

A Survey of Internet Access and Use by Students of Library and Information Science Modibbo Adama University of Technology Yola Library School

By

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Abstract

The study investigated Internet Accessibility and Utilization by Students of Modibbo Adama University of Technology Yola Library School. In order to achieve the aim of the research, five objectives were formulated which included: to determine whether the Students of Modibbo Adama University of Technology Library School Yola access and utilize Internet facilities, level of search skills, reasons for use of Internet, level of satisfaction and problems associated with use of Internet by students of Modibbo Adama University of Technology Yola Library School Yola. Survey method was used while questionnaire was used as an instrument used for data collection. A total of one hundred and fifty (150) questionnaire that is, thirty (30) from each level of the students (100-500) was administered using stratified random sampling. Data collected for the study was analyzed using descriptive statistics. The findings revealed that the students level of accessing Internet was very high, Internet search skill was very low, the major reasons why students use Internet was for assignments and communications. The students were not satisfied with the information retrieved on the Internet, while lack of adequate search skill, poor network and high charging fees were some of the problems faced by the students. Some recommendations proffered included: University authority should provide a means of enabling students to own personal computers and Internet facilities, the university authority should review its curriculum to include adequate information literacy skills on how to use internet and other ICT resources.

Introduction

Modibbo Adama University of Technology Library School was mounted during 2008/2009 academic session of the university with only six Direct Entry and fifty UTME students. The department has grown with current students' population of 570 students and had graduated two sets of students with B. Tech. Library and Information Science. The advent of microcomputers and the introduction of online electronic resources and databases at the beginning of 1990s led to the considerable development of online bibliographic and documentary information (BDI) resources (Downing, Moore and, Brown, 2005). The Internet has become a major shareholder in information generation, organization, storage, retrieval and dissemination such that developing nations can derive tremendous advantages from this technology for updating the knowledge of their researchers and scientists. According to Ebijuwa (2005), the Internet has launched the world into an information age that no institution or organization can still rely on only traditional printed information resources to perform effectively and efficiently. The Internet and other network technologies have continued to impact positively on information services delivery, education and training of information providers as well as the information needs of the seekers (Mohammed, 2008).

It is no doubt that Internet has greatly enhanced the distribution of current research materials and enabled researchers to have access to a wider source of information. Electronic mail devices, for example has enabled collaborative projects to be undertaken between geographically distant groups. This has made it possible for libraries today, to provide digital references, digital collections, online databases, e-journals, and e-books. It also enable libraries to operate anywhere, allowing

patrons with internet access to access content, services, and resources any time (Bertrot et al., 2004). These achievements were made possible through globalization in Librarianship which is seen as the ability to access information using telecom base internet resources. Information literacy is the basis of human right in a digital world that promotes social inclusion of all nations. Lifelong learning enables individuals, communities and nations to attain their goals and to take advantage of emerging opportunities in the evolving global environment for shared benefits. It assists them and their institutions to meet technological, economic and social challenges, to address disadvantages and to advance the wellbeing of all. Gross and Luthan (2007) revealed that students need to achieve a level of information literacy that will allow them to find, assess and use information in order to have successes in school, the workplace and their personal lives. Ampka and Mamza (2011) pointed out that, most of the libraries that were privileged to acquire information resources particularly Internet related facilities, have failed to make them available for use by the community of users or short lived due to inadequate and unqualified staff to organize them. It is only when those who handle information are well informed then information seekers will continue to suffer frustration. Looking at the role of Librarianship in the society, Steve (2007) pointed out that Library and Information Science Schools should be able to:

- a. Conduct and communicate its result for the advancement and development of the information profession.
- b. Encourage cooperation with the library profession and other relevant organizations in the strengthening of the library and the information services in Nigeria.

- c. Promote awareness of the need and opportunities for continuous professional growth.
- d. Provide leadership in the development of library and information science education in order to facilitate access to and guidance in the use of human records and information.
- e. Offer professional service to the information profession and society in general through its publications, consultancy work and organizational leadership.

It is therefore optimistic that Librarianship and library schools in this country must move with time. In this connection, the library schools should assume a leadership role and boldly experiment with innovations not only in the methods and subjects matters of their instruction but also in the educational level and quality of their recruits. It is therefore obvious that the ability of the librarians to manipulate internet facilities have direct effect on the entire community because they serve as links between the world of information and the users. Based on the above envisaged need for effective and efficient librarians/information handlers, it is the aim of this study to carry out “a survey of Internet accessibility and utilization by students of Modibbo Adama University of Technology Yola Library School.

