



MOBILE TECHNOLOGIES AND CONTEMPORARY LIBRARY SERVICES DELIVERY IN DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, ABRAKA

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Abstract

The study investigated the use of mobile technology in the delivery of contemporary library services in the Delta State University library. The study adopted a descriptive survey design with a population of 33 librarians in the Delta State University library. The total enumeration sampling technique was used to select the respondents. A questionnaire was used to gather the data, and they were analysed using mean scores and simple percentages. The findings of the study revealed that mobile technologies such as mobile phones, tablets, and laptops were poorly used for library service delivery. The study also revealed that SMS was the only service delivered by most of the respondents using mobile technology. On the other hand, current awareness services, digital reference services, selective dissemination of information, information repackaging, and OPAC are poorly delivered using mobile technologies. The study also revealed that the respondents used mobile technology to access social media platforms and interact with users, sent notification messages to users via mobile phone, and used mobile technology to update library news and events. However, lack of policy on the use of mobile technology for library services, inadequate skills, and nonchalant attitudes of staff towards the use of mobile technologies in libraries were the challenges faced by the librarians in the use of mobile technologies for library services. Thus, the study recommended, among others, that library management should formulate policies to encourage the use of mobile technologies in library services.

Keywords: Mobile technologies; mobile devices; ICT skills, contemporary library services

Introduction

As gateways to information and culture, libraries assume a principal

function in the public eye. The resources and services they offer open doors for learning, uphold proficiency and instruction, and help shape the groundbreaking thoughts and viewpoints that are vital to an imaginative and creative society. They additionally help guarantee a true record of information made and amassed by past generations. In a world without libraries, it is hard to propel exploration and human information or safeguard the world's combined information and legacy for people in the future. They play a crucial role in delivering information services to the public and encouraging creativity and learning (White, 2012).

Mobile technology is commonly regarded as the technology used in cellular communications. It can be more broadly defined as technology that is portable, powered by a battery, and uses wireless connectivity. This definition therefore encompasses all computing devices that allow internet connection and communication at any place and anytime, such as cell phones, tablet computers, and even laptops. Mobile technologies allow active user participation, easy access, quick feedback, etc. Due to its numerous benefits, it has been applied to library and information services. Mobile technology has made interaction and information access very timely for users and from anywhere.

Presently, phones have more highlights and capacities than any time in recent memory, including MP3 players, pictures, and web-based video, and have become more information-competent, thereby reducing the need for individuals to use computers to gather data. Individuals utilise a mobile phone as their essential interface for searching the Web, paying attention to music, sitting in front of the TV, understanding books, and associating with companions. So, in the course of recent years, the cell phone has become one of the significant interfaces' individuals use to access and share data. Libraries are social foundations, interfacing individuals with individuals and individuals with data. As most library users possess a cell phone, expanding quantities of personal digital assistants (PDAs) is the ideal opportunity for libraries to exploit mobile technologies because they help librarians remain significant in contemporary society. Librarians should know about innovative changes and plan for the fate of library portable connections. Librarians should be equivalent to this pattern and incorporate themselves into the innovation. Mobile technologies offer huge adaptability for individuals who need to exploit library services. Smartphones can access networks, and content can be continually streamed over a network, providing content on demand and making it unnecessary to maintain a paper copy of the material. Mobile technologies provide new opportunities for libraries to promote access and extend their reach. It is therefore expected that libraries use mobile technologies for contemporary services in university libraries.

Statement of the Problem

The dissemination of information and knowledge to communities and people is facilitated greatly by libraries. To keep up with the rapidly changing requirements and expectations of library users in today's fast-paced digital age, libraries must increasingly incorporate mobile technologies into their services. The primary concerns of this investigation are as follows. The goal of libraries is to ensure that all people have equal access to information. While libraries serve the public, not all users have equal access to its collections. The challenge lies in figuring out how to make library services, materials, and resources available via mobile technology such as smartphones and tablets in order to break down barriers and encourage equality for all users. Data collection and storage capabilities of mobile technology present issues of privacy and security. How to comply with data privacy rules without compromising the safety of patron data is a pressing issue for mobile library services. To the best of the researchers' knowledge, no study has been conducted into mobile technology and modern library services at the Delta State University Library. However, studies have been conducted into the application of mobile technologies in the delivery of library services. The purpose of the research was to fill this void in the existing literature.

Objective of the Study

The main objectives of the study are to:

1. Determine the mobile technologies used in contemporary service delivery at Delta State University Library.
2. Identify the contemporary services rendered using mobile technologies in the Delta State University Library.
3. Unravel the possession of skills for the use of mobile technologies for contemporary service delivery in the Delta State University library.
4. Identify the challenges associated with the use of mobile technologies in contemporary service delivery at Delta State University.

