

Application of E-Library to Knowledge Based Administration in the University of Uyo, Nigeria

Ufuoma D. Onobrakpor and Ahiaoma Ibegwam

University of Uyo Library, Uyo, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

Received: 2020/08/15.

Accepted: 2020/10/02.

Published: 2020/10/29

Abstract

Background:

Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) have facilitated the access and use of information in everyday life and by extension among administrators of Nigerian Universities. However, there seems to be a paucity of studies on the impact of e-library or lack of it on the information needs of the top echelon of the non-teaching staff of Nigerian universities, hence this study is undertaken to bridge this gap.

Methodology: The descriptive research design using questionnaire was used to elicit information from 146 persons that are senior administrative officers.

Findings: Revealed that the respondents used the e-library resources for some aspects of their jobs that included Statistics with a mean of 3.35, Professional publications with a mean of 3.31, and Records keeping with a mean of 3.08. Some of the respondents (2.95%), posited that the e-library saved them time and reduces stress, improved their job productivity (2.73%); and provided current information (2.92%). Major challenges in the use of the e-library included Poor availability of internet network (99.0% of the respondents). The least with a 6.7% was infrequent training on the use of the updated databases. Major medium of access was via personal Smart phones.

Implication: This study has shown that there is electronic information need and use of the e-library by some administrators of the University of Uyo. However, effective use of the e-library facilities is hindered by irregular, slow and epileptic internet and lack of smart phones.

Originality/Value: This study recommended that the mandatory policy of all senior administrators owning smart phones and compulsory increase of internet bandwidth, while the University library management build strong synergy and always update the University administrators on current events as it relates to the e-library regularly.

Keywords: *E-Library, Knowledge-Based Administration, Nigerian Universities, University Administrators. Paper Type: Empirical research.*

Introduction

The use of information available in electronic sections of university libraries has become a requirement in most universities worldwide. Information as the deriving and driving factor of the 21st century is vital in every aspect in human operation. Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) have facilitated the access and use of information in everyday life and by extension in the administration of Nigerian Universities. Electronic Library is commonly referred to as e-library and it is sometimes used synonymously with "virtual library" and "digital library" (Gani, 2014, p. 73). Different scholars have given various definitions of e-library based on their perception of the concept as seen in Issa, et al. (2009, p. 2). Velumani as cited in Ashikuzzaman (2016, para.2) viewed, e-library as the electronic information, library organised for usage of the catalogue, tag and search books and journals. It maintains a database as the collection of electronic materials and provides services in digital form.

Anyim (2018, p.1) views e-library as a multi-disciplinary concept that shares various branches of computer science including data management, information retrieval, library science, document management, information systems, the web, image processing, and artificial intelligence. In simple term, e-library is an electronic or digitised version of information resources that are processed and made available via Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) and the internet. That is, e-library is a solution that anyone can use to access a library,

having the appropriate formats, without the person stepping physically into the library to read books, journals for various purposes using the internet and computer from the comfort of his/her home, school, office, and any other place. Most universities usually have a combination of both the e-library and the physical library. This can be called a hybrid library. This implies that generally any library can be or have a combination of the following – physical, electronic or hybrid (Anyim, 2018; Arelosafe, 2020).

Memisoglu (2016, p.205), regarded knowledge as anything that is known; tangible or intangible facts that are learned as a result of the act of knowing; it is an interpreted form of data and the establishment of useful relationships between pieces of information. Knowledge is derived from data and information. It is revealed through intellectualization and interpretation of information (Özer as cited in Memisoglu 2016, p. 205). In this sense, knowledge is a need for people to shape, classify and interpret the world around them. Anderson & Whitford (2018, p.1) observed that all industrialized nations have complex formal knowledge systems such as educational institutions. They opined that "Knowledge organisations are designed to create, process, and disseminate information". As an educational institution, it operates a system that creates, process and disseminates information of her knowledge internally for the holistic as well as external function and productivity of the university. The university administrative system involves a great magnitude of granularity that includes, the management, senior and junior administrative officers, secretaries, executive officers, clerical officers, secretarial assistants, clerical

officers and office assistants; thus the essence of a knowledge-based administration cannot be over emphasised. However, while there have been extensive studies on the electronic library and information needs of the academic staff and students of Nigerian universities (Onuoha and Subair, 2013; Isah, A. 2010), there seems to be the paucity of studies on the library and information needs of the top echelon of the non-teaching staff who for the purpose of this study are referred to as administrators.

