

AWARENESS AND UTILIZATION OF AUTOMATED RESOURCES IN OSUN STATE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, OSOGBO

By

OKUNOYE, OLUWATOSIN OLUBUNMI

Osun State University Library, Osogbo, Osun State Nigeria,

Email: oluwatosin.okunoye@uniosun.edu.ng.

Phone Number +234-8053830726

Abstract

This paper investigated awareness and use of automated resources in Osun State University Library. The study employed the descriptive survey method. A total number of 500 respondents were drawn as sample size. This consisted of 400 students and 100 staff from the six campuses of the University. Questionnaire was used as research instrument. Out of the 500 copies of the questionnaire that was distributed to the respondents, a total of 329 (65.8%) copies were useably retrieved for analysis. Data collected were analyzed using simple percentages and frequency counts. The results showed that the extent of awareness and utilization of automated resources of the University library by staff and students were rated high by 97% of the sample. The study concluded that users should be encouraged to continue use of automated resources while recommendation is made to the university libraries to fully automate their resources and services and endeavor to carry out and maintain regular awareness creation for the use of available resources in order to ensure the realization of institutional objectives.

Keyword: Awareness, Utilization, Automation, Automated Resources, Academic Library, Osun State University Library

Introduction

Libraries and information service provision have undergone several transitions in terms of storage and retrieval. Changes have occurred from the earliest times of oral traditions, letters and figures on leaves, skins and carvings on stone and wood. Lewis (2004) describes two major transitions in libraries in the past fifty years. First is the change from paper library to automated library. The technologies involved in this transition are sustaining technologies. The second transition is the one from automated library to electronic library. Even though the concern in this study is with the automation of the library, it is instructive to note that in many libraries these two transition phases are very much simultaneously operational and complementary.

Library automation is essentially the use of computer technology in the library to manage some or all library operations like acquisitions, circulation, cataloguing, serials control, online access catalogue and others to acquire, process and disseminate information as quickly and accurately as possible. American Library Association (1983) defines automation as the performance of an operation, a series of operation or a process by self-activating, self-controlling, or automatic means. It refers to the use of automatic data processing equipment such as a computer or other labor-saving devices. Ojedokun (2008) observes that the term library automation was introduced by Harder in 1936. He further defines automation as the computerization or mechanization of all library activities and explains the goal of library automation to be the need to free library professionals of the routine often cumbersome clerical duties they indulge in and avail them the opportunity of giving more quality time to their clients who desire prompt response to their ever increasing and changing information needs. The goals for library automation which are global in out-look, are, according to Borgman (1997):

These goals evolved through three incremental phases – efficiency of internal operations, access to local resources, and access to resources outside the library – before reaching the present stage of addressing interoperability among systems and services. The challenge facing

libraries today is how to act locally – to implement systems that ensure internal efficiencies and high levels of service to the community – while thinking globally, assuring that local systems are able to exchange data with other systems located around the world. (pp. 215)

Automated resources are of vital essence in the university community. Ibrahim and Mohammed (2017) observe that these resources and services in university library are targeted towards organization, storage, retrieval and dissemination to the users thereby ensuring quick and accurate information provision. Okogwu and Ekere (2019) observe that the university library acquires print and electronic resources to meet parent institutional objectives. Such resources include books, journals, abstracts, audio and video CDs; including other electronic resources like databases, online databases, web resources, e-journals, e-books, and so on.

In developing societies like Africa today, quite a number of institutions are still struggling to meet up with library automation processes - that is to establish strong sustaining library technologies - in order to remain relevant. Surely, the slow pace of technological progress in libraries in this part of the world is not unconnected with entrenched societal, political, and economic problems they have long been battling with. Some of the problems noted here include: largely absent telecommunication infrastructural facilities, inadequacy of funds, prolonged erratic power supply, the successive problem of lack of sufficient political will to push for proper implementation of progressive policies, among others. Academic institutions like universities are having their fair share of these problems.

