

Full Length Research Paper

The use of e-journals by academic staff of Rufus Giwa Polytechnic, Owo, Ondo State, Nigeria

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The study surveyed the use of e-journals by academic staff of Rufus Giwa Polytechnic, Owo, Ondo State, Nigeria. Questionnaire was designed to gather information on the use of e-journals by the academic staff. Data gathered from the respondents were analyzed through the use of frequency table and percentage. From the analysis, it was discovered that all the academic staff use e-journals and it is used for different academic purposes. All the academic staff agrees to the use of e-journals for research purpose. It was also observed from the findings that most of the academic staff uses e-journals occasionally. The advantages derived from the use of e-journals were also revealed in the study. These include good source of information, currency and timeliness of information, ease of access, ease of storage and time saving. The study also identified some problems encountered by the academic staff while accessing e-journals. Among these problems were slow internet connectivity, frequent power outage and high cost of journal subscription. Recommendations were therefore given, this include increase of internet bandwidth, reduction in prize of articles on e-journals, payment of subscription fee for e-journals by the management of the institution and making it available to their academic staff.

Key words: Use, e-journals, academic staff, polytechnic.

INTRODUCTION

Journal publications are important sources of information in higher institution of learning. It is regarded as a veritable tool for global research. Miyanda (2015) defined journal as a scholarly research-based publication, which is produced on a continuing basis (regularly or irregularly), that is, weekly, monthly, quarterly, annually, etc. Adeniyi and Aladeniyi (2008) noted that journal publication in an academic or research community is not a thing to be dropped. They therefore stressed the need to emphasize its relevance in the academia, because it

serves as a gateway through which ideas, experience, and discoveries are disseminated for the purpose of development. Similarly, Singh and Bebi (2012) stated that journals play a role in the research and development activities and undisputedly are considered primary channels of information dissemination. Halloumeh and Jirjees (2016) acknowledged that during the last year of undergraduate level journal articles become more important and it is considered to be the most important source of information.

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Journals are used by researchers and scholars to distribute their research findings. It is a major requirement for any academic staff to be promoted in higher institution of learning in Nigeria. Every academic staff is expected to publish their research findings in a reputable journal before he or she can enjoy promotion from one level to another.

The evolution of information and communication technology (ICT) has brought about products such as e-journals, e-library, e-books, etc. It has also changed the way and method of disseminating information and research activities. Otu et al. (2015) affirmed that advances in information communication and technology have revolutionised the way in which information for academic research is accessed and disseminated. E-journals are journals that are available or published by electronic means. The evolution of electronic journals, according to Lancaster (1995), as cited in Otu et al. (2015) began in 1960s and today have managed to proclaim itself as one of the various academic tools available on the internet. Chirra and Madhusudhan (2009) noted that the demand for electronic journals (E-journals) among the academic and research community has increased over the years. E-journals are fast gaining wider acceptability and usage as most researchers and scholars now made their research findings available through electronic journals.

Profile of Rufus Giwa Polytechnic, Ondo State Nigeria

Rufus Giwa Polytechnic Owo is one of the state owned polytechnic in south west Nigeria. The polytechnic was established in 1980 as Ondo State Polytechnic Owo. The name of the polytechnic was changed to Rufus Giwa Polytechnic in 2003; presently, the polytechnic has six faculties running programmes that are accredited by the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE). The academic staffs of the polytechnic comprise lecturers, technical instructors, technologist and librarians. They are charged with the responsibility of training middle level manpower needed for industrial and technological development.

Statement of problem

Several researches have been conducted on the use of e-journals. Available literature has also shown that e-journals are becoming more popular in academic community. Halloumeh and Jirjees (2016) observed that the dependence on electronic journals have become more and more necessary. Despite the importance and popularity of e-journals in academic community, it appears as if no research had been conducted on the use of e-journals by the academic staff of Rufus Giwa Polytechnic, Owo, Ondo State. In view of the foregoing,

there is a need for a study to be conducted in this area. This study therefore investigates the use of e-journals by the academic staff of Rufus Giwa Polytechnic, Owo, Ondo State, Nigeria.

