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Abubakar Mohammed Kareto
ABU, Zaria, amkareto@gmail.com

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AVAILABILITY, ACCESSIBILITY AND UTILIZATION OF E-RESOURCES BY SENIOR ACADEMICS IN MAUTECH, YOLA

By

Murtal Aliyu (PhD)
Department of Library and Information Science
Modibbo Adama University of Technology, Adamawa State, Nigeria
Email: muraliyu@yahoo.com Phone: [+2348062258720](tel:+2348062258720)

&

Abubakar Mohammed
Department of Library and Information Science
Modibbo Adama University of Technology, Adamawa State, Nigeria
Email: amkareto@gmail.com Phone: [+2347036660009](tel:+2347036660009)

Abstract

Senior academics in universities need various kinds of information resources for teaching and undertaking high profile research. The aim of this study was to examine availability, accessibility and utilization of e-resources by senior academics in MAUTEch, Yola. Survey research design was adopted for the study. The study was guided by 5 research objectives. The population of the study consists of all the 172 Professors, Associate Professors and Senior Lecturers in Modibbo Adama University of Technology, Yola. The entire population was used for the study. Questionnaires was used to solicit data for the study. A total of 144 questionnaires were filled and duly returned, this indicates 84% response rate. The collected data in this research was analyzed using descriptive statistics. Findings of the study include unavailability, poor accessibility of some major E-Resources and unavailability of internet infrastructure among others. Recommendations were also made.

Keywords: Availability, Accessibility, Utilization, Electronic Resources, Senior Academics, MAUTEch.

Introduction

The electronic resources available in a library play a prominent role in facilitating access to the required information to users in an expedience manner. Electronic resources arc one of the emerging environments in libraries and information communication in the competitive service. E-resources usually consist of e-books, e-journals, e-articles, e-newspapers, e-thesis, e-dissertation, databases, CD-ROMs, e-map, e-mail, e-magazines etc., which are likely to be the alternative to the print media. In academia, electronic resources are dominating the research activities of researchers; researchers have realized the importance of such resources (Hadagali,

Kumbar, Nelogal and Bachalapur, 2012). Electronic resources provide accurate and timely information, especially for students who depend greatly on the electronic resources for information to advance research and collaboration with other researchers around the world for intellectual growth (Ukpebor, 2012)

The term electronic resources is seen by Sharma (2009) as library's information materials that are in electronic form which include electronic books (e-books); electronic newspapers (e-newspapers); electronic journals (ejournals) as well as Internet resources. E-resources also consist of databases, magazines, archives, theses, conference papers, government papers, scripts and monographs in an electronic form (Deng, 2010). MEDLINE, ScienceDirect, AGORA (Access to Global Online Research in Agriculture), HINARI, OARE (Online Access to Research in the Environment), LexisNexis, Ebscohost were mentioned as examples of databases (Ani and Edem, 2012).

The importance of electronic resources to students and academic libraries cannot be over emphasized. They offer postgraduate students the chance to access relevant and current information from different subject areas. The emergence of electronic resources, according to Ani and Edem (2012), has tremendously transformed the handling and management of information in Nigerian academic environments and university libraries in particular.

Availability at any time of the day; hyperlinks to other resources; huge information reservoirs; quick information; various search options; easy citations; ease in uploading and updating; ease in storage and dissemination; flexibility; time, space and cost are not major hurdles; ease of archiving are also importance of information resources as noted by Tekale and Dalve (2012). Also, electronic resources reduce pressure on academic libraries for physical storage space for books and journals and provide unlimited access to users.

The National Universities Commission (NUC), a government agency in Nigeria, subscribed to a number of international and local journals and made them accessible in Nigerian Universities through its URL link (www.nigerianvirtuallibrary.com) on the internet. Also, NUC, NULIB (Nigerian University Libraries Consortium) and eifl.net (Electronic Information for Libraries Network) are partnering to provide electronic resources towards teaching, learning and research in Nigerian Universities (Okiki, 2012). National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA), according to Egbe (2014), is developing ICT in Nigerian tertiary institutions through the National Virtual Library Project by setting up virtual libraries and donation of computers and/or internet facilities.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are as follows:

1. Determine the types of electronic resources available for Senior Academics in Modibbo Adama University of technology, Yola.
2. Determine the level of accessibility of electronic resources for Senior Academics in Modibbo Adama University of technology, Yola.
3. Find out the challenges in accessing the Electronic Resources by Senior Academics in Modibbo Adama University of technology, Yola.
4. Determine the extent of use of the electronic resources by Senior Academics in Modibbo Adama University of technology, Yola.
5. Determine the challenges faced by Senior Academics in using the electronic resource in Modibbo Adama University of Technology, Yola.

