OFFLINE DATABASES PROVISION FOR EFFECTIVE LIBRARY SERVICE DELIVERY IN FEDERAL UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES IN NORTH - WEST, NIGERIA

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Abstract
This study investigated the provision of offline databases for effective library services in three federal university libraries in North-West, Nigeria. The study adopted descriptive survey research design. The population of the study consisted of 177 librarians and library IT staffs. Total enumeration sampling technique was adopted. The research instruments used were questionnaire and observation checklist. The study used SPSS statistical software for data analysis. The data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics of frequency table, percentage and mean scores. The findings of the study showed that ICT facilities were available in the university libraries studied. However, not all offline databases were available for service delivery. The e-resources found on offline databases include e-books, e-journals, and e-theses. The study further revealed a number of factors retarding offline databases provision in the libraries studied. These include among others inadequate funding for electronic facilities and services, epileptic power supply, lack of dedicated server, inadequate security measures, inadequate computer to access the e-resources, limited number of e-books, e-journals, and insufficient cooling system. The study, therefore, recommends among others the formulation and implementation of appropriate policies that will ensure the provision of offline databases for improved services delivery in the university libraries.

Key words: Offline database, Library services, University library

Introduction

University libraries are academic libraries that render services to support teaching, learning and research activities of the parent institutions. University library, being an integral part of an academic institution is saddled with the responsibility of providing print and electronic information resources to support the vision and mission of the parent institution. Sobalaje et al, (2015) posited

that federal university library continues to bring man in contact with the world in the fulfilment of its function as a repository of knowledge in all forms and shapes by providing effective services to clientele.

According to Kotler and Armstrong (2012), service is an activity that is offered by an individual, organization, corporate body to another by giving out the needed sources to needed individual or organization. Some of the core challenges of libraries in this 21st century include innovation for effective services delivery that will meet the users' needs. Usman *et al,* (2018) opined that offline information content is a prominent electronic database for searching the latest literature conveniently without internet connectivity. To address the ever-increasing demands of current and relevant information in the 21st century, academic and research libraries must embark on the provision of large number of offline databases to suit the interest of new technology library users. Searching information in an offline database is easier, faster, less time consuming, user friendly and, above all, allows access to information which otherwise would not have been available because of geographical or financial restrictions.

Offline database includes CD-ROM, CD, DVD, HARD DISK, Computer Server, E-Granary, TEEAL, and VHS tapes. They are used to store and share information through intranet connectivity and retrieve the needed information anytime within twenty-four hours round the clock. Offline database is conceived as an electronic platform that is searchable without internet connectivity, it provides effective service to user community; it contains electronic resources (e-resources) that comprise e-books, e-journals, e-articles, e-theses and dissertations, e-conference papers and lecture notes. Offline databases contain collections of electronic information resources by publishers from various fields and disciplines which can be accessed offline without a network (Kwadzo, 2015). The database collections are categorized into textual, numerical, bibliographic and non-bibliographic, and offline (Aina, 2014). The information resources found on offline database can be in form of text, number, character, diagram or picture.

Statement of the Problem

The global technological advancement and information explosion has transformed the nature and form of service delivery in various sectors, including libraries. In recent years, the interest and preference of modern library users for electronic information over printed materials poses a great challenge to university libraries in providing the right information in the right format to the right user at the right time, with or without internet connectivity. With modern technology, many information resources are now published, acquired, processed, organised, and accessed electronically. Hence the need for the provision of offline databases which do not require Internet. However, many university libraries in Nigeria have not been able to provide the much needed services due to lack of effective and sustainable offline content and databases. It is therefore this obvious challenge that prompted this study with specific focus on the offline database provision in university libraries in North-West, Nigeria.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

This study aimed at investigating the offline databases provision in relation to effective service delivery in three selected federal university libraries in North - West, Nigeria. Specifically, the study was designed to:

1. Identify the ICT facilities available in three federal university libraries in North - West, Nigeria.

2. Identify the types of offline databases provided in the selected federal university libraries in North West, Nigeria.
3. Find out the types of electronic information resources on offline database provided in the selected federal university libraries in North West, Nigeria.
4. Identify the challenges facing offline databases provision for effective service delivery in the selected federal university libraries in North-West, Nigeria.

Research Questions

This study answers the following questions:

1.What ICT facilities are available in three federal university libraries in North - West, Nigeria?
2. What types of offline databases are provided in the selected federal university libraries in North - West, Nigeria?
3. What types of electronic information resources are on offline databases in the selected federal university libraries in North - West, Nigeria?
4. What challenges are facing offline databases provision for effective service delivery in the selected federal university libraries in North-West Nigeria?