Research questions

- (1) Do the academic staff of Rufus Giwa Polytechnic use e-journals?
- (2) How frequent do the academic staff use e-journal?
- (3) What are the academic purpose of using e-journal by the academic staff?
- (4) What are the advantages derived by the academic staff in their use of e-journal?
- (5) What are the problems encountered by the academic staff while accessing e-journals?

Objective of the study

The main objective of the study is to investigate the use of e-journals by the Academic Staff of Rufus Giwa Polytechnic, Owo, Ondo State, Nigeria. The study has the following specific objectives:

- (1) To find out if the academic staff of Rufus Giwa Polytechnic make use of e-journals;
- (2) To determine how frequent the academic staff make use of e-journals;
- (3) To identify the academic purpose the academic staff use e-journals for;
- (4) To find out the advantages they derive in the use of e-journals; and
- (5) To investigate the problems encountered by the academic staff when accessing e-journals.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Recent studies on the use of e-journals suggested that e-journals constitute an important source of information and that it is one of the most frequently used resources. Otu et al. (2015) noted that one of the most frequently used resources is the electronic journals. In a similar view, Nwaogu and Ifijeh (2014) acknowledged that the importance of electronic information resources in library service cannot be over emphasized. One of the most used electronic resources according to them is electronic journals. Malemia (2014) maintained that the use of information technology for scholarly publication is now common place all over the world. Malemia (2014) acknowledged that academic community in Africa are part of this transformation. Tobia and Hunnicult (2008) posit that electronic journals have become the preferred method for accessing the journal literature. Salau and Gama (2015) opine that electronic journals are said to be

the most sought after by academics of all the electronic information resources available to them.

On the frequency of using e-journal, Venkateswari (2015) reported that the maximum, 67 (53.18%) of respondents access electronic journals once in a week and the minimum, 9 (7.14%) are using electronic journals occasionally. The study also revealed that majority 41 (32.54%) of the respondents were using e-journals for their exam point of view, 37 (29.37) to update knowledge, 21 (16.67) for their research work, 14 (11.11) for course work, and only 13 (10.31) for communication. The study conducted by Bansode (2013) revealed that out of 264 respondents, 131 (49.63%) respondents make use of electronic journals 2/3 in a week and that the major category of the respondents comprise of research scholars, followed by post-graduate student and faculties. It was reported in the study that 69 (26.14%) faculties are using the electronic journals for various reason such as keeping themselves updated with the new information appearing in their subject of interest and preparing for the lecture and also carrying out their own research. 39 (14.77%) respondent are using electronic journal for keeping themselves update with the new information and for research purpose which constitute 28 faculties and 11 research scholars. As indicated in the study 90 (34.09%), respondents are using the electronic journals for just research purpose only, 66 (25%) respondent which constitute only the post graduate students are using it for making preparation at the examination.

Agyekum and Ossom (2015) carried out a study on the awareness and importance of electronic journal usage by faculty members and lecturers in Kumasi Polytechnic, Ghana. The study shows that only 22.2, 11.1, and 11.1% of the respondents use the e-journal for preparing lecture notes, keeping updates and for other purpose, respectively. They also observe that there is evidence that about 47.2% of the respondents used the e-journal for research work. Among the problems faced by respondents when accessing e-journals as indicated in the study, slow internet connectivity recorded the highest response rate with a total of 135 (67.5%). Frequent power outage 39 (19.5%) and lack of proper search strategies 26 (13.0).

Faizul and Naushad (2013) cited in Agyekum and Ossom (2015) observed that most of the users are aware of e-journal and that they are not only using them for building and updating their knowledge but also for collecting relevant materials for their study and research purpose as information can be acquired expeditiously through e-journals. Naushad and Nishi (2011) submitted that electronic journal offers researchers the opportunity to consult more information sources than ever before. In a similar view, Brown et al. (2007) stated that e-journals perform an increasingly important role in research which endanger an ever increasingly demand for new titles and back runs. According to Ray and Joan (1998) cited in Madondo et al. (2017) factors that promote the use of

electronic journals with timely availability, easy access and full text searching of the journals. Dadzie (2005) cited in Madondo et al. (2017) state that the advantages of e-resources include access to information that might be restricted to the user due to geographical location or finances, access to more current information and provision of extensive links to additional resources related to content. In a similar view, Maxymuk (2014) acknowledged that the advantages of electronic journal include no physical space required and accessibility from almost any work station that can be connected remotely to institution network. McMullen (2014) noted that the conversion of a print journal subscription to electronic access resulted in a substantial decreases in cost per use despite an increase in overall subscription. Vasishta and Naviyotu (2011) agreed the most fortunate thing about E-journal is that both libraries and users can conquer their problems of missing issues and delay in receiving the issues.

