ATTITUDES OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN TOWARDS COMPUTERIZED SERVICES AT THE KENNETH DIKE LIBRARY

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ABSTRACT

This study surveyed the attitude of undergraduate students of the University Ibadan towards computerized services at the Kenneth Dike Library. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. Data was collected through questionnaire and observation. A sample of 120, with 113 used for analysis, was taken from the study population of 1,119 undergraduate library users of the university. The study's findings revealed availability of CD-ROM (Compact Disc Read Only Memory), OPAC (On-line Public Access Catalogue) and Internet services in the library. The respondents are favourably disposed towards the computerized services in the library. There were however, the problem of inadequate facilities and disruptive power supply as major hindrances to

of the computerized services. The study concluded that there is a *attitude from the undergraduate students of the university* *computerized services in the library. It therefore recommended* *tion of library's own generating set and also that the library* *the level of awareness of its users towards the computerized* *in the library.*

INTRODUCTION

A University library strives to play a leading role in the teaching, learning and research activities of its parent institution. It should be aggressively dynamic in the provision of its services and manned by personnel of the highest quality, who possess adequate background, appropriate professional training and experience, and the proper orientation to meet the challenges of modern university academic. User expectation from any information system is to make available directly or remotely and in real time the needed information, format notwithstanding. In the university environment, the library a major information providing system supports teaching, learning and research with information materials of various types (Anunobi & Edoka, 2010).

The advent of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has however drastically changed the nature of traditional library services. Perhaps in any discussion of application of modern technology in the library, as revealed by Ukoh (1984), the first thing that comes to mind is the computer. The computer has made such a tremendous impact on the organization, management and dissemination of information that it readily commends itself to any library ready to accept it. When computers first made their impact on libraries especially with the automation of house-keeping routines, resource managers had expected financial savings as machine took over the work of humans. However, in higher education, the result has been that automation has enabled institutions to cope with great increases in demand without increases in staffing and how they are able to provide a much wider range of services, to improve the quality of work performed by students, simultaneously saving them time when searching for information.

Computers in libraries have proved useful in assisting the information processing aspects of traditional library operations like acquisitions, registration of readers, circulation functions and keeping track of reading

and research interests of users. Thus, repetitive and routine data processing tasks, which characterized most library operations are effectively and efficiently handled by computers. The computerization/automation of university library services brings with it many benefits, meant to improve the quality of services that the library renders to its users. Some of the benefits of automation include: enhanced productivity, increased output, more productive tasks in documentation and information processing, network enhancement and perfect control of records management and retrieval.

The computerization of university library, therefore, leads to a change in the way the library offers services to its clienteles. Change is a natural phenomenon in growth and development. Human beings are known to respond differently to changing situations thus, reflecting in their attitudes towards the object of change. Fear of change is similarly a natural human reaction. Every human being develops control over familiar situations, and in most cases, feels comfortable with the familiar rather than the unfamiliar.

A computerized library comprises not only facilities and formats, but also the essential human elements: users and staff. The success of any library system, after all, rests not on how well the design works on paper, but on how readily people will accept it and how effectively they can use it. And it is the users of the library that embrace or reject the new technologies; fulfill or frustrate the intentions of system designers and experience anxiety and disorientation as a result of their use. Attitudes are enduring patterns of belief, believed to be predictive of behavior, reflecting people's biases, inclinations or tendencies that influence their response to situations, activities, people or programme goals.

Students varied in their information needs and their seeking attitudes. They constitute a part of society who is fortunate to have access at little or no cost to themselves a variety of computerized services in their institutions' libraries. This is made possible because universities use considerable proportions of their budget to provide this technologies for their students to assist in the teaching, learning and research processes.

One of the major barriers in implementing new innovations in libraries is not only technical but also attitudinal, as positive attitude towards technology contributes to the better performance in a technologically advanced environment. However, little is known about student attitudes

20

towards computerized services in their institutions' libraries and without a better understanding, it remains difficult for these libraries to effectively provide these services for their users.

