



**AWARENESS AND USE OF LIBRARY WEBSITES BY FINAL YEAR LIBRARY
AND INFORMATION SCIENCE STUDENTS, DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY,
ABRAKA**

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Abstract

The study investigated awareness and use of library websites among final year library and information science students of Delta state university, Abraka. Three research questions were raised for this study. The population of the study, 130 consisted of the final year library and information science students. Total enumeration was used as a result of the size of the population therefore, no sample was drawn. The descriptive survey designed was employed in the study. The questionnaire was used as an instrument for collecting data. The 130 questionnaire administered, 115 were retrieved from the respondents. Data obtained were analysed using simple percentage and mean. It was found in the study that the students are aware of the library website. The extent to which the students use the library website is low. In essence, students usage on the website is not often. The study recommended that librarians should always publicise what the website holds and also find out reasons the library website is not regularly utilised.

Keywords: Awareness, use, library, library website, use of library website

Introduction

A library website is one example of a digital space, a virtual information world that attempts to bridge the physical and digital user experience, while creating innovative solutions to user's need of information. The library websites reflect the image of the library thereby giving a mirror of the holdings of the library (Naughton (2023)). The World Wide Web has tremendously impacted the function of academic libraries by shifting from the traditional function to modern ICT and Artificial Intelligence usage. Students now depend on web-based resources for their academic and research activities. Website, according to Kannappanavar, Jayaprakash and Bachalapur (2011) in Okechukwu and Anunobi (2020) is a collection of related web pages or digital assets that are addressed in relation to a Uniform Resource Locator (URL). The web server host the website that could be accessible through network like the internet or a private Local Area Network. With Website, institutions can publish the details of

programmes, admission, examination, fees, faculty, calendar of events, placements, research and publications, library facilities and resources and other activities. That is the reason websites are regarded as online representations of an institution or organization to the world, with the assurances of directly interacting with the community and the world at large.

Mandrekar and Rodrigues (2021) define web sites as libraries virtual presentation to the world where information on libraries and services are provided. Academic library web sites make provision for online catalogues, electronic databases, subject resources, library instruction/tutorials, and digital collections. According to Aghauche, Udem and Ogalanya (2018), a library web site can play different roles in the delivery of web-based services. It is a major tool used by libraries for the provision of their web-based services. It can serve as a workstation where a user finds databases, electronic texts, and the online catalogue. It make library-made products available, it is a window to the WWW which makes internet resources available on a selective basis, and a communication tool where information about services, people, facilities and collections can be found. All publicly accessible web sites collectively constitute the WWW. Today, libraries can treat their websites as a significant point of user contact and as a way of compensating for decreases in traditional measures of library use. Although some library websites comprises of general, inadequate information and information that are not regularly updated which makes the webpage outdated for accessibility to user. It has also been noted by Igere, (2023) that the problem of inaccessibility to needed information is a major challenge in some of the libraries. It is therefore expected that the website is well-designed and well-structured for the provision of the required, useful and adequate information for the academic user community. Most especially in this era of technology where students can achieve more when they are in the digital platform to access information (Igere, 2021). Creating awareness on the existence and availability of library website is of paramount to both the organisation and users because awareness makes way for use.

Awareness is a state of being knowledgeable about the availability of computer hardware, software, CD-ROM, OPAC and Internet connectivity in the university library. Eiriemiokhale and Ibeun (2018) described awareness as the degree to which services such as software, OPAC, online databases and CD-ROM searching are made known to users in the library. Awareness of library websites can be described as knowledge of the existence, benefits and purpose of utilisation of the websites. Song, Fabunmi and Asubiojo (2013) as cited by Akanmu (2024), reported that most of the library users may not be aware of the utilisation of library software and the only way to sensitize users is to improve on the awareness strategies

of technological tools in the library so that users will be acquainted with the developments and make judicious utilisation of the services.

Use in the context of this study means the ability or the ease at which an average person can use the website to achieve specific aim. It is noted that effectual use to accessing information resources is the major concern for designing a website (Jabeen & Ganaie 2019). Baba and Ganaie (2019) noted that the library website is significant in higher educational institutions. It is important that the website is properly designed to be user friendly to ease access and use. It is expected that there is provision of information as well as access to several services (online catalogues, electronic databases, digital collections, different library tutorials of the institution whom they are associated with) through the website that will be beneficial to users academically and otherwise. This study therefore seeks to investigate awareness and use of library website by final year students of library and information science in Delta State University, Abraka.

Objectives of the study

The aim of the study is to specifically:

1. Find out the extent to which the final year students of library and information science are aware of library websites in Delta State University, Abraka.
2. Examine the extent to which the final year students of library and information science use library websites in Delta State University, Abraka.
3. Find out how often the student use the library websites in Delta State University, Abraka

Research question

The following research questions were raised to guide this study

1. To what extent are the final year students of library and information science aware of library websites in Delta State University, Abraka?
2. To what extent do final year students of library and information science use library websites in Delta State University Library, Abraka use the library websites?
3. How often do the students use the library website in Delta State University, Abraka.

