

ASSESSMENT OF THE PROVISION AND FUNDING OF ELECTRONIC INFORMATION RESOURCES IN STATE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES IN NORTH-WEST ZONE OF NIGERIA

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate and assess the provision and funding of electronic information resources in state university libraries in North-West Zone of Nigeria. Qualitative research methodology was used and narrative design adopted for the study. A purposive sampling was also used while semi structured interview was used for data collection from twelve respondents which comprised university librarians and heads of ICT Units of six state university libraries in the North-West Zone of Nigeria. A thematic data analysis was used for analysis of the data collected from the respondents. The findings revealed that a number of electronic information resources were provided, ranging from online and offline databases, e-books, e-journals, CD ROM and other Internet-based resources. It was also revealed that state university libraries sourced their funds for the management of electronic information resources from state governments, Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TetFund) and library annual budget. The study recommended among other things the need for the provision of more e-resources and the libraries should look for more alternative sources of funding through local/international nongovernmental organizations and philanthropists; so that they can reduce reliance on government and library annual budget.

Keywords: Provision, Funding, Electronic Information Resource, University, Libraries

Introduction

Libraries have existed for thousands of years and are considered to be places where information resources and services are brought together for the purpose of sharing knowledge and experiences. These roles have been revolutionized by recent development in Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). The current information revolution and increasing impact of ICTs has modernized the process of learning and research in most university libraries. Dafiagor (2012) observed that “expert systems, wireless network, virtual collections, interactive web interfaces, virtual reference services and personal web portals have brought changes since the beginning of the new millennium”.

However, there have been clearly significant moves from paper-based information to electronic access to information and knowledge for higher education. Though the traditional functions and objectives of the library remains the same, the method of information dissemination and the format are changing. The academic library environment is in a state of transition in terms of resources and services; many information resources available in print are now available in CD ROMs, online and other available electronic forms.

Financial resource is also fundamental in a library system. In fact, the degree of financial adequacy determines the effectiveness of the library. Ndekwu (1991) remarks that, it has become a common knowledge that institutions of higher learning in Nigeria are underfunded and thus many services can no longer be adequately provided in such institutions. He argues

that even when funds are available, they are grossly inadequate because of the soaring prices of electronic and print resources.

Statement of the Problem

Electronic resources have become a critical part of the learning environment, particularly in higher education. They bring tremendous benefits to organizations and individuals in performing their work more efficiently (Daulat, 2014). The benefits of electronic resources also include provision of space economy, ease of access through numerous metadata, search engines, and Online Public Access Catalogues (OPAC). In a study conducted by Oldy (2005) on the effect of funding in Nigerian university libraries, it was found out that funding is one of the primary economic elements and it is very important in the provision of library resources. The study also revealed that low level of funding in university libraries had led to deterioration in the quality of library collection. The study then recommended that government, being the sole financier of the libraries, should see that it is adequately funded.

Moreover, libraries around the world are moving at fast rate to provide digital library in order to meet the changing user needs and requirements. The trend in Nigeria is for the libraries to provide e-resources and services that users can access anywhere and anytime without necessarily coming physically to the library. Some state university libraries in the north-west of Nigeria have one form of e-library or another or not having it at all. However, empirical evidences and research studies have been conducted on the types of information resources available as well as funding provisions for these resources. Against this background, this study was designed to examine the Provision and Funding of Electronic Information Resources in State University Libraries in North-West Zone of Nigeria with a view to finding out the challenges and possible solutions for improvement of the current situation.

Research Questions

1. What types of electronic information resources are provided in state university libraries in North-West Zone of Nigeria?
2. What are the sources of funding electronic information resources in the libraries under study?

Research Objectives

1. To ascertain the types of electronic information resources provided in state university libraries in North-West Zone of Nigeria.
2. To find out the sources of funding electronic information resources in the libraries under study.

Significance of the Study

The result of this study would be useful to the state institutions studied as well as other institutions of higher learning, especially university librarians who are the top level managers in-charge of policy formulation and implementation of information services in their libraries.

Scope and Limitation

The study covered all the state university libraries in North-west Zone of Nigeria with the exception of the Sokoto State University Library which did not have the ICT Unit and e-resources. The study also confined to e-resources and how they are funded in state university libraries in North-West Zone of Nigeria. Federal universities in the zone were not covered; as such the findings of this study would not be generalized to other university libraries in the zone.

