Electronic Information Resources available at the Delta State Polytechnic Library, Otefe-Oghara, Nigeria

Eyaufe, O. O.
Golley, J.
Stephen Brume

ABSTRACT

This study assesses electronic information resources available at the Delta State Polytechnic Library, Otefe. The aim is to ascertain if the information resources required by the academic staff to perform their teaching, research and general academic activities are adequately available. The study applies the survey method, using the questionnaire as the main instrument of data collection. The stratified random sampling method is used to arrive at a sample size of 50 respondents selected from 200 academic staff. A total of 50 copies of questionnaire administered to 50 academic staff from the 3 schools (Business Studies, Computing and IT as well as Engineering) of the polytechnic, of which 48 were returned and 45 were found usable for the study. Data were analyzed using frequency count and simple percentage. The results of the study reveal among others that the Polytechnic library is lagging behind in the provision of electronic information resources which is mostly needed considering that the world has gone digital. Also, it is found out that most participants of the study have considerable level of electronic information resources awareness and search skills. Thus the study recommends to the polytechnic management board and library as a matter of urgency the introduction of ICT infrastructure and provision of accessible electronic information resources at the Polytechnic library and entire polytechnic community.

Keywords: *Electronic information resources, information communication technology (ICT), digital age, Delta State Polytechnic, academic staff*

INTRODUCTION

A tremendous change has evolved in the world of information, characterized by the shift from printed information resources to electronic information resources. This change has been brought about by the advent and advancement in information and communication technology (ICT). This has brought about the fast production, processing, repackaging, dissemination and access to information. Dzandu and Dadzie (2012) point out that the term ICT broadly covers the internet, telecommunications equipment and services, information technology equipment and services, the media, all information providers including libraries and documentation centres. The "paradigm shift" brought about by ICT in the world

Eyaufe, O. O. *is affiliated with the Information Studies Department, University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN), Pietermaritzburg, South Africa.* ***Golley, J.*** *is a Librarian and* ***Stephen Brume,*** *is a Senior Librarian, both in Delta State Polytechnic, Otefe-Oghara, Nigeria. E-mail: omamomo.a@gmail.com.*

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of information globally has caused information consumers to shift towards electronic information. The penetration of ICT in tertiary institutions is more pronounced in the academic libraries as they are repositories of information. The internet has become a facilitator of scholarship among academics and students. In this regard, Bamigboye and Ojo (2010) note that scholarship activities of production, translation, and transmission of information are largely driven by ICTs. Sarah and Carl (2002), state that more than ever the advancement in ICT has brought about increasing emphasis on scientific research that is interdisciplinary in nature. UCL (2008) affirms that ICT has occasioned enormous changes in the information landscape, transforming teaching, learning scholarly communication and the role of traditional research library services**.**

With electronic information resources (EIRs) enabled by the ICTs, information users are able to overcome the barriers of distance and time in information access and retrieval. The academic community expects using ICT to access information in diverse forms and more conveniently. This expectation is heightened by the fact that most academic staff in tertiary institutions are getting more awareness through the media and are able to access electronic information through cybercafés (Oduwale, 2004). Academic libraries are therefore expected to change from the traditional manual ways of communicating information to meet the needs and interests of users in this digital age. The academic libraries in tertiary institutions are striving to stock and provide electronic information resources that include CD-ROM databases, electronic mails, Online Public Access Catalogue and the internet (Oduwale and Akpati, 2003) in order to meet the diverse, complex and ever changing information needs of their users. Following the growing widespread of the awareness of electronic information resources, the need for the provision of EIRs and services become imperative in every academic library.

Despite the widespread of the awareness of EIRs and the knowledge of its benefits in scholarly activities (Wolverton and Carol, 2005; Vakkari, 2008; Andrews, 1996; Nwezeh, 2010), many institutions of higher learning in developing countries are yet to equip their libraries with adequate EIRs and avail their users the opportunity of benefiting from the potentials of EIRs. Peiris N. and Peiris B. (2012) observe that while the academic libraries in developed countries have all types of electronic information resources such as CD-ROMs (databases and multimedia), on-line journals and databases which are used by majority of tertiary institutions students/academics, the situation is different in developing countries. Similarly, Igbo and Imo (2010) submit that lack of electronic information resources and irregular subscription to electronic databases are major factors that inhibit accessibility and use of electronic resources. It is therefore imperative to remove the barriers to access and use of electronic information resources in other to accelerate teaching, learning and research. According to Okoye and Ejimkike (2011), this will place Nigerian educational system in competitive position globally.

