

NIGERIAN JOURNAL OF LIBRARY, ARCHIVAL AND INFORMATION SCIENCE (NJLAIS).

VOL. 1. NO. 14. DECEMBER 2012.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Articles	Pages
• Library crimes: Need for effective legislation. By Emmanuel Owushi - - - - -	- 1 - 9
• Internet usages and its challenges by lecturers in Edo State: Case study of Ambrose Alli University Ekpoma and Benson Idahosa University, Benin City By Idiegbeyan-Ose Jerome and Odion Fredrick - - - - -	- 10 - 17
• The use of Library catalogue by students in six academic libraries in Plateau State, Nigeria. By Rhoda Danladi Diyoshak - - - - -	- 18 - 24
• Public Libraries as agents for democracy and good governance in Nigeria. By Margaret Bakari David - - - - -	- 25 - 33
• The Brain Drain syndrome in Developing countries: causes, effects, and recommendations. By Sani, Augustine Uneke - - - - -	- 34 - 40
• Radio as the trademark of the Hausas-a survey. By Kingley A. Emokiniovo, CLN, and Samuel A. Ogunrombi, CLN, MNIM, JP. - - - - -	- 41 - 49
• Evaluating the use of faculty libraries in Nigerian Universities- A case study of University of Benin. By Kingley A. Emokiniovo, CLN, and Samuel A. Ogunrombi, CLN, MNIM, JP. - - - - -	- 50 - 56
• Changing role of cataloguers in information and communication technology age: Implications for library science educators. By Ilo Promise Ifeoma - - - - -	- 57 - 64

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Nigeria	-	Institutions	-	N2,000
		Individuals	-	N1,000
Overseas	-	Institutions	-	5 USA Dollars
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INTERNET USAGES AND ITS CHALLENGES BY LECTURERS IN EDO STATE. A CASE STUDY OF AMBROSE ALLI UNIVERSITY EKPOMA AND BENSON IDAHOSA UNIVERSITY BENIN CITY.

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Abstract:

This study investigated the use of the internet by lecturers in Ambrose Alli and Benson Idahosa Universities. A Survey research design was adopted in conducting this research. Questionnaire was the instrument employed for data collection. The study population comprised lecturers in the two institutions. A total of 180 questionnaires were sent out, which 167 were returned and used for the study. The data obtained were analyzed using descriptive statistic. The finding revealed that internet is predominantly used by lecturers for research, current awareness, conferences, seminars, self development and entertainment purposes. The constraints to the use of the internet were highlighted such as erratic power supply, high cost of foreign exchange for internet information material etc. Based on these, recommendations and suggestions were made.

Key Words: Internet users, Edo State Lecturers, Ambrose Alli University, Benson Idahosa University.

Introduction

The internet is an international network of computer networks, that links millions of computers around the world, and it can be used for many different and ever growing purposes. . It can also be defined as a global network connecting millions of computers. According to the New Webster dictionary (2004}, Internet is an international Network of computers that facilitates data communication, transmission and exchange. The internet allows users to access different types of information from different locations as if they were held on one's computer. (Criddle, S. McNab, A. Ormes, S. and Winship, I, 2000).

The internet is a great source of information on any imaginable topic. Without doubt, the internet has made research materials accessible through (the World Wide Web) databases available on the net.

The internet has become very popular. Its importance and development, profoundly affect every profession today. The internet affects or will affect almost every possible area of life. Prominent among these changes are the ways in which information professionals view and use information. Many countries of the world today are linked to exchange of data, news and opinions.

Literature Review

According to Anyira (2011) as cited in INAS (2003), internet connectivity in Universities offered by today's information societies provides the platform to locate, download and share knowledge and learning. Luambano and Nawe (2004) explained that the internet had made it possible for people /researchers to have access to current and up to date information for research.

Internet has imparted changes into the information flow among academics/ lecturers who are active researchers. The effect of this has been far reaching since the result of the researches has to be widely circulated amongst peers across cultural and language barriers. The Internet has broken down known barriers to communication and information access globally. (Omotayo and Fadehan, 2012).

