

# AVAILABILITY AND USE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT) FACILITIES BY RURAL COMMUNITY USERS OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN SOUTH-SOUTH, NIGERIA

By

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## **Abstract**

*This study examined availability awareness and use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) facilities by rural community users in public libraries in South South, Nigeria. The design of the study was survey and it was carried out in selected 10 communities' public libraries in Delta and Edo states, Nigeria. The population was 4,866; comprising of adult male and female registered users of the public libraries under study. Simple random sampling was done to draw fifty (50) respondents from each of the libraries. Thus, five hundred (500) copies of questionnaire were distributed and four hundred and thirty two (432) were duly filled and returned giving a response rate of 86%. The data obtained for this study were analyzed using simple percentage and frequency counts. Findings from this study revealed that photocopiers, desktop computers, CD ROMs, UPS, library mobile phones and audio/video tapes were available for use. These were mainly used for accessing educational information for self-development and keeping abreast with current news/events. Photocopiers and UPS were used at high extent at 51.6% and 54.15 respectively, while internet access, scanners, printers and projectors had low use. The study also revealed that the extent of the use of ICT facilities in community library by rural dwellers in Edo and Delta states is low. It was discovered that inadequacy of ICT facilities (100%), erratic power supply (100%), poor awareness of ICT facilities (80.5%) and limited access (77.5%) hindered the use of ICT facilities in the communities' public libraries. The researcher recommends that the Federal and State governments of Nigeria should look into the poor state of public libraries especially in rural communities and allocate funds for the acquisition of ICT facilities for effective information service delivery.*

**Keywords:** *Availability, Awareness, Use, Information and Communication Technology, Public Libraries, Rural Community, Users*

## **Introduction**

In the present era, Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) are used to enhance the operations and services of libraries and to improve searches as well as facilitate access to information. The application of ICT creates awareness and network that are needed for 21st century integration of information society, even in the rural communities. This new technology, (ICTs) provides an unprecedented freedom from traditional restraint of time and space, making the retrieval of information resources easier for library users from any part of the society (Ayub, 2015). The ICTs include desktop and laptop computers, software, peripherals and connections to the Internet that are intended to fulfill information processing and communications functions (Ismail, Ahmad & Affandy, 2013). In the urban areas across Nigeria, the libraries provide almost

recent and latest information with the help of technology whereas the rural libraries seem to be lagging behind in terms of availability and access to technological facilities.

Rural communities in Nigeria are typically economically backward areas, characterized and handicapped by poverty, high rate of illiteracy, unemployment, subsistence farming, lack of economic and social amenities such as roads, electricity, pipe-borne water, hospitals, banks, industries, rural telephony, etcetera (Anie, 2014). According to Oghenetega, Umeji and Obue (2014, p.1) “a public library is an organization established, supported and funded by the community, either through local, regional or national government, or through some other forms of community organization”. It provides access to knowledge information and works of imagination through a range of ICT resources and services which are made available to all members of the community regardless of race, nationality, age, gender, religion, language, disability and economic as well as educational status. ICT is playing important roles in society in terms of development. It is clear that enhancement of ICT has made an impressive transformation of socio-economic environment in nations. ICT also acts as a mechanism in bridging the digital divide that exists between rural and their counterpart urban areas (Bashir et al., 2011 as cited by Samsuddin & Shaffril, 2019). Indeed, the application of information and communication technology to public libraries has helped in providing wide knowledge base for rural information seekers as the Internet and other ICTs affect all human activities that depend on information, including rural development and food security. This justifies the submission of Oghenetega, Umeji and Obue (2014) that in this modern day, developments in ICT (information communication technology) have resulted in great changes in lives of people for work, learning and leisure.

