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# **A Study on the Application of Information and Communication Technology in the University Libraries of North-Central Nigeria.**

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## **Abstract**

*University Libraries Provides the information resources and services to meet the user information requirements, however, ICT has changed the way Information services and Knowledge is delivered especially in the recent dispensation, there is a dearth need for Libraries especially University libraries to apply ICT to their daily routine functions and changed the old method of information delivery to users with the present generations of clientele been tech savvy, the need for ICT based Services, Resources and Products is a Necessity. This study Investigates the application, availability of ICT-based Services, Resources, and Products, the Researchers Employed a structured Interview distributed to the Heads of the Libraries and Personal Observation Individually visiting each of the University Library*

**Keywords:** University Libraries, North Central Nigeria, Application, ICT based Services,

## **Introduction**

University Library is a type of academic library that is established and funded by the university to support the teaching, learning, and research activities of the parent institution. University libraries are those libraries established in the universities (Alabi, 2015). University libraries play a pivotal role in the university; their mandate is to assist their patrons in the process of

transforming information into knowledge. The University library is the heartbeat of the University; the librarians in the university coordinate the evaluation and selection of information resources required for the various programs, organize, maintain and preserve the print and non-print information resources.

Information and Communication Application is synonymous with Modern Libraries, ICT has brought changes, improved service delivery and the way communication takes place with clientele, Libraries and Information Centers are employing ICT and electronic information resources and services to satisfy the diverse information needs of their users. E-journals, CD-ROM databases, online databases, e-books, web-based resources, and a variety of other electronic media are fast replacing the traditional resources of libraries (Haneefa,2007). ICT has entered into libraries and their users in the form of tools or products, resources or infrastructure giving the users effective services and access to information in various formats regardless of location especially in the present covid era, in which the importance of ICT application in the university libraries cannot be emphasized, without ICT Libraries will become redundant. The study aims to investigate the application of information and communication technology in university libraries of north-central Nigeria.

### **Objectives of the study**

To determine ICT Based Services offered in the University Libraries of North Nigeria

To determine the ICT Tools and Products available in the University Libraries of North Central Nigeria.

To find out the ICT facilities available in the University Libraries of North Central Nigeria

### **Literature Review**

A decade after the initial attempt on the application of ICT in academic libraries, in Nigeria it has not impacted the expectations of the user community, the development had been hampered by various challenges such as finances staff lacking ICT skills, and several other factors as such It is crucial to know what is the status and position of ICTs in the University Libraries of North-Central Nigeria, several studies have been on the application of ICT in Nigeria context, therefore the review will focus on areas which are considered relevant to this study: ICT resources,

services, and products, New technologies application and ICT Infrastructure The literature review is not intended to cover all literature in the selected areas rather the focus are on areas of literature that cover relevancy of application of ICT to Academic Libraries.

### **ICT Resources, Services, and Products**

Tonmay (2019) assessed the development of ICT in the university libraries of Assam, the author investigated the library digitization, the use of ICT resources, consortium by the libraries, the use of Rfid and barcode technology, the strength of Internet connections and the challenges in implementing this ICTs, he asserts that the libraries he studied in Assam are automated, installed barcodes and RFID technologies, and had CCTV camera to forestall theft and mutilation, he concluded by saying that lack of funds, lack of corporation from the management forestalled full development of ICT in the libraries.

John and Balasubranian (2019) investigated the use of ICT based resources and services in the academic libraries of Tamil Nadu using P.G. students, Research Scholar, and faculty members as respondents, his finding asserts that the usage of ICT resources and services is average, no formal training on how to use the ICT resources and that Academic libraries understudy lack LAN facility. The authors recommended that the usage of video conferencing facilities should be increased to maximize ICT-based activities and services.

Omeluzor et al (2016) investigated the utilization of social networking in the libraries of south-east Nigeria and stated that the utilization is low he further asserts that the study is the first of its kind in the region, he recommended reskilling of the information professionals, availability of finance, changing university curricula to meet with the new IT demand.

Hussain et al (2015) surveyed academic libraries in India and iterated that Traditional ICT based solutions for the management of Library operation and services are utilized, but knowledge creation and resource discovery tools such as blogs, wikis, social bookmarking, social networking, real simple syndication are not utilized and in the most cases librarians are not aware, he attributed this factor to lack of ICT skills, unawareness of the potential benefit of ICT and Inadequate Infrastructure.

Zabed (2014) surveyed Bangladesh public libraries to determine the use of IT in delivering information services by IT services in the library, the author accessed the automation practice, availability of electronic resources, and the IT facilities in the public libraries of Bangladesh, he concluded that IT services and resources are inadequate in the surveyed libraries, he also observed that despite the inadequacies, the older libraries fair better than the newly established public libraries.