Statement of Problem

The primary function of universities all over the world is creating and generating knowledge from all facets of human endeavours (Essien 2019, para.3). Different levels of structure are created by university management, which helps in the running of the institution and are managed by administrators. In the university, there are management staff that represent the major arms of the university to include the Vice-chancellor, the registrar, the bursar and the librarian. These line officers represent what is termed the university management. The administrative aspect of the university is headed by the Registrar and is charged with record-keeping and management of human resources of the institution. The job of the registrar's unit include matters relating to appointments and promotions. They are part of the administration of the faculties and units where they function as secretaries and faculty officers. In order, to function effectively, they need relevant information in a timely manner. The e-library is best suited for the provision of prompt information to this category of university staff. This brings to mind the question of

what the e-library needs of these administrative staff of the university are. How are their information and library needs met? Do the University Library cater for the information needs of the university administrators? If yes, how can the university library improve upon this? If No, what can be done by the University library to ensure that the library needs of these categories of staff are taken care of?

Purpose of the Study

This study examined the e-library needs and use by the administrators of the University of Uyo. The general objectives are to:

- Ascertain the information needs of administrators in the University of Uyo.
- Examine the role of e-library in satisfying the information need of administrators in the University of Uyo.
- Identify the challenges faced by the administrators in accessing information through the e-library.
- Proffer possible ways the e-library can better meet the information needs of administrators in the University of Uyo.

Research Questions

1. What are the information needs of administrators in the University of Uyo?
2. Have you ever used the University of Uyo Library?
3. Do administrators know the databases subscribed to by the University of Uyo Library?

4. What is your medium of access to the e-library?
5. Do administrators have access to the subscribed databases of the University of Uyo?
6. Does the e-library satisfy the information needs of the administrators?
7. What are the challenges faced by the administrators in accessing information through the e-library?
8. How can the e-library meet the information need of administrators in the University of Uyo?

Review of Related Literature

E-library is a current requirement in every university now in Nigeria. A lot has been written on E-library but deplorably none about administrators. The researchers have reviewed some researches on e-library and various categories of information users. A study by Nwaeze (1990) titled, Information needs and Utilization Patterns of Non-Academic Staff of University of Ibadan, showed that the non-academic staff of the University of Ibadan have work-related information needs among others, which they met within and outside the university campus. The study recommended a deliberate action by the university Library to cater for this category of university staff.

Ramayah & Aafaqi (2004) studied the Role of Self-Efficacy in E-Library Usage among Students of a Public University in Malaysia. Questionnaire was used for data collection, while the population was 704 university students from four different schools in a Malaysian public university, School of Humanities, School of Mass Communication, School of Chemistry and

School of Biology. The results further indicate that perceived ease of use fully mediates self-efficacy when explaining e-library usage and perceived usefulness. There is a computer section with Internet connectivity for accessing the resources. Most students are aware of the e-library resources but do not use them because they lack the skills. This is due to the fact that they have not been formally taught the use of e-library resources.

Ekong & Ekong (2018) studied the Impact of Information Literacy Skills on the Use of E-Library Resources among Tertiary Institution Students in Akwa Ibom State. They observed that students need information for a variety of activities and the e-library is a resource centre for providing a wide range of electronic resources that can meet any academic purpose. The study further revealed that the quality and volume of academic work is largely influenced by the knowledge and skills possessed in the use of e-library resources.

Ahmed, Rehman & Sheikh (2019) investigated the Impact of Personality Traits on Information Needs and Seeking Behaviour of LIS Students in Pakistan. The population for the study was 320 while two instruments, namely, BFI scale and a self-structured instrument were used to collect the data. Findings of the study revealed that out of 320 respondents, 186 possessed openness to experience, while only 7 possessed extraversion personality trait. Moreover, the students having extraversion personality trait were, generally, more concerned toward information needs. On the other hand, students having conscientious trait were increasingly more

seekers of information. Overall, the conscientiousness was identified as the most suitable personality trait for LIS students. A significant difference was also observed among all the personality traits of LIS students.