These developments have made changes on the information needs and seeking behavior of library users. However, in spite of the enormous effects of ICT on information service delivery, the communities’ dwellers seem to be underserved by their public libraries. This study therefore seeks to identify the availability, purpose, extent and challenges of ICT facilities by rural dwellers in public libraries in South-South Nigeria.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Public libraries, generally, function to support self-education as well as formal education at all levels by providing myriads of information resources needed for development. They also create and encourage information awareness on use of ICT for enhanced searches on improved livelihood and sustainable development. In developing countries such as Nigeria, public libraries are expected to be in the forefront of encouraging self-education with robust information collection, given the competition for admission into higher institutions of learning in the country. However, the high level of illiteracy in rural communities has shown that many rural dwellers may not have had access to modern technology that can help them become information literate and propel interaction with urban dwellers to bring about the realization of information society. This poor access to modern technology in the rural areas has raised concern in the mind of the researcher. Could it be that there are no ICT facilities available in the public libraries in these rural communities? Could it also be that the rural community dwellers are not aware of the availability, usefulness and benefits of ICT facilities if at all they are available in the public library in their community?. It is on the bases of these questions that this study seeks to examine availability awareness and use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) facilities by rural community users of public libraries in South South, Nigeria.

## Objectives of the Study

The main aim of this study was to investigate availability and use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) facilities by rural community users of public libraries in South South, Nigeria. The Specific objectives are to:

1. identify the ICT facilities available for use by rural community users in public libraries in South-South Nigeria;
2. ascertain the purpose of use of ICT facilities available in the community libraries in South South, Nigeria;
3. examine the extent of use of the available ICT facilities in the community libraries in South South, Nigeria and
4. find out the challenges militating against the availability and use of ICT facilities by rural dwellers in their community libraries.

## Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide this study:

1. What are the ICT facilities available for use by rural community users in public libraries in South South, Nigeria?
2. What are the purposes for the use of the ICT facilities available in the community libraries in South South, Nigeria?
3. What is the extent of the use of the available ICT facilities in the community libraries in South South, Nigeria?
4. What are the challenges militating against the use of the ICT facilities by rural dwellers in their community libraries in South South, Nigeria?

## Review of Literature

The public library is a potent democratic institution that serves all groups of people with information on education, livelihood, continuous self-development, participation and contribution for sustainable development. Every effort, therefore, is geared towards enhancing inclusive quality and equitable service delivery. Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) play a crucial role in all sectors of the society and have radically transformed the role of public libraries in developed countries. Through ICTs public libraries are providing more sophisticated and user friendly services to their patrons. ICTs can afford public library users the opportunity for cultural expression and personal fulfillment through lifelong learning (Mamman, 2015). It is however pathetic that the level of adoption of the ICT facilities by libraries in rural areas across Africa and Nigeria especially is very low (Mamman, 2015). The study conducted by Emojoroh (2005) on the roles and effectiveness of public libraries in nation building in Nigeria also confirmed that Nigerian public libraries are performing poorly in most aspects due to appalling resource allocation to them.

Also corroborating the poor availability of ICT facilities in library located in rural areas, Iwhiwhu and Okorodudu (2012) found in their study of public library information resources, facilities, services and user satisfaction with the Edo State Central Library, Benin-City, Nigeria that users were not satisfied with the information resources, photocopier facility and computers which are the few ICT facilities notable in the library. This lack of satisfaction has been however attributed to lack of awareness of the availability of the ICT facilities present in the library. Complementing the aforementioned fact, Nwabueze and Ntogo-Saghanen (2017) conducted a study on assessment of information resources of public libraries in Rivers state, Nigeria, and found that the extent of public awareness of the availability of information resources provided by public

library is low as the item by item analysis showed that out of the 23 ICT based items of information resources provided by public libraries in Rivers State, the extent of public awareness on 18 of the items is low. Samsuddin and Shaffril (2019) reported that the availability and use of ICT facilities in rural community helps to facilitate rapid rural community development by improving the living conditions of communities in rural areas. For example, by providing the rural communities with ICT facilities and services such as computers and Internet facility, it does not only close the digital gap, but it is also bringing the benefit of ICT to the rural poor. In line with the statement, Kelles-Viitanen (2005) stressed on the role of ICT which has proved that it could provide opportunities on education, health and promoting democracy based on good governance which is a catalyst in the task of achieving the goal of poverty reduction.

