



**FEDERAL UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY
MINNA**

**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
LIBRARY WEBSITES AND
INFORMATION DISSEMINATION
IN THE DIGITAL ERA:
TRENDS AND CHALLENGES**

BY:

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**INAUGURAL LECTURE
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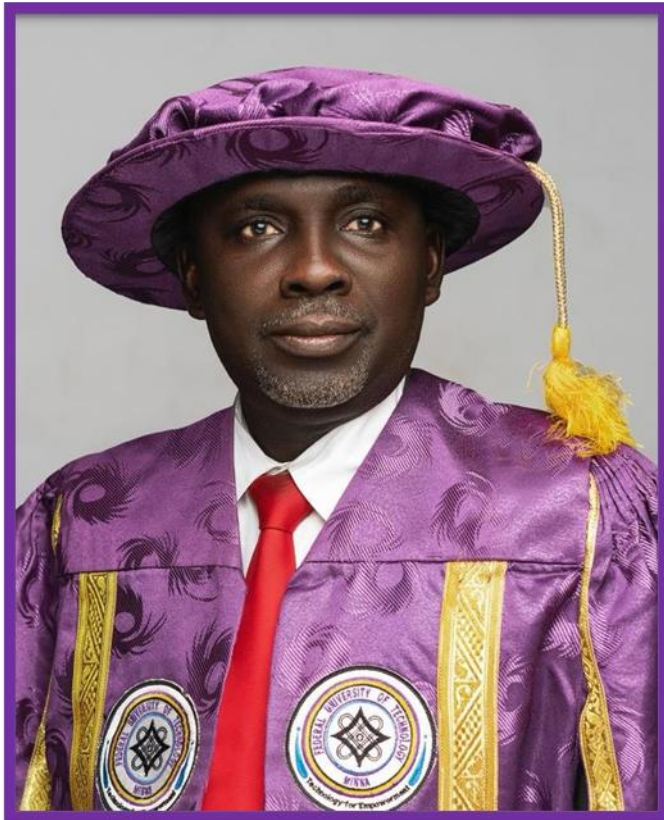
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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LIBRARY WEBSITES AND INFORMATION DISSEMINATION IN THE DIGITAL ERA: TRENDS AND CHALLENGES

Library and Information Science as a profession trains people on how to organize and manage library resources. It is a profession that is full of people passionate about making a positive change in the world, and tend to be happy about what they do. It is equally a profession that trains and graduates individuals who work in various information centres such as Public, Special, School, Academic, National and University Libraries.

Often people ask the question, Where is Science in Library and Information Science (LIS) as a profession? Today I wish to tell us that ordering and cataloging of information resources is where the "science" comes in library science. The "Science" in LIS lies in its systematic study of how information is created, organized, retrieved, evaluated and used. It is not "Science" in the laboratory sense, but in the sense of apply theory, research methods, data analysis and evidenced-based practice to information problems. Librarians' duties include organizing library materials so that patrons can easily find what they need. Assembling and indexing databases of library materials are also parts of the librarians' roles. Some librarians specialize in technical services, where they obtain, prepare and classify new materials. Apart from giving names to information resources, it is a discipline concerned with human behaviour and society; such as interaction with users, seeking their resources on education, communication, psychology etc; like many of the social sciences. Furthermore, training both in school and on-the-job, allows librarians to complete a variety of complex tasks such as cataloguing, classification, circulation, systems management and web design. Librarians may also be data base designers, budget managers, resource selectors etc. Many of these complex roles go on behind the scenes in the libraries.

What is a University Library?

University library is defined as a library or library system established, administered and funded by a university to meet the information, research and curriculum needs of its students, faculty and staff (Reitz, 2004). A university library is a part of a university set-up. University library is an example of an academic library. It is a library that is attached to a higher education institution and serves two complementary purposes: to support the curriculum and to support research in the university by faculty and students. A fundamental responsibility of a university library is to procure and provide various information resources for its users (Oyedum and Nwalo, 2011). In summary, university libraries are libraries that are dedicated to support university education and teaching, or a specialized academic library institution for the university community and general public, usually managed by librarians.

Who is a Librarian? A librarian is popularly referred to as information professional. A person who is well versed in collecting, recording, storing, organising, preserving, retrieving, and disseminating information in various formats. He is that professional that has fulfilled the requirements in the science of library and information with the required qualification to practice.

He is usually in charge of a library or has been specially trained to work in a library in order to manage books and other information sources in all formats. In other words, he is a person who works professionally in a library, providing access to information and sometimes social or technical programming to users. In addition, librarians provide instruction on information literacy (<https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/librarian>).

Classes of Librarians and their Duties

There are different classes of librarians in this modern era, including public service librarians, reference and research librarians, technical service librarians, collections development librarians, archivists,

electronic resources librarians, outreach librarians, librarians in medical libraries and school librarians. The general duties of each are outlined by class as shown below

Public Service Librarians - spend their time working with the public in many local libraries worldwide. They provide proper material for each age range from childhood to adulthood. A public service librarian advocates reading competence with many libraries offering services for children that aid in early learning.

Reference and Research Librarians - specialize in aiding in research. An interview is often performed with the individual requesting research aid to help organize the proper materials and services that will be needed for the research. Research often involves a very specific subject and a reference and research librarian will give directions on the proper database needed and the use of the database, along with locating and organizing any specialized materials that will be needed. Reference service could be defined as the culmination of all library activities aimed at facilitating the use of the library and its resources. Reference service in libraries most often involves direct, personal assistance to readers seeking information. Almost all libraries provide reference services via the telephone, and in many libraries one can email a reference question, or ask a Librarian or a reference librarian who will mail back with the answers (Dawha and Oyedum, 2015).

Technical Service Librarians - are the staff involved in ordering materials and subscriptions, as well as any other equipment needed by the library. Librarians working in this unit supervise new materials and over-see the processing and cataloging of each one. Excellent organizational skills are required for this position and strong communication skills are suggested as well as an avid interest in research.

Archivists - are often specialized librarians. They handle many manuscripts, documents and records, varying by country or region. There are many paths taken to reach this profession and the duties can vary between countries.

Electronic Resources Librarians - are responsible for the management of the databases licensed from third-party vendors. Librarians in this field need experience with licensing for electronic resources including individual journals, databases, and e-books. They will also need to have strong troubleshooting skills and a good knowledge of the use of these resources. These librarians are good in handling new technology to gather, store, manipulate and transfer information (Oyedum, 2003).

Outreach Librarians - are responsible for promoting library resources and services, as well as working to develop research proficiency in students. These classes of librarians are active in social networking forums on campuses, making visits to residence halls, and even physical and on-line exhibit development.

School Librarians - aid in the educational needs of students directly, through the latest information technology as well as traditional materials. These classes of librarians work with students, promote students' education, direct them in the use of the systems available in the library, acquire the needed materials for classroom work, as well as recommend the correct materials needed for research and learning.

Librarians in Medical Libraries - focus on helping people access information about medical sciences and health care. They can be found working in hospitals, insurance companies, medical schools, and other facilities that deal with medical information.

Serials Librarians - keep track of all serials in the library, like magazines, journals, and periodicals, and keep up to date with all the subscriptions the library has on these publications. They stamp anything new that comes in, add a strip so that it will beep when someone tries to

take it out of the library, add a reinforced binding if necessary and shelve it. They also dispose of old publications.