Ismaila (2019) studied the Information Needs and Information Seeking Behaviour of Postgraduate Students in Kwara State University. A sample of 630 Post Graduate Students has been selected by stratified random sampling method. Questionnaires and interview methods were used as instrument for data collection. The study among others revealed that two-third and one-fourth of the respondents agree and strongly agree that they need instruction on how to use library information sources in their subject areas. That e-reference books and e-journals are the types of electronic information sources browsed on the internet by the respondents. Also, major reasons for not using the internet are mainly because respondents are not interested in accessing the internet because of inadequate training in the browsing of the internet.

The reviewed studies are related to the present study in that, they are centred on library and information needs of members of the university community. The studies also identify various users, their needs for information, its access, usage, identified challenges and proffered solutions to the challenges that will facilitate the use of university e-libraries. However, it appears that there is no known empirical study that focuses on the administrators as users of electronic libraries. This study is therefore undertaken to fill this gap.

Methodology

The descriptive research design was adopted for this research. A questionnaire made up of open-ended and closed-ended questions. The open-ended questions were used to elicit awareness of the participants of, and general attitudes towards their electronic information needs. The closed questions on the other hand were used to capture information on specific attitudes of the administrators to the subjects. The population comprised of 146 persons who were senior administrative officers from the Registrar cadres of the University of Uyo. The whole population was used for the study and 103 of useable copies of the questionnaire were collected, giving the respondent rate of 70.5%. The Questionnaire was pretested using senior administrative officers from Akwa Ibom State University. The data is analysed using SPSS and presented using tables and figures.

Findings and Discussion

Section A: Demographic Data

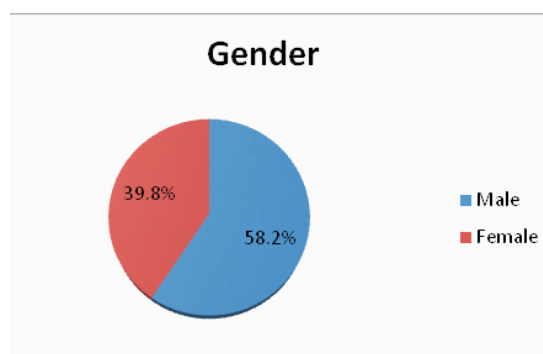


Figure 1: Gender of Administrators

Figure 1, shows a gender population of a majority of male with 58.2% while females are 39.8%. This suggests that the majority of the administrators are male.

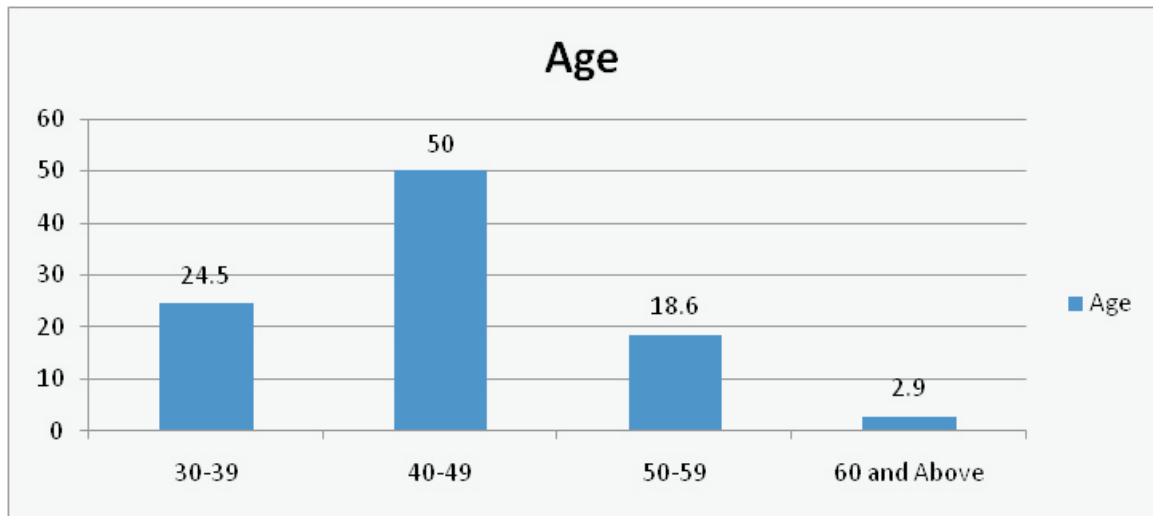


Figure 2: Gender of the Administrators

Figure 2, shows that the highest age range of the respondents are 40-49 years at 50%, next is 30-39 years at 24.5%, followed by 50-59 years at 18.6 and the lowest is 50 and above at 2.9%.