However, Adebayo, Ahmed and Adeniran (2018) in their study of the role of ICT in provision of library services: a panacea for sustainable development in Nigeria, highlighted the types of ICT facilities available in the public library to include computers, Internet, Electronic Mail (E-mail), Printing Technology, Video Conferencing and Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC). Whereas Emojorho (2010), in his study of ICT and collection management in public libraries which is a survey of South-South zones of Nigeria, using an ex-post-facts design with 147 respondents as sample size reported that new technological environment has reached only a few public libraries in the South-South Nigeria, with only a few ICT facilities available. Deliberating on the use of ICT facilities in public libraries, Obinyan, Obinyan and Aidenojie (2011), in their study on usage patterns in four branches of a state public library in Nigeria, found that students and youths mostly frequented the public libraries and make use of their facilities for information that can be used for examination purposes, self development, access to current news/events or just for personal enlightenment.

However, there are challenges to the effective utilization of ICT facilities in libraries located in rural areas in Nigeria. Nwabueze and Ntogo-Saghanen (2017) in their assessment of information resources of public libraries in Rivers state, Nigeria found that high cost of ICT resources, inadequate ICT resources, inadequate fund to purchase ICT resources are some of the major challenges facing the use of ICT facilities in public libraries. In the same vein, Oghenetega, Umeji and Obue (2014) in their study of challenges associated with the use of ICT facilities in public libraries in Nigeria highlighted limited/restricted access to users, high cost of purchase, lack of adequate infrastructure (ICT facilities), erratic power supply and technological factors as some of the challenges of the use of ICT facilities in public libraries in Nigeria. Also, Adebayo, Ahmed and Adeniran (2018) in their study of the role of ICT in provision of library services: a panacea for sustainable development in Nigeria, highlighted limited financial resources, shortage of ICT facilities and ICT skills, erratic power supply and poor maintenance of ICT equipment are some of the challenges of the use of ICT facilities in public libraries. The uncertainty surrounding the availability and proper usage of ICT facilities by public library users in rural area has led to the recurring question of whether ICT facilities are available for use in the public libraries in rural areas, and whether or not the users of public libraries users in the rural areas are satisfactorily utilizing the ICT facilities should they be available for use in the library attached to the rural communities. It is on the bases of these that this study seeks to examine the availability and usage of information and communication technology facilities by rural community users of public libraries in south-south, Nigeria.

## Research Methodology

A descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. The target population of this study is registered users of 10 public library branches located in rural areas in Edo and Delta States, South-South, Nigeria. The total population of the study is 4,866 male and female adults who as at the time of this study were registered users of the selected public libraries under study. The researcher randomly chose 50 male and female adult registered users from each of the public libraries in the rural communities under study making a total of 500 male and female adult users of the public libraries in the rural communities under study in Edo and Delta states which form the sample size for the study. The instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire which was administered to the respondents face to face in the library and personal observation by the researcher and an observation checklist to ascertain the types if ICT facilities available in the public libraries under study. 500 copies of the questionnaire were administered to the respondents, 432 copies were duly completed and found usable. Therefore, there was 86% response rate. The data collected for this study were analyzed using simple percentage, frequency counts and mean.