Review of Related Literature

Concept and Significance of Electronic Information Resources

Electronic Information Resources are resources in which the information is stored electronically and are accessed through electronic systems and network. In this context, the term primarily denotes “any electronic product that delivers collection of data be it text, numerical, graphical or time based as a commercially available resources (Bevekenty et al., 2003). Sadeh and Elingsen (2005) also asserted that, electronic information resources are package of e- journals or databases of abstracts and indexes that include full text of some articles referenced by the indexes. They further stressed that, electronic information resources are the interface through which it is offered, and should be considered. because these element are intricately linked, even though they can be licensed separately. Dadzie (2008) was of the opinion that electronic information resources are invaluable research tools that complement print-based resources in any traditional library setting. Similarly, Sabouri (2010) also defines electronic information resources as invaluable research tools which complement print resources in traditional library settings. They provide access to information because that might be restricted to the users because of geographical location or finances.

In his article on Changes in the Faculty Reading Behavior, Smith (2010), stressed that, the impact of electronic journals particularly library access is integral to research activities where the vast majority of respondents reported that they read at least one article from an electronic source weekly. Furthermore, electronic information resources are capable of providing services both within and remote to users irrespective of their location through electronic means. Gladney (2010) described digital library services as assemblage of digital computing and software needed to produce, emulate and extend the services provided by conventional libraries based on paper and other materials means of collecting, cataloguing, finding and disseminating information, while a virtual library on the other hand is said to be the one with a number of different information resources that can be accessed by an end user rather than delivering the end user to a physical set of resources.

Electronic resources are electronic representation of information which are available in various formats like e-books, online journals, e-magazines, e-learning, tutors and online test. Because of the effective presentation with multimedia tools, these e-resources have become the sources of information (Dadzie, 2005). According to Bothman and Holbig(2010), electronic information resources include CD ROMs, e-journals and locally loaded databases, websites and abstracting and indexing databases, such as Medline. They further stated that electronic resources also include products that aid in resources access for patrons, such as A-Z list, open URL servers, federated search engines and resources that provide full text content, such as publishers electronic journal content, journal contents platforms like project muse or Jstor and content aggregators like Ebschohost, academic search premier and proxy servers or other authentication tools (Bothmann and Holmbig, 2010). In line with above submission the researcher want find out what types of Electronic Information Resources are provided in state university libraries in North-West zone of Nigeria.

Funding of Nigerian University Libraries

Financial resources are fundamental in a library system. Infact, the degree of financial adequacy determines the effectiveness of the library. Nwalo (1997) cited by Dawakin Kudu (2002) opined that the poor state of funding of academic libraries in Nigeria is most likely that the provision of library resources and services that depend on finance will be adversely

affected. It is assumed that it affects the main libraries in Nigerian universities and may likely affect the departmental libraries too.

Okoye(2010) stressed that academic library is a very important sector of tertiary institution. According to her, the scenario of inadequate funding in tertiary institution libraries by both state and federal governments leaves much to be desired. She further explains that university libraries' funding have continued to dwindle since mid-1980s along with downturn in the economic fortunes of Nigeria. This has resulted in deterioration of the quality of resources, services and technology in the library. The implication of this is that many tertiary institution libraries have not been able to acquire collections comprehensively enough to meet the needs of their users. It could be seen from the literature reviewed that in most cases academic libraries are underfunded in both Federal and State owned institutions. There are also problems within the institutions in general in the sense that the management of these institutions don't consider libraries as important, as such no priority is given to them.

Okoro(2005) asserted that libraries are thus starved of vital funds that should be used in developing their collections. Academic libraries cannot be affectively developed without enough funds. Inadequate financial support to academic libraries has much negative impact on resources development for the development of the libraries. Ifidon (2006) states that as it stands now, there is no known financial standard for library development in Nigeria.. The situation is more precarious in academic libraries as what is regarded as book budget is a will guess or an approximation of imagination. Edoka (2007) and Ifidon (2009) reported that the Book Aid International and other international donor agencies have shown great concern over the problem in 2005.

Roseroka (2010) identified budgetary process and academic support as the major constraints facing university libraries. She emphasized that research activities of faculty are rooted in the creation of knowledge and research process values. Personal interest informs and advance contribution to knowledge, teaching and course design. Without library materials to support such influential stakeholders, the credibility of the library is eroded.