Literature Review

Over the years, numerous researches have been conducted on electronic database system and information resources in libraries in developing countries, including Nigeria. Most of these works revealed that libraries in the developing world have come to appreciate the importance of technology and information available through the databases and information systems in the library. It is argued that library resources and services should be sufficient in quality, depth, diversity and currency to support institution's curriculum. Academic libraries are often considered the most important resource centre of an academic institution (Emwanta, 2012). For information to be at the disposal of everyone, there must be adequately equipped library and well-packaged information services delivery online or offline. Offline database has become a sign of the modern age and is an invaluable tool for teaching, learning and research (Sethi and Panda, 2011). The 21st century, advancement of computer and networking technologies have revolutionized information needs and access across the globe.

Offline databases are electronic container, a platform or devices such as hard disk (internal or external), flash drive, e-Granary and CD ROM, DVD and Zip drive containing electronic information used in the library. Offline databases are created in an organization that manages data to allow easy access, fast storage and easy retrieval of information. Offline database can be edited to suit one's purpose or interest (Hajara and Olatoye, 2015). Offline database is for organizing and storing electronic information resources in the library without internet access. Database is a collection of information organized in such a way that computer programme can quickly select the desired pieces of data in electronic filing systems. Database can be categorized according to various bases, such as online database and offline database (Chiang, 2010). These include e-books, e- journals, e-articles, lecture notes, digitalised primary sources, and conference papers.

Usman *et al*, (2018) conducted a research on "Provision and Utilization of Offline Information Contents in Nigerian Academic Libraries for Sustainable National Development", the objective of the study was to enhance the provision and use of offline electronic resources for national development and its sustainability in Nigerian. The findings revealed that the best options to

address the poor state of access to research information in Nigerian academic libraries is to rethink and reconfigure our thinking towards provision of offline information contents for rapid national development and its sustainability. In fact, access and use of offline information contents would no doubt meet the yearning and aspiration of the new mindset of academic library customer given the poor state of internet connectivity in Africa in general and Nigeria in particular. Therefore, the quality of teaching, learning and research would be strengthened in tertiary institutions with the availability of offline database resources.

Research Methodology

A descriptive survey research design was used for the study. The population of the study comprised 177 e-librarians and ICT library staff from the following three (3) federal university libraries in North - West, Nigeria.

Table 1: Population and Sample Size of the Study

S/No	*Name of Library/Institution*	*No. of e-librarians and Library ICT staff*	*Sample Size*
1	Kashim Ibrahim Library (ABU) Zaria	150	150
2	Bayaro University Library (BUK) Kano	15	15
3	Abdullahi Fodiyo Library (UDU) Sokoto	12	12
	Total	177	177

Sample and Sampling Technique

The study used total enumeration, considering the population of the selected three federal university libraries, 177 e-librarians and ICT library staff in North West as seen in Table 1 above.

Research Instruments

The instruments used for data collection were structured questionnaire and observation checklist.

Method of Data Collection

The researchers embarked on field work to the three (3) selected federal university libraries in the North-West, Nigeria for the collection of the questionnaires and observation of situations, facilities and services.

Method of Data Analysis

The data collected from the research was organised and analysed based on the four research questions formulated. Descriptive statistical analysis was used, percentages were generated and tables drawn where necessary.

Results and Discussion

RQ1: What ICT facilities are available in the federal university libraries?

RQ1 Table 2: Available ICT Infrastructure/Facilities in the Library

ITEMS	***INSTITUTION***	***AVAILABLE***	***NOT AVAILABLE***	***PERCENTAGE***
Computer Systems	ABU. LIBRARY	1	0	100
	BUK. LIBRARY	1		
	UDUS. LIBRARY	1		
Systems server	ABU. LIBRARY	1	0	100
	BUK. LIBRARY	1		
	UDUS. LIBRARY	1		
Scanner	ABU. LIBRARY	1		
	BUK. LIBRARY	1	0	100
	UDUS. LIBRARY	1		
Intranet/UPS	ABU. LIBRARY	1		
	BUK. LIBRARY	1	0	100
	UDUS. LIBRARY	1		
Internet connectivity	ABU. LIBRARY	1		
	BUK. LIBRARY	1	0	100
	UDUS. LIBRARY	1		
Speedy local area network (LAN) /Wide area network (WAN)	ABU. LIBRARY	1		
	BUK. LIBRARY	1	0	100
	UDUS. LIBRARY	1		
Printer	ABU. LIBRARY	1		
	BUK. LIBRARY	1	0	100
	UDUS. LIBRARY	1		

Photocopier	ABU. LIBRARY	1			
	BUK. LIBRARY	1			0
100					
	UDUS. LIBRARY	1			
	ABU. LIBRARY	1			
Back code Scanner	BUK. LIBRARY	1		0	
100					
	UDUS LIBRARY	1			
	ABU LIBRARY	1			
Text editors/ OCR	BUK LIBRARY	1		0	
100					
	UDUS. LIBRARY	1			

Key: Available 1, Not Available 0
Table 2 above revealed that all (100%) the facilities listed were available in the selected university libraries in the North-West, Nigeria.