Section B: This section contains the questions used to solicit information on the e-library requirements of administrator of the University of Uyo.

Questions 2: Have you been to University of Uyo Library?

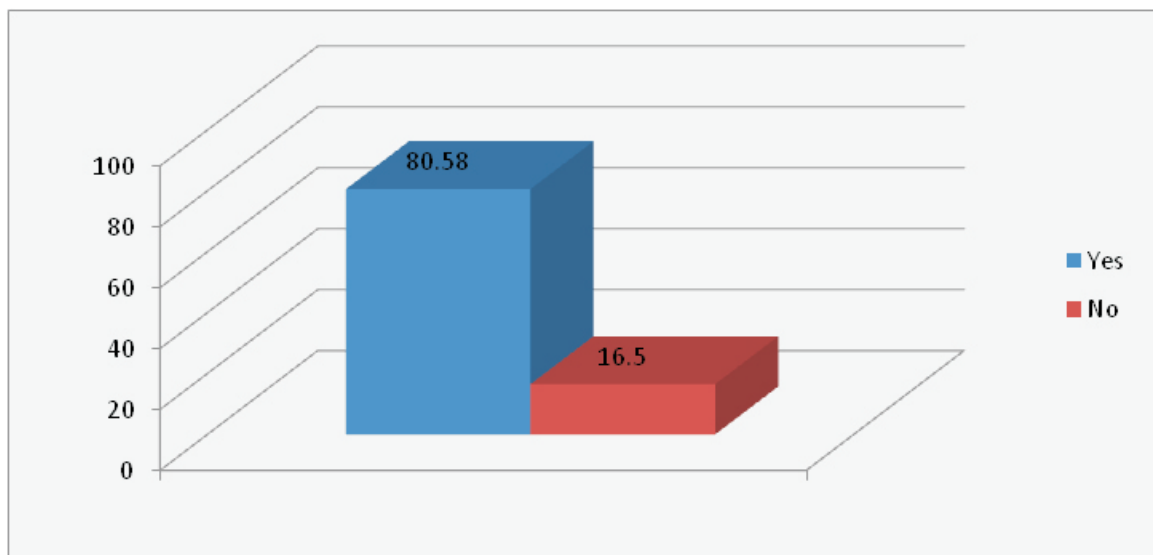


Figure 3

Figure 3 shows that majority of the respondents at 80.58% have been to the University of Uyo Library while 16.5% have never.

Questions 6: Are you aware that there is an E-library in University of Uyo

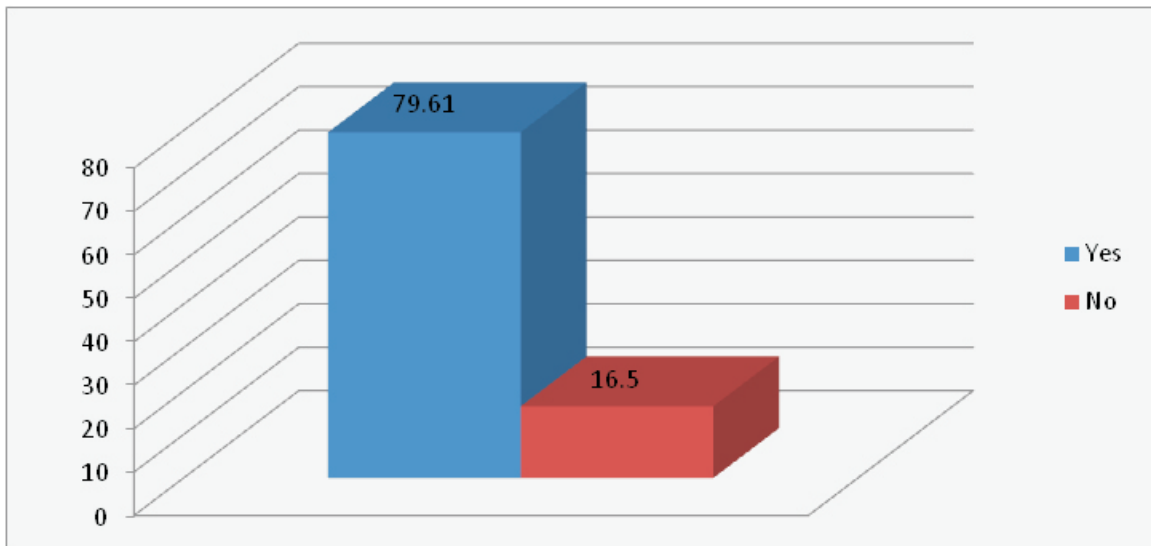


Figure 4 shows that 79.61% of the respondents are aware that the University of Uyo has an e-library, while 16.5% decline awareness.