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Against this back drop, this study aims to evaluate the EIRs and services available and provided at the Delta State Polytechnic library, Otefe to ascertain if her patrons EIRs needs are adequately served especially in this era of digitalization. Consequently, the following questions are raised:

1. What types of EIRs and services are provided by the Delta State Polytechnic library?
2. What types of EIRs and services are accessed by the academic staff of the Delta State Polytechnic?
3. Are the information needs of the academic staff of the Polytechnic adequately met by the Polytechnic library?
4. What factors constitute barriers to EIRs access at the Delta State Polytechnic library Otefe?

The Delta State Polytechnic Library, Otefe

The Delta State Polytechnic Library was established in 2002 alongside the Delta State Polytechnic, Otefe. The Polytechnic was established to among other things to help in the training of manpower equipped with computing and information technology skills needed in the present digital age, for national development *(www.dspgportal.edu.ng/)*. The Delta State Polytechnic Otefe was therefore created to provide the information needed for the polytechnic to enable the polytechnic achieve her set goals and objectives. The Polytechnic library currently houses over 10,000 collections of books and journals which cater for the information needs of all members of the polytechnic community. The Polytechnic is presently introducing information technology facilities in the library and staff offices in order to provide access to the internet and electronic information resources.

The study attempts to evaluate the electronic information resources and services provided and available at the Delta State Polytechnic Library. The study attempts to find out if these resources are made accessible to intended users. Also the level of EIRs awareness of users will be examined. The outcome of this study will be of value to Delta State Polytechnic library Otefe users, management and also the polytechnic management as it will, for the following reasons; reveal the EIRs and services provided at the polytechnic library thereby creating awareness of the availability of the resources and services available at the library. Provide knowledge of users of EIRs and services needs; this will help library management to build a collection that is responsive to users' ever changing information needs as the world is experiencing a paradigm shift in information use, handling and processing. Reveal barriers to EIRs and services provision; management will be equipped with useful information that help them in the provision of EIRs and services that will bring about effective and maximum use of the resources. Finally the outcome of this study will serve as a benchmark for future studies in related areas in the context of Delta State Polytechnic Otefe.

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Electronic Information Resources in Academic Libraries

According to Little (2012) the internet has fundamentally changed the way students and faculty members find and retrieve information when starting their research. This change he points out has also altered the ways by which academic libraries present information resources which previously was mainly in print format. Shulling and Wu (2007) assert that electronic information resources are now being found to form major aspect of libraries of tertiary institutions. Aina, Mutula and Tiamiyu (2008) observe that digital library resources and services are being increasingly introduced by several agencies including tertiary institutions. Literature abounds of studies of the effort that have been made by academic libraries to provide electronic information resources and services to enhance academic activities in their respective institutions. Tomney and Burton (1998) study found from their survey that academic libraries British Universities provided e-journals which were found to be used by a significant number of the academic staff members of various universities. Smith (2003) observes that the paradigm change experienced in information processing and production has also affected the academics at the university as they are now found to be great users of e-journals.

Increased awareness of electronic information resources and services and their impact have been found as factors that encouraged the use of electronic information resources among academics. Kaur and Verma (2009) study reveal that the increased use of e-journals by the academics at the Indian Institution of Technology, Delhi is due to their increased awareness of the resources at the institution. Dadzie (2005) investigation of the access and use of electronic resources by faculty and students of Ashesi University, Ghana reveal that among other things low usage of some electronic databases was due to lack of awareness of those resources despite their presence in the library. Obasuyi and Stella (2013) concludes that awareness is major factor that influences electronic resources utilization by pharmacy lecturers across universities in the south-south zone of Nigeria. The survey result indicates that awareness level of electronic resources among sampled lecturers was moderate so also is the use rate.

Similarly, Adisa (2011) study demonstrates that low awareness results in low use of electronic information resources by academic staff of University of Ilori, Nigeria. Sharma (2009) studies the use and impact of e-resources at Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University, India. The study finds that various electronic resources were available in the institutions academic library which were accessed and used by the academic staff. Bansode (2013) study revealed that electronic information resources are viewed as an important aspect of the library's collection. The study also reveals that low use of the resources is as a result of low awareness of its existence in the library among academics of the institution. The low awareness not withstanding there is indication that academics prefer electronic information resources to printed resources. Also, it is revealed

that the University of Annamalai Chidambaram, India provides a wide range of electronic information resources for her academic community (Natarajan, Suresh, Sivaraman and Sevukan, 2010).