Statement of the Problem

An academic library is essentially responsible to the institution it supports by providing information that are relevant to achieving desired objectives in the areas of teaching, learning and research. High quality of academic output is believed to be made possible by the availability of a rich information resources base which in most academic libraries in Nigeria comprises print and electronic information resources and services. The electronic resources are specifically automated for the use of such libraries. It is of utmost importance therefore that the user community comprising staff and students are well aware of available resources and be able to maximally utilize them.

However, the extent of awareness being created for the utilization of library automated resources is best decided by the library users. The researcher therefore, in this study seeks to ascertain the extent of user awareness and utilization of the automated resources in Osun State University.

The findings of this study will provide information on the extent of awareness and utilization of automated resources in Osun State University. In the context of this study, electronic resources have been termed automated resources.

Objectives of the Study

1. ascertain the level of awareness of automated resources in Osun State University Library in all the campuses;
2. determine the extent of lecturers' and students' usage of automated resources in Osun State University Library.

Research Questions

1. What is the level of awareness of automated resources in Osun State University Library?
2. What is the extent of lecturers' and students' usage of automated resources in Osun State University Library?

Literature Review

Automated resources are also categorized as electronic resources in this study. International Federation of Library association (IFLA) (2012) has termed electronic resources as those materials that are accessible through internet or local means using the computer, which could be desktop computers, the varieties of personal computers (pcs) or handheld mobile devices. Such accessibility is predicated on the availability of some factors that enable their use. In a study, Okoedion (2020) found that poor electricity supply, and poor internet connectivity are major factors impeding computerization of academic libraries in South-south of Nigeria. In another study, Quadri and Ogedengbe (2020) found that undergraduates from two universities in South-west Nigeria possessed high degree of computer self-efficacy. Most of the undergraduate students expressed confidence in their knowledge of the computer. Findings in a study Isah (2019) showed that inaccessibility to some electronic resources, incessant power supply, poor internet access, inadequate computer facilities to access information constituted reasons for user dissatisfaction in use of library e-resources. The use of automated resources and services in the academic library is also further enhanced by the use of Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) this provides a quick view of available print resources. In their study, Ajegbomogun et al (2019) found that while electronic information resources were available in the research institute being investigated, only few electronic resources were used by the researchers being investigated. Odiachi and Obinyan (2020) study however, showed that all respondents in the research study were aware of open access resources and that there was high extent of usage by the respondent lecturers. In a study, Emiri (2019) investigated awareness and use of OPAC in university libraries by students of library and information science in the Niger-Delta region of Nigeria and found that 80% of users were aware of OPAC and the services it provided, while less than 30% of the students used the services for reasons such as insufficient computer terminals, poor network and power supply. In Obim and Onyebuchi (2019) study, results showed that undergraduate students from three universities utilized the OPAC to access books in the library, although results also recorded low level purpose for OPAC utilization. The study went on to proffer strategies for the creation of awareness in OPAC use among the users.

Hammed (2013), explains that library automation ensures that recent technological developments are moving libraries from mere collectors of books to dynamic institutions that serve diverse kinds and levels of societal information needs. Today, the high efficiency of computers and other electronic gadgets and the internet have brought many innovative changes to libraries. Yakubu, (2014), analyzed ongoing automation activities in Federal University Dutsin-Ma (FUDMA), Katsina State, Nigeria, in the areas of cataloguing, acquisitions, circulation, registration (patrons) notes, reports and lists, while also elaborating on KOHA, the software application being used, which is Open Source and free. Olaniyan's (2003) investigation on the automation of the library (Circulation Section) is a case study of the University of Agriculture Abeokuta (UNAAB) Library. The work is based on developing a comprehensive and interactive computer system for providing up-to-date information on the circulation department of UNAAB library. It gives present-status information on the section that includes user registration, number of available books like textbooks, journals, and magazines and information on record keeping on charging and discharging of the library books. Ajidahun (2005) provides a progress and developmental report of automation in Nigerian universities starting from the early 1970s. The report covered federal and state-owned university libraries excluding private universities which at the earlier stage, were in their infancy but today have largely overtaken the public universities in the automation process. The report showed that all the university libraries in Nigeria are at one developmental stage of automation or the other. While some university libraries have fully automated their operations,

there were some others that were making steady progress. A number of library automation challenges were discussed and solutions were proffered.