Questions 3: Are you aware of the Data-bases subscribed to by University of Uyo Library

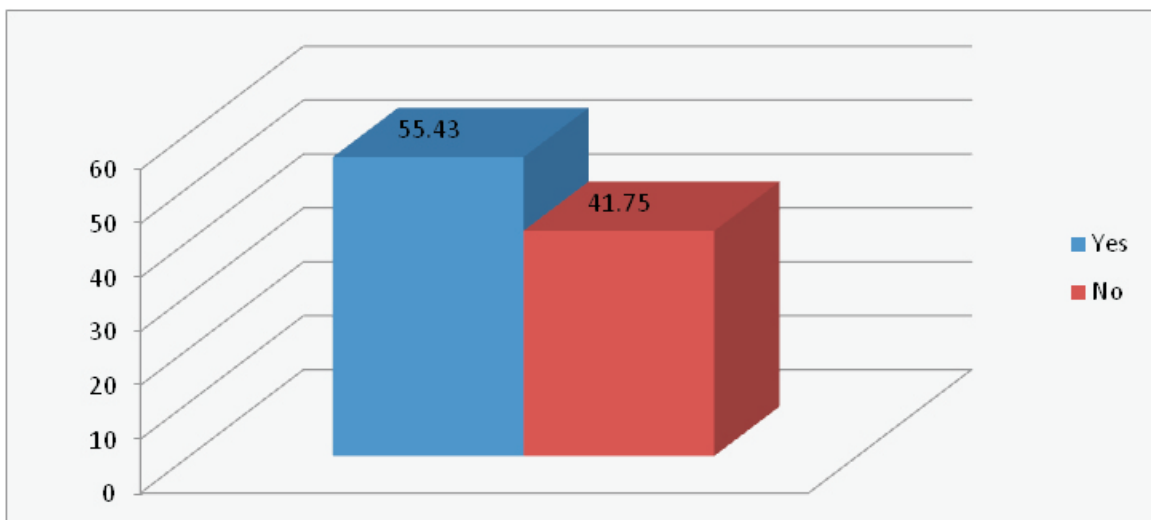


Figure 5: Respondents are Aware of the Databases

Figure 5, shows that 55.43% of the respondents are aware of the databases subscribed to by the University of Uyo Library, while 41.75% are not aware.

Questions 5: Do you have access to the databases?

