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Debut Online Library Registration at the Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta, Nigeria, Patrons' Opinions Survey and the Good News

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Abstract:

Introducing a self-service online library registration to a higher educational institution presents an opportunity for technology adoption evaluation, which may be useful to other institutions. This paper presents the experience of the deployment of online library registration built on koha library management software (KLMS), to 'Nimbe Adedipe Library, Federal University of Agriculture Abeokuta, Nigeria. The system was built on Koha Circulation module and before it was commissioned, it was presented to three categories of prospective users for observations. Firstly, to the members of library's automation department's staff, then to the library management which also includes the Readers' Services Librarian, and lastly, to the representatives of the University community which include the Principal Officers of the University, the Deans, Directors, Heads of Departments, students' union representatives and the members of Library Staff. At each presentation, participants applauded the initiative.

The aim of this research was to investigate the users' opinions about the first and a newly introduced online library registration system using koha library management software (KLMS) at the Federal University of Agriculture Abeokuta, Nigeria. It was anticipated that the outcome of the research will be useful both to improve the system and to benefit other libraries that use koha or other library management software (LMS).

Methodology: _The study discussed briefly the history of automation at 'Nimbe Adedipe Library, Federal University of Agriculture Abeokuta (FUNAAB), Nigeria. It also presents the strategies employed towards bringing about the "good news". Survey design of_ sample of tangibles type was adopted for the study, _and the_ study got its data from undergraduates and a few postgraduates using questionnaire.

Keywords: _Koha, Federal University of Agriculture Abeokuta, library management system, online library registration, Nigeria, users' opinions, users' preferences, users' experiences._

Introduction:

The Institutional Perspective

The Federal University of Agriculture Abeokuta

FUNAAB was established on January 1, 1988 as one of the three universities of agriculture established by the Federal government of Nigeria at the time. As at May 2018, the university has a total population of around 17,256 students comprising of about 15,941 undergraduate and 1,315 postgraduate students. Faculty staff strength was about 592 and non-teaching about 1,742. The university passed through different stages of merging and de-merging until it finally evolved as UNAAB (former name) in January 1988 ("Nimbe Adedipe University Library," 2018).

'Nimbe Adedipe Library (NAL) and the History of Automation

The university library at FUNAAB was named 'Nimbe Adedipe library (NAL) to honour the first Vice-Chancellor of the University, Professor Nurudeen Olorunnimbe Adedipe. The ultra-modern library building can accommodate 1000 users at a time. The total collection of books at present is 81,000 titles and 2,478 Journal volumes ("Nimbe Adedipe University Library," n.d.).

The process of automation in the library started in 1994 when it acquired the TINLIB library software designed for four workstations which were later increased to ten. The library later migrated from the DOS based TINLIB software to GLAS (Graphical Library Automated System) which is windows based and could operate 50 workstations within the library. Recently, the library migrated to koha LMS which presently holds about 81,000 records ("Nimbe Adedipe University Library," n.d.).

Problem Analysis / Motivation

Prior to the introduction of the online library registration, the University Library never had any experience of users' online registration. Users had to visit the library for their registration. This approach was therefore faced with the problem of clustering of students, rowdiness, hustles and

rushes, especially at the beginning of a new academic session – the experience of which was not interesting.

Now technology has been employed to solve these problems. Users interact with online platforms in different ways, thus, it is expected that they will have various opinions about such platforms. The platform studied is built for a federal university library and the library users' registration is fully online even though koha LMS offers two options for users' registration i.e., the onsite registration and the self-registration. Fully online registration in the sense that users do not have to visit the library to register, other than to come to pick up their library cards which are also generated and printed from koha - no queue, no struggle, no time wastage and more interestingly, with good internet connectivity, each user is able to register in an average of one minute (here is the good news). The system is on the web and users can register from within and outside the university campus. It is yet to be certain that there is any that has deployed such full online library registration among the federal university libraries that use koha in Nigeria. On this note, it was worthwhile to find out what the users that the system is deployed to serve, feel about it, what their experiences with the system are. This is the motivation for this research.

Objectives

The research provided answers to the following questions:

1. "What are the library users' experiences in using the library online registration platform?"
2. "What are the library users' opinions about the library online registration platform?"
3. "What are the library users' preferences between the traditional paper-based (onsite) registration and the automated (online) registration?"

This study employed the following objectives to answer the research questions:

1. To find out users' experiences (including challenges) at their interactions with the library online registration platform.
2. To find out users' opinions about the library online registration platform.

3. To determine the users' preference between the traditional paper-based (onsite) registration and the automated (online) registration.