It should be noted that more often, financial assistance to libraries through local or international NGOs may have a symbiotic relationship with such organizations, particularly with regard to fund raising and income generation. Examples of such organizations include Ford Foundation, World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF), United Nations Development Project (UNDP), World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations Childrens Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), British Council, Book Aid International (Dawakin kudu,2002).

According to Wise (2000), Nigerian libraries have benefited from continued education opportunities overseas provided by Carnegie, Ford and other foundations, such as British Council, UNESCO and other organizations. Instances of such assistance have been documented from foreign organizations such as Carnegie Cooperation of New York, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nations Children Emergency Fund (UNICEP), Ford Foundation, British Council and so on (Sharples, 1994). These organizations have been providing financial supports and training aids to institutions and organizations, especially in developing countries. Such contributions contribute toward the development of education, specifically libraries in collection and services. Igbinoba (1997) observed that the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations, Carnegie Cooperation, United States Information Services and the British Council and Brother's Brother (USA) have over the years made generous donations and aids to Nigerian academic libraries. In view of the crucial importance of funding in the provision of electronic resources in libraries and apparent dearth of existing literature, this study was conducted with a view to assessing

the sources of funds for the provision of electronic information resources in state university libraries in the North-West Zone of Nigeria.

Research Methodology

This study was designed to examine the provision and funding of electronic information resources in university libraries in North-West Zone of Nigeria. Qualitative research methodology was found to be relevant for the study because the respondents are not many and are in a better position to answer the research questions. Qualitative research involves the collection of limited samples, intensive interviews, close interaction with respondents and careful transcription of verbal and textual data (Berge, 2004). The narrative research design was adopted for this study. Narrative inquiry is the process of gathering information for the purpose of research through storytelling. The researcher then writes and narrates the experience (Trahar 2009). In selecting the participants for this study, a purposive sampling technique was used. A purposive sampling (judgment selective or subjective sampling) is a sampling technique in which a researcher relies on his judgment when choosing members of the population to participate in the study.

A semi structured interview was used for data collection from the 12 respondents of 6 state university libraries, comprising the university librarians and the heads of ICT units. A qualitative data analysis (QDA) was used to carry out analysis of the data collected from the participants.

Table 1: State Universities in North-West Zone

S/NO	UNIVERSITY	YEAR OF ESTABLISHMENT OF INSTITUTION	UNI. LIBRARIAN	HEAD OF AUTOMATION/E-LIBRARY UNIT
1	Kano University of Science and Technology, Wudil, Kano State	2001	1	1
2	Kaduna State University, Kaduna State	2004	1	1
3	Umaru Musa Yar'adua University, Katsina	2006	1	1
4	Kebbi State University of Science and Technology, Aliero	2007	1	1
5	Yusuf Maitama Sule University, Kano, Kano State	2012	1	1
6	Sokoto State University, Sokoto	2012	1	0
7	Sule Lamido University, Kafin Hausa, Jigawa State	2013	1	1
	TOTAL		7	6

Source: Preliminary Study November, 2018

Table 2: List of State Universities with E-resources and ICT Unit in North-West Zone

S/NO	UNIVERSITY	YEAR OF ESTABLISHMENT OF INSTITUTION	NO. OF RESPONDENTS		
			UNIVERSITY LIBRARIAN	HEAD OF ICT UNIT	TOTAL
1	Kano University of Science and Technology, Wudil	2001	1	1	2
2	Kaduna State University, Kaduna	2004	1	1	2
3	Umar Musa Yar'adua University, Katsina	2006	1	1	2
4	Kebbi State University of Science and Technology, Aliero	2007	1	1	2
5	Yusuf Maitama Sule University, Kano State	2012	1	1	2
6	Sule Lamido University, Kafin Hausa, Jigawa State	2013	1	1	2
	TOTAL		6	6	12