Review of Related Literature

Mobile Technologies Used in Library Services

Vollmer (2010) noted that new hardware and technologies such as Bluetooth, accelerometer, and multi-touch screens, as well as text messaging, smartphone software applications, mobile websites, global positioning systems (GPS), wi-fi, and media creation and capture tools, are all part of mobile technologies. Notwithstanding, libraries, through websites and mobile applications, can use mobile devices to notify users about opening hours, update

news about library events through chat, SMS, and e-mail, and provide links to databases and Web 2.0 platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, YouTube, etc.

According to Saxena and Yadav (2013), mobile devices will help libraries strengthen and provide user-oriented services. Libraries may well reach out to remote users who were considered unlikely to connect because of the absence of a medium. Mobile devices have more advanced features and capabilities than ever before, including text, audio, music players, video streaming, image messaging, mail synchronisation, third-generation network connectivity (3G), video calling, Bluetooth, and Wi-Fi. Verma, N., and Verma, M. (2014) felt that the dependency on computers is decreasing and that people are shifting towards mobile technology because it is handier, easier to handle data, and faster to access and multi-use. They further stated that different types of mobile phones are available and that different users are using different types of mobile phones, like PDAs (Personal Digital Assistants), smart phones, cell phones, iPods, MP3 players, and tablets. Guo et al. (2018) also confirmed the above-stated mobile devices as common mobile devices utilised in libraries and information services.

Dei (2021) assessed the adoption and implementation of mobile technology-based library services in academic libraries. A descriptive research survey was adopted. The population comprised public, private, and technical universities in Ghana. Out of these, the researchers purposefully selected 408 respondents, comprising 380 students and 28 library staff across the universities and academic libraries in Ghana. A questionnaire was used to gather the data, which was then collated, coded, and analysed descriptively using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22.0 into frequencies and percentages. The study revealed that few of the respondents owned smartphones, tablets, regular cell phones, personal digital assistants, e-book readers, and iPods. It is evident from the findings that the majority of the respondents own more than one mobile device.

Contemporary Library and Information Services

According to Dhamhere and Smet (2017), library users can obtain services whenever they need them, and scholarly databases can be accessed 24 hours a day from anywhere on or off campus. According to them, patrons can check books and journals and make inquiries even when the phones are busy or the library is closed. University libraries are providing most of their services via the web using technologies. For information to be available and accessible by users, libraries must be adequately equipped with well-packaged information service delivery. The elements of information and communication technologies like

teleconferencing, e-mail, and telecommuting could aid in the quality, efficiency, and effectiveness of library and information services delivery. According to Idowu (as cited in Igwela&Nsirim, 2018), library services according to international standards include: reference service, current awareness services (CAS), selective dissemination of information (SDI), reprographic service, display and exhibition, serials control, technical services, renewing and reserving, interactive search, and charging and discharging. Verma, N., and Verma, M. (2014) identified notification services where the latest arrivals, due dates, renewals, outstanding fines, etc. would be sent via SMS, MM, and IM. According to them, such notifications can be generated with the help of integrated library management software.

In contemporary society, most libraries have online public access catalogues (OPAC) to make users aware of their collections. An OPAC can be used by a member of the library to search the catalogue database in order to see if the library holds a particular work on a particular subject and be informed of the location of those works. Robertson (2005) confirmed that the library has been creating metadata records in the form of catalogue entries since the existence of libraries. He further explained that metadata is much more than a library catalogue record, and the community involved in its creation is much wider than just the library community. The implications of metadata for academic libraries seem to manifest themselves in the form of digital initiatives and, more specifically, institutional repositories. The need to provide digitally accessible contents over the internet informed the creation of metadata. This can be created and accessed using mobile technologies.

Kudu (2011) examined the delivery of reference and information services in academic libraries in Nasarawa State. The study employed a survey research design. The user sample population of 272 and the total staff population of 7 comprised the sample for the study. Two sets of questionnaires made up of 61 items each and an observation checklist were the instruments used to collect data, which were presented in tables and analysed using frequencies, percentages, and the mean. Findings revealed that current awareness services, selective dissemination of information, indexing, and abstracting were the major reference services provided. The study recommended regular evaluation of reference and information services and the provision and application of ICT facilities in reference services. Also, Dei (2020), in his study on the adoption and implementation of mobile technology-based library services in academic libraries, found that the respondents indicated that they would be interested in mobile library instructional guides and virtual tours.