Review of Related Literature

Awareness on the existence of library websites is very important in every institution where there is library website. Ensuring that the entire stock of the library is revealed through website

is a necessity in every library in this era of technology. According to Chakravarty and Wasan (2015), library website is a representation of the institution to ensure there is access to catalogue online, subject resources, subject information sources, library instruction, digital information resources with the aid of technological devices. Igere (2022) in like manner stated that technological devices are possible means of accessing information on institution and library based. In this era of technology, where digitized information resources are gotten conveniently, that is, anytime, anywhere which is different from the regular traditional ways of accessing information, the need for awareness of these technological sources cannot be overemphasised.

The term awareness implies an understanding on things happening around or existing. According to Dourish and Bellotti (2001) as cited in Nwankwo, Chukwu, Igbokwe and Agbanu (2019), awareness means to get an understanding or knowledge on a situation which provides ways for personal activity. They further buttressed on awareness as an understanding on a subject as a result of information or experience gained for further activities. The extent to which students know about the existence of library website is of great importance. Tsakomas and Papatheodorou, (2006) noted that the way information is accessed has been affected as a result of awareness on the changes arising from technology. In the past, it was known that the provision and usage of information in academic libraries was based on the collection of physical library resources, but presently, academic libraries are now moving into the virtual arena. Several studies has been carried out on awareness of students on website and electronic resources in universities worldwide, for instance, Mwantimwa & Elia (2017) study on the utilization of e-resources showed that majority of the respondents were aware of online databases that are available.

Azuibuike (2016) observed a high extent of awareness on e-resources among the postgraduate students at the University of Ibadan and Lagos State University. Also, in a study conducted by Bawa (2018), it was shown that the extent of students awareness on electronic resources was very low as 111 responded to the instrument. It was equally reported that 61% of the respondents agreed to low extent of awareness. This indicated that majority of the respondents still use the traditional library system to search for material for their academic work. Abinew and Vuda (2013) in Akpojotor (2016) found out that the extent of awareness of electronic library resources by students was low because most of the respondents indicated they are not aware of the existence of e-libraries resources. It was equally found that about (16%) of the respondents agreed that the extent to which they were aware of e-library resources was high. When clientele are aware of information resources in a library, the tendency of using such resources is high. Hence Akpojotor (2016) noted that awareness is core to use of

information resources. When resources are in closed access, it reduces to a great extent the usage of such resources.

Hence, use is described as a way of exploiting or employing things. Nwankwo, Chukwu, Igbokwe, and Agbanu (2019) define use as the extent to which individuals employ resources that are in the library. In the context of this study, use is regarded as the application of available websites in the library. This simply implies that as clientele make use of the websites in the library, it indicates use has been applied or put into practice. According to Nagarkar and Murari (2012) in Okechukwu and Anunobi, (2020) the term use ensure that the library websites are easily navigated, so that users can easily find their way quickly to access electronic resources. Igere (2015) in the same view pointed out how the internet is presently a complimentary means of reinforcing and enhancing accessibility to educational information sources. Though the library website has made it easy to access a variety of information, the staggering amount of information available has produced a kind of “information overload” problem which can confuse and discourage users.

In a study conducted by Okechukwu and Anunobi, (2020), it was shown that students have low extent of usage of library website in accessing full-text books with a mean response of 2.18, accessing reference materials 2.11, and using the website for what is new 2.05. Thanuskodi and Ravi, (2011) on uses of digital resources by faculty and research scholars of manonmaniam Sundaranar University revealed that the extent of use of digital resources was about 67.14% indicating a high extent of use of digital resources. In the same vein, Bawa, Bawa and Arthur (2018) also found that a low level on utilization of electronic resources among students with majority (37%) of the respondents indicated the use of e-library resource once a week, 31% agreed to use electronic library resource twice weekly, while 10% of the respondents visited the electronic library for resources daily. Igere (2021) study on use of internet, has equally revealed that majority of the respondents regularly use the internet twice a day with a percentage of 49. A percentage of 26 also agreed to use the internet severally per day. Yebowaah and Plockey (2017) conducted a study on awareness and use of electronic resources and it shows that 2 (7.7%) use the resources once a week while 4 (15.4%) use it twice in a week. It was also found that 11(42.3%) agreed to the use of e resources once in every month while 9(34.6%) agreed to once a while. It was noted that the categories of the respondents who use the electronic resources once a while were not regular users of the library facilities. In order words, consistency in the usage of the website to search for information is a way to determine adequate usage

Methodology

This study adopted the descriptive survey design. The population of the study is 130 which comprised the final year students of library and information science. Total enumeration was used as a result of the small size of the population, hence sample was not drawn. The questionnaire was used as the instrument to draw information from the respondents. From the 130 questionnaire administered, 115 was retrieved from the respondents. Data obtained from the questionnaire retrieved were analysed using frequency count and mean.

Results

Research Question one: To what extent are the final year students of library and information science aware of the library website in Delta State University, Abraka?

Table 1 shows the extent to which the final year students of library and information science are aware of library websites in Delta State University, Abraka.