## **ICT Infrastructure**

Several studies assess ICT infrastructure in Academic libraries

Lakshimiphati and Senthilkumar (2021) did a comparative study between the libraries of Karnataka and Andrapradesh, the authors' listed digital infrastructure in the library to include computer server, system printers, scanner Rfid tags, Rfid Printer, LCD project fax, web camera, CCTV, UPS, Cloud server and Modern/network server.

Babatunde et al (2020) investigated the information and communication technology infrastructure in university libraries of north-central and asserts that internet equipment, electronic email, e-library computer systems, and library automation are the information and communication technology system available in the library system

Bassey (2016) investigated the automation status and the most adopted software packages in Nigeria Libraries, his findings conclude that the automation level of Nigerian academic libraries is low however it differs from the state, federal, and private-owned universities, he concluded by asserting that Koha is the most adopted software package in Nigeria Libraries Scenario.

Shukla (2015) assessed ICT Infrastructure in University Libraries of Uttar Pradesh, the infrastructure range from the availability of internet connectivity, computers, printers, WebOpac, ICT facilities are ranging from E-mail, Facebook page, Blog, Library website and automation software such as CD/ISIS, open-source such as Koha, and he concluded that the ICTs are inadequate in the surveyed libraries.

Haneefa (2006) reported that special libraries in Kerala had basic hardware facilities and they were more interested in commercial library management software. There were 11 software

packages preferred by 23 libraries and CDS/ISIS was used more in libraries than any other software.

## Methodology

The study employs a survey method using structured interview that was personally handed to the head of the library's understudy, in addition, the researcher personally observed the ICT facilities in the nine university libraries understudy, the criterion used for the selection of the library was proximity and domicile location of the researcher.

## Findings of the study

This section presents the finding of the study

**Table 1: Institutional Information**

S/NO.	University Library	Acronym	Status	Year of Establishment
1	Baze University	Baze	Private	2011
2	Nile University	Nile	Private	2009
3	Federal University Lokoja	FUL	Federal	2011
4	Federal University of Technology Minna	FUT Minna	Federal	1983
5	Bingham University	BU	Private	2005
6	African University of Science and Technology	AUST	Private	2007
7	Federal University of Lafia	Fulafia	Federal	2011







Wikis									
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From Table 3 all university libraries have websites, only Baze, Nile University, and Futminna offer Electronic thesis and Dissertation no University libraries had WebOpac, social networking service blogs, and wikis, the finding is in line with that of Hussain et al (2015) that academic libraries in India have Traditional ICT based solutions for the management of Library operation and services, but knowledge creation and resource discovery tools such as blogs, wikis, social bookmarking, social networking, real simple syndication are not utilized and in the most cases librarians are not aware, in the same Omeluzor 2016 asserts that social networking site is underutilized in academic libraries of south-south Nigeria.

**Table 4: Automation Status of the University Libraries**

S/N	Institution	Automation Status	Automation Software
1	Baze	Partially	KOHA
2	Nile	YES	YORDAM
3	FUL	YES	KOHA
4	FUTMINNA	YES	KOHA
5	AUST	YES	KOHA
6	FULAFIA	YES	KOHA
7	FUAM	YES	KOHA
8	BU	YES	KOHA
9	UNI ABJ	NO	

Source: Field Work

Data in Table 3 indicates that most of the university libraries have automated library operation, except Baze University and University of Abuja which have partially and not automated any function. This is contrary to the finding of Basey and Ruth (2016) the automation of Library operation in Nigeria Academic libraries is low, in the same vein the finding is in line with this study that Koha open source software is the most adopted in Nigeria Libraries.

**Table 5: ICT Facilities Available in University Libraries**

ICT Facilities	Baze	Nile	FUL	FUTMINNA	BU	AUST	FULAFIA	FUAM	UNI ABJ
Computers	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Scanners				✓	✓		✓		
Photocopiers	✓	✓							
Printers	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Flash Drives									
Smart Board/Tvs	✓	✓							
External hard drives									
Barcodes	✓	✓							
Rfid Technologies		✓							
Security System	✓	✓							✓

Source: Field Work

From Table 5 all the Libraries had Computers and printers, however only Bingham university Futminna Fulafia had scanners, Only Nile University has installed RFIDs, and only Baze and Nile university had Smartboards/TVs in the libraries, No university library had external hard drives, flash drives, only three universities had installed CCTV camera to curtail theft and mutilation which are Baze University, Nile University and University of Abuja, only Baze and Nile university make use of Barcodes.

### **Conclusion**

The study reveals that the university libraries are taking the initiative to automate their library operations, but are still lagging in terms of offering ICT based services, resources, and Products, the Management, and staff of the libraries must realize the implication of not improving their services to meet up with the present ICT demand and essential that ICT Infrastructures are

installed and training of the concerned staff on usage to improve the library services in the various university libraries.

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