

Utilization of Computer Facilities by Staff of University of Jos Library

By

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Abstract

The research examined the utilization of ICT facilities by the staff of University of Jos library. Survey method was used in the research. Questionnaire was distributed to all the staff (75) who duly completed and returned them. Interview was conducted to confirm some of the responses to the questions in the questionnaire distributed as well as observation of the facilities in the offices. It was discovered that a majority of the staff are computer literate and use computer facilities only when the need arises. However, some of the staff that are computer literate still need training to acquire competence in the use of computer properly for their work. A majority of them use computer for E-mail purposes, followed by cataloguing, administrative work, research and teaching. All the academic librarians are computer literate except one librarian II and all the security staff. A majority of the respondents indicated that the use of ICT facilities does not improve their performance at work and the major constraint to the use of ICT facilities is lack of adequate facilities for staff use.

Introduction

Information and communications Technology (ICT) at the University of Jos Library has become the driving force in the new service platform of the library. This involves the application of computer and other communication technologies to provide what was previously provided in “hard” or “physical” copies. The adoption and adaptation of ICT by the University of Jos library follows a global trend in the provision of effective information services to users.

Computers are becoming natural part of man’s daily life. Thus their use in education by staff and students is becoming a necessity. (Gambari & Chike: 2007). Information and communication technology (ICT) has provided libraries with new opportunities to improve their resources and services. The advances in ICT since the beginning of the 20th century has been rendering manual-based library system in academic, research, special and public libraries less relevant. This is because using the ICTs in the library depends largely on the librarian’s attitude toward the current digital age. The problems associated with lack of ICT knowledge were discussed by Mohammed, et al. (1992), Khan (1995), Mahmood (1999), and Saeedet et al. (2000). However, the use of ICT is growing in Nigerian libraries. Lee, in Popoola (2002), asserts that microcomputers will create remarkable changes in the nature of professional work. He argues further that there is widespread fear and negative attitudes that have slowed the progress of ICT implementation. Attwell and Rule (1984) assert that many people resist using computers and other ICT technology when new technologies are being introduced almost daily. It is essential for librarians to keep up with ICT developments.

Statement of the Problem

University of Jos library uses computer facilities in most of their activities carried out by staff. With the current number of its staff it is necessary to determine their level of computer literacy and competence in using computers. The research questions centered on staff computer literacy, competence, usefulness of computer facilities to the staff daily work and constraints in using computers by the staff.

Methodology

The survey research method was used for this study. The population of the staff of the University of Jos library as at 2008 was 75. Due to the small size of the population, the whole population was used in the research. A structured questionnaire was developed and administered to the staff in their offices in October 2008. The researcher confirmed some responses from the respondents by conducting interviews and observations. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistic-frequencies, percentages and Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS).

Objectives of The Study

1. To identify the distribution of staff by gender, rank and qualifications
2. To identify the level of computer literacy among library staff.
3. To ascertain the frequency of computer use by the library staff.
4. To identify the purpose for which library staff uses computer facilities.
5. To identify the level of competence in the use of computer facilities

6. To identify the problems encountered by the library staff in the use of computer facilities.

Data Analysis and Results

The data generated for this study were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS). A total of 75 questionnaires were distributed to the University of Jos library staff. All the copies of questionnaire were duly completed and returned representing 100% return rate.

Staff Ranks

The staff ranks are provided in table 1 below:

TABLE 3: Staff Ranks

Rank	Frequency
Senior Librarian	3
Librarian I	2
Librarian II	6
Asst. Librarian	1
Asst. Librarian-in-Training	1
Typists/Secretaries	9
CEO (Admin Officer)	1
Library Officer	17
Library Assistant	7
System Staff	5
Caretaker	1
Security	13
Porter	8
Apprentice	1
Total:	75

The above table shows the number of library staff and their ranks from Senior Librarian to apprentice. Among the academic librarians, Librarian II, who are six (6) in number form the majority, while among the other category of library staff (non-academic), library officer cadre forms the majority. It is expected that their ranks will have some impact on their use of computers since they must have spent some years working acquire some experiences.

Staff Qualification

The staff qualifications are provided in table 2 below.

Table 2: Staff Qualification

Qualification	Frequency	Percent (%)
Masters	15	20
B.Sc	8	10.7
Advanced Diploma	4	5.3
Diploma	19	25.3
SSCE	29	38.7
Total	75	100

The above table shows the library staff qualifications. The Masters Degree certificate holders are 15 (20%) in number, while those with B.Sc are 8 (10.7%), Advance Diploma, 4 (5.3%), Diploma 19 (25.3%). Those with SSCE certificates are 29 (38.7%) in number. This shows that 23 (30.7%) of them have at least a University degree. It is presumed that their educational attainment will impact on their levels of computer literacy, competence and use.