**Table 1.1: ICT Facilities Observation Checklist**

| <b>CHECKLIST OF THE ICT FACILITIES AVAILABLE IN 10 RURAL COMMUNITY LIBRARIES IN EDO AND DELTA STATES</b> |                                  |            |           |           |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------|-----------|-----------|
| <b>S/N</b>                                                                                               | <b>Types of ICT Facilities</b>   | <b>VMA</b> | <b>LA</b> | <b>NA</b> |
| 1                                                                                                        | Desktop Computers                | √          |           |           |
| 2                                                                                                        | Laptop computers.                |            | √         |           |
| 3                                                                                                        | Photocopiers                     | √          |           |           |
| 4                                                                                                        | Scanners                         |            | √         |           |
| 5                                                                                                        | CD ROMs                          | √          |           |           |
| 6                                                                                                        | Internet Access                  |            | √         |           |
| 7                                                                                                        | Printers                         |            | √         |           |
| 8                                                                                                        | Projectors                       |            | √         |           |
| 9                                                                                                        | Digital Interactive boards       |            |           | √         |
| 10                                                                                                       | Uninterrupted power supply (UPS) | √          |           |           |
| 11                                                                                                       | Digital Cameras                  |            |           | √         |
| 12                                                                                                       | Telephone (Intercom)             |            |           | √         |
| 14                                                                                                       | Audio and Video Tapes            | √          |           |           |

Note: VMA: Very Much Available, LA: Less Available, NA Not Available.

## Findings

**Research Question 1:** What are the ICT facilities available for use by rural community users in public libraries in South South, Nigeria?

**Table 1:** Types of ICT facilities available for use in the library in your community?

| <b>S/N</b> | <b>Types of ICT facilities available for use by users</b> | <b>Freq</b> | <b>%</b> |
|------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|-------------|----------|
| 1          | Desktop Computers                                         | 266         | 62       |
| 2          | Laptop computers.                                         | 145         | 34       |
| 3          | Photocopiers                                              | 288         | 67       |
| 4          | Scanners                                                  | 104         | 24       |

|    |                                  |     |    |
|----|----------------------------------|-----|----|
| 5  | CD ROMs                          | 256 | 59 |
| 6  | Internet Access                  | 59  | 14 |
| 7  | Printers                         | 101 | 23 |
| 8  | Projectors                       | 52  | 12 |
| 9  | Digital Interactive boards       | --  | -- |
| 10 | Uninterrupted power supply (UPS) | 251 | 58 |
| 11 | Digital Cameras                  | --  | -- |
| 12 | Telephone (Intercom)             | --  | -- |
| 14 | Audio and Video Tapes            | 241 | 56 |

Table 1 clearly reveals the availability of photocopier by 70% mobile phones, 67%, desktop, 62%, CD ROMs, 59%, UPS, 58% and audio video tapes 56%. However, only 34% agreed to the availability of laptop computers, 24% went for scanners, 23% voted for printers, 14% rated for Internet while only 12% voted for Projectors. However, none of the respondents indicated that digital interactive boards, digital camera and Telephone (Intercom) are available in their community library. These findings were also confirmed and supported by the reports from the observation checklist (See table 1.1 below) used in verifying the availability of the ICT facilities by the researcher in the community libraries understudy. This shows that photocopiers, desktop computers, CD ROMs, UPS and audio/video tapes are very much available for use by library users in their communities while laptop computers, scanners, Internet access, Projectors were less available and digital interactive board, Telephone (Intercom) were not available for use at all by library users in their community.

**Research Question 2:** What are the purposes for the use of the ICT facilities available in the community libraries in South South, Nigeria?

Table 2: Purpose of the use of ICT Facilities in community libraries

| <b>Purpose of the use of ICT Facilities</b>            | <b>SA</b> | <b>%</b> | <b>A</b> |  | <b>%</b> | <b>D</b> | <b>%</b> | <b>SD</b> | <b>%</b> |
|--------------------------------------------------------|-----------|----------|----------|--|----------|----------|----------|-----------|----------|
| Accessing educational information for self development | 167       | 38.6     | 265      |  | 61.3     | --       | --       | --        | --       |
| Keeping abreast with current news, events etc.         | 201       | 46.5     | 231      |  | 53.4     | --       | --       | --        | --       |
| Internet browsing                                      | --        | --       | 61       |  | 14.1     | 321      | 74.3     | 50        | 11.5     |
| Downloading and storing information for personal use.  | --        | --       | 212      |  | 49.1     | 220      | 50.9     | --        | --       |
| Sending and receiving e-mail                           | --        | --       | 14       |  | 3.2      | 418      | 96.7     | --        | --       |
| To learn the culture of other ethnic groups, races.    | --        | --       | 45       |  | 10.4     | 306      | 70.8     | 81        | 18.7     |
| Chatting with people (social media)                    | --        | --       | 56       |  | 12.9     | 376      | 87       | --        | --       |
| Political awareness                                    | --        | --       | 23       |  | 5.3      | 401      | 92.8     | 8         | 1.8      |