Catalog Librarians - analyse a book by identifying the author, title, publication date, publication place, edition, ISBN number, illustrations, subject, size etc of a book. The catalog librarian then puts that information into a Machine Readable Cataloging format (MARC format) that lets the library catalog find the book one is looking for when one performs a search

(<https://www.careerexplorer.com/careers/librarian/> and

<https://work.chron.com/professional-duties-librarian-11973.html>)

Ladies and gentlemen, please permit me to inform you that all these duties performed by the librarians in various capacities and positions they occupy are also direct ways of relating to professionals in other disciplines.

Relationship of Libraries to Other Disciplines

Relationship is the way two or more people or things are connected, or the state of being connected. Thus, relationship of librarianship to other disciplines refers to connection of Library Science to other disciplines. In other words, it is the extent to which library services affect people in other professions (Oyedum, 2012).

Before the introduction of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in library services, library users visit libraries to satisfy their information needs. Students, scholars and administrators visit their academic libraries for knowledge acquisition, while the other categories of information seekers such as the farmers, artisans etc visit public libraries for their information needs.

The advent and rapid growth of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) have transformed the traditional libraries into automated, electronic, virtual and digital libraries. Computer and information technology has not only brought tremendous change and

impact on all types of library services but has also made library services and materials visible, with different libraries giving access to their library materials as well as gaining access to catalogues of other libraries around the world (Akawu *et al*, 2020). This revolution has actually changed the library scenario, most especially in academic institutions of higher learning. This shift is imperative based on the need of the moment to make research more productive, disseminate information accurately, establish a strong network system among all university libraries and also satisfy the information needs of every information seeker(Oyedum *et al*, 2015).

The introduction of ICT in library services has altered the ways in which time and distance affect information service delivery in many sectors of the economy such as the agricultural, environmental, engineering, social sciences, arts and health sciences to mention but a few and these services are provided with little or no error. For instance, in agriculture, the generation and application of agricultural knowledge is increasingly important, especially for the small farmers, who need relevant information in order to improve, sustain and diversify their farm enterprises. Basically, ICT enhances how we use, compute and communicate information to the people. Agriculture requires substantial knowledge transfer to a farmer and among farmers, including information about successful farming practices, new technologies or controls of pest and disease outbreaks as well as new market. Also important is information on how to gather as well as provide better storage facilities, improved transportation links, better prices of inputs and outputs, collective negotiations with buyers and information on weather (Sharma, 2014).

LIS relationship with Medicine as a discipline

Information Science is an interdisciplinary field primarily concerned with the gathering/collection, classification, manipulation, storage, retrieval, movement, dissemination and protection of Information.

As a profession, Medicine is the Science that deals with prevention, curing and treating of diseases. It is the Science that deals with the

maintenance of health and the prevention, alleviation or cure of diseases.

However, with the advent of technology this Science has advanced from simple use of herbs, shrubs and vegetables to application of high technology and scientific services using different equipment. This is often called HIT (Health Information Technology) or HIS (Health Information Science) which are services easily provided by the librarians to medical practitioners and this has significantly enhanced the quality and efficiency of their service delivery to patients.

Below are few direct ways that Information Science relates to the Medical profession: librarians provide health professionals with information on the production and existence of new drugs in the market; Information gathering/Collection on Health Issues; easy communication of health/medical advancements between fellow Medical Professionals using a properly set Information System such as Internet postings, newspaper publications, publication in grey literature such as pamphlets, informal information dissemination-eg people, air transmission etc

Information Science has allowed the analysis of large medical samples in large measurements and in more subgroups than had been previously practiced. This is with the aid of new advanced and efficient computers and computerized equipment. For example, a graphical user interface in a particular hospital known as Computerized Patient Record System (CPRS) usually produced by the information professionals allows health care/medical professionals to review and update a Patient's Electronic Medical record anywhere in the vicinity of over 1000 buildings or hospitals.

The relationship between **LIS and Computer Science Professionals** could be summarized in this order: -Computer Science deals with use of computers to process information fast.

LIS train scholars that produce computers and Information and Communication Technology facilities such as Internet facilities that are used in all sectors of life today; similarly, LIS as one of the existing disciplines acquires computer facilities and use them in libraries for quick, fast and accurate services; the idea of processing,

preserving/storing and disseminating of information to users also involve social duties of library and information science; computers are used for basic information science works e.g. cataloguing, indexing, charging and discharging, fraud detecting, manipulation and calculations etc, all these services are geared towards improving or transforming human beings for natural development in the society.

LIS vis-a-vis Archival Science

Archival Science deals with history of knowledge that could only be found in archives; Information Science (IS) deals with recorded information in various writing systems like papyrus, paper and microfiche and how to further locate, retrieve and disseminate some archival resources in the libraries and make them available to users when the need arises;-IS usually applied in analyzing history and documents traces with the aid of IT the recorded information in the Internet and this helps one to know/appreciate where he is coming from, where he is presently and where he is going to; they both deal with preservation and conservation of information materials for future

LIS vis-a-vis Law as a discipline

Information Scientists train law librarians and impart techniques of information searching in them; lawyers are always in need of diverse information in order to handle the cases before them. This is why there is need for them to relate with Information Scientists in order to get adequate assistance in their information searching; it is only the Information Scientists that can assist lawyers in effective information searching which could involve search for past or present information sources; information scientists are in a better position to search, download, retrieve and disseminate information to any lawyer in need of information and information sources. Thus, some LIS Professionals are regarded as Law Librarians.

Table 1: Libraries Versus Other Disciplines according to Rowley *et al* (2020)

Relationship	Agriculture	Engineering	Health/ Medical Sciences	Law	ICT	Sciences	Social Sciences	Education
Librarians as Instructors	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
Librarians as Researchers	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
Librarians as Resource persons	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
Librarians as Selectors	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
Librarians Recommend Information Resources	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
Librarians as Locators	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
Librarians as Analysers	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
Librarians as Organisers	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
Librarians as Educators	✓	✓	✓					

It is important to point out that all these duties performed by librarians are direct or indirect ways of disseminating information. Information dissemination activities such as digital services and face-to-face interactions could lead to offering services such as counseling, referral, practical help / practical information for problem- solving, advice, advocacy, community education, etc to users. All these portray how libraries relate to various disciplines. Thus, the pertinent question is:

What is information dissemination?

Information is defined as one or more statements or facts that are received by a human and that have some form of worth to the recipient. It could also be described as “news or facts about something,” Similarly, information dissemination is to distribute or broadcast information. This refers to an active distribution and the spread of information of all kinds to the users or those audiences that deserve it. It is also the means by which facts are distributed to the public at large.

The means by which people and various organizations distribute information has exploded within the last several decades. Oral and visual communications were the first means humans used to distribute information, followed by written communication. All means of communication stem from these basic means.

Traditional and social media represent the two general forms by which humans disseminate information in contemporary society. Traditional media of communication could also be described as channels or technological devices through which messages are conveyed to a large and heterogeneous audience. They are the vehicles that are used for conveying messages from a source to a large destination. Traditional media include phones, television, oral communication and print publications. Social media encompasses text messages, micro blogs and online news outlets. Improvements in technology have made these outlets increasingly popular and have become the main ways of distributing information because of the speed in which dissemination occurs. Traditional media, while slower, is still an effective way of communication distribution.

Importance of Information Dissemination

According to Dhawan (2002) the following are some of the importance of information dissemination: Information dissemination is an important and critical factor for the success of people awareness programmes, activities in adult education and learning programmes; sensitizes all learners on the importance and relevance of information; enhances awareness of various communities on their rights and privileges as well as responsibilities; is a vital tool that enables skills acquisition among the undergraduate and graduate students; refines knowledge that already exists, upgrades existing level of skills, as well as nurtures and shapes innate potential and talent of individuals and groups in a society.