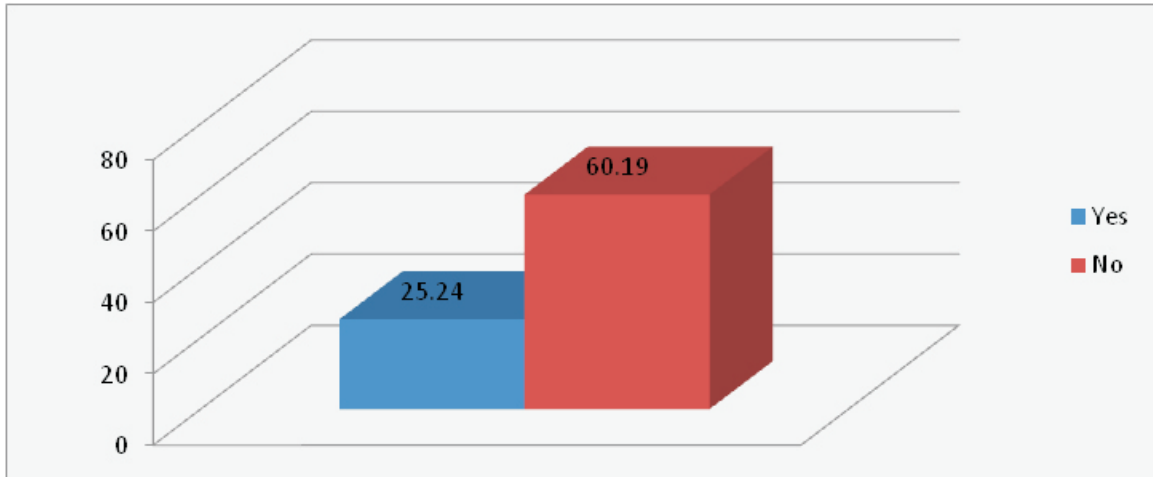


Figure 6, shows that 60.19% of the respondents do not have access to the e-library database while 25.24% responded that they have access.

Questions 4: The Medium of Access

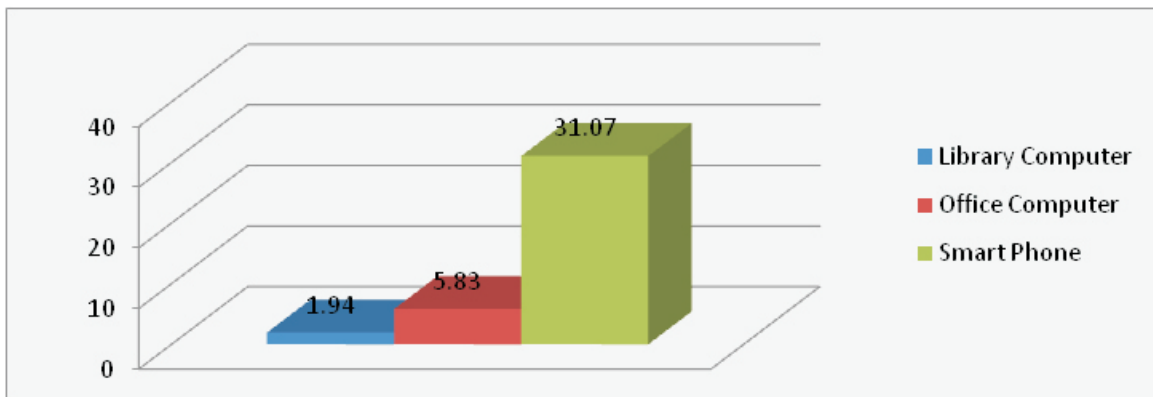


Figure 7 shows that the medium of access to the e-library was majorly via smartphones at 31.7%, office computer was on a low of 5.83% and the lowest was library computer at 1.94%.

Questions 6: What in your opinion is Electronic information?

The respondents gave various understanding of an e-information, but only 26.21% gave understanding if e-information as information accessed and gathered through various electronic medium or Information available electronically. As such the majority did not give a clear or a close comprehension of what an e-information is.

Research Questions 1: What are the information needs of administrators in the University of Uyo?

Table 1: Types of E-Resources Need

S/N	What are the type of e-resources you need	Mean
10.	Statistics	3.35
11.	Records	3.08
12.	Journals	3.03
13.	Professional publication	3.31

Table 1 reveals that all the respondents gave a massive indication to the listed type of e-resources they need. Statistics were the highest with a mean of 3.35, followed by Professional publication with a mean of 3.31. Records were a mean of 3.08 while Journals were a mean of 3.03. This indicated that administrators need e-resources that are available and can be accessed from the e-library.

Research Questions 6: Does the e-library satisfy the information need of the administrators in the University of Uyo?

Table 2: E-library Satisfaction of Information Need

	How does the e-library satisfy your information need as an administrator?	Mean
10.	Gives me quick access and fast delivery of information	2.94
11.	It guarantees me access to e-resources on administrative matters	2.94
12.	The e-library saves me time and reduces stress	2.95
13.	Improves my job productivity	2.73
14.	E-library gives me current information	2.92

Table 2, shows that 2.94% of the respondents stated that it gives them quick access and fast delivery of information. Others (2.94%), stated that it guaranteed them access to e-resources on administrative matters; Some of the respondents (2.95%), said the e-library saves them time and reduces stress; For 2.73% of the subjects it 'improved their job productivity'; and for 2.92% of the responders the E-library gave them current information. This indicates that e-library has satisfactory benefits to administrators that used it.

Research Questions 3: What are the challenges faced by the administrators in accessing information through the e-library?