Ajebomogun (2007) observed that while electronic journals have become essential tools for learning, teaching and research, most of the scholars and researchers are not fully utilising them. Magara and Okolo (2008) argue that the major obstacle to the underutilisation in the use of electronic journals in higher learning institutions was the lack of awareness about the resources. Ojo and Akande (2005) in their study at the University College Hospital, (UCH), Ibadan, Nigeria examined student's access, usage and awareness of electronic resources. They reported that the level of usage of electronic information resources is not high. A major problem identified is lack of information retrieval skills for exploiting electronic resources, thus making the level of usage of electronic resources by medical students very low.

Oduwole and Akpati (2003) observed that electronic resources cut across all members of the university community, that, it was to a greater extent easy to use and were satisfied with search outputs. The constraints identified in their study include insufficient number of terminals available for use, despite high demand and inadequate electricity.

Generally, e-journal is seen as a relevant tool for research and other scholarly work, although with some challenges.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The target population for this study was the academic staff of Rufus Giwa Polytechnic, Owo, Ondo State, Nigeria. This study is a descriptive survey in which questionnaires was used as the instrument for data collection. Descriptive survey were employed because of its ability to use the questionnaire in eliciting information in carrying out the study and it will also permit the description of the current use of the e-journals by the academic staff of Rufus Giwa Polytechnic Owo, Ondo State Nigeria. Purposive sampling technique was used. 200 available academic staff was used as the sample size out of 400 targeted population. Questionnaire was

Table 1. Distribution of respondents by gender (Field Survey, 2015).

Gender	Number	%
Male	153	80
Female	38	20
Total	191	100

Table 2. Faculty of respondents (Field Survey, 2015).

Faculty	Number	%
Engineering	34	18
Applied Science (Formerly known as Faculty of Food Science Technology)	56	29
Agricultural Technology	14	7
Business Studies	27	14
Social Science and Communication Studies (Formerly known as Faculty of Information and General Studies)	25	13
Environmental Studies	30	16
Polytechnic Library	5	3
Total	191	100

Table 3. Usage of e-journals (Field Survey, 2015).

Usage of e-journals	Number	%
Yes	191	100
No	-	-
Total	191	100

used as the instrument for data collection; the questionnaire was in two sections: section A is on the bio-data of the respondents while section B was in line with the research questions raised in the study. 200 questionnaires were administered and a total of 191 were completed and returned. This represented 95.5 response rates from the sample size. The data collected from the respondents were analysed through the use of frequency count and simple percentage.

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 revealed that majority of the respondents were male with 153 (80%), while the female respondents recorded 38 (20%). The findings therefore corroborate Masoumeh (2014) findings where majority of the respondents were male. This finding is in contrast with the findings of Venkateswariu (2015) where most of the respondents in their study are females.

Table 2 revealed that majority of the respondents were from the Faculty of Applied Sciences with a total of 56 (29%). This is followed by the Faculty of Engineering with 34 (18%) while the least is the Polytechnic Library with a total of 5 (3%). The low response rate from the Polytechnic Library may be attributed to the fact that the

Polytechnic Library do not graduate students rather they provide Library Services to the academic community and also engage in the teaching of the Use of Library (LIB101) a compulsory course for all new students.

Table 3 revealed that all the academic staff use e-journals with 191 (100%) response rate.

Table 4 indicates the frequency of usage of e-journals. The table revealed that those that use e-journals occasionally are in majority with 95 (50%) response rate those that use it twice in a month recorded the lowest with 18 (9%).

Table 5 indicates that all the respondents make use of e-journals for research purpose with 126 (66%) agreed and 65 (34%) strongly agreed. The table also revealed that those that use e-journals for the purpose of writing proposal for research grants recorded the least with a total of 79 (41%) agreed and 37 (19%) strongly agreed.