Librarians' Role in Information Dissemination

Librarians as custodians of knowledge play a lot of roles in information dissemination. Fagbola *et al*, (2011) opined that information

dissemination is key in libraries and the proliferation of ICT has made it more robust. Some of these roles are through: acquisition of information resources; cataloguing and classification exercise; indexing and abstracting exercise; compilation of table of content; shelving and shelve-reading exercise; use of Library Website and Social Media such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, Google, LinkedIn, Email services, Short Messages, Library blogs, Graphic design using Canva, Plotagon device, 3D Animation device, Library Website and Library Repository to mention but a few.

Information Dissemination Versus Change

Librarians' dissemination of information has brought a lot of changes in the life of individuals and the society at large. Some of these changes are mainly observed in individuals who in turn transform the society: Information dissemination reforms people; eradicate ignorance and offers knowledge; is a way of empowering people with education; gives room for survival and self-development; raises socio-economic status of people; gives people some places to go when they have to stay where they are; helps in making proper decisions; serves as instrument of developing intelligence and; enhances good character formation as a product of books disseminated by the librarians.

Information dissemination activities of today are effectively achieved in environments where functioning digital technologies such as a good library infrastructure like computer hardware, software and peripherals, computer network, telecommunications and email system, Internet and intranet, wireless equipment and the Library Websites are available.

What is Digital Era?

The simplest way to describe digital era is that it is the environment that uses digital technologies. It is also referred to as Information Age. This is a period that information demand for decision making is very high; with higher forms of technology to ensure satisfaction of these demands.

Digital era is a period where a shift process occurs from industrial-based to an information based economy using computer or other

technology devices as medium of communication. That is, the 21st century shift from the industrial revolution to a new economic domination of information technology. It is the era where Physical facilities such as computers and related electronic resources have come to play a central role in education. Electronic resources are the prime ingredients and they serve as the most important part of academic library resources today. The academic libraries often prefer electronic resources to substitute print collections for optimum use, especially as most libraries have problem of adequate physical space for users (Oyedum, 2011; Oyedum, 2012a and Oyedum, 2012b).

The era where digital technologies play a prominent role in shaping up and regulating the behaviours, performances, standards, etc., of societies, communities, organizations and individuals is the era that is under a massive influence of the Internet and digital technologies such as cloud computing, mobile devices, and virtual reality. Digital era is the environment that uses digital technologies. In summary, it is a term used to describe today's era, in which digital technologies are used in almost every aspect of life.

Roles of University Libraries in the Digital Era

The 21st century is known as the “Technology Era” where technological gadgets are seemingly competing with libraries in information storage, processing and dissemination. Easy access to computers and information via World Wide Web changed the library landscape; patrons now have options of accessing information at a click on their desktops, laptops or mobile devices, and it appears that libraries and all that they offer might no more be the first port of call for information seekers. Search engines such as Google continue to expand their services in information retrieval with Google Assistant, Map and other features that link data sets, making access to information very fast and inexpensive. The Internet has become one of the fastest and inexpensive ways to obtain information about almost everything. Search engines are very popular and useful. Information has become an economic commodity, a resource which could be bought and sold for profit (Ogunjimi, 2020).

Today, librarians concentrate more on online acquisition of information resources, cataloguing and classification exercise, indexing and abstracting exercise and use of Social Media for information services. Librarians provide literacy training to patrons to ensure that they know how to effectively and efficiently access, use and evaluate information sources in an ethical manner (Nwalo and Oyedum, 2011).

The digital era has brought about a lot of changes in the way that librarians offer their services to the digital natives leading to the need to acquire 21st century skills despite where one is working, be it a school, public, special or academic library. Chutia (2015) posited that book-oriented librarianship had been changed to user- centred librarianship leading to the need for new skills to serve the patrons. The evolution in the education system such as open and distance learning, online education venture, virtual campus, flipped classrooms, e-learning and learning management systems has brought about diverse patrons who require different types of information (Chutia, 2015).

Generally, it is expected that a digital librarian should be able to select, preserve and manage digital collections and also work with the technical architecture of digital libraries. This would assist in planning and implementing digital services by putting in place policies that will secure and protect digital intellectual information to serve as standards that should be adhered to when running a digital library.

The protection of digital intellectual property in a networked environment cannot be underestimated in the digital era. This is why it is important that the librarians should have basic technical skills such as ability to troubleshoot new technologies, use online media, and willingness to learn new technologies to embrace the ever changing library technologies.

Skills the 21st Century Librarians Should Possess in the Digital Era
Librarianship, according to Elaturoti (2020) is changing very fast with the high rate of technological infusion in every aspect of the profession. Books and other information resources that are managed by libraries and information professionals are being transformed to electronic platforms. Also, the information users are becoming more technology

savvy and sophisticated in their information needs and the quest to satisfy these needs. Users are vast in the use of search engines, and it is like they do not need libraries and the services of librarians anymore. All these and many more developments have put great strains on libraries and librarians. Therefore, for librarians to remain relevant and be able to meet up with the challenges in providing library services in the 21st century, they have to incorporate the following:

Critical thinking skills which could be referred to as set of abilities and competencies that are required to survive in the digital environment and this would create ability to perform a certain task exceptionally. They need to be proactive and self- initiative to take future- focused actions to change oneself or the situation which is aimed at benefiting individuals and organisations.

They also need to be innovative in thinking. This will enable the librarians think out of the box. Thereby, thinking out of the traditional library box to device better means of doing regular tasks or accomplishing some things and achieving the same or better results. They should see beyond today (as God can see); that is, not encouraging any limitation, always moving forward, especially in gathering knowledge on how to be pace setters in your area of specialization.

They should be able to imagine the unimaginable- the ability to have the power of forming a mental image of something not present to the senses or never as everyday practice- a science of innovation and ability to delve into difficult terrene, that is involving into complex situations in the cause of looking for the best.

Ability to find, that is ability to identify, explain and solve problems in everyday tasks for example, identifying research problems and ability to adapt, that is, ability to be flexible and adjust to changing factors, conditions or environments. Being adaptable is a highly valued skill in nearly every workplace. Also important is ability to produce new knowledge and publish it (graphic design, images, video etc); ability to publish your services online. Not only on the social media but also on your website and ability to determine the right vendors for the services needed.

The 21st century librarian should be able to negotiate more e-resources for your users, by providing infrastructure or materials that provide content and information services for the users. He should be innovative and creative in providing services. That is, rendering library services in better and more creative ways as to make users patronize library more.

He should have capacity to learn the new technologies very quickly and be able to teach online- related skills, including the use of virtual teaching platforms such as zoom and information that is in electronic form as well as also create open access to your services as well as create a library space that would enable involvement and interaction within the library (Ogunjimi, 2020).

Readiness of Federal University Libraries for Information Dissemination in the Digital Era Using Website

Readiness is a function of what we are doing now. One cannot give what he does not have. One of the ways to achieve adequate information dissemination in libraries is through a good and functional website.

What is a Website?

A website is a collection of web pages (documents that are accessed through the Internet), such as the one you are looking at now. A web page is what you see on the screen when you type in a web address, click on a link, or put a query in a search engine. A web page can contain any type of information, and can include text, color, graphics, animation and sound (Abubakar, 2021).

When someone gives you the web address, it generally takes you to the website's home page, which should introduce you to what that site offers in terms of information or other services. From the home page, one can click on links to reach other sections of the site. A website can consist of one page, or tens of thousands of pages, depending on what the site owner is trying to accomplish. Websites are important means of communication with the outside world. It is the virtual representation of any physical structure.