Review of Related Literature

(Tella et al. 2017, 1-14) examined the use of KOHA library software in some selected university libraries in Kwara and Oyo States, Nigeria and found that majority of the respondents have positive perception towards the use of KOHA. They also found irregular power supply and insufficient manpower as major challenges to the smooth running of the software and on this note, they suggested the procurement of standby power generating set and other infrastructural facilities, and recruitment of more experts as the solution to the challenges. Vimal and Jasimudeen (2012) investigates the adoption of Koha software and the users' perceptions about it among Indian libraries, and found out that most users are satisfied with koha. (Basiru and Adebayo, 2017, 10-16) samples library staff and undergraduates' opinions on koha utilization and general perception, and the level of satisfaction of library staffs. This is one of the very rare studies on users' opinions or perceptions of koha services that focus on undergraduates as koha is mostly used by academic libraries.

From general review of related literature, it is obvious that majority of the studies on koha adoption, users' opinions or perceptions focus on library staff while studies on this subject with end users, such as students of a university in focus are rare. Thus, this study fills in this knowledge gap because it focuses on undergraduate users of the online library registration which is built on koha LMS.

Strategy to Achieving the "No Queue, No Struggle, One Minute Maximum Registration

Koha LMS offers two options for users' registration i.e., the onsite registration and the self-registration. For both types of registration, users will have to be physically present at the library for verification of their details. In FUNAAB, there are over 15000 undergraduates and if they have to come for onsite registration or verification, it is believed the experience will not be too far from that of the traditional onsite paper-based registration – the clustering of users, long queues, struggles, pushes and even the fatigue on the members of library staff involved in the registration.

In other to alleviate or even eliminate the aforementioned challenges, drawing on the existing synergy between the University Library and the University Information Communication Technology

Resource Center (ICTREC), already authenticated records of any prospective library user (students or staff), who triggers the library registration are automatically pulled from the university central database(s) and submitted directly to the koha MySQL database. This takes place within about one minute with good internet connectivity. Then, the user comes to pick up his or her koha generated library card after a specified number of days. This way, the user does not have to fill in the koha registration form, and will not have to come for any verification at the library because the user has already been verified at the University-level registration. For instance, if a student who is yet to pay his or her school fees makes an attempt to register for use of the library, at the point of submission of his/her records, she receives a message "Invalid username or/and password". Similarly, a member of staff who is yet to be fully documented with the university receives the same response when he or she makes an attempt to register for library use. Thus, rather than repeating the same authentication process that the University has already done, and making the users pass through double registration stress, this strategy has set both users and Library Staff free from unnecessary stress and has saved them a lot of time which they can invest in other tasks or activities. After all, this strategy is in line with the third Ranganathan's Laws of Library "save the time of the user" and "the library is a growing organism".

Before the package was commissioned, it was presented and demonstrated to three categories of prospective users for observations. Firstly, to the members of library's automation department's staff, then to the library management which also includes the Readers' Services Librarian, and lastly, to the representatives of the University Community who include the Principal Officers of the University, the Deans, Directors, Heads of Departments, students' union representatives and the members of Library Staff. At each presentation and demonstration, participants applauded the initiative.

Research Methods

Methodology

This research aspect of this paper makes use of quantitative methodology and the *Survey design of* sample of tangibles type was adopted for the study.

A survey design of sample of tangibles is that in which researchers use sampling techniques and make inferences about the population as a whole, from the information they collect from the sample ("Survey research," n.d.).

The questionnaire for this study was originally targeted to be all categories of library users. However, as at the time of this research, only undergraduates were available for the library registration, the postgraduates were yet to start the session. Thus, only a very few postgraduates were surveyed. Library registration is not attached an ultimatum, hence users register year round. It is on this fact that the sample for this research is taken from the total number of the users who had registered themselves as at the time of this research. Total number of research participants was 114 which is about 5% of the total number (2180) of library users who had registered on the online library registration platform as at the time of collection of data for this research.

The sample size for this study was justified by the principle of sample size determination of Israel (2003). This principle specifies that, in a population of 50,000, if 5% Precision Level is taken at 95% Confidence Level and P=.5, then the sample size should be 397. 397 is only about 0.8% of the population of 50,000 whereas the sample size 114 for this research is about 5% of the population 2180, which is higher than Israel's 0.8%. Hence, the sample size for this research is justified.