|                                |    |    |     |  |    |     |      |     |      |
|--------------------------------|----|----|-----|--|----|-----|------|-----|------|
| Retrieve Religious Information | -- | -- | 121 |  | 28 | 201 | 46.5 | 110 | 25.4 |
|--------------------------------|----|----|-----|--|----|-----|------|-----|------|

Table 2 shows that 167(38.6%) and 265(61.3%) of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed respectively that they make use of ICT facilities for accessing education information for self development with none of them opposing to that, 201(46.5%) and 231(53.4%) of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed respectively to making use of ICT facilities for keeping abreast with current news and events with none of the respondents opposing to that. Only 61(14.1%) of the respondents agreed to making use of ICT facilities for Internet browsing while majority of them 321(74.3%) and 50(11.5%) of them disagree and strongly disagree respectively to making use of ICT facilities for Internet browsing. 212(49.1%) of the respondents agreed that they make use of ICT facilities for downloading and storing information for personal use while 220(50.9%) of them disagree to making use of ICT facilities for downloading and storing information for personal use while none of the respondent strongly agreed/disagree with making use of ICT facilities for downloading and storing information for personal use. Only 14(3.2%) of the respondents agreed to making use of ICT facilities available in their community library for sending/receiving e-mails while majority 418(96.7%) of the respondents disagree with that and none of the respondents strongly agreed/disagreed to making use of ICT facilities for sending/receiving e-mails. Only 45(10.4%) of the respondents agreed to making use of ICT facilities for learning the culture of other ethnic groups and races, while majority of them 306(70.8%) of disagree with that and 81(18.7%) of the respondents strongly disagreed to using ICT facilities for learning the culture of other ethnic groups and their races.

Only 56(12.9%) of the respondents agreed with making use of the ICT facilities available in their library for social media while 376(87%) of the respondents disagree with making use of ICT facilities for social media and none of the respondents strongly agreed/disagreed with making use of ICT facilities for social media. Only 23(5.3%) of the respondents agree with using ICT facilities available in their community library for political awareness, while majority, 401(92.8%) of them disagree while 8(1.8%) of the respondents strongly disagreed to that point. 121(28%) of the respondents agreed to making use of ICT facilities for retrieving religious information, 201(46.5%) of them disagree while 110(25.4%) of the respondents strongly disagree to that claim. This means that majority of the respondents strongly agree and agree respectively with making use of the ICT facilities available in their community library for accessing educational information for self development and keeping abreast with current news/events while most of the respondents disagree and strongly disagree with using ICT facilities for internet browsing, downloading and storing information for personal use, sending and receiving e-mail, knowing about the culture of other ethnic groups and races, chatting with people (social media), political awareness and retrieve religious information.

**Research Question 3:** What is the extent of the use of the available ICT facilities in the community libraries in South South, Nigeria?

**Table 3: Extent of the use of the available ICT facilities in community libraries**

| S/N | Extent of the use of available ICT Facilities | Very High Extent | High Extent | Low Extent | Very Low Extent | Mean Score |
|-----|-----------------------------------------------|------------------|-------------|------------|-----------------|------------|
| 1   | Desktop Computers                             | 201              | 121         | 78         | 32              | 3          |
| 2   | Laptop computers.                             | 63               | 82          | 167        | 120             | 2.2        |
| 3   | Photocopiers                                  | 189              | 124         | 67         | 51              | 3.0        |