BRIEF ON KENNETH DIKE LIBRARY

Kenneth Dike Library was established in 1948 at the inception of the University College, Ibadan; and used to be known as the University of Ibadan Library until 1988 when it was renamed Kenneth Dike library in honour of its first African Vice-Chancellor, Late Professor Kenneth Onwuka Dike. The library is the largest of its kind in Africa, south of the Sahara, housing over 500,000 volumes of books and about 6,000 periodical titles (current and non- current). It operates a library system that comprises 29 faculties/departmental libraries. The library was established primarily to serve the interests of the university community. However, because of its unique position as the first and largest university library in Nigeria, staff and students of other universities, may be permitted to use the library resources for short periods, after having obtained permission from the University Librarian.

AUTOMATION IN NIGERIAN UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

Awareness of the need for automation in Nigerian University libraries date back to the early 1970s'. The University of Ibadan issued its first edition of the computer produced catalogues of serials in the library in 1975. In its introduction, the catalogue identified the benefits of computerization as including accuracy, speed and consistency, noting the production of the catalogue with the aid of the computer as a solution to the problem of previously expensive, time-consuming and irregular editions or supplements. At that time, there was a growing concern about crises in information retrieval and difficulty meeting increasing demands of library users.

A report submitted in 1976 to the library management committee of the Ahmadu Bello University complained of the inadequacies of the existing Browne charging system including, slow operation, difficulty with knowing the individual readers' holding, laborious and frustrating searches for recall and reservation, as well as high error rate in filing. Members of the circulation staff were anxious for a smoother and more efficient system. Thus the Nigerian university libraries needed to resort to automation if they

were to cope with increasing demands on their services. Other statements of dissatisfaction with the manual circulation system came from the University of Ife, now Obafemi Awolowo University and again from the University of Ibadan (Ehikhamenor, 1990).

Serious application of information technology to library processes started in Nigerian university libraries in the early 1990s. Individual efforts in this direction such as those by universities in Lagos, Ibadan and Zaria in the mid 1970s and 80s failed largely because of lack of technical know-how on software development and maintenance of hardware (Alabi, 1987). However, from the early 90s till date, more successful implementation efforts have been recorded (Idowu and Mabawonku, 1999). The greatest impetus to library automation in Nigerian university libraries so far has come from the World Bank. In 1991, most of the federal university libraries were supplied with books and journals under the NUC/World Bank credit facility agreement. One of the conditions in the agreement was that the libraries would automate their services.

NUC promised to offer one micro-computer and a 4-LAN version of TINLIB (The Information Navigator) software to each university library. The Kenneth Dike Library, University of Ibadan, which had already gone beyond the initial stages of TINLIB installation, was given an updated version of TINLIB capable of driving 20 workstations in a network (Ogunleye, 1997). It installed the TINLIB library software in 1992. Presently, the circulation and cataloging modules of the package are in use. Other university libraries that use the TINLIB software are those in Ilorin, Ogbomoso, Abeokuta, Nsukka, Bauchi, Minna and Lagos State University Lagos. (Idowu and Mabawonku, 1999).

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The use of computerized system cuts across all professions in any society. Awareness of the need for automation in Nigerian university libraries has become very popular. In the library, a computerized cataloguing system enables the use of centrally produced bibliographic records. Other such services offered to users in libraries include e-mails, on-line database/ electronic journals access, CD-ROM technology and OPAC.

22

The role of the information provider is to understand the needs of the users and their attitudes towards seeking their needs. Only then can users optimize the benefits that such services tend to offer. However, not much is known about the attitudes of undergraduate students of the University of Ibadan towards computerized services in the institution's library. It therefore becomes imperative to take a closer look at those attitudes, which have an effect on how students make use of the computerized services and will in turn affect the overall success of the library's computerization programme.

STUDY JUSTIFICATION

Previous research studies have discussed the awareness of the need for automation in Nigerian university libraries as well as the various computerized services and also the problems associated with it in Nigeria. However, none has discussed the attitude of users to automation and computerized services in Nigerian University libraries which justifies the need for this research study.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study are to:

(i) find out the computerized services offered by the Kenneth Dike Library, University of Ibadan to undergraduate students;

(ii) determine the skills required by users to make use of the services;

(iii) find out what skills the users possess to benefit from the services;

(iv) examine the students' attitude towards computerized library services;

(v) find out the terms of provision of the services to the library users; and

(vi) find out the hindrances to the use of the computerized services in the library and how such could be curbed;