Table 3: Challenges in accessing information through the e-library.

	Items	Per cent	Ranking
19	Poor internet network	102 (99.0%)	1.
20	Lack of knowledge of internet	98(95.1%)	2.
21	poor search and retrieval skills	86 (83.4%)	3.
22	Infrequent training.	79 (76.6%)	4.
23	Inadequate internet compliant staff in the library	56 (54.3%)	5.
24	Lack of time.	41(39.9%)	6.
25	Poor office ICT facilities.	41(39.9%)	6
26	Infrequent training.	7(6.7%)	7.

Table 3, depicts the challenges faced by the administrators in the course of using the electronic library of the university to include, Poor availability of internet network with the highest ranking of 99.0% of the respondents. This is followed by the inability to use the internet with 95.1% of the responders attesting to the challenge it possess. The least with a 6.7% administrators stated that it was infrequent training on the use of the updated databases that encumbered their use of the e-library. They also indicated that Poor internet network is a major inhibitor in the use of the e-library. Likewise the responses to question 5, the chart indicates an increase of medium of access via Smart phone.

Research Questions 4: How can the e-library meet the information need of administrators in University of Uyo?

Table 4: How the e-library can meet the information need of administrators.

	How can the e -library meet your information need as an administrator	Mean
27	Provision of needed information in electronic-format	3.31
28	Create awareness of the e-library services	3.18
29	Training on search and retrieval	2.95
30	Alert me on new electronic information	3.06
31	Give me username and password of subscribed databases for easy access at home and my convenience	2.82

Table 4, reflect some of the ways the e-library can improve and meet the information need of administrators. Provision of needed information in electronic-format was the highest with a mean of 3.31; Create awareness of the e-library services was a mean of 3.18; Alert me on new electronic information was a mean of 3.06; followed by training on search and retrieval strategies on a mean of 2.98, and Give me username and password of subscribed databases for easy access at home and my convenience on a mean of 2.89. Another strategy as indicated in item 28, on how the e-library can meet the information need of the administrators was to build strong synergy and always collaborate with the University administrator. This indicates that in the provision of an existing e-library, the University of Uyo Library is on track in meeting the needs of the administrator in the University of Uyo but more is yet to be done.

Discussions

The fact that the majority of the administrators in the university are males is depicted by figure 1. This is in tandem with the over 30 years history of administration of the university that has produced only one female registrar. This, unlike the librarianship profession where the majority of the professionals are of female gender (Mars, 2018). It also supported the result of the study by Eboiyehi et al. (2016) which revealed low representation of women with 29.2% compared to men with 70.9% in senior management position in some selected, public universities in the south-west of Nigeria." The prominent age range of the administrators was 40-50 years with 50% while the least was 60years and above. This is not surprising as the retirement age of administrators was 60 years before it was increased to 65 years several ago by the Nigerian government. While many respondents (55.4%) were aware of the availability of the subscribed databases of

the university library, majority of them(60.1) did not have access suggesting that they were not registered members and therefore may not have the user identification and passwords which would have been automatic if they were registered members. Many respondents (31.1 %) had access and used the databases via their smartphones at the convenience. This suggests that for the administrators, possession of a phone was a necessity for the smooth performance of their daily routine. Therefore these phones should be considered as a work tool that must be provided by their employers just like desktops and laptops are provided or incentives like soft loans given to the staff to enable them possess these smart phones, tablets and iPhones.

Conclusion

This study which is an imperial research on the application of the e-library for knowledge-based administration by administrators of the University of Uyo has shown that there is electronic information need and use of the e-library by some administrators of the university. However, effective use of the e-library facilities is hindered by challenges that can be overcome by the provision of specialised information in electronic format for this category of staff, as well, as ensuring regular, fast and uninterrupted internet. Provision of smart phones was also adjudged as a way of facilitating the use of the electronic library. This position is held by many administrators as a viable avenue for improving their utilisation of the e-library of the University Uyo. The least incentive for improving the use of the e-library was prompt notification of

subscribed library databases including the institutional user names and passwords.

