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INFLUENCE OF INSTITUTIONAL INTERNET CONNECTION ON THE USE OF ELECTRONIC INFORMATION RESOURCES BY UNDERGRADUATES OF

UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN, NIGERIA.

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Abstract

Information is necessary for development and to make meaningful decisions, as such, students in the university need to have access to current, latest and recent information; this can only be assured and ensured through the provision of internet connection within the university to students in order to access electronic resources scattered online. It is therefore, believed that universities, as part of their functions should provide internet service to students in the university to aid their academic activities. Lack of institutional internet connection provision to students may greatly affect their academic activities because they are prevented from accessing electronic information resources needed for their use.

The internet is very critical to the academic activities and performance of students; hence, the university must endeavour to make the provision of institutional internet connection to students which will give students access to electronic information resources. The study recommended that efforts should be made by the University's M.I.S management to improve on the provision and availability of institutional internet connection. The university should ensure frequent power supply. The university should increase their bandwidth purchase and also purchase from large companies not middlemen, this would resolve bandwidth issues.

Introduction

Information professionals have long sought to comprehend what factors are relevant in encouraging a person to seek out information. More recently, a particular focus of inquiry has been on those factors that play a role in deciding whether to use the library and its resources as to seek information (either physically or virtually) as opposed to just surfing the Internet. These inquiries assume an even greater importance as it is a fact that more people are using the Internet to find information they need, information that is unmediated by the library (Kibirge, 2000). In this age of information and communication technology (ICT), the use of the Internet has become the norm to accessing information dispersed on open access and databases. Developing countries including Nigeria are not exempted from this trend. The craving for the Internet stems from its central role in ICT with access to free online journals, magazines, and other information resources anytime and from anywhere for academic and research purposes (Kode and Kode, 2003).

The use of Internet (if maximized) plays a major role in helping undergraduate researchers' access large number of materials from different parts of the world. With its advent, lecturers and students can work together without physical interaction between each other and achieve the same objective with that of traditional way of studying in higher institution. Lecturers exchange ideas and communicate them effectively to students electronically since teaching, learning and research are now made easy with the Internet.

Universities worldwide now invest a lot in Internet provision and access because it reduces the time between the production and utilization of knowledge; improves co-operation and the exchange of ideas among fellow researchers in other institutions, regions or countries, furthers the sharing of information; and promotes multidisciplinary research. Bon (2007), states that the Internet can substitute for expensive hardcopy libraries, by availing students' access to scholarly electronic information resources. Today, survival in academics without the Internet is hardly imaginable. The Internet has useful applications like; online data repositories, library catalogues, journals, news services, student and financial administration systems, online supported or solely online conducted teaching, as well as in digital communication with fellow students and

lecturers, open access and electronic information materials which is the focus of this study, among others. The internet emerged as the educational tool because it is a good source of getting the right information and solutions to academic problems of students in higher institution of learning. Lyon (1998) states that, Internet connections now constitute a highly visible service in every library and that the librarians and their clients have embraced it in their daily works. Academic libraries now run information literacy courses to educate faculty members and students on skills needed to access, retrieve and evaluate information resources from the Internet. Qunqing (2004) refers to the Internet as a large "encyclopedia" or "a library without walls" for its abundant information.

Electronic information resources serve a prominent role in facilitating access to the required information by the user in an expediency manner. Electronic information resources are useful tools in libraries and information communication environment, these recourses enables libraries to cope in the information competitive world. The emergence of electronic information resources has tremendously transformed information handling and management in Nigerian academic environments, and University libraries in particular. Electronic information resources usually consist of e-books, e-Journals, articles, newspaper, thesis, dissertation, databases and CD-ROMs, which are likely to be the alternative to the print media. The familiarity and use of electronic information resources in the libraries for rapid development is necessary and important. Dadzie (2005) writes that electronic information resources are invaluable research tools that complement the print based resources in a traditional library setting. Their advantages, according to her include: access to information that might be restricted to the user due to geographical location or finances, access to more current information, and provision of extensive links to additional resources of related contents.

The emergence of electronic information resources has tremendously transformed information handling and management in Nigerian academic environments, and University libraries in particular (Ani and Ahiauzu, (2008). A number of electronic resources initiatives have been put in place to assist in the development training and use of electronic resources in a number of Universities such as the connection to the internet.