Table 6 revealed the advantages derived by respondents from the use of e-journals. As shown in the table, majority of the academic staff use e-journals because it serves as a good source of information with a total of 130 (90%) agreed, while only 10 (5%) disagreed. This is followed by those that said it is current and timely with a total of 122 (64%) respondents agreed. However,

Table 4. Frequency of using e-journals (Field Survey, 2015).

Frequency	Number	%
Everyday	23	12
Once in a week	28	15
Twice in a week	27	14
Twice in a month	18	9
Occasionally	95	50
Total	191	100

Table 5. Academic purpose of using e-journals (Field Survey, 2015).

Purpose	A		SA		D		SD	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
For Research	126	66	65	34	-	-	-	-
Writing articles for presentations in seminars	96	50	58	30	26	14	12	6
Writing proposal for research	87	46	60	31	23	12	21	11
Writing articles for publications	104	54	65	34	15	8	7	3
Preparation for teaching	104	54	42	22	37	19	8	4
Proposal for research grants	79	41	37	19	31	16	43	23

Table 6. Advantages derived from the use of e-journals (Field Survey, 2015).

Advantages of e-journals	A		SA		D		SD	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Good source of information	130	68	40	21	10	5	11	8
Current and timely	122	64	53	28	7	4	9	8
Saves time	112	57	49	26	15	9	15	9
Ease of storage	98	51	50	26	22	12	22	12
Ease of dissemination	92	48	42	22	24	13	33	17
Ease of access	118	62	50	26	15	9	8	4
Results in better quality	88	46	45	24	23	12	35	18

respondents that agreed with the point that they use e-journal because it results in better quality recorded the lowest with a total of 88 (62%).

Table 7 indicates the various problems encountered while accessing e-journals. Among these problems, slow internet connectivity ranked the highest with a total of 102 (53%) agreed and 56 (29%) strongly agreed. This is followed by frequent power outage with a total of 70 (37%). The major findings are that;

- (1) All the academic staff of Rufus Giwa Polytechnic, Owo use e-journals.
- (2) Majority of the respondents use e-journals occasionally.
- (3) The academic staffs use e-journals for different academic purposes. And all the academic staff agreed to the use of e-journals for research purpose.

(5) Majority of the respondents agreed that the advantage they derived from the use of e-journals is that it is a good source of information. This is followed by respondents that indicated that e-journals are timely and current.

(6) The major problems faced by the respondents were slow internet connectivity, frequent power outage and high prize of article available in some of the e-journals.

Conclusion

From the findings, it was concluded that the academic staff of Rufus Giwa Polytechnic use e-journals and it used for different academic purpose, with the use of e-journals for research purpose having the highest number of respondents. The academic staff also derived some advantages from the usage of e-journals. These include

Table 7. Problems encountered while accessing e-journals.

Problems	A		SA		D		SD	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Difficult to read from the screen	40	21	16	8	38	20	34	18
Slow internet connectivity	102	53	56	29	22	12	11	8
Frequent power outage	70	37	62	32	10	5	-	-
High prize of article available in some of the e-Journals	66	35	68	51	12	6	-	-
Lack of guidance and training	38	20	24	13	44	23	-	-

good source of information, current and timely, time saving, ease of storage, etc. This study has clearly shown that e-journals are valuable tool for research in academic community, especially among the academic staff. For e-journals to be well accessed by the academic staff of Rufus Giwa Polytechnic, the problems encountered by the academic staff, while accessing e-journal such as slow internet connectivity, frequent power outage and high price of articles in some e-journals need to be addressed.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

- (1) Internet bandwidth should be increased by the internet service provider in the institution
- (2) Regular power supply should be ensured by the management of Rufus Giwa Polytechnic, Owo
- (3) The authority of the institution should subscribe to e-journals and made it available to their academic staff free of charge or by asking them to pay a token fee
- (4) Prices of articles in e-journals should be made affordable by the publishers of e-journals.
- (5) The management of the institution should ensure regular training on practical use of e-journals in the institution, especially among the academic staff.
- (6) Other researchers interested in this type of study should extend it to the students of the institution.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The author has not declared any conflict of interests.

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