Skills for the Use of Mobile Technology

Today, the world of information needs skilled librarians that can testify to relevant information and disseminate information to library users without any trouble. Gani et al. (2016a) addressed the fact that library professionals need some basic skills and knowledge to make libraries good. These skills and competencies are durable technological skills, better knowledge of information behaviour, better understanding of the user's needs, knowledge of changing trends, and knowledge of information repackaging. The library professionals should address these skills and competences to make the library environment healthy and nice. Rao (2014b) investigated that the current era of librarianship needs management skills, communication skills, soft skills, and many other associated skills that can help to handle the library work smoothly and handsomely. Furthermore, the present age of information is changing library trends, and library users' demands are changing rapidly with the invention of new technologies. Okoye (2012) mentioned that present and future library professionals need skills and competencies to make the library run smoothly. It would be better to train the library staff as per the requirements of the current digital era. He identified that library professionals should be well aware of new technologies, know about collection development, and maintain records. Furthermore, it would be better to enhance the skills and knowledge of library professionals for future purposes. Omehia et al. (2020) stated that the integration of mobile technologies in libraries means nothing if librarians lack the information and communication technology (ICT) competencies to utilise them. According to them, skills are essential for excellent job performance, and libraries, as a matter of necessity, should prepare librarians for emerging technologies to enable them to handle different jobs as required by different ICT tasks. As stated by Oyedokun et al. (2018), the level of ICT competencies required varies from one position to another depending on the tasks and duties involved. For example, knowledge of the use of mobile technology is necessary, especially now that librarians can deliver services even while in a taxi or queue with just mobile technology. Therefore, librarians need to be competent in the use of mobile technology to be able to use it to access the web, retrieve information from the web, use mobile apps, send and receive emails, and, of course, provide several services that can be provided with the use of mobile technologies. Itsekori and Ikechukwu (2012) noted that librarians need basic digital skills to use mobile technology in library service delivery. Basic digital technology competence includes how one uses a computer, tablet, or mobile phone to send and receive emails, browse the internet, and make and receive a video call.

Igwela and Nsirim (2018) investigated mobile social media as a facilitator of library service delivery by library staff in Rivers State, Nigeria. A survey method

was adopted, with 250 copies of the questionnaire distributed to 250 library staff from government higher institutions in Rivers State, Nigeria. 200 copies of the questionnaire were retrieved and used for the study. The findings of the study revealed that although librarians were skilled in the use of mobile technologies, they were not using them for library service delivery. As a result, the study recommended that library management develop and implement a policy that will support and guide the use of mobile social media for library services.

Challenges Facing the Use of Mobile Technologies

The rapid spread of mobile technology in developing countries is increasing access to an enormous range of communication and data services that are highly valued by most businesses and global entrepreneurs in various countries. Most of these services utilise software applications that support new forms of network collaboration. However, while the flow of mobile technology has been faster than any other information and communication technology in human history, the capabilities for using this technology to its full potential have been slower to develop (Kas, 2008). Relevant studies have proven that the rise of mobile technology and some of its usage characteristics and users are correspondingly increasing.

Damilola et al. (2019) examined the use of mobile technology for the provision of reference services in Nigerian university libraries. The study revealed that electricity failure, too many mobile devices to learn, lack of knowledge, slow speed of the internet, inadequate funds, staff, and training opportunities in using mobile devices for marketing library and information products and services have been identified as some of the constraints to mobile information service delivery. The study recommended that the computer skills of librarians as an important factor in mobile technology use for reference service delivery should be developed through training, retraining, and motivation.

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey design with a population of 33 librarians in the Delta State University library. The total enumeration sampling technique was used to select the respondents. A questionnaire was used to gather the data, which was analysed using mean scores and simple percentages.

Findings and Discussion

Table 1: Mobile Technologies used in Contemporary Services Delivery in Delta State University Library

I use the following technologies in services delivery?	Yes	No
Tablets	34%	66%
Laptop	31%	69%
Mobile phone	48%	52%
Personal Digital Assistant (PDA)	15%	85%

The result of Table 1 shows that only 48% of the respondents used mobile phones for library services, 34% used tablets for library services, 31% used laptops for library service delivery, and 15% used PDAs. This indicates that the use of mobile technologies in library service delivery is low. This is a confirmation of the study carried out by Dei (2021) on the assessment of the adoption and implementation of mobile technology-based library services in academic libraries, which found that few of the respondents used smartphones, tablets, personal digital assistants, e-book readers, and iPods.

Table 2: Contemporary Services Rendered Using Mobile Technologies in Delta State University Library

I deliver the following services via mobile technologies?	YES	NO
Digital reference services	34%	66%
Current awareness services	48%	52%
Selective dissemination of information	34%	66%
Information repackaging	48%	52%
SMS service	48%	52%
OPAC	15%	85%

The result of Table 2 shows that 34% of the respondents use digital reference services; 48% use current awareness services; 34% are involved in selective dissemination of information (SDI); 48% engage in information repackaging; 48% use the SMS service, while 15% of the respondents use the Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) to make the library collection available to the public.