An electronic information resource is defined as any work encoded and made available for access through the use of a computer. It includes electronic data available by remote access or by

direct access (fixed media). In other words, remote access (electronic resources) refers to the use of electronic resources via computer networks. (AACR2, 2002 edition; glossary) while direct access (electronic resources) refers to the use of electronic resources via carriers (e.g., discs/disks, cassettes, cartridges) designed to be inserted into a computerized device or its auxiliary equipment. Dadzie (2007) writes that electronic information resources are invaluable research tools that complement the print – based resources in a traditional library setting. Their advantages, according to her include: access to information that might be restricted to the user due to geographical location or finances, access to more current information, and provision of extensive links to additional resources related contents. This rapid emergence and development of electronic information technologies therefore makes it possible to envision radically different ways of organizing the collections and services the library has traditionally provided. Examples of electronic information resources include, but are not limited to: web sites, online databases, e-journals, e-books, electronic integrating resources, and physical carriers in all formats, whether free or fee-based, required to support research in the subject covered, and may be audio, visual, and/or text files.

Electronic information resources can be seen as the most recent development in information technology and are among the most powerful tools ever invented in human history. Electronic information resources are becoming more and more important for the academic community (Kumar and Kumar, 2008). It is therefore, imperative for any university to ensure the provision of these electronic resources to facilitate academic activities within it which are only accessed through a stable and unfailing internet connection in the university.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are to:

- establish if there is institutional internet connection provision in the University of Ibadan to undergraduates;
- ii. examine the uses of institutional internet connection by undergraduates in the University of Ibadan;
- iii. find out the various electronic information resources available to undergraduates of the University of Ibadan;
- iv. determine the influence of internet on use of electronic information resources by undergraduates of the University of Ibadan; and
- v. identify the constraints to the provision of institutional internet connection to undergraduates in the University of Ibadan.

Methodology

The target population for this study was the undergraduate students of university of Ibadan and the staff of MIS, University of Ibadan. The population comprised 12,125 undergraduate of the University of Ibadan drawn from all the thirteen faculties in the University of Ibadan. These faculties are Agriculture, Arts, Basic Medical Sciences, Clinical Sciences, Dentistry, Education, Law, Pharmacy, Public Health, Sciences, Technology, the Social Sciences and Veterinary medicine. The study was conducted in 2015. The undergraduate students of the University of Ibadan were sampled with the use of stratified sampling technique. The choice of this method was necessitated because of the large population and to remove being bias in the process of picking sample for the study population, also because the population was stratified as the students were from their respective faculties. The sample was drawn from the total population of 11,202 registered undergraduate students of the University of Ibadan.

Findings

The findings of the study as presented are derived from the analysis of data collected from undergraduate students and the staff of MIS, University of Ibadan. The findings are presented separately in terms of the results from the survey of students and the interview of the staff of MIS.

Students Survey

Most of the undergraduate students stated that the University of Ibadan provided institutional internet connection. This shows that the University Management understands the importance of the internet to the academic activities of students. The fact that the world presently is a global village connected virtually through electronic means via the internet has made information sharing and communication only a finger tip away and only through a click of a button. Internet ensures that undergraduates have access to various information resources and also communication with colleagues, lecturers and scholars all over the world.

The results of this on the use of institutional internet connection showed that majority of the undergraduate students used the institutional internet connection mainly for research purpose. This result may result from the fact that most of the undergraduates that participated in this study were in their final year (400 level) for those not doing a five-year course. The implication of this is that they will have to carry out their project work which might require them to use information resources, especially current journal articles for their project work. This finding is in agreement with the results of the studies conducted by Kaur and Manhas (2008), Mishra (2009) and Malik and Mahmood (2009) which reported that most of the undergraduates sampled used the internet for research purposes and other educational purposes.

The undergraduates identified that they accessed the internet through the passwords of lecturers as the MIS has failed to provide such for students even at a cost. This management issue by the MIS makes students to share passwords and whenever they want to access the internet they need to pray the password should not be in use by fellow students. Breakdown of the internet and slow internet speed are also experienced regularly. This is similar to the results of the study conducted by Malik and Mahmood (2009) where the respondents identified slow internet speed and poor quality as constraints that militated against their use of the internet. Okeke (2005) revealed the root cause of these challenges as under-funding of the educational system by the Federal Government, as budget has been cut down from year to year.