Afolabi (2009) investigates the Information Technology (IT) literacy level of librarians in 4 tertiary institutions in Ondo State, Nigeria. The study, with a response rate of 80%, revealed that information technology literacy level is still low. 29% of librarians have not had formal training in the use of the computer, 79% do not have personal computers and only one librarian (4%) could create a database and design a website. Quite a number of the respondent librarians' sections were without computers. Igun (2013) investigates the problems militating against librarians in the utilization of ICTs in Nigerian university libraries using 169 librarians from thirteen university libraries in the South-South zone of Nigeria revealed that librarians, irrespective of their gender, agreed that there were problems in all sections of libraries with the use of ICTs with inadequate funding reported as the major problem, while librarians with fewer years of working experience, reported problems of ICT use than librarians with more years of experience.

Muswazi (2005) says that the integration of print and electronic sources at the University of Swaziland Library shows 86.2% (50-58) students did not use online databases and this was the highest figure for underutilized e-resources. Ojedokun's (2001) says internet access and usage by students of the University of Botswana reveal that despite the lack of necessary searching skill students were aware of the immense benefits of its use in academic studies. According to Fatoki (2004), the University of Ibadan initially operated a very small aperture terminal (VSAT) connection through a private Internet Service Provider (ISP) to the internet. Thus far, there is no known documentation in literature of the extent of awareness and utilization of automated resources in Osun State University library, hence this study.

About Osun State University Library

Osun State University (UNIOSUN) is a multi-campus institution operating a collegiate system with six campuses in the six geopolitical zones of the state. Osun State University management recognizes the library as a significant player in its academic affairs and the pivot on which all academic activities revolve. College libraries on all campuses had to be developed simultaneously due to the multi-campus nature of the university. The Library started operations in 2007 with a collection of 520 volumes acquired from different sources including, donations, and gifts from other institutions, purchases from publishers, book agents and vendors. The library has some titles including electronic titles of local and international journals, has over 60,000 volumes of books and provides local newspapers and magazines for its users. The library also started to develop a virtual library, making subscription to a number of electronic databases including the World Library Service to make available online journals, books, magazines and other reference and research materials. The library has well over 1,133 electronic resources in various formats. By November 2010, the design of the library's website was already completed, hosted and ready for use. The website has facilities and features that include E-Resources, Library Catalog, College Libraries Home Page, Social Media Plug-In like Face book and Twitter, Link to Uniosun Home Page, Library Staff Login Page, among others. UNIOSUN library currently operates a combination of print and electronic-based resources. The library had a goal to provide full automation services for its patrons from the onset. Its automation services are however currently provided alongside manual services. The library started the automation of its services in the 2009/2010 Session with the purchase and installation of the KOHA Library Management System software and this made the library holdings partially visible and accessible. So far, UNIOSUN library has successfully incorporated the use of a few of the KOHA modules for its services experimentally. The library also has internet connectivity across campuses. Internet connectivity is possible via a "Router"

that uses subscription of Globacom internet service provider. Also available are static content of various documents on the Local Area Network in the e-library like the e-granary subscription-based. Among the online databases are: OARE, HINARI, AGORA, ALUKA, JSTOR, (E-BOOKS), EBSCOHOST, LEXIS-NEXIS, QUESTIA. There are also Internet connection-based open access databases. However, adequate internet connectivity for all campus libraries is a challenge for the university library. The inability of Internet Service Providers to have their Infrastructures in all the colleges of the institution is a barrier to effectively deploying library services that are internet dependent. In such cases, the cost of provision of Internet services becomes very high, often with limited bandwidth options. The institution is however looking to utilizing fiber optics with microwave links as option. This action will improve the quality of the library services provided across the campuses.