S/N	Items	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	Mean
1	Electronic books	53	37	15	10	3.16
2	Electronic Journals	45	39	12	19	2.96
3	Library databases	33	38	27	17	2.76
4	Multimedia resources	23	28	35	29	2.39
5	Internet archive	27	31	33	24	2.53
6	Digital collections	21	35	29	30	2.41
7	Online catalogues	26	34	38	17	2.6
	Grand Mean					2.69
	Criterion Mean					2.50

The analysis in table 1 shows the extent of students awareness on library website resources. It revealed a high extent on students awareness of some of the library website resources like electronic books (3.16), electronic journals (2.96), library databases (2.76), internet archive (2.53), online catalog (2.6), while some of the items like multimedia resources (2.39), digital collections (2.41), indicated low extent of awareness. This is because the criterion mean is 2.50 is higher than the result realised. The grand mean is 2.69 which is greater than the criterion mean of 2.50, it can be deduced from the study that the extent of students awareness on library websites is high.

Research Question two: To what extent do final year students of library and information science use library websites in Delta State University, Abraka?

Table 2: Extent to which final year students of library and information science use library websites in Delta State University Library, Abraka.

S/N	Items	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	Mean
1	Full E-journals	19	22	31	43	2.15
2	Full E-books	15	27	38	35	2.19
3	Online databases	26	28	39	22	2.50
4	OPAC	31	44	14	16	2.61
5	Microform	15	29	41	30	2.25
6	Internet archive	20	35	33	27	2.42
7	Multimedia resources	30	25	36	24	2.53
8	Digital collections	21	27	39	28	2.36
	Grand Mean					2.37
	Criterion Mean					2.50

Table 2 analysis shows the extent on students use of library websites resources. From the table, it shows a low extent on the use of some of the library websites which are lower than the criterion mean of 2.50. For instance, e-journals (2.15), e-books (2.19), multimedia resources (2.53), digital collections (2.36), microform (2.25), internet archive (2.42). It was equally found in the study that online databases (2.50) and OPAC (2.61) are used to a high extent because the result is equal and higher than the criterion mean of 2.50. On a general note, the grand mean of 2.37 is lower than the criterion mean of 2.50. It can be deduced that the final year library and information science students use library websites to a low extent.

Research question 3. How often do the students use the library websites

Table 3. How often students use the website

S/N	Items	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
1	Daily	22	19.13
2	Everyday in a week	10	8.70
3	Twice a week	15	13.04
4	Thrice a week	15	13.04
5	Monthly	48	41.74

6	Never	5	4.35
	Total	115	100

Table 3 shows how often students use the library website. The data revealed that majority of the students with 48(41.74%) respondents use the library website monthly, 22(19.13%) of the respondents use the website daily, 15(13.04%) of the respondents use the website twice a week and thrice a week and 5(4.35%) of the respondents never use the website. This is an indication that library website used by the students is low.

Discussion of Findings

The findings on the extent of students awareness of library website revealed that majority of the respondents have high extent of awareness. Though some of the items also reveal low extent but the high extent outweigh the low extent. This finding is in relation to that of Mwantimwa & Elia (2017) who has earlier found that most respondents agreed that they were aware of the online databases available. In a different way, it was found by Bawa (2018) that the extent of students awareness on electronic resources was very low. there is therefore the need to continue publicizing library recent activities

Findings on the extent of use of library website showed a low extent on use. Some of the items sampled such as OPAC and online database though had high extent of website use but it was generally found that, the grand mean was lower than the criterion means indicating a low extent on usage of website. It was therefore deduced that the final year library and information science students use library websites to a low extent. This finding is in consonance with that of Okechukwu and Anunobi, (2020) that the students in federal universities in south east have low extent of usage of library website in accessing full-text books a result of a low mean result realized. Although in a different dimension, the study of Thanuskodi and Ravi, (2011) on uses of digital resources by faculty and research scholars pointed out that the extent of usage of digital resources was on a high extent. This indicated that the utilisation of website could vary in different institution.

The study also revealed that the frequency of website use is low among the students. Although the daily and weekly usage of the website was low but majority of the respondents agreed to a monthly usage of the website which by implication shows a low usage. This corroborate the study of Yebowaah and Plockey (2017) that most students use electronic resources once monthly while some others use the facilities once a while which shows that most of the students

were not regular users of the library facilities. The implication here is that, the flare to use library resources in most cases is lacking in students. Librarian are to find out if the resources put in place in the library are well utilised if not, there should be intervention from parent body and government on how to improve on services.

Conclusion

The study has been able to reveal the awareness and usage of library website by the students. The study revealed that the extent to which the students are aware of the library website is high. In other words, the students are not novice on the library websites. Though the students are aware of the library website, there is a low extent on the use of website. The students do not often use the library website.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that:

1. The library should always publicise what the website holds and the need to use the library website most especially in this era of technology where users can access information from their convenience.
2. Librarians should always find out if the website is used, if not, check out the reasons for not using the library website.
3. Libraries should ensure that the website is easy to access because one reason that could lead to poor usage is difficulty in access to the website.

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