Is institutional internet connection provided for undergraduates in the University of Ibadan?

Table 4.2 Provision of internet connection for students

Statement	Ye	es	No		
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	
Does the university provide internet connection for students?	159	77.2	47	22.8	

Table 4.2 presented results on the provision of internet connection for students. The findings showed that most of the respondents 159 (77.2%) agreed that the university provided internet connection, though 47 (22.8%) disagreed to this. The pattern of this result may be a reflection of the fact that certain percentage of the undergraduates live off campus and while on campus may be busy with academic activities and as such may not have the time to ascertain if internet connectivity exist in the university community.

Mode of internet provision

	Mode of internet provision	SA		SA		SA		A		A D			SD
		Fre	eq. %	6 Freq.		F	Freq.		req.				
				%		%					%		%
1	Hall of residence	69	33.5	82	39.8	30	14.6	25	12.1				
2	Faculty	59	28.6	100	48.5	31	15.0	16	7.8				
3	University MIS	49	23.8	84	40.8	45	21.8	28	13.6				
4	Department	46	22.3	76	36.9	48	23.3	36	17.5				
5	Provision from internet cafes	40	19.4	79	38.3	55	26.7	32	15.5				
6	Internet connection from admin. Offices	31	15.0	94	45.6	52	25.2	29	14.1				
7	Using lecturers I.D. to access	52	25.2	76	36.9	47	22.8	31	15.0				
8	Internet by communication service provider	49	23.8	85	41.3	49	23.8	23	11.2				

Table 4.3 showed that majority of the undergraduates 100 (48.5%) indicated that the most prominent mode of access to the internet was through their various faculties, though 16 (7.8%) strongly disagreed. The respondents ranked internet connection from admin offices, internet by

communication service provider and University MIS as the 2nd, 3rd and 4th mode of access to the internet as expressed by 94 (45.6%), 85 (41.3%) and 84 (40.8%) of the undergraduates. Although, 29 (14.1%), 23 (11.2%) and 28 (13.6%) strongly disagreed with the majority. This result revealed that most of the undergraduates accessed the internet through the institutional internet connection available within the university campus.

What are the uses of institutional internet connection to undergraduates of the University of Ibadan?

Table 4.4 Use of institutional internet connection by undergraduates of the University of Ibadan

	Use of internet provision	5	SA		A		D	,	SD
		Freq. %		Freq.		Freq.		F	req.
					%	%			%
1	To read world news/newspapers	61	29.6	98	47.6	35	17.0	125	.8
2	Sport updates	60	29.1	86	41.7	39	18.6	21	10.2
3	Research purposes	120	58.3	69	33.5	10	4.9	7	3.4
4	Search for international schools	57	27.7	96	46.6	41	19.9	12	5.8
5	Take online courses	54	26.2	86	41.7	46	22.3	20	9.7
6	Search for scholarly articles	94	45.6	87	42.2	18	8.7	7	3.4
7	Keeping up with trends in my profession	86	41.7	94	45.6	18	8.7	8	3.9
8	Sending and receiving e-mails	103	50.0	81	39.3	17	8.3	5	2.4
9	Browse social media	91	44.2	90	43.7	19	9.2	6	2.9
10	Searching for professional bodies to join	61	29.6	92	44.7	41	19.9	12	5.8
11	Participating in online discussion forum	63	30.6	96	46.6	37	18.0	10	4.9
12	Searching for articles/publications	85	41.3	96	46.6	15	7.3	10	4.9
13	Searching for available grants and	81	39.3	91	44.2	25	12.1	9	4.4
	scholarships								
14	Accessing electronic resources	66	32.0	94	45.6	38	18.4	8	3.9
15	On-line trading/marketing	57	27.7	96	46.6	38		15	7.3
						18.4	1		