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study has the following research questions:

1. What computerized services does the Kenneth Dike University library offers its undergraduate student users?

2. What does the computerized service require in terms of new skills on the part of the users?

3. What skills do the users possess to avail themselves of the services?

4. What is the attitude of the students to these computerized services?

5. What are the conditions required for the provision of the services?

6. What are the barriers to the use of such services in the library and how can such barriers be removed?

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This aims at contributing to the limited information on the attitude of students towards computerized library services. This study becomes very relevant because the attitude of the students could affect the success or failure of the computerization programme. Since not much has been done in this area, the study therefore attempts to fill a gap created by this dearth of literature.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Concept Attitude

Attitudes are enduring systems of positive or negative evaluations, emotional feeling and tendencies with respect to social objects. Attitude can be described as settled behaviour or manner of acting, as representation of feeling or opinion. It refers to certain predisposition to act or react in a positive or negative way towards certain situations and ideas. Reactions can be pre-conceived notions, ideas, fears, convictions etc. Behavioural scientists have given high importance to the study of human beings and his surroundings in the context of attitude.

From a physiological view, Anastasi (1992) defines an attitude as "a tendency to react favourably or unfavourably towards a designated class of stimuli such as a national or ethnic group, a custom or an institution". He further explained that in objective terms, the concept of attitude may connote response consistency with regard to certain categories of stimuli. In actual practice, the term was frequently associated with social stimuli and with emotionally toned responses. Although a great variety of definitions of attitude can be found in the psychological literature, the most frequently occurring features are the positive or negative (affective) tone and the postural characteristics, that is, always predisposes its holder to one posture or the other.

As often hidden but nonetheless fundamental sources of our social behaviour, attitudes have been accorded a great deal of attention by psychologists. Social philosophers, scientists, educationists and even action-oriented pragmatists have used the concept of attitude to offer a theoretical explanation for socially significant behaviours. Closely related to attitude are beliefs and opinions, with all the three involving some aspects of an individuals' cognitive organisation of his/her world. However, they vary mainly along two dimensions viz: the degree to which they are explicitly expressed; and the amount of affective tone they contain.

Like attitudes, beliefs tend to be indirectly expressed in behaviours, usually verbal behaviour. They may be more specifically directed towards particular problem as they are often neutral in affective tone than attitudes even though they involve acceptance of proposition. Opinions, on the other hand, are verbally expressed beliefs or attitudes. Opinions are by definition explicit. They are more likely than beliefs to have strong affective tone. Adoption of some positions on a given issue normally leads to an opinion. Opinion is sometimes differentiated from attitude, but the proposed distinctions are neither consistent nor logically defensible. More often, the two terms are used interchangeably.

ATTITUDES TOWARDS LIBRARY COMPUTERIZATION

The success of efforts at computerization in the library depends not only on how well the system works, but also on how well it is received by the intended users, which is reflected in users' attitude towards it and predictive of their behaviour. Positive attitude contributes to its success, while negative attitude only detracts from the merits of the system because

it translates into its low use or non-use. Some studies have however shown generally positive attitude towards computerization in the library.

Allen (1989) analyzed some studies undertaken to analyse patron's response to using bibliographic databases on CD-ROM in academic libraries and found that patrons prefer CD-ROM to comparable printed reference tools. Lombardo and Condic (2000) set out to determine user acceptance of the On-line Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) and found that users overwhelmingly preferred the OPAC and found it easy to use. Similarly, Isman (2004) found that students in Eastern Mediterranean University have very positive attitude towards Internet use; just as Allen (1997) found that the students surveyed were receptive towards electronic information resources while the internet was their most used of these resources available to them. Even Idowu (1997) found that the Nigerian university librarians have a positive disposition towards the computerized systems.