Methodology

This study adopted the survey research method. The population for this study consisted of staff and students of Osun State University, totaling about 17,500. The selected sample for the study was 500 respondent users from all the seven colleges in the six campuses of the University using stratified sampling technique. This comprised of 400 students and 100 members of staff of the University. Students were selected using stratified random sampling technique with gender, level of study, department, and college as basis for stratification while stratification for the 100 members of staff was based on gender, designation, department and college. The questionnaire was used as research instruments in the collection of data in the study. Sections of the questionnaire include: Section A with items on personal data of the respondents; Section B had items on the level of awareness of automated library resources by the users, that is, lecturers and students; while Section C had items on the extent of utilization of the automated library resources. Data collected were analyzed using frequency counts and percentages.

Findings and Discussion

Out of the 500 copies of the questionnaire that was distributed to the respondents, a total of 329 (65.8%) copies were useably retrieved for analysis.

The study sought to ascertain the level of users' awareness of automated resources in Osun State University Library. Responses were therefore elicited from users to a list of questions in order to ascertain their level of awareness using a five-point Likert scale of measurement. This is represented in table 1 below.

Table 1: Level of Awareness of Automated Library Resources

No	ITEM	VH	(%)	H	(%)	L	(%)	VL	(%)	UND	(%)	T (%)
1	I have ... knowledge of what an automated library is	103	34.45	159	53.18	12	4.01	25	8.36	0	0.00	100
2	My awareness of the automation status of the college library is ...	69	23.08	131	43.81	46	15.38	50	16.72	3	1.00	100
3	I am ...aware that the library has an e-library	92	30.77	154	51.51	28	9.36	22	7.36	3	1.00	100
4	I have ... knowledge of my library's website address	72	24.08	103	34.45	50	16.72	72	24.08	2	0.67	100
5	I ...agree that I have attended a Library Use instruction class about its automated resources	65	21.74	124	41.47	61	20.40	47	15.72	2	0.67	100
6	I have ...level believe that the Library Use instruction class helps me to effectively use the library's e-resources.	63	21.07	130	43.48	50	16.72	51	17.06	5	1.67	100

7	I ...believe that no instruction class was provided by the library about its automated resources	56	18.73	80	26.76	89	29.77	67	22.41	7	2.34	100
8	I have ... level awareness that e-resources are available in the library to aid my learning/teaching and research	93	31.10	135	45.15	36	12.04	28	9.36	7	2.34	100
9	I ... agree that I have never asked any library staff if the library has e-resources	61	20.40	87	29.10	63	21.07	81	27.09	7	2.34	100
10	I have ...level awareness that some of my library's electronic e-resources can be accessed around the campus axis	65	21.74	107	35.79	53	17.73	67	22.41	7	2.34	100

The table 1 above shows the opinions of respondents on whether they were at all aware of automated resources in the university library. Of the total 87.63% of returned responses as indicated above, it showed high level awareness of the automated library resources. 82.3% of respondents were aware of the availability of e-library resources in their respective campuses. On the other hand, 64.55% showed that the library instruction classes were useful to them in the utilization of the e-resources. It should be noted that members of staff were also carried along in orientation organized by the library and the University as well as one on one and college basis on the availability of library resources. A total of 82.28% showed that they were aware that their library had an e-library.