16	Downloading and uploading of information	111	53.9	78	37.9	11	5.3	6	2.9
17	Keep up with inter campus gossip	56	27.2	75	36.4	57	27.7	18	8.7
18	Announcement and university news	75	36.4	98	47.6	26	12.6	7	3.4
19	Documentary	57	27.7	92	44.7	46	22.3	11	5.3
20	Tele-conferencing	41	19.9	76	36.9	68	33.0	21	10.2
21	Skype	54	26.2	83	40.3	45	21.8	24	11.7
22	Online course registration	101	49.0	82	39.8	15	7.3	8	3.9
23	Read university news	86	41.7	76	36.9	32	15.5	12	5.8

Findings on the purpose of use of institutional internet connection by the undergraduates revealed that the internet was used for diverse reasons. Out of the 23 reasons presented, most of the respondents 120 (58.3%) strongly agreed that they used institutional internet connection for research purposes, while 7 (3.4%) strongly disagreed. The second purpose of internet use by the undergraduates was downloading and uploading of information as noted by 111 (53.9%), even though 6 (2.9%) disagreed. Most of the respondents also acknowledged that they used the institutional internet connection for sending and receiving e-mails, online course registration, announcement and university news, search for international schools and participating in online discussion forum, with the following percentages 103 (50.0%), 101 (49.0%), 98 (47.6%) and 96 (46.6%). Although, 5 (2.4%), 8 (3.9%), 7 (3.4%), 12 (5.8%) and 10 (4.9%) disagreed with the majority. Most of the respondents 96 (46.6%) also averred that they made use of the internet connection in the university to search for articles, publications and online trading/marketing. Though 10 (4.9%) and 15 (7.3%) had a different opinion (Table 4.4).

What are the various electronic information resources available to undergraduates of the University of Ibadan?

Table 4.5 Availability of electronic information resources to undergraduates in University of Ibadan

Electronic information resources	SA	A	D	SD
	Freq. %	Freq.	Freq.	Freq.
		%	%	%

1	Search engine	102	49.5	89 43.2	11	5.3	4	1.9
2	Encyclopedia	84	40.8	98 47.6	18	8.7	6	2.9
3	Documentary	64	31.1	97 47.1	39	18.9	6	2.9
4	Yahoo news	63	30.6	106 51.5	29	14.1	8	3.9
5	Open access	54	26.2	102 49.5	42	20.4	8	3.9
6	Databases/websites	80	38.8	95 46.1	22	10.7	9	2.4
7	Professional association forum	51	24.8	101 49.0	43	20.9	11	5.4
8	Newspapers	73	35.4	104 50.5	24	11.7	5	2.4
9	Journal website	59	28.6	107 51.9	33	16.0	7	3.4
10	Electronic mail	77	37.4	102 49.5	22	10.7	5	2.4
11	Email discussion forum	51	24.8	104 50.5	43	20.9	8	3.9
12	Electronic news	73	35.4	94 45.6	30	14.6	9	4.4
13	E-books	73	35.4	107 51.9	21	10.2	5	2.4
14	Institutional repository (IR)	40	19.4	103 50.0	47	22.8	16	7.8

Table 4.5 showed that journal websites were the most available electronic resources to the undergraduates as noted by 107 (51.9%), even as 7 (3.4%) said these were not available to them. Additionally, Yahoo news, email discussion forums and newspapers were electronic resources that were also available to the undergraduates via the internet. This view was that of 106 (51.5%) and 104 (50.5%), which was also rebuffed by the minority, 8 (3.9%) and 5 (2.4%). The fourth and fifth electronic resources available through the internet to the undergraduates were institutional repository 103 (50.0%) and open access resources 102 (49.5%). While 16 (7.8%) and 8 (3.9%) strongly disagreed with this opinion. This implies that most of the undergraduates are aware of the availability of these electronic resources on the internet as their responses have shown. This could motivate them to utilize the institutional internet more for academic activities rather than for social networking and other worthless ventures.

What is the influence of internet connection on use of electronic information resources by undergraduates of the University of Ibadan?