METHODOLOGY

Survey research design was used in this study. The population of the study is 172 consisting of all Professors, Associate Professors and Senior Lecturers in Modibbo Adama University of Technology, Yola. Questionnaire was used as tool for data collection. The collected data in this research was analyzed using descriptive statistics (Percentage, score, frequencies and tables).

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Response Rate

A total of 144 questionnaires were filled and duly returned. Thereby, representing 84% response rate, this was considered acceptable.

Data analysis

Types of E-resources Available for Senior Academics in Modibbo Adama University of Technology, Yola

In order to determine the types of e-resources available for the senior academics in MAUTech, Yola, 22 different types of the e-resources were provided for them to indicate their availability. Their responses are presented in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Types of E-Resources Available for senior academics in MAUTECH, Yola

S/n	E-Resources	Not				Rmk
		Available		Available		
		F	%	F	%	
1	Encyclopedia Britannica (online)	89	61.8	55	38.2	A
2	Roget's International Thesaurus (online)	05	3.5	139	96.6	NA
3	Webster's Encyclopedia (online)	75	52.1	69	47.9	NA
4	Online Almanacs	56	38.9	88	61.1	NA
5	Newspaper directory	105	72.9	39	27.1	A
6	Data/GIS	92	63.9	52	36.1	A
7	Academic Commons	10	6.9	134	93.1	NA
8	Subject Guides	77	53.5	67	46.6	A
9	Information Gateway	12	8.3	132	91.7	NA
10	E-Journal	122	84.8	22	15.3	A
11	E-Books	111	77.0	33	22.9	A
12	E-News	140	97.2	04	2.8	A
13	E-Image	30	20.8	114	79.2	NA
14	E-Music & Sound Collection	15	10.4	129	89.6	NA
15	E-Commerce	42	29.2	102	70.9	NA
16	E-Data Archives	57	39.5	87	60.4	NA
17	E-Manuscripts	18	12.5	126	87.5	NA
18	E-Maps	92	63.9	52	36.1	A
19	E-Magazine	80	55.6	64	44.4	A
20	E-Thesis	65	45.1	79	54.8	NA
21	E-Research Reports	83	57.7	61	42.3	A
22	E-Bibliographic Database	46	31.9	98	68.0	NA

Key: A – Available, NA – Not Available, Rmk – Remark

From the findings above, it is apparently clear that more than 50% of the senior academics in MAUTech testified to the availability of Encyclopedia Britannica (online), Webster's Encyclopedia (online), Newspaper directory, Data/GIS, Subject Guides, E-Journals, E-Books, E-News, E-Maps, E-Magazine and E-Research Reports while less than 10% indicated the availability of Roget's International Thesaurus (online), Academic Commons and Information Gateway.

Accessibility of E-resources by Senior Academics in Modibbo Adama University of Technology, Yola

In order to determine the accessibility of e-resources by senior academics in MAUTECH, Yola, 22 different types of the e-resources were provided for them to indicate their accessibility. Their responses are presented in Table 2 below:

Table 2: Accessibility of E-Resources by Senior Academics in MAUTECH, Yola

S/n	E-resource	Accessible		Not Accessible		Rmk
		Fx	%	Fx	%	
1.	Encyclopedia Britannica (online)	80	55.5	64	44.4	A
2.	Roget's International Thesaurus (online)	00	0.0	144	100	NA
3.	Webster's Encyclopedia (online)	79	54.8	65	45.1	A
4.	Online Almanacs	49	34.0	95	65.9	NA
5.	Newspaper directory	120	83.3	24	16.7	A
6.	Data/GIS	87	60.4	57	39.6	A
7.	Academic Commons	03	2.0	141	97.9	NA
8.	Subject Guides	74	51.3	70	48.7	A
9.	Information Gateway	08	5.5	136	94.4	NA
10.	E-Journal	137	95.1	07	4.9	A
11.	E-Books	104	72.2	43	29.9	A
12.	E-News	125	86.8	19	13.2	A
13.	E-Image	07	4.8	137	95.1	NA
14.	E-music & Sound Collection	10	6.9	134	93.0	NA
15.	E-Commerce	11	7.6	133	92.3	NA
16.	E-Data Archives	30	20.8	114	79.2	NA
17.	E-Manuscripts	09	6.2	135	93.8	NA
18.	E-Maps	85	59.0	59	40.9	A
19.	E-Magazine	69	47.9	75	52.1	NA
20.	E-Thesis	37	25.6	107	74.3	NA
21.	E-Research Reports	89	61.8	55	38.2	A

