensure effective utilization of library facilities. Library management services enhance the efficiency of library service delivery. It helps in maintaining data on books issued to users, and books available in the library, this helps librarians spot any particular book at any given time in the library

Importance of the Application of ICT in Management of Library Services

The need for information and communication technology (ICT) in Nigerian tertiary Institutions cannot be over-emphasized: everyone requires ICT competence to survive in this technology-driven age. This calls for early acquisition of ICT skills by lecturers and students. Libraries provide a wide range of users with access to networked Information such as database electronic Information, journals and others. Publications from various publishers (Chissenga 2014) ICT resources enhance the speedy flow and sharing of information among individuals and institutions. The computers are used to perform various library operations and routines, such as ordering, acquisition and circulation of library materials (Mistra, 2014), Computers can also be used for various activities such as processing, storage, analyzing and information dissemination within the institutions of learning (Adebayo et al. 2018).

In the same vein, ICTs through the internet have made it easier to send out orders to publishers and products of teaching material and equipment, as well as placing orders for online processing of theory materials (Adebayo et al. 2018). ICTs also encourage collaboration among researchers, irrespective of the location, the internet provides up-to-date information on any subject or topic, and with ICT many library users now have access to the vast sea of information, without necessarily investing much time and energy. Hence, the process of distributing Information is now being facilitated through the use of information and communication technology. ICT Eder (2020) also noted that the emergence and application of digitization in libraries especially academic libraries have continued to revolutionize the pattern and scope of library services delivery.

According to Olise (2010), the introduction of KT in education brought about the computerization of traditional material such as books, journals, newspapers and other information resources in the library. She also stated that this has led to the existence of a virtual library. The introduction of Internet into library services has greatly enhanced the efficiency and effectiveness of library services and improved research (Onyezare and Offor, 2011). Affirming this, Osuala (2012) said that, the greatest benefit of Internet to library services is the inexpensive way to communicate with other Internet users worldwide. He contended that the Internet is used to obtain important resources for teaching and learning in schools.

Information and communication technology (ICT) application provides the ability to access information with the use of telecommunication-based- Based Internet services, they also create, organize and manipulate information from remote locations. Within a short time interval.

Role of Library Services

A library is a place where information resources are acquired, organised and disseminated for its users. It is where knowledge in various formats is made available to users who need it. According to Ashikuzzaman (2004), the primary role of the library is to provide information services to support the educational, cultural, economic and technological development of communities. Libraries provide users with access to networked information such as database electronic scholarly journals and other publications from various publishers (Aina, Okunmu and Dapo-Asaju, 2014), the libraries facilitate information exchange, resource sharing among library

users. In addition to storing content, digital libraries provide a means for organizing, searching and retrieving the content contained in the collection (Verma, 2015).

Libraries offer vital services to their users and services rendered differ from one library to another low (2011) highlighted the library services to include

- Reference
- Selection dissemination of information
- Reprographic services
- Exhibition services
- Technical service
- Computerized interactive search
- Serials control
- Borrowing renewing and reserve

Libraries also loan out other types of informative resources including CDs, DVDs and computer games which can be cheaper than purchasing new ones. Many academic libraries provide computers with internet access, thereby enabling browsing of the web in a conducive environment. Libraries stock large numbers of prints, audio and e-books for different reading public (Mondal, 2020). Many libraries also offer services such as organizing programmes where clubs or departments can use library facilities to carry out exhibitions or other academic activities.

Integrating ICT in Library Services.

Libraries are a critical component of any educational institution. They are responsible for the acquisition, conservation transmission and dissemination of information. The use of ICT facilities is an important tool in academic libraries, as it supports resourced sharing effective and efficient service delivery, steady and easy access to information and provision of up-to-date information to users (Nzew, 2020) In recent times there has been tremendous improvement in the library services offered to users due to the application of ICT in the management of library services. The different ways in which ICT can enhance the management of library services are as follows:

Acquisition: This is concerned with finding book selection sources, searching and systematic selection of books, placing orders with a wide range of suppliers, receiving and recording materials, and requisition payment orders Computerization of this process using a library management system helps to computerize the items which take relevant bibliographical details for each book at each stage. It helps maintain bills and expenditure register of various reports such as approval request forms, purchase orders,

budget and expenditure analysis, Vendor's list can also be created automatically to enable more effective placing of book orders

Cataloguing: Cataloguing is one of the most important functions which makes library holdings' bibliographic records available for the users Edel (2020) stated that the computerization of the Cataloguing process makes it easier and more effective for cataloguers to create, edit and delete bibliographic records using the extensive cataloguing features of the cataloguing modules of the library management system. This process also generates bibliographic records that form the computerized catalogue (OPAC) which is the most efficient tool in retrieving information about the library holdings.

Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC): The OPAC is a computer-based library catalogue designed to be accessed through computer terminals so that library users may directly and effectively search for and retrieve records without the assistance of human intermediary OPAC enables users to search for holdings using different search terms including: title author, subject among The system provides the two request for titles to be held as reserve materials.

Classification of Information Resources: Through the application of computers classification of information resources have been made simple and easier, hence, relevant call numbers for each book are to be fed into the computer. The computer can help in alphabetical classification by taking keywords from the acquisition module. computerization of classification provides the following benefits to users:

- Helps the classification in the selection of isolated terms, grouping and arrangement in hierarchical order.
- Helps a classifier in synthesizing classification numbers.
- Saves time by avoiding reference to the schedules and improves accuracy and speed in classification.

Circulation: The application of technological devices, such as computers, scanners and their software in circulation helps in performing routine circulation including checking in and checking out of books, reservations and other functions easily and quickly. According to Eder (2020), an automated circulation system provides access to manage all the library lending processes, including depth circulation management processes check out on issue out of books and check in or return of books compilation of overdue books, calculation of overdue fines, generating of related statistics of books among others.

Serials Control System: The serials include periodicals, magazines newspapers, journals etc. The nature of serial subscriptions creates problems and makes it a complex process, which requires a separate control system. The use of a computerized serial provides the following benefits:

- Orders new journals sends reminders and receives journals
- Prepared list of periodically received and list of periodically cancelled
- Effective bindery management recording and accessing bound volumes and keeping track of the amount spent on subscription binding etc.

Benefits of Integrating ICT into Library Services,

The introduction of information and communication technology (ICT) in academic libraries will enable users more effective access to information resources and Information. Other benefits of ICT as stated by Ashikuzzaman (2014) include:

- i. Provision of access to unlimited information from different sources
- ii. ICT enables easier, faster cheaper, and more efficient library operations.
- iii. ICT helps to manage information overload as information retrieved is made easier in computerized systems.
- iv. Provision of easy access to information dissemination
- v. Computerization helps libraries to save space and reduce paper usage.
- vi. ICT helps in the accumulation and building up of knowledge from generation to generation.
- vii. Technologies especially computers facilitate the collection, and storage organization. processing analysis presentation, communication and disunion of Information
- viii. The application of computer in library services enhances the modernization and intelligent levels of library resources management.

Challenges of ICT Application in Library Services

Application of ICT in the management of library services is a crucial effort towards improving academic programmes in tertiary institutions. In most tertiary institutions ICT applications in libraries are faced with a lot of challenges. Said, Tukur and Adams (2014) posited that lack of systematic ICT policy impedes the deployment of ICTS. They enumerated the following challenges facing application to library services to include:

- i. Lack maintenance culture
- ii. Inadequate space and conducive environment for keeping ICT equipment
- iii. Lack of electricity supply
- iv. Constant change in software and hardware
- v. Lack of technical Information Technology knowledge by library staff.

vi. Copy right and intellectual property right

Okehukola (2004) stated that poor ICT policy implementation strategy causes low level of ICT application. It could be recalled that, the government introduced, computer education in tertiary institutions and distributed computers but they have never been put into effective utilization by some institutions. However, widespread ignorance and misconceptions about ICTs among students and lecturers influence the application of ICT and its use in schools.

In summary, frequent electricity interruptions have been a persistent problem militating against ICT applications in Nigerian universities. Moreover, inadequate IT manpower is another problem facing ICT application in library services in tertiary institutions.

Conclusion

The application of information and communication technology (ICT) to the management of library services is an important effort, towards repositioning tertiary institutions in Nigeria towards knowledge acquisition and information dissemination. Through globalization, there are transformations in the education sector, one of the major areas & that has impacted education is the application of ICT in library services. Libraries provide users with access to networked information such as database electronic journals and publications. ICT can be applied in cataloguing, classification, Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) circulation systems among others, ICT therefore, is a key strategic tool for sustaining academic development in tertiary institutions.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusion to move forward, it is recommended that:

1. Staff of academic libraries in tertiary institutions should undergo capacity-building programmes to enhance their skills in this era of technological advancement.
2. Funds should be provided to libraries regularly because their type of job requires strong financial support.
3. Policies that would encourage the deployment and development of ICTS in all institution's libraries should be formulated and implemented.
4. Stand-by generators in libraries should be provided, in case of power outage.
5. Academic libraries in tertiary institutions should be adequately equipped with ICTs equipment to improve efficient service delivery.

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