Meanwhile, the proliferation of universities has added to the problems of the universities and their libraries so much that now their future seems uncertain. Then the problems of ICT's in Nigerian university libraries as related to library development. Ever since the problem of literature explosion became noticeable in the 1970s, the developed world has devised various systems to facilitate the flow of information within and across the countries, and developing countries are invited to take advantage of these devices. However, this invitation is not readily accepted by the developing nations like Nigeria because of some mitigating factors. These include human factors, fear, and the level of development-cum infrastructure of the nation and so on. The case of application of modern technology in the library should start with the acceptance of the new technology as vital to the effective performance of the functions of the library (Ogunsola, 2004)

Tamuno and Ojedokun (1987) observed that the implementation of IT is still very problematic in Nigerian academic libraries, explaining further that the old traditions of library collection handling, the insufficient knowledge of library staff on usage of modern information technologies and the poor financial situation are some of the problems creating obstacle in the introduction of new information technologies in Nigerian academic libraries.

Ehikhamenor (1990) explains that automation efforts in Nigerian university libraries have been persistently frustrated by lack of man power, funds and computing facilities, as well as poor maintenance of equipment and destructive interruption of electric power. He went further to state that only a few libraries have a clear automation goal that seems realistic presently.

Similarly, in a study on the IT facilities in research/university libraries carried out by Idowu and Mabawonku (1999), the survey results showed that the most severe inhibitor to complete computerized systems in the libraries was inadequate funding by the government. Other inhibitors were low man power, irregular supply of electricity, poor maintenance culture, lack of basic infrastructure and lack of spare parts. The reason why funds may have been rated as the most severe inhibitor may not be unconnected with cost of equipment, software and systems support. They are quite expensive in Nigeria, supporting Ehikhamenor (1990) who identified economic factor as an inhibitor to successful information transfer and implementation.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research design employed in carrying out this study is descriptive survey design. The total number of undergraduate students in the University of Ibadan during the 2008/2009 academic session stood at 3,608. (Source: Planning Office, University of Ibadan). Out of this number, available records of undergraduate library users as at the time of this study indicated a total of that 1,119; representing the study population.

The purposive sampling technique was adopted for the study. A sample size of 120 (20%) of total population was selected for the study. The questionnaire was used to collect data complemented with observation while the descriptive statistics was used for the analysis of the data.

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Characteristics of the Respondents

Out of the 120 copies of the questionnaire distributed to the respondents, 133 (94%) were completed, returned and found useable for the purpose of this analysis. A higher number of male 77 (68.3%) as against 36 (31.7%) females, constitute the study's respondents. The predominant age

bracket of the respondents was, expectedly 21-25 (69.7%) and then 26-30 (17.9%) while 31-35 (8.0%) and 36-40 (4.4%).

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by Faculty

Faculty	Frequency	Percentage
Arts	12	11.0
Science	17	14.9
Social science	20	18.1
Education	24	21.3
Law	13	11.7
Technology	14	12.4
Agriculture and Forestry	12	10.6
Total	**113**	**100.0**

From the table above, the Faculty of Education had the highest number of respondents (21.3%) while Arts and Agriculture & Forestry had the least (11.0%) and 10.6%) respectively. Computerized services that are available to respondents in the library are presented in Table 2 below:

Table 2: Computerized Services Available in the Library

Services	Respondents	Percentage
CD-ROM	106	94
OPAC	103	92
INTERNET	113	100.0

N=113

The table shows that respondents are largely aware of computerized services available in the library; as all of them indicated so for Internet services availability, followed by CD-ROM (94%) and OPAC (92%) respectively; which is a good development indeed. On their usage of computerized services, (92%) indicated for Internet; 55% for OPAC and 37.9% for CD-ROM. On required skills needed to enable them use the services, majority claimed that there was no such need as only 6% indicated to the contrary with respect only to OPAC searching skills. This is probably due to the fact that 94.7% of them claimed to possess computer literacy skills already. Both CD-ROM and OPAC services in the library are free as against Internet service, which attracts a fee of ₦100:00 per hour.

Opinions on computerized services in the library were sought towards understanding their attitude in this regard, using the Likert type scale.