Source: Preliminary Study November, 2018

Data Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation of Findings

Table: 3 Background Information of the Participants

S/N	University	Year of Establishment	Rank	Qualification	Code
1	Kano University of Science and Technology, Wudil, Kano	2001	University Librarian Head of ICT	PhD LIS BLIS	P1 P2
2	Kaduna State University, Kaduna	2004	University Librarian Head of ICT	PhD LIS MSc.Inf. Sci.	P3 P4
3	Umar Musa Yar'adua University, Katsina	2006	University Librarian Head of ICT	MLIS BLIS	P5 P6
4	Kebbi State University of Science and Technology, Aliero	2007	University Librarian Head of ICT	PhD Islm. Stds. MLIS	P7 P8

5	Yusuf Maitama Sule University, Kano	2012	University Librarian Head of ICT	M LIS BLIS	P9 P10
6	Sule Lamido University, Kafin Hausa	2013	University Librarian (Ag) Head of ICT	BLIS B.Sc Comp. Sci.	P11 P12

Table 3 above reveals that, out of twelve (12) participants, three (3) had PhD in Library and Information Science, one (1) had PhD in Islamic Studies, totaling four (4) with PhD. Three (3) had Masters in Library and information Science (MLIS), four (4) Bachelor in Library and Information Science while One (1) had Bachelor of Science Computer Science. However, their rank ranges from University Librarians to ICT Sectional Heads. This shows that the participants had adequate qualification in that respect.

The table also shows that the code given to each participant appeared on the table, the date and time within which the researcher conducted the interview was from 22nd February to 30th March, 2018. Moreover, the interview lasted for about forty five (45) minutes in their respected offices. The table also shows the years in which the libraries were established.

Results and Discussions

Research Question1: The participants were asked the types of electronic information resources (EIRs) provided in their ICT Units.

Response: There were different types of EIRs provided. The participants had identified different EIRs provided in the state university libraries under study.

P1 & P2: *The types of EIRs we have in this our Library comprise e-journals, e-books, CDs, databases and web resources ranging from ScienceDirect, EBSCOhost, ProQuest, European American Journal, AGORA, HINARY, Nigerian Virtual Library, OARE and Innearsk.* This clearly shows that Kano State University of Science and Technology has these e-resources; both online and offline, e-books, CD ROM and other internet web resources. It also has a fair stock of EIRs in their Library.

P2 & P4: *The types of EIRs we have in this Library are databases such as ScienceDirect, JSTORE, AGORA, TEEAL, HINARY, e-brary, BioOne, Scopus, Springer, ProQuest, EBSCOhost, etc. Others include online reference resources such as AJOL, DOAJ, Bookboon and Institutional Digital Repository.* This indicates that the Kaduna State University Library has a large volume of both online and offline databases as well as digital institutional repository; unlike the other state university libraries. It is also evident from the data collected that the University has more e-resources compared to the rest of the university libraries in the North-West Zone of Nigeria

P5 & P6: *The types of electronic information resources provided in this Library are e-journals and e-books, databases such as ScienceDirect, Elsevier, EBSCOhost and LexisNexes. We equally have some open source software such as Book Zizi and bookfi.* It was gathered that this Library did not have institutional repository and CDs which are available in some state university libraries in the region. In comparison with the other libraries under study, this Library has a reasonable number of online and offline databases.

P7 & P8: *Today we have in stock volumes of electronic information resources which consist of online electronic databases such as JSTORr, AGORA, ScienceDirect, HINARY, institutional repository, which include manuscripts and theses. It was gathered during the interview that Kebbi State University of Science and Technology had some electronic information resources such as online databases as well as e-books, e-theses and other internet web-resources. It also had a fair stock of electronic information resources.*

P9 & P10: *The types of electronic information resources we have today in this Library are e-books, e-journals, CDs, audio visual information resources (Chamila), online databases such as Springer, ScienceDirect, JSTOR, HINARY, AGORA and LawScope. This clearly shows that CD Roms, e-books, audiovisual information resources, online and offline databases are all available in the Yusuf Maitama Sule University Library. The data further indicate that the Library has reasonable electronic information resources in stock.*

P11 and P12: *The types of electronic information we provide here are offline databases, E-books, CD ROMs and other internet web resources. It was discovered that online databases were not provided. Aldo, institutional repository as well as Library portal were not available in this Library. Offline databases were provided just like the other state university libraries in the North-West Zone.*

Research Question2 : The participants were asked question on the sources of funding of electronic information resources as well as the percentage of the Library annual budget spent on EIRs, and whether the percentage is adequate or not.