RQ2: What types of offline databases are provided in the federal university libraries in North - West, Nigeria?

Table 3: Offline databases provided in federal university libraries in North-West Nigeria

ITEMS	***INSTITUTION***	***AVAILABLE***	***NOTAVAILABLE***	***Percentage***
CD-ROMs	ABU.LIBRARY	1	0	100
	BUK.LIBRARY	1		
	UDUS. LIBRARY	1		
egranary	ABU.LIBRARY	1	0	100
	BUK.LIBRARY	1		
	UDUS. LIBRARY	1		
TEEAL	ABU.LIBRARY	1	0	100
	BUK.LIBRARY	1		
	UDUS. LIBRARY	1		

	ABU.LIBRARY	1	0	66.7
	BUK.LIBRARY			
	UDUS. LIBRARY	1		
OPAC				
	ABU.LIBRARY		0	100
Green Stone	BUK.LIBRARY			
	UDUS. LIBRARY			
	ABU.LIBRARY	1	0	100
External/Internal Hard Disk	BUK.LIBRARY	1		
	UDUS. LIBRARY	1		
			0	
	ABULIBRARY	1		100
Compute Server	BUK.LIBRARY	1		
	UDUSLIBRARY	1		
			0	100
	ABU.LIBRARY	1		
DVDs				
	BUK.LIBRARY	1		
	UDUS. LIBRARY	1		
CDs	ABU.LIBRARY	1	0	100
	BUK.LIBRARY	1		
	UDUS. LIBRARY	1		

	ABU.LIBRARY	1	66.7
Zip Drive	BUK.LIBRARY	0	
	UDUS. LIBRARY	1	

Key: Available 1, Not Available 0

Table 3 above revealed that 9 (80%) of the items listed were available in the selected university libraries in North- West, Nigeria, while only 1(20%) was not available.

RQ 3: What types of electronic information resources are on offline databases in the

federal university libraries in North-West, Nigeria?

Table 4: Electronic information resources on offline databases in the federal university libraries in North-West, Nigeria

ITEMS	*INSTITUTION*	*AVAILABLE*	*NOTAVAILABLE*	*PERCENTAGE*
	ABU. LIBRARY	1	0	100
E-Books	BUK. LIBRARY	1		
	UDUS. LIBRARY	1		
	ABU. LIBRARY	1	0	100
E-journals	BUK. LIBRARY	1		
	UDUS. LIBRARY	1		
	ABU. LIBRARY	1	0	100
E- theses	BUK. LIBRARY	1		
	UDUS. LIBRARY	1		
	ABU. LIBRARY	1	0	100
E-conference papers	BUK. LIBRARY	1		
	UDUS. LIBRARY	1		
	ABU. LIBRARY	1	0	100
E-articles	BUK. LIBRARY	1		
	UDUS. LIBRARY	1		
	ABU. LIBRARY		0	100
E-Lecture notes	BUK. LIBRARY		0	

	UDUS. LIBRARY	0	
	ABU. LIBRARY	0	100
E-seminar presentations	BUK. LIBRARY	0	
	UDUS. LIBRARY	0	

Key: Available 1, Not Available 0

Table 4 above revealed that 5 (71.5%) of the electronic resources listed were found on offline database while 2(28.5%) of the items were not available in the selected university libraries in North-West, Nigeria.