|    |                                  |     |     |     |     |             |
|----|----------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------------|
| 4  | Scanners                         | 46  | 71  | 188 | 127 | 2.1         |
| 5  | CD ROMs                          | 89  | 168 | 101 | 74  | 2.6         |
| 6  | Internet Access                  | 12  | 56  | 285 | 79  | 2.0         |
| 7  | Printers                         | 43  | 98  | 153 | 138 | 2.1         |
| 8  | Projectors                       | 13  | 44  | 264 | 111 | 1.9         |
| 9  | Digital Interactive boards       | 0   | 0   | 0   | 432 | 1           |
| 10 | Uninterrupted power supply (UPS) | 120 | 148 | 101 | 63  | 2.8         |
| 11 | Digital Cameras                  | 0   | 0   | 0   | 432 | 1           |
| 12 | Telephone (Intercom)             | 0   | 0   | 0   | 432 | 1           |
| 13 | Mobile Phones (GSM)              | 103 | 231 | 64  | 34  | 2.9         |
| 14 | Audio and Video Tapes            | 129 | 146 | 89  | 68  | 2.7         |
|    | <b>Aggregate Mean</b>            |     |     |     |     | <b>2.20</b> |
|    | <b>Criterion Mean</b>            |     |     |     |     | <b>2.50</b> |

Table 3 revealed that with an aggregate mean of 2.20 which is less than the criterion mean of 2.50, it can be concluded that the extent of the use of ICT facilities in community library is Edo and Delta states is low.

**Research Question 4:** What are the challenges militating against the availability and use of ICT facilities by rural dwellers in their community libraries?

**Table 4:** Challenges of the use of ICT Facilities in Community Libraries

| <b>Challenges of the use of ICT Facilities</b>                                      | <b>Agree</b> | <b>%</b> | <b>Disagree</b> | <b>%</b> |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|----------|-----------------|----------|
| Inadequate ICT facilities                                                           | 432          | 100      | --              | --       |
| Erratic power supply                                                                | 432          | 100      | --              | --       |
| Poor awareness of the availability of ICT facilities                                | 348          | 80.5     | 84              | 19.4     |
| Limited access to ICT facilities                                                    | 335          | 77.5     | 97              | 22.4     |
| Lack of skills to utilize ICT facilities                                            | 121          | 28       | 311             | 72       |
| Illiteracy                                                                          | 57           | 13.1     | 375             | 86.8     |
| Inadequate telecommunication facilities in the library e.g. mobile phones, intercom | 391          | 90.5     | 41              | 9.4      |
| Staff resistance to ICT introduction in public libraries                            | 88           | 20.3     | 344             | 79.6     |
| Frequent changes and modifications of ICTs                                          | 52           | 12       | 380             | 87.9     |

Table 6 revealed that 432(100%) representing the total population of the respondents agreed that inadequate ICT facilities and erratic power supply as major challenges to the use of the facilities in their community library. Majority 348(80.5%) voted for poor awareness of the availability of ICT facilities in their community public library while 84(19.4%) of them disagree. 335(77.5%) agreed with limited access to ICT facilities while 97(22.4%) of them disagree. Only 121(28%) of the respondents agreed to lack of skills to utilize ICT facilities while majority 311(72%) of them disagree. 57(13.1%) agreed with illiteracy while majority 375(86.8%) of them disagree. 391(90.5%) agreed to inadequate telecommunication facilities in their community library while 41(9.4%) of them disagree. Only 88(20.3%) agreed to staff resistance to ICT introduction in community libraries while majority 344(79.6%) of them disagree. 52(12%) of the respondents agreed with frequent changes and modifications of ICTs while majority 380(87.9%) of them disagree. This means that the major challenges to use of the ICT facilities in community libraries by rural dwellers in Edo and Delta states are inadequate ICT facilities, erratic power supply, poor

awareness of the availability of ICT facilities, limited access to ICT facilities and inadequate telecommunication facilities in the library e.g. mobile phones, intercom.