Data Sources

Data were collected from undergraduates and postgraduates using questionnaire

Data Analysis

Data was analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

Findings

Findings from this study are descriptively presented in the following table, based on the questionnaire:

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHICS

CHARACTERISTICS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGES (%)
Gender		
Male	71	62.3
Female	43	37.7
Total	100	100
Category		
Postgraduate	2	1.8
Undergraduate	112	98.2
Academic staff	0	0
Non Academic staff	0	0
Total	100	100

Table 1: Demographics

Table 1 shows the frequency distribution of the demographic characteristics of the respondents. Of the 114 respondents, 43(37.7%) were female while 71 (62.3%) were male. The study also reveals that the population is predominately undergraduate having 112 (98.2%) while the postgraduate followed it with a total of 2 (1.8%).

ANALYSIS OF AND FINDINGS FROM THE RESPONDENTS' LEVEL OF ASSERTION TO THE POSTED RESEARCH STATEMENTS.

Presented are the analyses of questions posted to the respondents in the questionnaire:

- *Statement one* shows that 107(93.8%) of the respondents agreed that the online registration system is easy, 7 (6.1%) of the respondents indicated less satisfaction in the context of ease of learning the system, and none of the respondents commented that it is not easy to learn. **This implies that the online registration system is easy to learn.**

- *Statement two* reveals that 107(93.8%) of the respondents agreed that the online registration system is user-friendly, 5(4.4%) indicated less satisfaction in the context of user-friendliness, while 2 (1.8%) disagreed that the online registration system is user friendly. **This implies that the online registration system is user-friendly.**

- *Statement three* reveals that 108 (94.7%) of the respondents agreed that the online registration system is easy to use, 5 (4.4%) gave less satisfaction in the context of ease of use while 1 (.9%) disagreed that the online registration system is easy to use. disagreed that it is easy to get system to perform. Considering statements three and four, i**mpliedly, the online registration system is easy to use.**

Sections	Statements	Assertions				
B **1**	**Ease of Learning of the online registration system** Easy to Learn	**Very Easy** 82(71.9%)	**Easy** 25(21.9%)	**Somehow Easy** 7 (6.1%)	**Not Easy** 0 (0%)	**Not Easy at all** 0 (0%)
C **2**	**User-friendliness of the online registration system** User-friendliness	**Very Friendly** 78(68.4%)	**Friendly** 29(25.4%)	**Somehow Friendly** 5 (4.4%)	**Not Friendly** 2 (1.8%)	**Not Friendly at all** 0 (0%)
D **3** **4**	**Ease of use of online registration system** Easy to use Easy to get system to perform tasks	**Very Easy** 74(64.9%) 82(71.9%)	**Easy** 34(29.8%) 26(22.8%)	**Somehow Easy** 5 (4.4%) 4 (3.5%)	**Not Easy** 1 (.9%) 2 (1.8)	**Not Easy at all** 0 (0%) 0 (0%)
E **5**	**Ease of access to the online registration system** Easy to access	**Very Easy** 77(67.5%)	**Easy** 29(25.4%)	**Somehow Easy** 5 (4.4%)	**Not Easy** 2 (1.8%)	**Not Easy at all** 1 (.9)
F **6**	**Reliability of the online registration system** Available (uptimes)	**Strongly Agree** 57(50.0%)	**Agree** 46(40.4%)	**Somehow Agree** 7 (6.1%)	**Disagree** 3 (2.6%)	**Strongly Disagree** 1 (.9%)
G **7** **8** **9** **10**	**Overall satisfaction about the newly introduced registration** Adequacy Efficiency Effectiveness **Overall Satisfaction**	**Very Satisfied** 87(76.3%) 92(80.7%) 81(71.1%) 86(75.4%)	**Satisfied** 25(21.9%) 18(15.8%) 27(23.7%) 24(21.1%)	**Somehow Satisfied** 2 (1.8%) 4 (3.5%) 6 (5.3%) 3 (2.6%)	**Not Satisfied** 0 (0%) 0 (0%) 0 (0%) 1 (.9%)	**Very Dissatisfied** 0 (0%) 0 (0%) 0 (0%) 0 (0%)
H **11**	**Preference (Online registration versus Offline registration)** Much better Better	**Strongly Agree** 78(68.4%) 62(54.4%)	**Agree** 20(17.5%) 37(32.5%)	**Somehow Agree** 2 (1.8%) 2 (1.8%)	**Disagree** 4 (3.5%) 6 (5.3%)	**Strongly Disagree** 10 (8.8%) 7 (6.1%)
12	Which registration method do you prefer?	**Former offline** 0 (0%)	**Current online** 114 (100%)			

| **13** | Reasons | **Easy Access**
 16(14%) | **Faster**
 40(35.1%) | **Stress free**
 45 (39.5%) | **Former is best**
 1 (.9%) | **None**
 12 (10.5%) |

| **I** **8** | Challenges | **Wrong password**
 2 (1.8%) | **Insufficient system**
 1 (.9%) | **Late pass recovery**
 5 (4.4%) | **Late awareness**
 1 (.9%) | **Network problem**
 32(28.1%) | **Inaccessible elsewhere**
 6 (5.3%) | **Unfriendliness of attendants**
 3 (2.6%) | **None**
 64 (56.1%) |