The internet is referred to as network of networks that consists of millions of private, public, academic, business, and government networks, of local to global scope, that are linked by broad way of electronic, wireless and optical networking technologies. The internet has become an integral part of modern societies that bring unparalleled development. To facilitate effective communication according to Oluwole, (2007), different computer systems are connected together to ensure sharing of resources. This concept is referred to as computer net working, which could be done with in a metropolises (metropolitan Area Network), with in a nation or among nations (wide Area Network).

The internet carries an extensive range of information resources and services, such as the inter-Link hypertext document of the World Wide Web (www) and the infrastructure to support email.

Freedman (1996) opined that with the internet, one can have a growing information database without date collection and maintenance responsibilities.

The most important advantage of using the internet for research is that it is easy to get information.

A new pew Internet American project report (2010) revealed that 93% of young adult age (18-29.) three quarter (74%) of all adult age (18 and above)go online. Over the past years teen and young adults have been consistently the two groups most likely to go online. The internet increase affects real-world international relation (Bollier 2003), in ecommerce, and e-conferencing in international business, grass-roots. (Graham, and Metaxas, 2003 Barbeerio, 2004) asserted that students use of Internet and other electronic sources is on a clear growth curve.

According to Internet world status (2005) as cited by Olalude Oluwole Francis (2007) Africa as a continent had recorded an Internet user growth.

Objectives of The Study

The objectives of this study were to:

- (a) Ascertain the the use of internet by lecturers in Edo State
- (b) Identify the purposes of using internet by lecturers.
- (e) Determine the level of internet usage by lecturers in Edo State
- (f) Determine the challenges militating against the internet usage by Lecturers in Edo State.
- (g) Suggest possible solutions to the challenges

Methodology

A descriptive statistics survey design was adopted for this study. The population comprised lecturers in Ambrose Alli University Ekpoma and Benson Idahosa University Benin City. A total of 120 and 60 respondents respectively were randomly selected in the two universities which represented the total population of 180 respondents.. The instruments used for data collection was the questionnaire. The questionnaire was administered by the researchers out of the 180 questionnaires administered in the two universities, 109 were returned from Ambrose Alli University Ekpoma and 58 were also returned from Benson Idahosa University Benin City, a grand total of 167 questionnaires were returned and found usable for the study this represents 92.8% response rate. The data were analyzed using percentage method

Data Analysis and Interpretations

Table 1 Respondents Biodata

1.	Sex:	Frequency	Percentage
	Male:	108	64.7
	Female:	59	35.3
2.	Age range		
	(i) 20-30	57	34.2
	31 - 40		
	(iii) 41 - 50	42	25.2
	(iv) 51 - 60	55	32.9
	(v) 61 - 70	8	4.8
		5	2.9

The 167 respondents consist of 108(64.7%) males, and 59 (35.3) female lecturers..

Table 2 : Reasons for using the internet.

Reasons for using the Internet		Frequency	percentage
(i)	Research Purpose	133	79.6
(ii)	Current awareness service		
(iii)	Sport Information	109	65.3
(iv)	Conference seminar Information		
(v)	For entertainment	71	42.5
(vi)	Self development	96	57.5
(vii)	Social network		
		62	37.1
		122	73.1
		113	67.7

The use of the internet for research purposes attracted 133(79.6%). Ojedokum and Owolabi (2003) opined that lecturers use internet for teaching and research as corroborated by this research work. This was followed by self development 122(73.1%), while social network attracted 113 (67.7%). 109(65.3%) respondents Indicated that they used internet for current awareness purpose. 96 (57.5%) used internet to obtaine conference information, 71 (42.5%) respondents used internet for sports, while 62 (37.1%) used internet for entertainment purposes.

