

Use of Internet in the Management of Serials Resources in Higher Institution Libraries in Anambra State

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ABSTRACT

The article examines how the use of internet in the management of serials resources in Higher Institution Libraries in Anambra State. All the head librarians in the serials section of tertiary institution libraries in Imo State made up the study's population. A researcher made questionnaire was the instrument used to collect data from the respondents for the study. Simple percentages and frequency counts were used for data analysis. Findings revealed that many tertiary institutions in Anambra state still operate their serial sections using old methods rather than fully utilising ICTs, and many of these institutions are still having trouble getting access to Internets facilities. Another finding showed that the tertiary institutions studied are challenged with power outage and they have inadequate internet connectivity. The study, the researchers offered some recommendations.

KEYWORDS: Use, Internet, Management, Serials, Resources, and Libraries.

INTRODUCTION

Serials are publications issued in successive parts bearing numerical or chronological designations intended to be continued in definitely. The advent of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has invariably affected the management of the Serials in tertiary institution libraries. Serials are important sources of current information particularly in tertiary institution libraries. Serials serve a great purpose to the students, lecturers and researchers. In recent times, all tertiary libraries are creating and maintaining a serials collection within their budget and space. With the advent of internet, proliferation of information and scholarly writings, library users find it difficult to get all relevant information in time with the pace the tertiary libraries are keeping. The cost of serial publications are also rising hence many libraries cannot acquire enough serials needed by the varying users. All these factors pose problems in the acquisition and management of serials in these tertiary libraries. The different formats, delivery options, subscription and licensing issues, standardization and bibliographic control, archiving and many other issues make serials management a big problem and so often neglected (Renwick, 2013).

Information and communication technology has reorganized library routines. Library practice that was done manually is now being handled with ICTs. Information technology has enhanced the system of acquisition, technical processing and circulation activities in libraries in a way that library patrons can have access to their information requirement with no great effort (Khan, 2016). It is obvious that without computers and internet facilities, it will be difficult for libraries to provide their clients with their information needs. Thus the area acquisition and management of serials needs a lot of attention in libraries.

It is seen from the reviews that a large number of studies had taken place on every specific aspect of serials, but the studies were mainly conducted abroad (Anderson, 2006). The services provided were not much satisfactory up-to the last decade and it is clear from the available literature that not many studies were conducted in this area in Nigeria context. The periodical use studies, showed the dissatisfaction of the users about the collection and services of serial unit in many tertiary institutions in Nigeria (Pesch, 2012). Serials acquisition, which involves selection, deselection, and subscription; organisation and use, which involves processing and putting issues on racks for users; and maintenance, which involves updating, filling in the gaps, preservation, binding back issues, and fixing damaged ones, are the components of serials management.

PURPOSES OF THE STUDY

Specifically, the research was conducted to

1. Identify the method of serials acquisition operations performed with Internet facilities in tertiary institution in Anambra State
2. Identify the method of management of serials performed with Internet facilities in tertiary institution in Anambra State
3. Find out the Internet facilities used for the acquisition and management of these serials in these tertiary institution libraries.

Research Questions

1. What is the method of serials acquisition performed with Internet facilities in tertiary institution in Anambra State.
2. What is the method of serials management performed with Internet facilities in tertiary institution in Anambra State
3. What are the Internet facilities for the acquisition and management of serials operations.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Agbaje (2002:27) informed that “information technology can be an effective hand–maid to serials management at every stage of management process and irrespective of content, use, format and overall strategy adopted for serials management by the organization in question” Oketunji, Agbaje and Oni cited in Akindele and Nwalo (2017) noted that using various approaches, Internet facilities in serials unit can be for the following functions and activities: subscription control, procurement process, order preparation, fund analysis and accounting. They can also be used for bibliographic file control, cataloguing of new serials, preparation of serials record entries and transaction control. Effecting serials additions, changes and deletions or collection control can be performed with internet facilities. Services and preservation functions such as servicing request for serial publications, binding control file, missing issues, holding accession of want list as well as union lists are amenable to internet facilities use. In their

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findings on the use of computer for library services in Bangladesh, Islam and Islam (2007) found that all the libraries surveyed used Internet for serials control as well as other activities. The services provided according to them include CD-ROM searching, online searching, online networking, photocopying, online information services and database searching services. In Nigeria according to Ikem and Ajala (2000), preliminary use of Internet in the library started with its use to produce Union list of serials sponsored by Committee of University Librarians of Nigeria. That notwithstanding, its continuous use for various serials function is numerous.

The components of serials management are selection, acquisition, processing, organization (cataloguing, classification and indexing), shelving, preservation, evaluation and weeding. Akindele and Nwalo (2016) asserted that the elements of serials management are “serials acquisition which involves selection, de-selection and subscription; organization which involves processing and display on shelves or racks for users; maintenance which involves updating, filling the gap, preservation, binding of back issues and repair of damaged ones”.

Serials are publications that occur in volumes and numbers and this means serials contain current information because of their occurrence. Therefore, serials publications are important information materials to individuals interested in knowing the current situation in any of an issue. For instance, an individual that wants to know the current situation of the state of the economy of a nation can get such from a national newspaper of that country. Likewise a researcher interested in current researches and outcome of such can consult conference proceedings or journal articles where recent and current researches and their result can be found. This was emphasized by Idhalama and Obi (2019) who stated that serials are important publications in academic and special libraries due to the currency of information they contain. Serials are important to students and researchers because they contain the most current and relevant information that can be used for academic and research purposes. Komolafe, Gbotosho and Odewole (2020) stated that serials publication could be used by the general public for leisure and entertainment, so serials are vital information resources to people in the society. Serials management is important in libraries and information centers because users need current information and this can only be retrieved and used by them when the serials are managed effectively for users to have access to the information contained in them. Management of serials becomes imperative with the escalating costs of serials and the dwindling available library budgets which necessitates the judicious use of available financial resources and invariably manage the acquired information resources including serials.