### **Discussion of Findings**

It is obvious from the study that photocopiers, desktop computers, CD ROMs, UPS and audio/video tapes are very much available for use by library users in their communities while laptop computers, scanners, Internet access, Projectors were less available and digital interactive board, Telephone (Intercom) were not available for use at all by library users in their community. This finding agreed with the study of Mamafha, Ngulube and Ndwandwe (2014) that computers, photocopiers, DVDs, CDs, CD-ROMs are some of the available and well utilized ICT facilities in public libraries at Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality in South Africa. Corroborating this finding, Mamman (2015) also found that computer facilities and audio-visual media/equipment, CD ROMs, comprised the highest number of ICT facilities in public libraries in Nigeria while computer software and Internet facilities, databases and Intercoms were sparingly used in public libraries across Nigeria.

Apparently, the major purpose for making use of the ICT facilities available in community libraries in Delta and Edo states are to access educational information for self development and keep abreast with current news/events. This finding agrees with that of Nkanu and Okon (2010) that in Nigeria, public libraries ICTs facilities were used as necessary tools for meeting the informational, recreational and educational needs of the users. It is also evident from this study that, the extent of the use of ICT facilities in community library by rural dwellers in Edo and Delta State is low. This finding is in agreement with Mammon (2015) who found that the purposes for which ICT facilities are used to a low extent in public libraries include sending and receiving e-mail knowing about the culture of other ethnic groups, races, etc. and chatting with people.

Clearly, the major challenges to use of the ICT facilities in community libraries by rural dwellers in Edo and Delta states are inadequate ICT facilities, erratic power supply, poor awareness of the availability of ICT facilities, limited access to ICT facilities and inadequate telecommunication facilities in the library e.g. mobile phones, intercom. This is in agreement with Nwabueze and Ntogo-Saghanen (2017) who found that high cost of ICT resources, inadequate ICT resources, Inadequate fund to purchase ICT resources as some of the major challenges facing the use of ICT facilities in public libraries. To further corroborate this finding, Oghenetega, Umeji and Obue (2014) found that limited/restricted access to users, high cost of purchase, lack of adequate infrastructure (ICT facilities), erratic power supply and technological factors as some of the challenges of the use of ICT facilities in public libraries in Nigeria.

### **Conclusion**

The study has shown that the availability of ICT facilities in public libraries in rural areas in Nigeria is still low as users admitted to being aware of the availability of just few of the ICT facilities in the public libraries in their community. A convincing number of the respondents are to a high extent aware of the availability ICT facilities such as desktop computers, photocopiers, CD ROMs, Uninterrupted power supply (UPS) and audio/video tapes which clearly pointed to the fact that other ICT facilities that may be useful to the users for meeting their information needs are missing (not available). Most of the respondents use the ICT facilities available in their community public library for accessing educational information for self development and keeping abreast with current news/events but the extent of the use of ICT facilities in community library by rural dwellers in Edo and Delta states is low. However, some of the challenges facing the optimal and effective utilization of ICT facilities by users of the public library include inadequate ICT facilities,

erratic power supply, poor awareness of the availability of ICT facilities, limited access to ICT facilities and inadequate telecommunication facilities in the library.

## Recommendations

In view of the foregoing, the following recommendations were made:

1. The Federal and State governments of Nigeria should look into the poor state of public libraries especially in rural communities in Nigeria and allocate funds for the acquisition of ICT facilities for effective information service delivery.
2. The libraries should advocate and collaborate with NGOs, MDAs and corporate organizations for effective partnership in developing the community libraries.
3. Public library management in Edo and Delta states should solicit for help from government, business organizations, individuals and philanthropists so that through donations and bequeathal, ICT facilities could be made available for use in community libraries across the states.
4. Library management should make sufficient budgetary allocation for ICT development which will ensure that ICT facilities are adequately acquired, serviced and maintained regularly; thereby eradicating the problems of inadequate ICT facilities, slowness of computers as well as other associated challenges.

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