Library website therefore is the virtual version of the physical library. For libraries to be appreciated in the present day context, they need to exist beyond their physical boundaries and operation hours. Library websites are necessary to assist library users find information they need and to complete an already started task. With this, the librarians provide access to information resources as well as provide library and information services to distant users.

The main thing to remember in creating a website is that you are not creating the website for yourself; you already know about the information or service you have to offer. You are creating the site for your visitors, so it should contain the content they want and be organized in a way that makes sense, even to an outsider.

Based on the aforementioned, the library website involves the following: Services, Accessibility, References and External links.

Services

Library websites can offer the following services: *Interaction with the library catalog*: An Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC) provides the ability to log onto a library account to renew or request items.

- *Gateway to electronic resources*: Libraries may organize the various periodical indexes, electronic reference collections, and other databases they subscribe to. Resources may be organized alphabetically, by subject and by media.
- *Library tutorials*: Interactive tutorials can help users choose and use electronic resources, how to renew a book, and other library functions.
- *Virtual reference*: Virtual reference allows remote patrons to connect with library staff and have their questions answered, including via email and texting.
- *Library blogs*: Blogs can announce new resources or services at the library and to give patrons another venue to communicate with staff and provide feedback.

Accessibility

The contents of every website should be accessible to users. It should be easy for patrons to navigate and retrieve desired information. Thus, library websites should be designed with Web accessibility standards in mind.

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External links

Typical external links are: National Library of Nigeria (<http://www.nln.gov.ng/>) and Librarian Registration Council of Nigeria (www.lrcn.gov.ng)

Put differently, one of the most important routes for online education is the exploitation of a virtual space in teaching and learning. Designing and adoption of e-discovery tools are also of paramount importance towards satisfying information needs of online users. Library website is a typical example of e-discovery tool which is designed to create awareness on the services rendered by the library, information and reference services as well as enhance document delivery. Ifijeh and Yusuf (2020) suggested that for a library website to meet the information needs of visitors and conform to the best practices, it should include the following: provide a single point of access to library resources; allow teaching staff to direct students to useful resources more easily; promote the resources held by the library, including subscription; improve navigation of library resources; improve access to scholarly and educational web based resources; provide more efficient access to e- resources; improve information service delivery; provide library services 24/7; and facilitate access to library and information services remotely.

In their separate studies, eUKhost (2016), Comodo Websecurity (2018), Talalaev (2018) and Desailly (2018) revealed that a good functional website should accommodate the following features:

Table 2: Expected Functionalities of the Studied Library Websites of the Federal Universities in Nigeria

S/N	Statements	UIlo	FUTO	FUTM	UNN	UNSOK	ABU	ULAG	UPOT	UI	UMD	MAYOLA
1	A functional website should have correct and frequent Configuring of administrative settings	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	NA
2	A functional website should have a secure domain name system server	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	NA
3	A functional website should have a clear navigation	MA	MA	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	NA
4	A functional website should have pages for frequently Asked questions	NA	NA	A	A	NA	NA	A	NA	NA	NA	NA
5	A functional website should have SSL that encrypts communication systems	NA	A	A	NA	A	A	A	A	A	A	NA
6	A functional website should be well formatted	NA	A	A	NA	MA	MA	A	A	A	A	NA
7	A functional website should always have fast page loading speed	MA	MA	MA	MA	A	MA	A	A	A	MA	NA
8	Search bar on the website is a necessary	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	NA	NA	A	NA

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	function to be considered											
9	A functional website should have well developed source code	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	NA
10	A functional website should have access control for visitors interaction	NA	NA	NA	A	NA	A	NA	NA	NA	A	NA
11	A functional website should have contact information	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	NA
12	A functional website should be malware proof	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	NA
13	A functional website should work on multiple browsers	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	NA
14	A functional website should integrate social platforms and promote business	NA	A	A	A	A	NA	NA	NA	A	A	NA
15	Choosing a good hosting provider makes a website to be functional	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	NA
16	The content of a website should be updated often	MA	A	MA	MA	MA	MA	A	MA	A	MA	NA
17	A functional website should eliminate clutter	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	NA
18	A functional website should always build layers of security around the site	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	NA
19	A functional website should	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	NA

	have a logical road map											
20	A functional website should be easy to access/search/use	A	A	A	NA	A	A	A	A	A	A	NA

Keys: **A- Available**, **MA- Moderately Available**, **NA- Not Available**.

Source: Library Websites of studied universities 2025

Percentage Summary- 80% Available and 20% Negative.

Table 3: Expected Website Routine Library Services of the Studied University Libraries

S/ N	Statements/ Trends	UILO	FUTO	FUTM	UNN	USOK	ABU	UI	ULAG	UMD	UPOT	MAYOL
1	Interaction with the library catalogue/ OPAC	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
2	Lending and borrowing services	NA	A	NA	A	NA	A	A	NA	NA	A	NA
3	Access to Information Resources	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	NA	A	A	A
4	Access to Databases	NA	NA	A	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
5	Exhibition of New Resources	A	A	NA	A	NA	A	A	A	A	A	A
6	CAServices	A	A	A	A	NA	A	A	A	A	A	A
7	Gateway to electronic, Digital / Online resources	NA	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	NA	NA
8	Library tutorials/ Orientation/ Open access movt eg OER	NA	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	NA	NA

The Relationship Between Library Websites and Information Dissemination in the Digital Era:
Trends and Challenges

9	Virtual reference /Integration with digital tools eg AI	NA	NA	NA	A	NA	A	A	NA	NA	A	NA
10	Online book reservation	NA	NA	NA	A	NA	A	A	NA	NA	A	NA
11	Library blogs/ Social Media Platforms	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
12	Request a Purchase service	NA	NA	NA	NA	A	NA	A	NA	NA	NA	NA
13	Research Help service/User-centered design	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	A	NA	NA	NA	NA
	SUMMARY IN PERCENTAGE	31%+ve	54%+ve	46%+ve	69%+ve	38%+ve	69%+ve	85%+ve	38%+ve	46%+ve	54%+ve	38.8%+ve

Keys: **A-Available, NA- Not Available.**

Source: Library Websites of studied universities 2025

Discussion

Information plays a key role in all aspects of human development and its effective communication will help facilitate mutual understanding among farmers, doctors, teachers, agricultural scientists, business men, students, media workers, extension workers, motor drivers and road hawkers. Information is a major ingredient for development. Thus, Kaye (1995) opined that good information improves decision-making, enhances efficiency and provides a competitive edge. Knowledge and information are basic ingredients for increased societal development and productivity.

University libraries play a vital role towards teaching, learning and research in Nigerian universities. They are considered as the heart of all institutions of learning where academic activities revolve.

It is observed from Table 3 that clientele can access information resources in the studied libraries from their websites. However, running through the features in the Table, one would notice that any feature where patrons are expected to interact in the website is usually poorly attended to by the libraries. For instance, item number 10 on Table 2, which stated that a functional website should have access control for visitors interaction indicates that this service is poorly attended to since 8 out of the 11 universities studied are not rendering this service via website. Of course, one is not surprised because users have limited access to the websites and so what are the librarians controlling? A standard library website should have the enablement for allowing access to information resources such as books, journals and other monographs. This would be in line with first law of Ranganathan which stated that “Books are for Use” (Panda, 1994). The main objective of every library is to render adequate services to patrons; thus every librarian always strives to satisfy users’ needs. Though these resources may not be accessible through the Website, they could be scanned and communicated to the clientele.