Lamptey (2010) presents an overview of the electronic information resources and services available at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology Library Kumasi, Ghana. The library subscribes to a variety of databases which include HINARY, AGORA, EBSCO HOST, Emarald insight and Blackwell/Wiley. Access is made to these resources at a cost to every member of the academic community. Ani, Edem and Ottong (2010) attempted to analysis the access and use of internet by academic staff at the University of Calabar, Nigeria. They find out that internet access at the University of Calabar is low, indicating that the University has not sufficiently provided electronic information resources for her academic staff access and use. This is also the case of University of Nigeria, Nsukka where Wats and Ibegbulam (2006) reported limited and poor access to electronic information resources at the medical library. Similarly, at the Delta State University, Abraka, it is reported that academic staff has access to computers and other ICT infrastructures in their offices but experience problem of poor internet connectivity both at office and in the academic library (Emojerho and Adomi, 2006). Indicating that the access to electronic information resources is not adequately supported by the academic libraries of Delta State University, Abraka, university of Calabar and university of Nigeria, Nsukka (Emojerho and Adomi, 2006; Wats and Ibegbulam, 2006; Ani, Edem and Ottong, 2010). As a consequent, Anyira (2011) reports that Nigerian university education has been bedeviled by the problem of inadequacy of current and relevant information for teaching, learning and research.

METHOD

The study utilizes survey method using structured questionnaire and observation to generate data. The population of the study comprises academic staff drawn from the 3 () schools business studies, computing and IT and engineering of the Polytechnic. The stratified random sampling is used in determining the sample frame for academic staff as it allows a better representation with less discrepancy (Busha and Harper 1980). Survey questionnaire is used to collect data from academic staff. The data generated were analyzed using simple frequency counts and percentage and presented in tables. A total number of 50 copies questionnaires were administered to the sampled academic staff. Of this number, 48 were filled and returned while 45 were found usable for the study, giving a response rate of 90% (table 1).

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RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 indicates that some of the total respondents are from the school of business studies, while others are from the schools of computing and IT and engineering respectively. The high response rate from academics from the school of Business Studies may be due to the fact that business studies is the most populated school in the polytechnic while Engineering is the least populated which is reflected in their academic staff strength and in the response rate of this study.

Respondents were asked to choose from the list provided the types of electronic information resources and services that are provided and made accessible to them at the Delta State Polytechnic library, Otefe. The result presented in table 3 above reveals that some respondents from the school of engineering agree that CD-Rom search services is provided by the Polytechnic library and that they have access to this services. The result also reveals that respondents from the school of computing and IT and respondents from the school of business studies confirm the existence of the CD-Rom search service. Thus of the entire respondents confirm the availability and accessibility of this service. There is an indication that selective dissemination of information and current awareness services are provided and accessed by academic staff of Delta State Polytechnic librarys.This is shown in some of the respondents agreeing to have accessed selective dissemination of information and current awareness service respectively. The low use of those services may be due to the Polytechnic library's poor awareness programme to advertise her resources and services and to reach out to her patrons. From the results presented in table 2, respondents indicate the non availability of all other electronic information resources and services listed in the questionnaire these include online public access catalogue (OPAC), online databases, electronic books, electronic journals, online abstracts and indexes, full text databases, electronic theses/dissertations and photocopying, printing and scanning.

A question was asked to find out if the information resources and services provided by the Delta State Polytechnic library; that are available to the academic staff of the polytechnic are adequate for teaching, research and general academic purposes in the present digital age. The indices of the result as presented in table 3 indicates that majority of respondents from the 3 schools confirm the inadequacy of information resources and services available at the Polytechnic library for teaching, research and general academic purposes while others from the schools of business studies and engineering respectively indicate that the information resources available are highly inadequate. This implies that the academic staffs are in need of information resources from which they can access current and up to date information quickly and at a reduced cost.

Respondents were also asked to indicate the factors that constituted problems to electronic information resources access at the Polytechnic library. It is clear from the result presented in table 4 that non availability of EIRs, no

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internet connectivity, poor power supply, lack of EIRs and services awareness programme ranked highest among the factors listed as problems of electronic information resources access. Inadequate EIRs search skills and low level of EIRs awareness are ranked as the least factors that constitute problems to electronic information resources access among the academic staff of Delta State Polytechnic Otefe. An insignificant number of the total respondents indicate inadequate EIRs search skills in the three schools namely: business studies; computing and IT; engineering as well as low level of EIRs awareness as problems to electronic information resources access.