P1and P2: *We source our funds through Library annual budget received from the University Management and the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TetFund) but I cannot ascertain the level of percentage spent on EIRs, and the funds are not adequate.*

The data revealed that the Library has two sources of funds which include TetFund and the annual budget received from the University Management. However, there is no available data on the percentage of the Library's annual budget spent on procurement of electronic information resources.

P3 and P4: *We source funds for the procurement of EIRs through Library annual budget from the University Management and we also receive TetFund grant. At least 20% is being spent on the procurement of EIRs which is not adequate.*

From the above submission, it is seen that the sources of funding electronic information resources are through Library annual budget and the TetFund intervention only. There was no contribution from individuals or organizations. Furthermore, 20% of the Library's annual budget received from the University Management goes to procurement of electronic information resources.

P5 and P6: *We mostly source our funds from Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TetFund), state government annual budget and donations from local and international organizations as well as philanthropists. The percentage is not available but the funds allocated to EIRs are fairly adequate.*

The data indicated that they source funds through three ways- TetFund and Library annual budget from the University Management received from the state government. They also receive gifts and donations from individuals and organization. The respondents also revealed that there is no actual percentage spent on the procurement of electronic information resources just like other state university libraries in the North-West Zone.

P7 and P8: *Our sources of funds are the annual Library budget from the University Management and TetFund grant but I cannot ascertain the level of percentage spent on EIRs and the funds are not adequate.*

This indicates that the Library has two major sources of funds are TetFund and the annual budget received from the University Management, just like other state university libraries. However, there is no available data on the actual percentage of the Library's annual budget spent on procurement of electronic information resources.

P9 and P10: *We source our funds for procurement of EIRs here through Library annual budget, gifts/donations and Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TetFund). At least 60% of the Library's annual budget is allocated to procurement of EIRs and it is adequate.*

The data indicated three main sources of funds for the Library, which are TetFund and annual budget received from the University Management, gifts and donations from individuals and 60% percent of the Library's annual budget is spent on procurement of electronic information resources.

P11 and P12: *We source for the procurement of electronic information resources from the annual Library budget from the University Management but the percentage allocated to EIRs is not available.*

The data collected from this respondent show that they used only a certain percentage of money received for the Library. There is no available data on the percentage of money spent on electronic information resources as revealed by the interviewee.

Generally, the results of the interviews indicated that different types of electronic resources are provided in the libraries studied, ranging from e-books, e-journals, CDs, databases (online and offline). It was only P11 and P12 that has less electronic information resources because it was established recently. This shows that state university libraries provide a number of electronic information resources which include Science Direct, Hinari, EBSCOhost, Springer, e-Grannay, TEEAL, Agora, BiOne, JSTOR, e-book and CD. This finding is in line with Boothman and Holbig (2010) who stressed that EIRs include CD ROMS, e-journals, locally loaded databases, web resources, and indexing and abstracting databases.

Based on the data available, poor funding is the major challenge in the provision of EIRs in all the libraries under study. These libraries relied only on the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TetFund) intervention, donations from individuals, state governments and average percentage from the University Management for the provision of EIRs. This finding is in line with that of Bothman and Holmberg (2006) who identified some of the challenges associated with the provision and management of EIRs to include lack of consistent policy, staffing, budgeting and funding, change, communication, internet connectivity and user education.

Conclusion

From the findings of the study, there is a clear indication that different types of electronic information resources are provided and maintained in the state university libraries studied. These resources include e-databases, online and offline, CD ROM, e-books, e-journals and other Internet web resources. This indicates that frantic efforts are being made by the libraries to provide their users with relevant electronic information resources. Despite the efforts, however, the state university libraries were faced with the problem of funding due mainly to their reliance on only few sources of funding. These sources included the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) interventions, certain percentage of the libraries' annual budget and donations from organizations and individuals.

Recommendations

Based on the above findings, the following recommendations are made for improvement.

1. Even though reasonable electronic information resources are provided in the state university libraries, there is the need for additional e-resources so as to cater for the variety of needs of library users, especially in the current digital age that is characterized by explosion of electronic publications.
2. The libraries should look for alternative sources of funding so as to enhance the provision of adequate electronic information resources. To this end, the libraries should explore the support and intervention of external donor agencies/organizations locally, nationally and internationally; thereby reducing their reliance on meager government annual budgetary allocation and TETFund intervention.

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