Table 2: Analyses of questions posted to the respondents

- *Statement four* reveals that 108 (94.7%) of the respondents agreed that it is easy to get system to perform tasks, 4 (3.5%) gave less satisfaction in this context, while 2 (1.8%)

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- *Statement five* reveals that 106 (92.9%) of the respondents agreed that the online registration system is easy to access, 5 (4.4%) gave less satisfaction to the statement, while 3 (2.7%) disagreed with the statement that the online registration is easy to access. Since majority of the respondents agreed that the online registration system is easy to access, then the system is easy to access.

- **Statement six** reveals that 103(90.4%) of the respondents agreed that the online registration system is available (uptimes), 7 (6.1%) gave less satisfaction to the statement while 4(3.5%) of the respondents disagreed that the online registration system is available.

- *Statement seven* reveals that 112 (98.2%) of the respondents were satisfied that the online registration system is adequate, 2 (1.8%) were less satisfied and none of the respondent were dissatisfied with the adequacy of the system.

- *Statement eight* reveals that 110 (96.5%) of the respondents were satisfied with the efficiency of the online registration system, 4 (3.5%) were less satisfied and none of the respondent were dissatisfied with the efficiency of the online registration system which implies that the system is efficient.

- *Statement nine* reveals that 108 (94.8%) of the respondents were satisfied with the effectiveness of the online registration system, 6 (5.3%) of the respondents were less satisfied and none of the respondents were dissatisfied with the effectiveness of the online registration system.

- *Statement ten* reveals that 110 (96.5%) of the respondents gave overall satisfaction to the online registration system, 3 (2.6%) gave less overall satisfaction and 1 (.9%) of the respondents disagreed with the overall satisfaction of the system. Thus, considering statements seven, eight, nine, ten, the frequency and percentage of respondents that were satisfied with the adequacy, efficiency, effectiveness and overall satisfaction of the newly introduced online registration system is high compared to those that were dissatisfied. Therefore, users are very well satisfied with the online library registration system.

- *Statement eleven* reveals that 98 (85.9%) of the respondents agreed that the online registration system is much better compared to the offline registration, 2 (1.8) were less

satisfied and 14 (12.3%) of the respondents disagreed that the online registration is much better than the paper registration.

- *Statement twelve* reveals that 99 (86.9%) of the respondents agreed that the online registration is better compared to the paper registration, 2 (1.8%) were less satisfied and 13 (11.4%) of the respondents disagreed that the online registration is better compared to the paper registration.

- *Statement thirteen* shows that 114 (100%) of the respondents prefer the current online registration to that of the former offline registration. The respondents that agreed to statements eleven and twelve are more than those that disagreed with the statements. Also, the whole population of study agreed to the fact that they prefer the current online registration. Hence, it can therefore be asserted that users prefer the current online library registration to the previous paper-based registration.

It was observed that the respondents preferred the current online registration to the former offline registration because of the following recorded reasons; 16 (14%) said that it is easy to access, 40 (35.1%) said it is faster, 45 (39.5%) said it is stress free, 1(.9%) said that the former is best and 12 (10.5%) gave no reason.

Also, 2 (1.8%), 1 (1.9%), 5 (4.4%), 1 (.9%), 32 (28.1%), 6 (5.3%) and 3 (2.6%) of the respondents stated that they faced the challenges of wrong password, insufficient systems, late password recovery, late awareness, network problem, inaccessibility of online registration elsewhere and unfriendliness of the attendants respectively, while 64 (56.1%) were faced with no challenge.

Contributions to Knowledge

The findings of this research contribute immensely to Human-Computer Interaction (HCI) field in that:

- The study identifies and collates the experiences, opinions of the users about the newly introduced online library registration system, and it also determines their preferences for it. The strategies engaged to achieve the "good news" (no queue, no struggle, one minute maximum registration) present innovative idea to other libraries across the world, more especially those that use KLMS. This research is one of those that pose significant benefits to global librarianship.

Conclusion and Recommendations:

The innovativeness introduced into the deployment of online library registration at FUNAAB makes the whole experience laudable. The university community especially the students acclaim the initiative. It is hoped that the knowledge shared in this paper will be beneficial to other libraries across the globe. It I thus recommended that libraries and their institutional directorate of ICT should maintain synergy so as to facilitate real time access to information.

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