Staff Computer Literacy

The study tried to find out whether staff are computer literate . The response shown in table 3 below:

Table 4 : Computer Literacy of Staff

Responses	Frequency	Percent (%)
Yes	48	64
No	27	36
Total:	75	100

The table shows that 48 (64%) of the library staff are computer literate while 27 (36%) are not. This shows majority of the staff computer literate. Hence the possibility of using computer in the library is likely to be high. It has been discovered that 18 (24%) of the library staff were sponsored by the university for computer training, while 20(26.7%) of acquired their computer skills through self sponsorship. However 10 (13.3%) of the staff learned on the job while 27 (36%) of the can still cannot use computer.

Frequency of Computer Usage

The study attempted to find out how often that staff use computer facilities. The results shown in table 4 below:

Table 4: Frequency of computer Usage

S/no.	Responses	Frequency	Percent %
1.	Daily	10	13.3
2.	Two times a week	5	6.7
3.	Three times a week	4	5.3
4.	Only when the need arises	29	38.7
5.	I can't use computer	27	36
	Total:	75	100

The table that shows 10 (13.3%) of the staff use computer daily, 5 (6.7%) use it twice a week; 4 (5.3%) thrice a week, 29 (38.7%) only when the need arises and 27 (36%) can't use the computer. This shows that a majority of those that are computer literate use the computer only when the

need arises. In University of Jos library, staffs use computers for their daily duties like cataloguing, reference services and research.

Nineteen (25.3%) of the staff can use computer without any assistance while 56 (74.7%) of them are not competent in the use of computer and thus need assistance. This result shows that even though some staff are computer literate they still need training to acquire more competence to properly use computer for their work.

In another dimension, it has been discovered that 5 (6.7%) of the staff have personal computers while 70 (93.3%) do not have. This finding shows that a majority of the staff 70 (93.3%) do not have personal computers. This is not quite good for library staff in this information age. Librarians should be encouraged to own personal computers.

Reasons for Computer Usage

The reasons why the staff use computers were sought. Their responses were provided in table 5 below.

TABLE 5: Reasons for computer usage

RESPONSES					
S/NO.	Reasons	YES	%	NO	%
1.	E-Mail	48	64	27	36
2.	Cataloguing	25	33.3	50	66.7
3.	Teaching and Research	18	24	57	76
4.	Administrative work	27	36	48	64
5	Circulation	2	2.7	73	97.3
6.	Reference services	8	10.7	67	89.3
7.	Leisure	10	13.3	65	86.7

When asked the reasons for computer use, 48 (64%) of the staff use computer for E-mail, 25 (33.3%) of them use it for cataloguing, 18 (24%) use it for teaching and research, 27 (36%) use it for administrative work, 2 (2.7%) of their use it for circulation work, 8 (10.7%) use it for reference services and 10 (13.3%) use it for leisure. This result shows that all the staff that are computer literate are making the best use of computer for one thing or the other.

Constrain for Use of Computer

The problems associated with the use of computers by the staff are provided in table 6 below.

Table 6: Constraints to the use of Computer Facilities

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Electricity	5	6.7
Few facilities	52	69.3
Network downtime	14	18.7
Viruses	4	5.3
Others, specify	-	-
Total	75	76.8

The table shows that 52(69.3%) indicated that the major constraint is few facilities, 14(18.7%) indicated network downtime, 5(6.7%) indicated electricity, 4(5.3%) indicated viruses. This shows that the major constraint is lack of adequate computer facilities for staff use. It was discovered that majority of staff don't have computers on their offices, especially the non-librarians.

Discussion of Results

From the analysis of the data collected the percentage of staff who are computer literate is high (64%) while 36% are not. A majority of the staff sponsored themselves to acquire computer skills and use computer when the need arises. It was also discovered that even though many staff are computer literate, their level of competence is very low. About 74.7% of the staff need training to acquire relevant computer competences. Few of the staff (6.7%) own personal computers, this is not quite encouraging as it has become a necessity and not a luxury to own a laptop, in this information age especially the staff in the tertiary institutions. The major constraint in the use of computer facilities is inadequate facilities.

Suggestions

Based on the results of this study, the researcher suggests the following:

1. Effort should be made by library management to organize in-house training for staff to achieve a better level of competence.
2. Librarians should be encouraged to buy personal computers through collaboration between the University management and computer vendors at cheaper rates
3. Computer literacy should be a pre-requisite for employment in Academic librarian cadre.
4. The University should make a deliberate budgetary provision for training library staff in ICT related programmes.

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