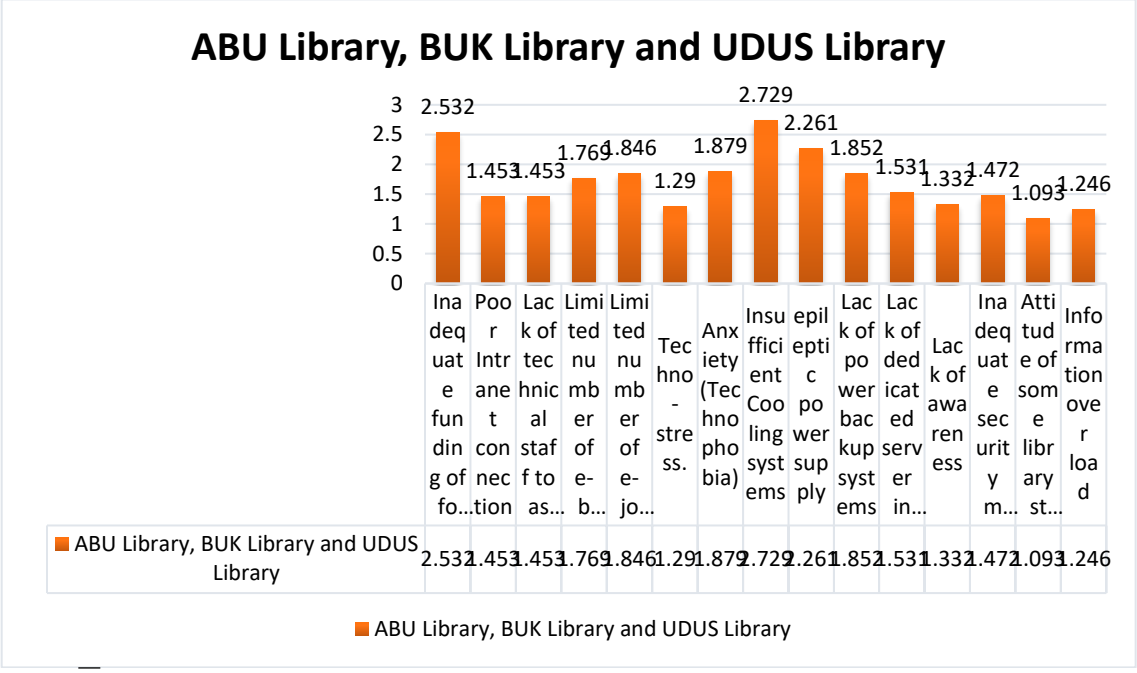
RQ 4: What challenges are facing offline databases provision for effective service delivery in federal university libraries?

Table 5: Challenges facing offline databases provision for effective service delivery in federal university libraries

ITEMS	*Institution*	*Overall Mean*	*STD Deviation*	*Decision*
		$\overline{X}$		
ABU Library BUK Library UDUS Library	Inadequate funding of for electronic resources	2.532	0.642	D
ABU Library BUK Library	Poor Intranet connection			

UDUS Library		1.453	1.079	S
ABU Library BUK Library users UDUS Library	Lack of technical staff to assist	1.453	1.320	S
ABU Library BUK Library UDUS Library	Limited number of available book	1.769	1.137	D
ABU Library BUK Library e-journal UDUS Library	Limited number of available	1.846	0.992	D
ABU Library BUK Library UDUS Library	Techno-stress.	1.290	1.040	S
ABU Library BUK Library UDUS Library	Anxiety (Technophobia)	1.879	1.162	D
ABU Library BUK Library UDUS Library	Insufficient Cooling systems	2.729	0.479	D
ABU Library BUK Library UDUS Library	epileptic power supply	2.261	0.828	D
ABU Library BUK Library UDUS Library	Lack of power backup systems	1.8502	1.007	D
ABU Library BUK Library Library UDUS Library	Lack of dedicated server in the	1.531	0.951	D
ABU Library BUK Library UDUS Library	Lack of awareness	1.332	0.804	S
ABU Library BUK Library ABU Library	Inadequate security measures	1.472	1.211	S
BUK Library UDUS Library	Attitude of some library staff	1.093	0.953	S

ABU Library BUK Library UDUS Library	Information over load	1.246	1.036	S



Key: $\bar{X}$≥1.5 = Agree. Represented by (D) X≤1.5 = Disagree. Represented by (S)

The above chart revealed the numerous challenges facing the university libraries in the provision of offline databases for effective library services delivery. These challenges include limited number of e-books, anxiety (Technophobia), lack of power backup, limited e-journals, lack of dedicated server in the library, epileptic power supply, inadequate funding for electronic resources, and insufficient cooling system. However, the data revealed that lack of technical staff to assist users, inadequate security measures, poor Intranet connection, information overload, techno-stress, attitude of some library staff and lack of awareness, were not factors affecting the provision of offline database for effective library services delivery in the affected university libraries.

Conclusion

Based on the results of the study, it is concluded that, offline databases are available in the three selected federal university libraries in the North-west, Nigeria. However, the databases provided in all the libraries are affected by lack of use as well as malfunctioning and obsolete facilities. This suggests the real need for the management of the university libraries to provide and also encourage the use of offline databases in their respective libraries, in addition to taking proactive measures to eradicate all the challenges hindering offline database provision and improved service delivery.

Recommendations

In the light of the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. The university libraries should not only provide offline databases but should equally ensure their functionality, access and utilisation by users.
2. Qualified and competent library professionals with IT knowledge and skills should be employed in order to ensure effective and efficient library service delivery.

3. The university libraries should provide relevant and adequate electronic resources on offline databases and also comply with necessary copyright policies.

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