Table 2: Extent of Utilization of Automated Library Resources

No	Databases	VH	(%)	H	(%)	L	(%)	VL	(%)	UND	(%)	T (%)
1	EBSCOHOST	22	7.36	58	19.40	54	18.06	109	36.45	56	18.73	100
2	AGORA	22	7.36	48	16.05	58	19.40	111	37.12	60	20.07	100
3	OARE	23	7.36	44	14.72	43	14.38	125	41.81	64	21.40	100
4	Design Issues	32	10.70	41	13.71	46	15.38	116	38.80	64	21.40	100
5	QUESTIA	26	8.70	40	13.38	47	15.72	121	40.47	65	21.74	100
6	Nigerian Virtual Library	30	10.03	38	12.71	64	21.40	101	33.78	66	22.07	100
7	HINARI	24	8.03	42	14.05	46	15.38	122	40.80	65	21.74	100
8	PERI	20	6.69	49	16.39	39	13.04	124	41.47	67	22.07	100
9	JSTOR	25	8.36	38	12.71	48	16.05	124	41.47	64	21.40	100
10	ALUKA	28	9.36	42	14.05	45	15.05	125	41.81	56	18.73	100
11	The Federalist	5	1.67	4	1.34	1	0.33	21	7.02	259	86.62	100
12	SciElo	33	11.37	49	16.39	44	14.72	122	40.80	51	17.06	100
13	DATA Online	45	15.05	46	15.38	49	16.39	108	36.12	51	17.06	100
14	African e-journal	44	14.72	53	17.73	49	16.39	108	36.12	45	14.05	100
15	Biokemitri	39	13.04	49	16.39	38	12.71	121	40.47	52	17.39	100
16	Lexis Nexis	43	14.38	42	14.05	55	18.39	120	40.13	39	13.04	100
17	Office databases (ie. CD-ROM/DVDs)	47	15.72	58	19.40	47	15.72	102	34.11	45	15.05	100
18	Library Online Resources	59	19.73	50	16.72	45	15.05	92	30.08	46	15.38	100

19	e-Granary	34	11.37	51	17.06	43	14.38	116	38.80	48	16.06	100
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The table 2 above shows that the extent of respondents' utilization of all the library e-resources is generally high. The Federalist (6.68%) was rated as the most less frequently used, while Library Online Resources (33.85%) was the most frequently used.

Discussion of Findings

Table 3: Level of Awareness and Utilization of Automated Library Facilities

Level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Low	2	0.67
Moderate	8	2.68
High	289	96.66
Total	299	100.00

The summary Table 3 above showed generally high level (97%) of awareness and utilization of automated library resources by staff and students in the University. According to the results, the library users who have high level of awareness of the University library's automated facilities were 87%, 9% had moderate level of awareness, while only 5% of the respondents had low level of awareness. It was also revealed that 57.45% of the sample gained more from the user education classes organized for them by the library. In the case of Afolabi's (2009) study it was discovered that there was no significant difference between those who went through the orientation class and those who did not in terms of utilization of library resources. Results showed that the library users utilized 80% of the available e-resources. Similarly, 83% showed that the extent of utilization of the e-resources was very high, while only 10% showed non-usage. This result could indicate that high level of usage was partly due to favorable impact it had on the users' study. Ogunbote's (2008) study showed that Internet services utilization had significant impact on study and research activities among university students. Okunlaya, Emmanuel and Ajegbomogun's (2014) analytical study of internet resources use among students of humanities in selected Nigerian universities showed that 55% of the respondents spent more time on the Internet.

However, an important factor to note here is that the high extent of utilization may also be a result of users' individual access with data subscriptions using mobile phones and modems. Ojokoh and Asaolu's (2005) study on internet access and usage by students of the federal University of Technology, Akure, Nigeria, revealed that inadequacy of computers with internet facilities for students greatly hindered effective access of internet resources.

Conclusion and Recommendations

From the analysis of the study, it can be concluded that it is of great importance that proper awareness is created for the user community of an institution, in order to ensure better utilization of available automated library resources. Library users are therefore encouraged to continue to utilize library electronic resources and services for actualizing their academic objectives.

In view of the findings of the study, recommendations proffered include the following:

1. Full automation of all resources and services of academic libraries should be given priority arising from the immense benefits this provides for the users in fostering educational development in the institutions.
2. Academic libraries should explore every means available to carry out and maintain regular awareness creation to the user community, especially maximizing orientation and user education forum, regarding electronic resources and services available in order to ensure continuous and maximum usage.

3. Adequate funding of academic libraries is necessary by the government and university management. This will ensure that all information and communication technology infrastructural facilities are in place in order to foster automation of the libraries, not just for program verification and accreditation purposes but in order to realize institutional goals and objectives.

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