Literature Review

Lots of researches have been carried out by different writers on Internet and its accessories at different points of view. Reviews of related literature in research is very important because it serves as a stepping stone for researchers to stand on in order to build upon since it is a continuous process. According to Adomi (2009), and Salam and Adegboro, (2010) in their separate studies revealed that students of tertiary institutions in Nigeria access Internet for different purposes at different locations such as homes, private café, institutional libraries, etc. They equally pointed out that internet has not only made it possible to access wider range of information but also has made it possible for researchers and academic institutions to disseminate information to a wider audience through hosting websites and search facilities. Similarly, Azubogu and Madu (2007) in their research on “computer and Internet technology in Imo State University” revealed that though majority of the students use Internet, that some of the students do not access Internet at all. Search skill is very important if proper exploitation of internet facilities could be successful. While emphasizing on the need for search skill to internet users, Nwokedi (2007) pointed out that acquisition of internet skill by information seekers is very needful as this can lead to discovery of valuable research, teaching resources and learning capabilities, adding that regular accessibility would

stimulate use of internet and minimize the perceived barriers to its use. Similarly, according to Rehman and Ramzy (2006) in their study on “Internet use by health professionals at the health center of Kuwait university” revealed that there is the need for adequate training on how to use internet facilities for users to be able to get their desired information. Mohamed (2012) in his article titled “Importance of Reference Services for Users in Academic Libraries” pointed out that academic libraries should conduct users education program to help them in searching the right information by using correct Boolean searching, databases and OPAC. Therefore, user education program is very important in order to assist them search information according to their needs without having any problems.

A study carried out on “Evaluation of the nature, extent and level of satisfaction with the use of Internet by faculty of applied science and technology, university in Jordan” by Momani (2007), revealed that there is lack of satisfaction with the use of Internet facilities by the university students. Contrary to Momani’s finding that the most effective way of satisfying library users as pointed out by Mohammed (2008) in his article “Attracting Students into Library and Information Science Program in Developing Countries”, is through ICT particularly, the Internet and other network technologies which have continued to impact positively on information services delivery, education and training of information providers as well as the information needs of the seekers” Salam and Adegboro, (2010) and Raknuzzaman (2006) shared the same view that irregular power supply, slow access speed and lack of information technology literacy are the major problems associated with access and utilization of internet. Momani (2006) also revealed in his study on “the nature, extent and level of satisfaction with the use of internet by faculty of applied science and technology” that lack of access, slow access speed, lack of training and lack of university support as the main problems confronting internet use in the university.

The ability of our future librarian/ Information handlers to effectively embrace and use internet for information handling has direct effect on the country. It is therefore the aim of this study was set out to ascertain the extent of accessibility, utilization and problems facing students of Modibbo Adama University of Technology Library School Yola in the use of Internet facilities.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are to:

1. Determine Whether Students of Modibbo Adama University of Technology Yola Library School access Internet facilities

2. Determine whether Students of Modibbo Adama University of Technology Yola Library School have required search skills to explore the Internet facilities
3. Determine the reasons why students of Modibbo Adama University of Technology Yola Library School use Internet
4. Determine the level of satisfaction of information retrieved by Students of Modibbo Adama University of Technology Yola Library School.
5. Problems associated with accessibility and utilization of the Internet facilities by Students of Modibbo Adama University of Technology Yola Library School.

Methodology

Survey method was used for this study. The target population was the entire students of the Library School numbering Five Hundred and Seventy. However, a sample of One Hundred and Fifty was selected using stratified random sampling where thirty students were taken from each of the levels 100 -500. Structured questionnaire was used as the main instrument for data collection while data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics.

Data Analysis and Findings

Out of the one hundred and fifty (150) copies of the questionnaire administered, one hundred and forty-two (142) were accurately filled and retrieved representing 94.7% which was used for the data analysis. It was also revealed that majority of the students are males 86(60.6%) as against females with 56(39.4%) respectively. The results were discussed under five sections based on the research questions.

Table 1 revealed that majority of the students 94 (66.2%) do not have personal computers as against 48 (33.8%) who indicated that they have personal computers. Only 42(29.6%) have personal Internet facilities while the majority of the respondents 100(70.4%) do not have Internet facilities. An attempt was made to find out whether they have nearby Internet centers. It was interesting to discover that out of the one hundred students who had no Internet facilities, 96(67.6%) indicated that they have nearby Internet café where only 46(32.4%) indicated that they don't have Internet café nearby. To ascertain whether they access the Internet, 120(84.4%) responded that they access as against 22(15.6%) who said that they do not access Internet at all.