Also, interaction with some library users indicated that none of the library websites studied allows full interaction of the users with the Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC). Having OPAC listed as one of the services rendered by the library on the website home page is not enough. It is expected that there should be follow up links or drop-down button on how to use catalogue to search, retrieve and use information resources in the library. Generally, library catalogue is described as a list of books and other reading resources in the holdings of the library. This shows that they portray records of the documents in a library. It is therefore important that both the library collections, process of locating and retrieving them and how to use these resources should be well demonstrated in the library website; especially as virtual libraries attract the attention of the users more. Ideally, the terms Cataloguing and Classification in librarianship are usually given prime attention since it

is generally believed that any library resources no matter how good or costly it may be would be of no value if the users are not adequately using them. Therefore, to ensure adequate use of library resources, the use of catalogue is always emphasized upon as an important retrieval device (Oyedum, 2006).

Similarly, aside having OPAC in the libraries there is need for the library websites to demonstrate how the lending and borrowing services are obtained in the libraries. Large number of users especially the 21st century learners are used to online information and passing this very important library service to them via website is recommended. These students are participatory learners who use information technology to accomplish specific tasks such as the use of e-learning and learning library management systems. They do not solely depend on the instructor and are well versed in the use of ICT. They are commonly referred to as “Lifelong learners” who participate in distance and online learning programmes. However, from observation, 5 out of the 11 universities studied are attempting this service; most libraries studied were using this space in the website to remind users of certain Circulation Unit rules and regulations. Giving the users the instruction on borrowing 2 or 3 books at a time in the website is not the issue. The websites are expected to up-date the lending and borrowing services by introducing a caption “Borrow a Book/ Book a Book.” This will always enable users to log in to access the information resources available for borrowing. There can also be a search button for users to scroll if time permits. By so doing one can identify and schedule for pick-up of the information resource. Where the information resource is not available, the date for the book to be available would also be identified. To save the time of both the user and the library staff, another method could be by indicating against the resources, “Available or Not Available”, as usually observed in online air ticket booking.

Furthermore, it was observed that access to databases in some of these libraries via their websites is not easy. The third law of Ranganathan states “Every book its reader.” The implication of this law to every librarian is to provide to users access without limitations or border to library resources. This means that users with access code such as

username and password should be able to access information resources such as the subscribed databases without physically being present in the library. Some institutions studied are yet to key into these possibilities users have to avail themselves before accessing databases.

As observed from some of the studied library websites, with users' password and user name when a database is selected, it still takes one to a different page other than the expected page. Database is a structured collection of e- resources such as books, journals, proceedings, monographs etc that are subscribed by libraries to satisfy the information needs of the users. This indicates that a library with a rich collection of online databases would expose the patrons to the possibility of a seamless knowledge acquisition. Probably this could be why Samaravickrama *et al* (2014) argued that the impact of online databases on academic libraries and undergraduate students is noteworthy and unprecedented. The possibilities that online databases provide is the reason libraries are going digital, which has proven to be cheaper in the long run (Madhusudhan, 2010). These include: Science Direct, Ebsco -host, Google Scholar, JSTOR, Elsevier, TEEAL, AGORA, AJOL, HINARY, ResearchGate, Scopus etc.

In the same vein, a functional website is expected to serve as a gateway to online e-resources and have a proper digital transformation of libraries. To provide more information resources, librarians could easily link online resources to the library websites for users and this invariably would make access to online resources easy for users. By so doing, one without data to search Internet can always reach online resources through websites. This service is necessary because website resources should be adequate and sufficient and librarians can always source from different information sources including from sister libraries where collaboration service is existing. Shifting from physical collections to digital resources such as e-books or accessing and retrieving of soft copy resources are usually easy compared to hard copies. Some libraries studied are yet to key into this service proper.

Furthermore, looking at the area of exhibition of new materials, this service is common in most E-commercial websites, where new additions are highlighted on the home page of the websites. This is

usually the fastest way for visitors on that website to know the information that is new and necessary. It is good for libraries to adopt this technology, and most of the studied libraries are rendering this service.

Current Awareness Services (CAS) as a method of information dissemination is another important item in Table 3 that almost all the studied libraries are giving attention. Sincerely, it does not cost the libraries much to have News Groups and Online Community platform through which they communicate to the patrons via WhatsApp, telegram or blog. In advanced countries, library tools such as google alert and blogs are often used to acquaint users with latest holdings in the library. Through the same means, patrons would also indicate their information needs which would be attended to by the reference librarian. Short Messages (SMS) services could also be a formidable tool for CAS. No wonder, Naqvi (2013) posited that librarians should be more proactive in providing CAS to its clientele.

Table 2 indicated that frequently updating website services is poorly achieved in the studied university libraries. Three (3) out of 11 universities in this study frequently update their Websites. Library users always need current information in order to be updated in their areas of specialisation but where this is not available it negatively affects library use. To support this finding, item 14, which is integration of social media into library websites is achieved by only 6 universities out of 11 of them studied. Such integration enables information sharing as users can easily share contents of the webpage to their contacts on social platforms. This shows that social media platforms are good avenues for gathering current information as well as adequate tools for librarians to disseminate useful information to users. From observation, the integration of social media is not only poor but the available social media pages are rarely interactive and up-to-date.

Availability of clear navigation is observed in 10 out of the 11 universities studied. For instance, the University of Lagos library's interface is easy to navigate and well broken down for users. Accordingly, the clienteles can easily find their ways around. The same can be said about Usman Dan Fodio University, Sokoto, University of

Nigeria Nsukka libraries to mention but a few. However, just as mentioned earlier, this navigation success or ease of use does not quite extend to access to online databases.

Virtual reference service is non-existent in most of the studied university libraries. What is close to this service is the physical queries or information requests patrons usually give to reference librarians. One would have thought that since the world is going virtual, the libraries should also tweak some of their services to go virtual. Also important in digital era library services is integration with digital or discovery tools such as AI-powered search systems, Chatbots and learning management systems.

Every library service is intended not only to satisfy the users' information needs but also to do this in a limited time. No wonder, the 4th law of Ranganathan states, "Save the time of the user." From Table 2 this law is not recognized judging from the scores obtained on items 7 and 6. Item 7 states that a functional website should have fast page loading speed and this is not obtained in these universities since 7 out of 11 of them showed poor loading speed. The pertinent question is, how can the librarians save the users' time when their working tools such as websites cannot achieve fast page loading speed? This situation could be as a result of poor management of available network infrastructures which in turn affects the quality of library services offered to users (Abduldayan, Oluwade and Oyedum, 2013). On the other hand, item 6 states that a website should be well formatted. Good formatted website would assist users to understand the content. Five (5) universities scored low in this aspect. Libraries as information centres need adequate organization for effective information retrieval. Therefore, libraries, whether physical or virtual should be organised or formatted in a way that minimum time would be spent in searching, navigating and retrieval of information by the users.

The frequently asked questions (FAQs) pages in the studied library websites are not adequately handled. Table 2 reveals that 8 out of 11 library websites studied are not performing this necessary library service. The FAQs page is the one that gives quick answers to users or customers' questions/queries. The idea is to keep the answers short and

lucid so that people would find information quickly. It will not be out of place to call it the mini virtual version of the physical Reference Unit of the libraries.

Examples of such frequently asked questions are:- does the library have electronic devices for loan?, How can I use the library e-resources?, As an undergraduate student can I use all sections in the library?, Where can I find past projects, theses and dissertations in the library?, Should I re-shelve consulted books or periodicals?, What should I do if I cannot find the book I need on the shelf? How can I find information resources in the library?