Recommendations

The University of Uyo Library appears to be on track in her provision of an existing e-library service to its user community. However, there is an urgent need to do more for the administrators in the university to maximally utilise the available e-library resources, as such as the following recommendations are made:

- i. The University management should increase and improve on the internet service provision and the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) facilities in the various administrative offices. Also, technological manpower should be regularly provided for maintenances and servicing of the ICT facilities in the various offices to enhance digital information notification and provision to the administrators.
- ii. The university library management should create more awareness of the e-library services to the administrator in the University of Uyo.
- iii. There should be regular training on electronic information search and retrieval for administrator in the University of Uyo.
- iv. Regular update and alerts on new electronic information.
- v. The University library management should build strong synergy and always collaborate with the University administrators.
- vi. The university management should have a policy that makes it mandatory for all senior administrators to have

iPhone. They can be given incentives by providing soft loans to make this possible.

- vii. A comparative study of the specific information needed by an administrator based on this peculiar work schedule may through more light in the specific data-based to be subscribed for this category of e-library user.

REFERENCES

- Ahmed, S., Rehman, F., & Sheikh, A. (2019). Impact of personality traits on information needs and seeking behaviour of LIS students in Pakistan. *Information Discovery and Delivery*, 47 (3). 125134. <http://doi.org/10.1108/idd-09-2018-0046>
- Anderson, D. & Whitford, A. (2018). The public administration of knowledge organizations. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 15. <https://academic.oup.com>.
- Arolasafe, G, (2020, February 1). *E-Library concepts and sustainability issues The way forward*. <https://www.convanantuniversity.edu.ng>
- Ashikuzzaman, Md. (2016, October 23). *Brief information about e-Library*. <http://www.lisbdnet.com/brief-information-e-library>.
- Anyim, W. O. (2018). E-Library resources and services: Improvement and innovation of access and retrieval for effective research activities in university e-libraries in Kogi State Nigeria. *Library Philosophy and Practice (e-journal)*. 1647. <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/1647>
- Ebouyehe, C. O., Fayomi, I. & Eboiyehi, F. A. (2016). From exclusion to discrimination: gender inequality in the senior management of Nigerian University, *Issues in Education Research* 26(2)182-205.
- Ekong, U. O. & Ekong, V. E. (2018). Impact of information literacy skills on the use of e-library resources among tertiary institution students in Akwa Ibom State. *Nigerian Journal of Technology NIJOTECH* 37 (2). 423431. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4314/njt.v37i2.1>
- Essien, E. E. (2019). An address by the Vice-Chancellor of University of Uyo on the occasion of the 2nd distinguished registry lecture held at 12th April, 2019 at the University of Uyo.
- Gani, E. (2014). Management of university electronic libraries in Northwest Nigeria. *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 19 (8), 72-80. <https://www.iosrjournals.org>
- Issa, Blessing, & Daura, ((2009). Effects of information literacy skills on the use of e-library resources among students of the University of Ilorin, Kwara State. *Philosophy and Practice*, 245. <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/245>
- Isah, A. (2010). Electronic library use by academic staff at the university of Ilorin, Nigeria. *Journal of Library and Information Science*. 7 (1-2), 138-149. <https://www.academia.edu/25422841/>

- electronic_library use* by academic staff at the University of Ilorin, Nigeria.
- Ismaila, Y. A. (2019). Information needs and information-seeking behaviour of postgraduate students in Kwara State University, Malete. *Library Philosophy and Practice (e-journal)*. 2363. <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/2363>
- Mars, P. (2018). Gender Demographics and perception in Librarianship *Research Journal*. <https://scholarwork.sjsu.edu/ischoolsrj/vol17issue213>.
- Memisoglu, S. P. (2016). Teachers' and administrators' perceptions of knowledge management competence of high school administrators. *Educational Research and Reviews*, 11 (4). 125-133. <http://www.academicjournals.org/err>.
- Nwaeze, A. (1990). *Information needs and utilization patterns of non-academic staff of the University of Ibadan* (Unpublished master's dissertation). University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria.
- Onuoha, U. D. & Subair, M.O. (2013). Undergraduates' use of libraries in federal universities in south-west, Nigeria. *Journal of Research and Method in Education*, 3(5), 12-17. <http://iosrjournals.org/iosr-jrme/papers/Vol-3%20Issue-5/C0351217.pdf>
- Ramayah, T. & Aafaqi, B. (2004). Role of self-efficacy in e-library usage among student of a public university in Malaysia. *Malaysia Journal of Library and Information Science*, 9 (1), 39-57. <https://www.semanticscholar.org>.