Table 4.6 Influence of internet connection on use of electronic information resources by undergraduates of the University of Ibadan

	Statements	Ş	SA		A		D	,	SD		
		Fre	eq. %	Freq.		Freq.		Freq.		F	req.
					%		%		%		
1	I read world news more because of	19	9.2	51	24.8	91	44.2	45	21.8		
	University of Ibadan internet connection										
	provision										
2	Institutional internet connection enables me	45	21.8	81	39.3	47	22.8	33	16.0		
	to download current materials for my										
	research work										
3	Institutional internet connection in	35	17.0	70	34.0	61	29.6	40	19.4		
	University of Ibadan helps me to have										
	original ideas and make my work unique										
4	I work within a minimum time to get my	38	18.4	68	33.0	56	27.2	44	21.4		
	work done because of University of Ibadan										
	internet service										
5	University of Ibadan internet provision	25	12.1	67	32.5	64	31.1	50	24.3		
	makes me keep up with people in my field										
	of study										
6	It saves me cost of downloading and cafe	56	27.2	34	35.9	36	17.5	40	19.4		
	expenses										
7	I watch online tutorial of related work done	22	10.7	57	27.7	69	33.5	58	28.2		
	in class because of University of Ibadan										
	internet service										

Table 4.6 presented results on the influence of institutional internet connection on electronic information resources utilization. Most of the undergraduate students 81 (39.3%) agreed that the internet enabled them to download current materials for their research work, even though 33 (16.0%) strongly disagreed with the opinion of the majority. In addition, 70 (34.0%) of the respondents also acknowledged that the institutional internet had helped them to have original ideas that made their work unique, though 40 (19.4%) strongly disagreed. On the

contrary, quite a significant number of the undergraduates 91 (44.2%) and 69 (33.5%) expressed that the institutional internet connection did not have any positive influence on their ability to read world news more and watch online tutorial of related work done in class. Though, 19 (5.2%) and 22 (10.7%) agreed that the internet connection had positive effect in this regard. On the average though, most of the undergraduates agreed that the institutional internet connection had positive influence on their use of electronic resources.

What are the constraints to the provision of institutional internet connection for undergraduates of the University of Ibadan?

Table 4.7 Constraints to the provision of institutional internet connection for undergraduates of the University of Ibadan

	Constraints to IIC		SA	A		D			SD
		Freq. %		eq. % Freq. %		Freq. %		% Freq.	
1	Power supply	83	40.3	77	37.4	36	17.5	10	4.9
2	Poor management by student	32	15.5	81	39.3	71	34.5	22	10.7
3	Poor management by MIS staff	66	32.0	90	43.7	41	19.9	9	4.4
4	Large students' population	75	36.4	69	33.5	48	23.3	14	6.8
5	Fund	69	33.5	86	41.7	33	16.0	18	8.7
6	Preference of service providers connection	63	30.6	75	36.4	56	27.2	12	5.8
	to Unibadan connection (Airtel, Glo, MTN)								
7	Frequent breakdown	82	39.8	88	42.7	30	14.6	6	2.9
8	Cost of ICT tools	52	25.2	89	43.2	54	26.2	11	5.3
9	Belief that students are not the major	80	38.8	74	35.9	43	20.9	9	4.4
	concern for internet provision by the								
	university								
10	Bandwidth issues	64	31.1	87	42.2	46	22.3	9	4.4
11	Changes in school management which	55	26.7	80	38.8	50	24.3	21	10.2
	leads to change in school policies								

The major constraint identified by most of the respondents 90 (43.7%) was poor management by MIS staff, though 9 (4.4%) did not consider it a challenge. Cost of ICT tools, frequent breakdown of the internet infrastructure, bandwidth issues and fund were all identified as constraints limiting the use of institutional internet connection by undergraduates. This views were expressed by 89 (43.2%), 88 (42.7%), 87 (42.2%) and 86 (41.7%), though 11 (5.3%), 6 (2.9%), 9 (4.4%) and 18 (8.7%) strongly disagreed with the majority (Table 4.7).

Key Informant Interview

The interview session was with Mr Oguntoye Abiodun, the Director of Operations, Management of Internet Service (MIS), University of Ibadan. This was because as the Head of Operations MIS in the University; he was in the best position to answer all questions asked. The voice recording method was used in the interview; this gave the researcher flexibility of asking questions and monitoring the facial and physical expressions of the interviewee.

Mr Oguntoye Abiodun made it known that institutional internet connection is provided in the University of Ibadan. He also confirmed that there is a provision of institutional internet connection which is strictly designed for use by students and it is made available in all halls of residence which might not be functioning to optimal level because it is free. He also mentioned that the idea of payment for the wireless by student had been raised but the University Administration felt that the students should start paying when the network becomes fully functional.