Questions like these could be displayed in the FAQ space to encourage library users ask their questions when the need arises. Unfortunately, as earlier mentioned this service is not obtained in 11 out of the 14 universities surveyed. What does one expect, where library tutorial through which library users are provided with information on how to use the library is not provided through websites by the libraries studied. Library tutorial/ orientation involves guiding users around using the library website. Information such as how to request for library books, how to loan, and renew books could be imparted to users via this media. This implies that this service could as well extend to a guide on how to use the physical library as well as information on Open Educational Resources (OER). Ask the Librarian option, WhatsApp chats, direct SMS and links to other libraries where collaboration is existing would go a long way to satisfy most queries usually raised by the users. Similar to orientation services is Chat –a - Librarian services. In this ICT age, the librarians in order to attract the users to the libraries are expected to offer help through the chat-a – librarian service where patrons have access to librarians' help real time through a virtual chat. The link to the service should be provided in the website. Unfortunately, some of the studied websites do not allow effective interaction with the users, thus the users cannot be fully satisfied with the library services through the websites.

Online book reservation is another aspect of library services expected to be provided by a functional website. Table 3 reveals that all the studied library websites do not perform this relevant function. This service

helps a user to make a request for a particular information resource to be reserved for him for later use. Ideally, the Circulation Unit in library website should have a portal where users could electronically reserve physical information resources such as books for borrowing. This service is not available in some of the studied library websites.

Library blog as well as social media platforms, are certainly necessary for adequate information dissemination. This is why every functional website is expected to fully integrate social media platforms. Library blogs give more room for librarian/user dialog which strengthens their relationship. It provides the avenue for fruitful interaction between the users and the librarians. Librarians through this media inform users about the activities taking place in the libraries, information resources available or not available in the libraries etc. On the other hand, the users would inform the librarians of their information needs and the updates expected in the collection development. Unfortunately, this service is not available in all the library websites studied.

Request a purchase service is necessary in library websites since it will avail the library users the opportunity to request for information on needed resources that are not available in the library. Table 3 reveals only 2 out of 14 universities studied perform this service. To render this service there should be a request form containing description of the information resources and borrower's profile.

Research help service and user- centered design are other vital services which librarians use in relating to scholars in other disciplines as revealed in Table 1. They are also avenues librarians use in assisting the researchers to search, access, retrieve, improve user experience and use information resources required for a research topic. a

In summary, it is important to state that university libraries in the digital era are playing unprecedented roles toward information service delivery. Some of these libraries in developed and developing countries exploit technologies to reach out to their users virtually (Ishtiaq *et al*, 2020). Generally, libraries in digital era have increased the use of social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook and Whatsapp to share resources and answer queries, partake in webinars, conference calls,

online meetings and online tutorials, sharing more open access resources, providing access to e-books and digital collections.

Consequently, in Nigeria some academic libraries and academic librarians have collaborated with Non- Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in organising sensitization campaigns and information literacy programmes. As has been proved by most academic librarians, service delivery is provided to library users through informal channels rather than institutional which include websites and text messages, Facebook posts and Whatsapp chats (IFLA,2020).

Today, some of the library services such as Reference services, Reprographic service, Charging and discharging services, Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI), Current Awareness Services (CAS), User education, to mention but a few could be provided electronically by the librarians without necessarily having physical contacts with library users. Ideally, the future of the library to individuals in information society is that, people could access information resources of the library from anywhere in the world; provided one has data or even where there is no data, one can always call the reference librarian to assist. Therefore all the physical library services should be extended to electronic services and much more due to obvious reasons.

It is important to note that for university libraries to maintain their status of delivering quality library and information services, there is the need to exploit digital technologies such as functional websites in their services. Librarians should also be trained in the use of ICT in university libraries for delivering quality library and information services to their users. Provision of library and information services via websites and social media platforms such as Facebook, Whatsapp, Telegraph etc should be created and exploited by individual libraries in Nigerian universities so as to promote quality information service delivery to the library users.

Challenges of library websites vis-à-vis information dissemination in the digital areas

-Digital divide: unequal access to Internet connectivity and digital devices;

Information overload: difficult for users to filter and evaluate vast amount of online information;

-Websites usability issues: Poor navigation, outdated interfaces and accessibility problems;

-Copyright and licensing restrictions: legal limitations on sharing digital resources;

-Limited funding and technical skills: budget constraints and lack of trained IT staff in some libraries; and

-Rapid technological change: constant need to update systems and stay current with emerging technologies.

CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE

This is categorized into two (2) groups, namely: Information dissemination vis a vis Health Information Studies and Information Dissemination vis-à-vis User Studies.

Information Dissemination vis a vis Health Information Studies

We assessed usability and user experience of a Prototype medical library website for federal universities in Nigeria (Imavah, Abifarin, Oyedum and Ojeniyi). Six medical libraries were covered namely; Ahmadu Bello Teaching Hospital, Shika, Kaduna State (North West), Jos University Teaching Hospital, Lamingo, Jos, Plateau State (North Central), University of Maiduguri Teaching Hospital, Borno State (North East), University College Hospital, Ibadan, Oyo State (South West), University of Nigeria Teaching Hospital, Ituku/Ozalla, Enugu State (South East) and University of Benin Teaching Hospital, Benin, Edo State (South South). Population was 2,290 medical students and 30 of them were used for testing exercise. Finding: Users found the design of the prototype medical library website for federal universities in Nigeria to be highly visually attractive and generally easy to use.

We also assessed the place of librarians in the promotion of quality maternal healthcare among rural women in Minna, Nigeria (Jibril, Abduldayan and Oyedum, 2017). Three different rural areas in Minna, Niger State, Nigeria were purposively selected for the study namely: Gidan Kwano, Gidan Mangoro and Garatu and the total population of women in the targeted rural areas was four thousand (4000). Two hundred (200) of them were selected for the study, 32 librarians from 2 public libraries and 3 healthcare providers in 3 primary health centres. Finding: The analysis revealed that majority (65%) of the respondents indicated that they need health information and some 83% of the respondents disclosed that they consult people for their reproductive health information, showing that the librarians provide little or no health information to them. The study equally revealed that the best collaboration between the librarians and the health workers in disseminating health information is through direct cooperation and government intervention by creating an enabling environment.

Gabasa and Oyedum (2019) investigated the role of medical librarians on maternal awareness as well as access and utilization of health information resources in federal universities in Northern Nigeria. The universities involved are: Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University Bauchi, Ahmadu Bello University, Shika Zaria, Aminu Kano University, Kano, University of Abuja, Gwagwalada, FCT, Jos University Teaching Hospital, Jos, University of Maiduguri and Usman Danfodio University Sokoto. Finding: i. The studied librarians provide awareness, accessibility and assist in utilization of health information resources services to the maternal patients. ii. The study revealed that the extent to which the pregnant women accessed the health information from the medical librarians was high.

Saidu and Oyedum (2020) assessed the level of information dissemination and use to post-natal mothers on immunisation as prevention of childhood killer diseases by librarians in FMCs North-Central, Nigeria. The hospitals covered are: Federal Medical Centre Bida, Federal Medical Centre, Keffi, Federal Medical Centre, Lokoja and Federal Medical Centre Makurdi. Finding: The study revealed that medical librarians mostly disseminate information on

immunization to post-natal mothers through radio/ television messages, workshops/seminars and outreach services/programmes.