Table 1: Response rate of respondents according to their schools

School	**Frequency**	**%**
Business studies	21	46.7
Computing and IT	15	33.3
Engineering	9	20
Total	45	100

Source: Survey, 2016

Table 2: Electronic information resources and services provided by the Delta State polytechnic library and accessed by academic staff of the polytechnic

	BUS 21	**C&IT 15**	**Engr 9**	**Total 45**
Types of EIRs and services	**Freq.(%)**	**Freq.(%)**	**Freq.(%)**	**Freq.(%)**
Online public access catalogue (OPAC)	-(-)	-(-)	-(-)	-(-)
Online databases	-(-)	-(-)	-(-)	-(-)
Electronic books	-(-)	-(-)	-(-)	-(-)
Electronic journals	-(-)	-(-)	-(-)	-(-)
Online abstracts and indexes	-(-)	-(-)	-(-)	-(-)
Full text databases	-(-)	-(-)	-(-)	-(-)
Electronic theses/dissertations	-(-)	-(-)	-(-)	-(-)
CD-Rom search service	10(47.6)	8(53.3)	7(77.8)	25(55.6)
Selective dissemination of information	5(23.8)	5(33.3)	6(66.7)	16(35.6)
Current awareness services	5(23.8)	3(20)	5(55.6)	13(28.9)
Photocopying, printing and scanning	-(-)-(-)	-(-)	-(-)	-(-)

BUS = Business studies 21; C&IT = Computing & IT 15; Engr = Engineering 9

Source: Survey (2016)

Table 3: Adequacy of information resources available at the Delta State Polytechnic library

	BUS 21	**C&IT 15**	**Engr 9**	**Total 45**
Types of EIRs and services	**Freq.(%)**	**Freq.(%)**	**Freq.(%)**	**Freq.(%)**
Highly adequate	-(-)-(-)	-(-)	-(-)	-(-)
Adequate	-(-)-(-)	-(-)	-(-)	-(-)
Somewhat adequate	5(23.8)	5(33.3)	3(33.3)	13(28.9)
Inadequate	3(14.3)	10(66.7)	3(33.3)	16(35.6)
Highly inadequate	13(54.2)	-(-)	3(33.3)	16(35.6)

Source: Survey (2016)

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Table 4: Problems associated with the access of electronic information resources and services at the Delta State Polytechnic library

Problem	Schools	Yes freq.(%)	No freq.(%)
Non availability of EIRs	Business studies (21)	21(100%)	-(-)
	Computing and IT (15)	15(100%)	-(-)
	Engineering (9)	9(100%)	-(-)
Non availability of ICT infrastructures e.g computer	Business studies	15(71.4%)	6(28.6%)
	Computing and IT	7(46.6%)	8(53.3%)
	Engineering	2(22.2%)	7(77.8%)
Limited computers to access EIRs	Business studies	15(71.4%)	6(28.6%)
	Computing and IT	7(46.6%)	8(53.3%)
	Engineering	2(22.2%)	7(77.8%)
No internet connectivity	Business studies	21(100%)	-(-)
	Computing and IT	15(100%)	-(-)
	Engineering	9(100%)	-(-)
Poor internet connectivity	Business studies	21(100%)	-(-)
	Computing and IT	15(100%)	-(-)
	Engineering	9 (100%)	-(-)
Poor power supply	Business studies	21(100%)	-(-)
	Computing and IT	15(100%)	-(-)
	Engineering	9(100%)	-(-)
Inadequate EIRs search skills	Business studies	5(23.8%)	16(76.2%)
	Computing and IT	2(13.3%)	13(86.7%)
	Engineering	2(22.2%)	7(77.8%)
Low level of EIRs awareness	Business studies	9 (42.9%)	12(57.1%)
	Computing and IT	-(-)	-(-)
	Engineering	2(22.2%)	7(77.8%)
Lack of EIRs and services awareness programme	Business studies	21(100%)	-(-)
	Computing and IT	15(100%)	-(-)
	Engineering	9 (100%)	-(-)

Source: Survey (2016)

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results generated from the study it can be concluded that the Delta State Polytechnic library, Otefe, to be polite, is lagging behind in the provision of electronic information resources. The wide spread awareness of electronic information resources among academics in tertiary institutions has made it even more disturbing that the Delta State Polytechnic library Otefe is yet to fully incorporate digital library system into her library practices. It is important to note that with the present trend the polytechnic academic staff and students alike has not benefited from the full potentials electronic information resources has to offer. The polytechnic, including her staff and students will therefore not be able to compete effectively with their counterparts in the digital age. The academic staff of the polytechnic understands the importance of electronic information resources, hence, majority of them has acquired EIRs search skills and they possess

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considerable level of EIRs awareness. However they have not been able to access electronic information resources maximally because the polytechnic library does not provide them with the resources. Based on the findings of the study it is recommended that as a matter of urgency the polytechnic library should liaise with the management of Delta State Polytechnic, Otefe and provide relevant electronic information resources needed to promote teaching, learning and academics generally. The management should put in place modalities for the introduction of information communication technology infrastructures in library system and entire polytechnic community.

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