Table 3 Shows frequency of internet usage by lecturers

4.	Frequency of Internet usage:	Frequency	percentage
	(i) Daily	127	76.1
	(ii) Weekly		
	(iii) Monthly	23	13.8
	(iv) Occasionally		
	(v) Never	12	7.2
		5	2.9
		-	-

Table 3 above clearly reveals the frequency of internet usage by lecturers in Ambrose Alli University Ekpoma and Benson Idahosa University Benin City all in Edo State. 127 (76.1%) of the respondents use internet daily. This supported Rehman and Ramzy (2004) that reported that the internet has established a place in the personal and professional lives of researchers through their daily use of it. 23(13.8%) indicated that they used the internet weekly. 12(7.2%) stated that they used the internet monthly, while 5 (2.9%) indicated that they occasionally used the internet. This is in support of Oledé Oyewole Francis

(2007) which stated his research work carried out in 2007 that there is increase in the use of internet in Africa and in Nigeria in particular. Aniedi and Effiom (2009) Also revealed this result in their research. They reported that 91.25% of the academic staff in Cross River State University of Technology used the internet for one reason or the other.. It is also worth knowing that all the respondents for this study used internet at one time or the other. This is revealed by the fact that no respondent agreed that they did not use internet at all.

Table 4: Challenges of internet usage by lecturers

Challenges	frequency	Percentage
(i) Lack of constant electricity	127	76.1
(ii) Lack of reliable internet service provider		
(iii) High cost of internet subscription in Nigeria	92	55.1
(iv) Lack of clear policy on internet use in Nigeria		
(v) un availability of Indigenous knowledge on the internet	87	52.1
	55	32.9
	11	6.6

Table 4: revealed that lack of constant power supply is the major challenge faced by lecturers in the process of using the internet. This was indicated by 127 (76.1%) respondents. This was followed by unreliable internet service providers 92 (55.1%).

High cost of internet subscription is another major challenge as stated by 87 (52.1%) respondents. 55 (32.9%) also reported that lack of clear policy on internet use in Nigeria constitutes challenges in the process of using the internet, while 11 (6.6%) complained that unavailability of indigenous knowledge on internet is also causing challenge in their usage of the internet. This finding agreed with Aniedi and Effiom (2009) who revealed that the major obstacles to ICT usage among academic staff in Cross River state University were weak infrastructure, power failure, and financial constraints.

Table 5 :
Possible Solutions to the challenges

Solution	Frequency	Percentage
There should be adequate power supply to motivate internet use	148	88.6
Institutions /government should provide internet service for lecturers	140	83.8
Government should provide internet use policy	98	58.7
There should be Indigenous knowledge/ languages on the internet	75	44.9

The table above revealed solutions to the challenges of lecturers using the internet. 148 (88.6%) respondents believed that there should be adequate power supply to motivate and encourage the use of the internet by lecturers. 140 (83.8%) reported that institutions and government should provide internet service for lecturers; while 98 (58.7%) respondents stressed the need for government to provide internet use policy and 75 (44.9%) stated that there should be indigenous knowledge/ language on the internet.

Challenges To Internet Usage

The following are constraints to internet development in Africa and in Nigeria in particular.

- (a) The initial capital involves putting internet facilities and services in place are enormous.
- (b) Problem of foreign exchange required to purchase relevant infrastructure and information telecommunication technologies for the developed world.
- (c) Development of specific national policy is lacking in most sub-Saharan – African as well as many academic Libraries has no specific road map to follow.
- (d) The lack of reliable internet service providers (ISPs) is another problem.
- (e) The lack of indigenous knowledge of the internet
- (f) Unstable electricity supply.
- (g) Many useful resources on the internet are not usually free of charge

Conclusion and Recommendation

The internet is playing a major role in the life of everyone in the society especially the lecturers. Revelation from the study showed that majority of our lecturers use internet daily for research purposes, self development, entertainment and leisure. The paper recommends that:

- (i) Constant power supply should be ensured in the work place.
- (ii) Trusted and efficient internet providers should be contacted to ensure constant availability of the internet access.
- (iii) Research materials on the internet should be made available freely to lecturers and research to promote knowledge and development. This can be possible if the institutions subscribe to academic database and make them available for usage.
- (iv) Indigenous people should be trained to acquire the knowledge of the internet.
- (v) Government/ institutions should fund universities adequately so that the university managements can provide internet service for lecturers.

Finally, internet has come to rescue universities from the shortage of research materials in most academic libraries. Government, institutions and other well meaning individuals should as a matter of fact support internet services in universities so that lecturers and other researchers can have unlimited access to the information which the internet provides for research work because research leads to national development.

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