Abubakar and Oyedum (2020) assessed the level of information dissemination and use to post-natal mothers on anti-malarial drug resistance by librarians in federal medical centres in North Central Zone, Nigeria. The hospitals involved are: Federal Medical Centre, Abuja, Federal Medical Centre, Makurdi, Federal Medical Centre, Lokoja and Federal Medical Centre, Keffi. Findings: i. The medical librarians disseminate information to post-natal mothers on anti-malarial drugs through personal space / my library, television / radio announcement and library orientation services. ii. The extent to which they used information dissemination to post-natal mothers for anti-malarial drug resistance was low.

Afolabi and Oyedum (2020) assessed the influence of information dissemination, currency and utilization on drug productivity of pharmaceutical companies in North-central, Nigeria including Kwara, Niger, Benue, Nasarawa, Kogi and Plateau States. The pharmaceutical companies involved are: Biomedical Limited, Ilorin, Kwara, Kwara Chemical Company Limited Ilorin, Bioraj Pharmaceutical Limited Ilorin, Kwara, Peace Standard Pharmaceutical Industry Nigeria, Ilorin, Tuyil Pharmaceutical Industries Ltd Ilorin, Sam Pharmaceutical Company Ilorin, Kwara, Dana Pharmaceutical Limited, Minna, Niger, Danadams Pharmaceutical Limited Minna, Niger, Leyjey Pharmaceutical Industry Ltd Minna, Niger, ECWA Central Pharmaceutical Ltd Jos, Plateau and Europharm Laboratories Jos, Plateau Findings: i. Information dissemination improves drug production as well as reduces the rate of drug effect in pharmaceutical companies in North-central, Nigeria. ii. Researchers in Pharmaceutical companies if backed up with current information will improve drug production in their companies. iii. Information utilization leads to innovation through researches in Pharmaceutical Companies in North – central, Nigeria.

Oserada and Oyedum (2023) assessed the awareness, information dissemination and use of information as preventive measures provided by librarians to hepatitis patients for health literacy in specialised hospitals in North Central, Nigeria. The hospitals involved are: Dalhatu Araf Specialist hospital, Lafia, Nasarawa State, Kogi State Specialist Hospital Lokoja and

Plateau State Specialist Hospital. Finding: Information resources available in specialist hospitals studied are conference proceedings, journals, newspapers etc

-information is disseminated to hypatitis patients through posters/handbills, library websites, conferences, workshops and seminars.

Jibril and Oyedum (2023) considered the effect of information dissemination and collaboration of librarians with health practitioners for sustainable mental health literacy of the youths in North Central Nigeria. The areas covered are: Iyamoye – Kogi State, Panda – Nasarawa State, Garatu – Niger State, Miango – Plateau State, Ogidi – Kwara State and Adoka – Benue State

Findings: i. The study revealed that the level of mental health literacy of the youths in the rural areas of North- central, Nigeria was low. ii. The study equally revealed that information dissemination has positive influence on the mental health literacy of the youths in North – central, Nigeria. Thus, the absence of information resources such as magazines contribute to the low mental health literacy level.

Information dissemination vis a vis User Studies

Adamu, Oyedum and Alhassan (2025) investigated the librarians' preparedness on data creation, storage and accessibility for research data management services in federal university libraries in Northern Nigeria. The universities involved are: University of Maiduguri, Federal University Kashere, Bayero University Kano, Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto, Federal university of Technology, Minna and University of Jos. Findings: A high level of availability of research data management services in federal university libraries in Northern Nigeria

was revealed. Librarians demonstrated low level of awareness on data creation and management, low competencies in data storage and low level of training on data accessibility.

We assessed the performance of library management software (LMS) for service delivery in federal university libraries in Nigeria (Akawu, Alhassan and Oyedum, 2023). Seven universities comprising of federal and state universities , especially those that have functional LMS were used in the study. These include: Delta State University Library, Abraka, University of Benin Library, Benin City, Ambrose Alli University Library, Ekpoma, University of Calabar Library, Calabar, University of Port Harcourt, River State University of Science and Technology Library, Port Harcourt, Cross River State University, Library, Calabar, University of Uyo Library, Uyo, Akwa Ibom State University Library, Akwa Ibom, Federal University of Petroleum Library, Effurun and Niger Delta University Library, Amassoma. Finding: The study revealed that all the LMS cataloguing modules evaluated have usability issues which affected the effectiveness of cataloguing module of LMS but at different levels of interaction in terms of user interfaces of cataloguing module.

Jonathan and Oyedum (2023) assessed the influence of information dissemination, current awareness services and online databases in libraries as facilitators of undergraduate Engineering student' skills acquisition in North- central, Nigeria. The universities involved are: Federal University, Lafia, Federal University, Lokoja, Federal University of Agriculture, Makurdi, Federal University of Technology, Minna, University of Abuja, University of Ilorin, University of Jos and Federal University of Health Sciences Otukpo. Findings: i. The study revealed availability of online databases in the studied libraries and that the libraries employed the use of online databases, current awareness services and information dissemination to improve skills acquisition of the Engineering students. ii. Information is disseminated in the studied libraries through the use of bulletins, libraries' websites, online reference services, emails, film/video and radio/television.

Chukwu and Oyedum (2023) assessed the level of awareness and use of information resources as a correlate of socio-economic empowerment of undergraduate students of agriculture in federal universities in North-central, Nigeria. The universities involved are: University of Abuja, University of Ilorin, University of Jos, Federal University Lafia, Federal University of Agriculture, Makurdi and Federal University of Technology, Minna. Findings; i. The awareness of information resources by the undergraduate students of agriculture studied is low. ii. The level of use of information resources of the undergraduate students of agriculture studied was high. iii. The extent to which awareness and use of information resources affect socio- economic life of undergraduate students of agriculture was fairly high. iv. There was no significant relationship between students' awareness and use of information resources and their socio- economic empowerment.

We designed a framework for the unification of E-theses repositories for university libraries in Nigeria (Salau, Oyedum, Abifarin and Udohudo, 2021). The universities studied are: ABU, Zaria, FUT, Minna and UNN. Finding: the study revealed that the management of electronic theses and dissertations in Nigerian Institutional Repositories was poor based on policies, contents and system architecture.

We also considered development and acceptance testing of a computer-based Data Management Model for Chemistry Research in Federal Universities of Technology in Nigeria (Abduldayan, Abifarin, Oyedum and Alhassan, 2021). The universities involved are: FUT, Minna, FUT, Akure, FUT, Owerri, Modibbo Adama University of Technology Yola and Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi. Finding: The study revealed that chemists in Nigeria are yet to incorporate appropriate research data management practice during their research processes.

Abedoh and Oyedum (2019) assessed the effect of mobile technologies and Web 2.0 as facilitators of undergraduate students' use of federal university libraries in South Western, Nigeria. The universities involved are: University of Ibadan, Oyo State, Obafemi Awolowo University, Osun State, Federal University of Technology Akure, Ondo State and

Federal University of Agriculture Abeokuta, Ogun State. Findings: i. The study revealed that there were Web 2.0 tools and mobile technology services in the studied libraries and this has attracted more library users for effective use of library services. ii. Blog, Facebook, text messaging and email services were the most used Web 2.0 tools and mobile technology services by undergraduate students in the studied university libraries.

Ejigogo and Oyedum (2016) assessed staff attitude, book theft, library policies as factors affecting lending services to students in university libraries in North-central , Nigeria. The university libraries involved are: Benue State University, Makurdi and Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida University, Lapai. Findings: i. It was revealed that book theft, staff attitude and library policies such as overdue fines and closing and opening hour of the library negatively affect lending services to students in the studied universities.