Table 3: Possession of skills for the use of Mobile Technologies for Contemporary Services Delivery in Delta State university library

Items	Mean	Decision
Send notification messages to users via mobile phone	2.5	Agreed
Use mobile apps for library services	2.3	Disagree
Use mobile technology to access social media platforms and interact with users	3.5	Agreed
Use mobile devices for library virtual audio tour	2.2	Disagreed
Use mobile technology to update library news and events	2.5	Agreed
Total Mean Score	2.6	

Table 3 indicates that skills possessed by librarians for the utilisation of mobile technologies included using mobile technology to access social media platforms and interact with users (3.5), sending notification messages to users via mobile phone (2.5), and using mobile technology to update library news and events (2.5). On the other hand, just a few respondents could use mobile apps for library services (2.3) and mobile devices for audio messages to users (2.2). Savitha et al. (2011) identified the services libraries can render with mobile technologies, including SMS notification, OPAC, text reference services, data browsing, mobile document supply, and a library virtual audio tour.

Table 4: Challenges faced in the Utilisation of Mobile Technologies in Contemporary Services Delivery in Delta State University

Challenges	Mean	Decision
Lack of mobile devices	1.9	Disagreed
Internet subscription charges	2.0	Disagreed
Inadequate skills	3.4	Agreed
Lack of awareness on the use of mobile technology for library services	2.3	Agreed
Lack of policy on the use of mobile technology for library services	3.5	Agreed
Non-challant attitudes of staff towards the use of mobile technologies in library	3.2	Agreed
Total Mean Score	2.7	

Table 4 shows the challenges faced by librarians in the utilisation of mobile technology in contemporary service delivery in Delta State and shows that lack of policy on the use of mobile technology for library services (3.5), inadequate (inadequate skills), and nonchalant attitudes of staff towards the use of mobile technologies in libraries (3.2) were the challenges faced due to the mean scores, which are higher than the reference mean of 2.5. This is in line with the study carried out by Damilola et al. (2019) on the use of mobile technology for the provision of reference services in Nigerian universities and libraries, who found that electricity failure, too many mobile devices to learn, lack of knowledge, slow speed of the internet, inadequate funds, staff, and training opportunities affected the use of mobile technologies in mobile technology library service delivery.

Results and Discussion

The following were the findings of the study:

1. The use of mobile technologies in contemporary service delivery at Delta State University Library is not commendable. 48% of the respondents used mobile phones for library services, 34% used tablets for library services, 31% used laptops for library service delivery, and 15% used PDAs. This indicates that the use of mobile technologies in library service delivery is low at Delta State University Library.
2. The use of contemporary services rendered using mobile technologies in the Delta State University Library is strong, as evidenced by the 2.6 total mean score in this study's findings. This indicates that the use of mobile technologies in library service delivery is high at Delta State University Library. 34% of the respondents use digital reference services; 48% use current awareness services; 34% are involved in selective dissemination of information (SDI); 48% engage in information repackaging; 48% use SMS services; and 15% of the respondents use the Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) to make the library collection available to the public. This indicates that the use of mobile technologies in library service delivery is low at Delta State University Library.
3. The possession of skills for the use of mobile technologies for contemporary service delivery in the Delta State University library is strong, as evidenced by the 2.6 total mean score in this study's findings. This indicates that the use of mobile technologies in library service delivery is high at Delta State University Library.
4. The challenges associated with the use of mobile technologies in contemporary service delivery at Delta State University were itemized and commented on by the respondents with a 2.7 total mean score, indicating that many of the respondents face challenges in their service delivery.

Conclusion

Digitally accessible contents like online and electronic information resources have become the most widely sought-after information resources by information seekers and users. This enables mobile technology users to access a great number of services provided via electronic means, the internet, the web, or social media. However, this study investigated mobile technologies and contemporary library services and revealed that mobile technologies such as mobile phones, tablets, and laptops were poorly used in library service delivery. SMS service was the only service delivered by most of the respondents using mobile technology. However, librarians used mobile technology to access social

media platforms and interact with users, sent notification messages to users via mobile phone, and used mobile technology to update library news and events. Nevertheless, lack of policy on the use of mobile technology for library services, inadequate skills, and nonchalant attitudes of staff towards the use of mobile technologies in libraries were the challenges faced by the librarians in the use of mobile technologies for library services.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Library management should formulate policy to encourage the use of mobile technologies in library services.
2. Library management should organise training for staff on the use of mobile technologies for services delivery.
3. Library professionals should keep tag of innovations and future developments in mobile technologies to be effective with the latest technological development and remain relevant in the face of new technologies.

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