Table 3: Attitude of Respondents towards Computerized Services

Item	Item description	SA/A	U	D/SD	Total
1.	I prefer traditional manual library services to computerized ones	14 (12.8%)	15 (13.1%)	84 (74.1%)	113 (100%)
2.	I am in favour of all automation efforts in my institution's library.	81 (71.6%)	25 (22.4%)	7 (6.0%)	113 (100%)
3.	I tend to avoid using the computerized services for I cannot do that effectively	73 (64.9%)	33 (29.1%)	7 (6.0%)	113 (100%)
4.	My library usage has increased as a result of the computerized services	91 (80.5%)	8 (6.7%)	14 (12.8%)	113 (100%)
5.	I avoid the use of computerized services in the library whenever I can	97 (86.6%)	8 (6.7%)	8 (6.7%)	113 (100%)
6.	I like the computerized services offered in my institution's library	98 (88.9%)	8 (7.1%)	7 (6.0%)	113 (100%)
7.	My library usage has decreased as result of computerized services	7 (6.0%)	67 (59.6%)	39 34.4%	113 (100%)
8.	I do not know how to use a computer and so stay away from the new system in the library to avoid embarrassment	7 (6.0%)	0 (0)	106 (94.0%)	113 (100%)
9.	Library automation allows users to be creative	61 (53.9%)	39 (34.4%)	13 (11.7%)	113 (100%)
10.	Computerized services offered in the library make library usage more interesting.	83 (73.4%)	26 (22.6%)	4 (3.9%)	113 (100%)
11.	Computerized services increase efficiency in the library.	59 (52.8%)	52 (45.7%)	2 (1.4%)	113 (100%)
12.	The availability of computerized services in the library improves the quality of services rendered by the library.	83 (73.4%)	18 (16.3%)	12 (10.3%)	113 (100%)
13.	I spend less time in the library to get the information I need because of the computerized services.	30 (27.0%)	45 (40.0%)	38 (33.s0%)	113 (100%)
14.	The computer system is not working most of the time, so it is frustrating to use the library.	25 (22.3%)	27 (23.7%)	61 (54.0%)	113 (100%)

KEY:

SA/A	Strongly Agree and Agree
U	Undecided
D/SD	Disagree and Strongly Disagree

From Table above, it seems that respondents have positive attitudes towards computerized services in the library; especially that nearly all the positive statements attracted very favourable responses by majority of respondents while the negative ones received otherwise. These findings are in line with some previous findings by: Allen, (1989), Schiutz and Salomon (1990), Idowu (1997), Lombardo and Condie (2000) and Isman (2004), who have found in their previous studies positive attitude towards computerization and electronic information resources in the libraries studied.

The next two tables present findings on barriers to use of the computerized services in the library and suggested solution as to how they can be removed.

Table 4: Barriers to the Use of the Computerized Services

Barriers	Respondents	Percentage
Cost of services	8	7.1
Aversion to change	0	0
The need to learn new skills	15	13.5
Computer phobia	0	0
Inadequate facilities	91	80.9
Disruptive power supply	110	97.5

N=113

Expectedly, inadequate facilities (80.9%)and disruptive power supply (97.5%) are the two most significant barriers to the use of the computerized services in the library. This is in line with the findings of previous studies by Idowu and Mabawonku (1999), Ehikhamenor (1990), Ogbomo (2009) and Bamigboye & Ojo (2010).

Table 4.2.11: Suggested solutions to the Barriers of Usage

Suggested Solutions	Frequency	Percentage
Reduction in cost of services	8	7.1%
Provision of back-up power supply	110	97.5%
Provision of adequate facilities	91	80.9%
Teaching users the needed skills to enable them use the computerized services	14	12.1%
Enlightenment campaigns on the benefits of the use of computers in the library	2	1.4%
Returning to manual system	0	0

On ways of overcoming the identified barriers, majority suggested the provision of: back-up power supply (97.5%) and adequate facilities (80.9%); thereby suggesting that the current facilities available in the library are not enough to satisfy the demand for their use. Other suggestions include: teaching users the required skills for its use (12.1%). Interestingly, none suggested the return to manual system as a solution.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings above, it is concluded that in spite of inadequate facilities available for and the disruptive power supply, which constitute major barriers to its use, the undergraduate student users of the University of Ibadan have a favourable disposition towards the computerized services offered by their library. Thus, the following are recommended for enhanced computerized services provision by the library:

1. Acquisition of a generator for the library is imperative to offset the problem of power outage which has come to be a significant aspect of our national live. Only then can the occurrence of interrupted computerized services could be guaranteed.

2. Awareness campaign to users who are yet unaware of such services provision by the library; since there cannot be enough of such a campaign.

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32

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