Abu and Oyedum (2016) assessed the library policies, students' residency and recency as factors affecting the use of library resources by undergraduate students of federal universities in North -central Nigeria. The universities involved are: University of Ilorin and Federal University of Technology, Minna. Findings: i. The study revealed that the use of library resources among undergraduate students in the two federal universities in North –central Nigeria is low. iii. The opening and closing hours, stealing and mutilation and overdue fine policies of the studied libraries negatively affect the use of the libraries by the students. iv. Close proximity of libraries to students' hostels positively affect the use of information resources. v. Also, the libraries studied have some up-to-date information resources such as textbooks and journals but do not have adequate Internet facilities.

Joshua *et al* (2019) assessed acquisition and management of serials and provision of library services in federal university libraries in North-central Nigeria. The universities involved are: Federal University, Lokoja, Federal University, Lafia, Federal University of Technology, Minna, University of Jos, Jos, University of Agriculture, Makurdi, University of Ilorin, Ilorin and University of Abuja, Abuja. Findings: i. The study revealed that the main aspects of management of serials are

selection and acquisition processes which are achieved in the studied university libraries through subscription, exchange with other libraries and through consortia which in turn enhances library services. ii. The study also revealed that other aspects of serials management such as organization and preservation of information resources are provided in the libraries to boost library services. iii. There is significant relationship between management of serials and provision of library services in the studied federal university libraries in North-central, Nigeria.

Oyedum and Agbaji (2015) considered the relevance of electronic libraries in academic library services using Federal University of Technology (FUT) Minna and Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida Lapai Libraries. Finding: The study revealed that the use of electronic library in academic libraries is relevant in discharging library services, though lack of basic ICT skills amongst the library staff as well as lack of computer equipment and the failure of steady electricity power supply posed great challenges to the effective use of electronic library in academic libraries.

Oyedum *et al* (2014) assessed the level of use of the library resources by the undergraduate students in Federal universities in Nigerian. These universities include: University of Ibadan, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, University of Jos, University of Maiduguri, University of Uyo and University of Abuja. Undergraduate students from across Arts, Education, Engineering, Law, Science and Social Science faculties in the selected universities were used. Finding: It was revealed that the level of students' use of library resources in Nigerian federal universities was low.

The Way Forward

-Invest (could be in terms of human, facilities and finance) more on ICT facilities and services especially now that improved service delivery to consumers(students and the general public in terms of universities) mostly requires ICT.

The library management should work towards boosting their channels of information dissemination. For instance, libraries should be more

creative, provide functional websites, deploy more frequently email and telephone services, encourage each user to create a user profile for adequate update and information dissemination.

There is need for library management to make concerted efforts in acquiring useful online databases targeted at knowledge advancement of the patrons. This would enable the users especially the students to have access to a wide variety of information resources simultaneously.

It also requires periodic appraisal which will highlight failings and strengths of websites, what should be improved and what should be repealed.

Adequate funding of federal university libraries by enhancing their annual budgetary allocation to enable them effectively manage their websites and meet up to expectations. Services like bibliographic control- that is, listing of all information published and unpublished(Oyedum, 2019) could be provided.

There is need for librarians to acquire knowledge on ICT and training on Website development so as to develop the library websites themselves. This would enable them to include all expectations necessary for adequate library website functionality, including well formatting for fast page loading speed.

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CONCLUSION

Libraries in most academic institutions exist to assist in teaching, learning and community development services. In rendering these services they effectively relate with individuals from various fields of life to disseminate current information to satisfy their information needs. For adequate information dissemination, there is no doubt that library websites have become important and reliable information and communication tools in the present era. They have enabled libraries to render services to unimaginable places and people and at unimaginable speed. The growing interest in Internet services in Nigeria and the world over has made it imperative to routinely assess the level of availability, accessibility, effectiveness, efficiency, ease of use / usability and interactivity of libraries' website features in order to identify the way forward for every information seeker to get reasonable satisfaction in information searching. One can therefore conclude that since the level of studied websites' features are not very functional and

encouraging, there is need for all hands to be on deck in order to improve the level of accessibility, usability and interactivity features of the websites, so as to strengthen the efficiency of these websites. With access to information resources and databases, interaction with the library catalogue and exhibition of new library resources via these websites would improve. Accordingly, the library users especially the students would in turn be encouraged to effectively use their websites in order to achieve their educational objectives.

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PROFILE OF THE INAUGURAL LECTURER

Prof. Georgina U. Oyedum is a Professor of Library and Information Technology in the Department of Library and Information Science (LIS), Federal University of Technology, Minna, Nigeria. She is the 4th child out of the 6 children of her parents. She was born in Ihiala, in Anambra State of Nigeria and married to Prof. O.D. Oyedum from Neni, Anaocha Local Government Area, Anambra State.

Her academic carrier started with primary school education at Shell Camp Primary School, Alvan Ikoku College of Education, Owerri followed by her secondary education from Uli Girls' Secondary School, Uli, Anambra State.

By 1982, she was employed as a Library Assistant in Kashim Ibrahim Library, Ahmadu Bello University (ABU), Zaria and served for only one year following her admission into the College of Advanced Studies, Zaria where she pursued and passed her Interim Joint Matriculation Board (IJMB) examination; this enabled her to be admitted as a direct entry student into ABU, Zaria, where she read "Library and Information Science" and graduated with "Second Class Honours, Upper Division" in 1988. She served the mandatory National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) in Educational Resource Centre, Minna, Niger State in 1989. On completion of her NYSC exercise, she again applied to ABU, Zaria for her Master's Programme. Before she finished the Programme in 1992, she was employed into the Library Services Department of Federal University of Technology, Minna, Niger State. While in the Library, she served as a Cataloguer, Classifier and Indexer. She served as the Head of the following Units in the Library: Reference, Serial and Circulation as well as the Coordinator of the Course "Use of Library", a one hundred level course. Between 1998 and 2003 she served as the Secretary to the Committee that designed the proposed Department of Library and Information Technology, which was finally established in F.U.T Minna in 2004. In 2005, she proceeded to the University of Ibadan for her Ph. D Programme and completed in 2011. On returning back to the University, she applied for transfer of her services from the University Library Services Department to Library and Information Technology Department as a Senior Lecturer. She has nineteen (19)

years of working experience as a practicing librarian before joining the academics in 2011.

She served as the Sub-Dean of School of Science and Technology Education (SSTE), Federal University of Technology, Minna from 2012 to 2014. She also served as the Head of the Department of Library and Information Technology, Federal University of Technology, Minna from 2014 to 2015. During her tenure as the HoD, the Department was able to achieve Full Accreditation status in 2015.

She is greatly involved in mentoring of both Undergraduate, and Postgraduate students in the Department. She has over 93 publications in local and international peer-reviewed journals. From 2013- 2018 she was the Editor-in-Chief of Journal of Information Resource Management (JIRM), published by Niger State Chapter of Nigerian Library Association. Her research interest covers a wide area of librarianship notably User Studies, Information Management, effect of ICT on Library and Information Services, Knowledge Management as well as Health Informatics.

Prof. Oyedum is a Certified Chartered Librarian as from 15th July, 2005. She is a member of a number of professional bodies such as: Nigerian Library Association (NLA), National Association of Library and Information Science Educators (NALISE), International Federation of Library Association (IFLA) as well as African Library and Information Association and Institutions (AFLIA). She has attended several national and international conferences including: American Library Association (ALA), International Federation of Library Association (IFLA), Nigerian Library Association (NLA) and National Association of Library and Information Science Educators (NALISE). She has served in various Committees in the University and External Examiner and/or Assessor to some tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

Prof. Georgina Uchey Oyedum is happily married to Prof. O. D. Oyedum of Department of Physics, F.U.T. Minna and is blessed with children and grandchildren.

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