This is affirmed by Ogunnuga (2013) who reported that there is an increase in the relevance of serials management by libraries due to reduction in library budget and the need to provide current library information materials such as serials and this has made serials management to be among the most challenging routines in the library. The management of serials publication is important to keep track on renewal, frequency of serials, special issues and new serials. Serials management is important to the library personnel as it enables them know what serials to choose from the enormous series published based on the information needs of users, how to acquire or subscribe to serials and how to organize serials. These different activities if not properly done will negatively affect the serials collection in terms of wrong choice of serials selection and invariably, poor service delivery to users. Serials management therefore, must be taken seriously by the library personnel for improved service delivery to users. This will consequently, improve the image of the library.

Research Design

Descriptive design was used for the study. Population of the study are professional and para-professionals in serials section of higher institutions in Anambra State. The higher institutions are Madonna University, Okija; Paul University, Awka; Tansian University, Umunya; Legacy University, Library, Okija; Nnamde Azikiwe University, Awka; Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojuwu University, Uli and Peter University, Achine Onneh. The instrument distributed use in collecting data for this study were duly completed, returned and analysed using mean and media statistics.

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Research Question 1: Identify the method of serials acquisition operations performed with Internet facilities in tertiary institution in Anambra State

S/N	Serial Public Services	Respondents	Percentages
1.	Indexing of articles in journals	3	7.8
2.	Classification of Serials	4	10.5
3.	Indexing of newspapers	10	26.3
3.	Management of serials resources	10	26.3
4.	Ordering of serials resources	6	15.7
5.	Provision of Current information to users	5	13.2
	Total	38	100

The impact that Internet facilities have on serial operations at academic libraries in Anambra State is depicted in the table above. Out of the 10 tertiary institutions we visited, we found that internet use was employed for indexing newspapers and managing serials resources (26.3%), ordering serials resources (15.7%), and giving users current information (13.2%). Indexing journal article content (7.8%) and categorising serials (10.5%) are the less frequent uses of the internet. The investigation revealed that many higher education institutions still operated their serial portion using old systems as opposed to fully utilising ICTs. This is consistent with Krubu and Osawaru's (2011) study, which found that ICT in libraries has helped staff members swiftly meet users' needs and has sped up the cataloguing and classification of library contents instead, use all ICTs.

Research Question 2: Identify the method of management of serials performed with Internet facilities in tertiary institution in Anambra State

S/N	Serial Public Services	Respondents	Percentages
1.	Access to abstracts	4	10.5
2.	Access to Indexes	2	5.3
3.	Access to periodical full titles	10	26.3
4.	Access to article titles	10	26.3
5.	Location of physical serials	5	13.2
6.	Retrieval of Serials titles	3	7.8
7.	Retrieval of full text Serial	4	10.5
	TOTAL	38	100

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The table demonstrates that the serials section in higher institutions in Anambra State uses the internet to provide users with the following services: access to full titles of periodicals (26.3%), access to full titles of articles (26.3%), and location of physical serials (13.2%); access to abstracts, indexes, and full text serial retrieval, however, receives below-average grades in the ten (10) higher institutions in Imo State. The use of Internet resources in the serials department to supply services in our tertiary institutions may therefore be concluded. The argument that current awareness services are offered to enable maximum exposure and utilisation of the library's information resources is backed by Nwalo (2003).

Research Questions 3: The Internet facilities for the acquisition and management of serials operations.

S/N	Internet facilities	Respondents	Percentages
1.	Computers	3	7.8
2.	Printers	3	7.8
	Internet facilities	2	5.3
3.	Mobile Phone	10	26.3
4.	Multiple Media	1	2.6
5.	CD-Room	1	2.6
6.	OPAC(online public access catalogue)	5	13.2
7.	Networking facilities	13	34.2
	TOTAL	38	100

The available internet resources for these serials' management and functioning are shown in the table. personal mobile phones and networking capabilities are available (26.3%), and the OPAC (Online Public Access Catalogue) is also available (34.2%) to search for serials resources, but many higher education facilities in Imo State seriously lack amenities like computers, laptops, printers, CD-Rooms, and multiple media. these demonstrated that many of them are still having trouble using ICT tools. The assertion that having access to internet resources at the library will lessen journal theft and material mutilation is also backed by Aina (2004).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The information acquired led to the following conclusions. The majority of the time, the Internet is used for cataloguing, serials, and processing and acquisition procedures. The future of libraries and the effects the Internet has had and will continue to have on them and librarians cannot be seen in a crystal ball. There will always be a place for librarians and libraries, whether they are physical or virtual, as long as they never lose sight of their goal and purpose to serve library customers in the best way possible. The study's findings led the researchers to the following conclusions and recommendations:

1. To help serial librarians adapt to the digital age, there should be sufficient funding for Internet skills training and retraining.
2. The library's financiers should provide money to the purchase of Internet facilities.
3. Continuously offering reliable internet access would increase serial librarians' effectiveness in supplying their patrons with the information they require.

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