Table 1: Students Access to Internet facilities

Do you have a personal computer?		
Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	48	33.8%
No	94	66.2%
Do you have personal internet facilities?		
Yes	42	29.6%
No	100	70.4%
If no, do you have a nearby internet café?		
Yes	96	67.6%
No	46	32.4%
Do you access the internet?		
Yes	120	84.4%
No	22	15.6%

Table 2: Student Search Skills in Accessing Internet Facilities

How do you access Internet?		
Response	Frequency	Percentage
Personal computers	42	29.6%
Through Café	78	54.9%
How did you acquire the search skill?		
Through personal effort	42	35.0%
Through formal training	24	20.0%
Through café operators.	30	25.0%
Through friends	24	20.0%
Are you conversant with Boolean search operators?		
Yes	46	32.4%
No	96	67.6%

Table 3: Reasons for Use of Internet

What do you use the internet facilities for?		
Response	Frequency	Percentage
Research/projects.	32	22.6%
Communication.	46	32.4%
Assignments	56	39.4%
Recreational/Leisure.	8	5.6%

Table 4: Level of Satisfaction with Information retrieved

How will you assess the level of satisfaction with Information Retrieved?		
Response	Frequency	Percentage
Satisfactory	6	4.2%
Fairly satisfactory	46	32.4%
Not satisfactory	90	63.4%

Table 5: Problems Associated with Accessibility and Utilization of Internet by Students

Have you experienced any difficulty(s) in accessing the internet?		
Response	Frequency	Percentage
YES	128	90.1%
NO	14	9.9%
If yes, which of the following might be some of the problems?		
High charging fee	10	7.1%
Lack of search skills	70	49.3%
Inadequate terminals	2	1.4%
Poor network	52	36.6%
Power failure	2	1.4%
In-conducive environment.	6	4.2%

Table 2 shows that 42 (29.6%) indicated that they access Internet facilities through personal computers while 78 (54.9%) through cafes. This implies that out of the 142 respondents 22(15.5%) of them don't have access to Internet facilities. And when asked how they acquired their search skills 42 (35.0%) reported that they acquired the skill through personal effort, 24 (20.0%) through formal training and friends while 30(25.0%) indicated that they acquired the skills through café staff. To determine whether they were conversant with Boolean search operators, only 46(32.4%) of the respondents indicated "Yes" as against 96(67.6%) who said "No", this situation could lead to retrieval of so many irrelevant items.

Table 3 above shows that 56(39.4%) of the respondents use Internet facilities for Assignment, followed by 46 (32.4%) for communication, while 32 (22.6%) for research/projects and the least 8(5.6%) for recreation/ leisure.

Table 4 above indicated that only 6 (4.2%) of the respondents were satisfied with level of information retrieved from internet, followed by 46 (32.4%) who were fairly satisfied and majority of

them 90(63.4%) were not satisfied with the information retrieved. This might be attributed to level of search skill the respondents possess that would enable them in using appropriate search terms in retrieval process.

Table 5 above revealed that majority of the students acknowledge having problems in using the internet facilities with a response rate of 128(90.1%) as against only 14(9.9%) who said they have no problem at all. lack of search skill constituted the bulk of the problems as 70(49.3%) of the respondents indicated they lack appropriate skills, followed by poor network with 52(36.6%), high charging fees 10(7.1%), in- conducive environment 6(4.2%) while 2(1.4%) each identified power failure and inadequate terminals respectively as problems faced.

Summary of Major Findings

1. The study revealed that the students of Modibbo Adama Library School Yola level of accessing internet is very high;
2. The students of Modibbo Adama Library School Yola Internet search skill is very low;

3. The students of Modibbo Adama Library School Yola majorly use the Internet for assignments and communications.
4. The student librarians' level of satisfaction with the information retrieved on the internet was very low and,
5. Lack of adequate search skill, poor network and high charging fee constitute the bulk of the problems faced in using internet facilities by the students.

Conclusion

It is an established fact that knowledge is growing daily and those who are charged with the responsibility of acquiring, organizing, preserving and disseminating information need to be trained with regard to the current trend of handling information. This call, for the need for library schools to assume a leadership role and boldly come up with innovations that would manage this information increase. Students need to achieve a level of information literacy that will allow them to find, assess and use information in order to have successes in school, the workplace and, their personal lives. We have seen that the students are willing to move with the current trends of information handling as signified by their high interest in accessing internet facilities. The most unfortunate part of the story is that, their level of satisfaction with the information retrieved on the internet was very low. Lack of adequate literacy search skill, Poor network and high charging fee constitute the bulk of the problems faced in using internet facilities by the student librarians. The students lack practical exposure in terms of information literacy programme.

Recommendations

Modibbo Adama University of Technology Library School Yola is a young growing library school in Nigeria which is expected to contribute positively in information generation and distribution is facing some challenges. Based on the findings of this study the following recommendations are made:

- 1 University authority should provide a means of enabling students to own personal computers and internet facilities in order to encourage accessing internet. This could be included in students registration fees to be paid in installments;
- 2 The University authority should review its curriculum to include course that would expose the students to more practical, to enable them acquire adequate search skills on how to explore Internet and other ICT related resources.
- 3 The students should also explore other uses of internet other than assignments and communications.
- 4 The students level of satisfaction can be improved by exposing them to adequate

techniques of Internet searching to enhance retrieval of relevant information.

- 5 Finally, the University Authority should provide information literacy programme for students to acquire search skills, provide bandwidth with larger capacity to enhance signal speed, reduce fees charged for students and ensure steady power supply.

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