22. E-Bibliographic Database	38	26.3	106	73.6	NA
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Key: A – Available, NA – Not Available, Rmk – Remark

Based on the analysis presented in table 2 above, out of the 22 E-Resources, only 10 are relatively accessible with a frequency count of above 50%, these 10 E-Resources include; Encyclopedia Britannica (online), Webster's Encyclopedia (online), Newspaper directory, Data/GIS, Subject Guides, E-Journals, E-Books, E-News, E-Maps and E-Research Reports. While, Roget's International Thesaurus (online), Academic Commons, Information Gateway, E-Image, E-music & Sound Collection, E-Data Archives and E-Manuscripts were the poorly accessible E-Resources with frequency count of less than 10%. Though, the some E-Resources

are available for use by senior academics in MAUTech, poor available of some vital E-Resources is a source of concern considering their impotence.

Challenges in Accessing E-resources Available for Senior Academics in Modibbo Adama University of Technology, Yola

In order to determine the challenges in accessing e-resources by senior academics in MAUTECH, Yola, 5 different challenges were provided. Their responses are presented in Table 3 below:

Table 3: Challenges in Accessing E-Resources by Professors in MAUTECH, Yola

S/n	Accessibility	Yes		No		Rmk
		Fx	%	Fx	%	
1.	Unavailable/poor internet facilities at offices	29	20.1	115	79.9	DA
2.	Unavailable/poor internet facilities at home	80	55.6	64	44.4	A
3.	Generally unavailable/poor internet network services	89	61.9	55	38.2	A
4.	Unstable power supply	76	52.8	68	47.2	A
5.	Lack of Time	70	48.7	74	51.4	DA

Key: A – Agree, DA – Disagree, Rmk – Remark

Table 3 above have shown that there is severe problem of Generally unavailable/poor internet network services in MAUTech, other problems posing serious challenge to E-Resources in the university are Unavailable/poor internet facilities at home, Unstable power supply and Lack of Time. This has revealed the numerous challenges faced by African academics while getting access to E-Resources for global competitiveness

Utilization of E-Resources by Senior Academics in Modibbo Adama University of Technology, Yola

In order to determine the utilization of e-resources by senior academics in MAUTECH, Yola, 22 different types of the e-resources were provided for them to indicate their utilization for each of the listed e-resources. Their responses are presented in Table 4 below:

Table 4: Utilization of E-Resources by Senior Academics in MAUTECH, Yola

S/N	E-Resources	Level of Utilization
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		High Fx (%)	Moderate Fx (%)	Low Fx (%)	Never Fx (%)
1.	E-Encyclopedia Britannica	50 (34.7)	30 (20.9)	14 (9.8)	50 (34.7)
2.	E- Roget's Int. Thesaurus	00 (0)	00 (0)	00 (0)	144 (100)
3.	E-Webster's Encyclopedia	37 (25.7)	42 (29.2)	14 (9.8)	51 (35.4)
4.	Online Almanacs	29 (20.1)	20 (13.9)	32 (22.2)	63 (43.8)
5.	Newspaper directory	96 (66.6)	24 (16.7)	24 (16.6)	00 (0)
6.	Data/GIS	50 (34.8)	37 (52.7)	40 (27.8)	17 (11.9)
7.	Academic Commons	00 (0)	03 (2.1)	41 (28.5)	100 (69.4)
8.	Subject Guides	54 (37.5)	20 (13.9)	67 (46.5)	03 (2.1)
9.	Information Gateway	00 (0)	08 (5.6)	136 (94.4)	37 (25.7)
10.	E-Journal	117 (81.3)	20 (13.9)	07 (1.9)	00 (0)
11.	E-Books	90 (62.5)	14 (9.8)	40 (27.8)	03 (2.1)
12.	E-News	120 (34.8)	05 (3.5)	17(11.8)	02 (1.4)
13.	E-Images	00 (0)	07 (4.9)	37 (25.7)	100 (69.5)
14.	E-Music & Sound Collection	00 (0)	08 (5.6)	34 (23.7)	102 (70.9)
15.	E-Commerce	02 (1.4)	09 (6.3)	13 (9.0)	120 (83.3)