He also said since 100% internet connection is provided for staff use, and it is evident that staff cannot make use of the 100% internet connection during the day, the idea of placing students on the left over from staff was brought up and then, the institutional internet connection is made available for use by students at night. On the long run, he made it known that students going to the departments and faculties to use the institutional internet connection at night has various disadvantages which boils down to the fact that it might affect students performance because if students stay awake all night, it is likely that such student will be sleeping in class, also, not sleeping well at night may have adverse effect on the health of students.

The Director brought it to note that institutional internet connection is also provided in the main library for use by students and a token amount is paid. He said that the institutional internet connection is present in all the thirteen (13) faculties in the University of Ibadan and that 75% is covered in all the 107 departments. The Director stressed the importance of providing institutional internet connection for student because; it is believed to help in their academic activities. He elucidated more on the importance of internet provision for the academic activities of students by saying that students needs current and recent information which is provided through the internet, therefore before a student can think of going to the library to get information, he/she would have gone online to search for information first.

Among the constraints to the provision of institutional internet connection as mentioned by the MIS Director were inadequate power supply, this was the major constraint mentioned. Another was the Internet Service Provider (ISP) used. The Purchase of bandwidth from middlemen was also mentioned as a constraint and unwillingness of the University to increase their bandwidth purchases. Also mentioned among the challenges was climatic condition, as there may be downtime when there is slight change in the climatic condition due to the fact that the two I.S.Ps used are connected to the university through a radio. He said that if a fibre cable is run down to the university instead of connection to a radio, this would ensure 100% internet connection.

In conclusion, the world as gone digital and the University is doing all to ensure the provision of internet access to lecturers and even students, because without internet access, keeping up with the trend and use of electronic recourses be student will be difficult.

Conclusion

The internet is very critical to the academic activities and performance of students; hence, the university must endeavour to make the provision of institutional internet connection available to students which will in turn give students access to electronic information resources that will help their academic activities and performance. It is therefore, imperative that adequate provision of institutional internet connection is as important as availability of electronic information materials and vice versa. This fact therefore, stresses the need for the adequate institutional internet connection provision on a continuous basis to enhance the use of electronic information resources by students and also to help them in their academic activities and performance.

The availability of institutional internet connection in the university is a *sin qua non* to effective electronic information resource use. Electronic information resources were revealed to

be mostly used by students instead of visiting the library to consult books in order to get information. It is therefore, apparent that necessary provisions should be made to make the institutional internet connection available at every point in time to enable students access electronic information materials at any time and as quick as possible. This is to say that the university administration should put all hands on deck to ensure the good quality of the institutional internet connection provided for students' use.

The everyday advancement in technology all over the world has necessitated the university to also try all its possible best to move in the trend. The world as gone digital, hence the university also wants to go digital and without internet access, digitization cannot happen. Therefore there is need for the university to make adequate provision of institutional internet connection.

Management of the M.I.S, university of Ibadan, should operate flexible and effective methods of optimal level provision of the institutional internet connection. The satisfaction of students of the institution with access to electronic information resources and good academic performance of students should be a major concern of the institution.

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of this study;

- 1. Efforts should be made by the University's M.I.S management to improve on the provision and availability of institutional internet connection.
- 2. The university should ensure that the issue of power supply is resolved. There should be 24 hours electricity on the sockets which the fibre cable of the internet connection is landing on.
- 3. The university should increase their bandwidth purchase and also purchase from large companies not middlemen; this would resolve the bandwidth issues.
- 4. The university administration should make the payment for institutional internet connection by students mandatory so as to ensure its functioning to an optimal level.
- 5. The IPNS for the institutional internet connection should be changed to a better one.
- 6. A more proactive means of creating awareness of electronic information resources among undergraduate should be adopted. This will increase the level and frequency of use.
- 7. The use of electronic information resources should be encouraged for independent project study undertaken by the undergraduates. This will help undergraduates to have access to vast information resources.

8.	Finally, adequate funding should be made available for the proper provision of the institutional internet connection by the University , so that electronic information materials needed can be acquired.

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