16.	E-Data Archives	00 (0)	30 (20.9)	62 (43.1)	52 (36.1)
17.	E-Manuscripts	01(0.7)	08 (5.6)	35 (24.3)	100 (69.4)
18.	E-Maps	10 (6.9)	75 (52.1)	39 (27.1)	20 (13.9)
19.	E-Magazines	09 (34.8)	60 (41.7)	15 (10.4)	60 (41.7)
20.	E-Thesis	10 (6.9)	27 (18.8)	07 (4.9)	100 (69.4)
21.	E-Research Reports	49 (34.0)	40 (27.8)	50 (34.7)	05 (3.5)
22.	E-Bibliographic Database	02 (1.4)	36 (25.0)	19 (13.2)	87 (60.4)

Key: H –High, M – Medium, L – Low, N – Never

Examination of the table above have shown that Newspaper directory, E-Journal, E-Books and E-News are the most used utilized E-Resouces by the senior academics in MAUTech because more 50% of the respondents have shown that they used these resources. Furthermore, more than 50% of the respondents indicated that that they never used E- Roget’s Int. Thesaurus, Academic Commons, E-Images, E-Music & Sound Collection, E-Thesis, E-Manuscripts and E-Commerce.

Challenges Facing Senior Academics in Utilizing E-resources in Modibbo Adama University of Technology, Yola

In order to determine the challenges facing senior academics in utilizing e-resources in in MAUTECH, Yola, 5 different challenges were provided for the professors. Their responses are presented in Table 5 below:

Table 5: Challenges Facing Senior Academics in Utilizing E-Resources in MAUTECH, Yola

S/ n	Factors	Yes		No		Rmk
		Fx	%	Fx	%	
1.	Non-subscription	120	83.3	24	16.7	A
2.	Lack of awareness of available e-resources in the library	101	70.1	43	29.9	A

3.	Lack of university self-designed e-library application	130	90.3	14	9.8	A
4.	Volatility of coverage of the e-resources	69	47.9	75	52.1	DA
5.	Unreliable nature of e-resources	70	48.7	74	51.4	DA

Key: A – Agree, DA – Disagree, Rmk – Remark

Table 5 above is aimed at ascertaining the challenges faced by the academics in accessing and utilizing E-Resources by senior academics in MAUTech. From the analysis, it is clear that Non-subscription, Lack of awareness of available e-resources in the library and Lack of university self-designed e-library application are the major challenges faced by the senior academics in MAUTech

Conclusion

Availability, Access and utilization of information is vital for successful and efficient research at universities. Electronic resources are providing new platforms for information to aid in research conducted by academic staff. Apparently, the university libraries in developing countries such as Nigeria are working hard to overcome the challenges of availability, access and utilization of information resources. The study concluded that there is unavailability, poor access and inadequate utilization of many vital E-Resources by senior academic in MAUTech, these challenges incapacitate the quality of their research productivity compared to the counterparts across globe.

Recommendations

In view of the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made to improve on the availability access and utilization of electronic resources by senior academics in MAUTech:

1. Adequate budgetary allocation should be given to the University Library for subscription to major E-Databases and acquisition of relevant electronic information resources in MAUTech.
2. Internet infrastructures on campus should be improved; this should include access to uninterrupted internet service in office and the university library to facilitate access to E-Resources
3. Train/retrain librarians on frequent basis to equip them ability to enlighten and educate users on the technicalities of E- Resources and appropriate user education should be organise for senior academics in MAUTech for better use of electronic resources in the University Library and beyond.
4. Lastly, based on the findings of the study, effective development of digital libraries in MAUTech would ameliorate the problems of availability, accessibility and utilization of electronic resources by the senior academics in the university

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