9-2019

Influence of Information Availability and Use on Economic Integration of Small Scale Business Owners: The Role of Libraries

Magnus Osahon Igbinovia
Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma, infor.migbinovia@gmail.com

Bayor Odelami
University of Ibadan, Ibadan, bayorodelamii@gmail.com

Influence of Information Availability and Use on Economic Integration of Small Scale Business Owners: The Role of Libraries

Magnus Osahon Igbinovia
Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma
Magnus.igbinovia@aauekpoma.edu.ng

Bayor Odelami
University of Ibadan, Ibadan
bayorodelami@gmail.com

Abstract

The purpose of the study is to investigate the influence of information availability and use on the Economic Integration (EI) of small scale business owners, and the roles of libraries. This was achieved with the aid of five research questions and four null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The study adopted the embedded type of the mixed research design. The quantitative component employed a survey research of the correlational type for research questions one to four and the research hypotheses. This was complemented or supported by a qualitative component that addresses research question five. . The target population for the study comprised of sixty-two (62) small scale business owners in University of Ibadan community. Total enumeration was adopted as the sampling technique due to the manageable population. The closed-ended questionnaire was used to elicit data for the quantitative component of the study while structured interview elicited data for the qualitative component. Data collected from the questionnaire was analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, means and standard deviation) and inferential statistics (correlation, multiple regression and ANOVA).The study found that small scale business owners in University of Ibadan community had high level of economic integration, information was highly available to them and their level of information use was high. Also, information availability and use, individually and jointly influenced economic integration. The authors concluded that how economically integrated small scale business owners will be, is determined by how much information they utilize. Recommendations were made on how libraries could foster EI in line with the study.

Keywords: Economic integration; Information availability; Information use; Libraries, Small scale business owners, University of Ibadan, Nigeria

1. Introduction

Libraries are established to provide timely, accurate, current and reliable information for individuals, organizations and the society at large. The information provided by library is utilized for solving personal, economic, political, religious and social problems. Thus, libraries are instrumental in providing solutions and enhancing development. This corroborates Aabø (2011)

who asserted that through the provision of information resources, libraries have positively touched lives of millions in urban and extreme rural communities. Libraries therefore play vital roles in driving societal development in all aspects of human endeavor, including the economic. On this, Robert et. al. (2000) submitted that public libraries play a large role in local economic development, especially in providing resources for existing businesses and for potential business startups. American Library Association (ALA, 2018) also noted that libraries impact local economy and workforce development by providing variety of information resources germane for business development, job creation, return on investment and workforce development. Library has thus become a tool for achieving development and subsequently economic integration (Aabø, 2005; Debono, 2002; Kerslake & Kinnel, 1998).

The term Economic integration (EI) is usually perceived from international, regional and national levels. Economic integration from international spectrum is described as a process by which countries come together, coordinate and link their economic policies in order to remove trade barriers, leading to economic performance and welfare of their citizenry (Olayiwola et.al 2013). Meanwhile, Golley et al. (2007) defines it as the process of increasing interdependence of regions, either within or across countries, as reflected in the flow of goods, services and/or factors of production. Regardless of the level at which EI would be applied, Balassa (1961) gave a general view that EI encompasses measures designed to abolish discrimination between economic units as well as the absence of various forms of discrimination among these units. This, can be applied to small scale businesses, to connote a condition where small scale business owners are free to carryout economic activities with less hindrances. From the definitions of economic integration at the aforementioned levels, there are possible factors that could drive the realization of EI, which can be applied to small business owners, as in the case of this present study.

The level of economic integration as perceived by small scale business owners could be influenced by the availability of economic information and its subsequent use, as information is crucial to the success of every economic enterprise. This suggests that information availability and use would influence the EI of small scale business owners. McKay, Armengol and Pineau (2005) studied regional economic integration in a global framework and asserted that among the most important elements that foster integration is information. The correlation of information to

economic integration was further stressed by McCarthy (2006) that information markets like the Web and Internet have great implications for economic integration which create bonds between producers and consumers that drive marketing integration. Information thus is considered a key element to economic integration though there is scarcity of literature that explicitly shows such correlation. Moreover, since the ultimate aim of economic integration is to ensure economic growth and development, regardless of the level it exist, some studies (Colombatto, 2006; Oyeronke, 2012) have shown that information in its availability and use influences economic growth and development. This study also hinges on that premise to fill the observed dearth in literature by investigating the influence of information availability and use on economic integration of small scale business owners and its implication for libraries.

2. Statement of the Problem

The level of unemployment, poverty, disparity in distribution of income, hunger, malnutrition, militancy, and terrorism in Nigeria is on the rise every day. The efforts of successive governments to curb these and other menace have not yielded significant results as these problems persist. These problems have put a dent on the economic integration of Nigerian state. Economic integration perceived to be a channel for achieving economic growth and development has been adversely and severely affected negative effects. The resultant consequences of this on the economy include; persistent rise in unemployment level, poverty, hunger and underdevelopment.

Moreover, while economic integration is considered a concept between two or more countries, at regional or global levels, elements of EI can be related to business activities at domestic levels or within a country, state or community. This is an area that lacks adequate attention in scholarship, resulting to a dearth in literature on how to economically integrate small businesses within a community, despite the fact that they are the "life-wire" of every national economy.

3. Research Questions

The following research questions are raised to reflect the objectives of the study and the essence of the research:

1. What is the level of economic integration among small scale business owners in the University of Ibadan?
2. What is the level of information availability to owners of small scale business in the University of Ibadan?
3. What is the level of information use by owners of small scale business in the University of Ibadan?
4. What is the relative contribution of information availability and use to economic integration of small scale business in the University of Ibadan?
5. How do libraries enhance information availability and use for economic integration of small scale business owners?

4. Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses will guide the study at 0.05 level of significance:

Ho1: There is no relationship between information availability and economic integration of small scale business owners in the University of Ibadan

Ho2: There is no relationship between information use and economic integration of small scale business owners in the University of Ibadan

Ho3: There is no relationship between information availability and information use by small scale business owners in the University of Ibadan

Ho4: The linear combination of information availability and information use does not influence economic integration of small scale business owners in the University of Ibadan

5. Literature Review

Libraries play several roles in developing a society, particularly in enhancing economic development which directly affects the well-being of the societal and its members. Libraries bring about development which changes the life of people defined at different levels, depicting the library as an agent of change. According to Agbo et. al (2013) at the national level, development connotes there is an improvement in the general well-being of the people while at the individual level, it implies increased skill and capacity, self-discipline, greater freedom,

responsibility and material well-being. Thus, on economic development, the ultimate aim is to break the vicious circle of poverty and lead a country to a stage of self-sustaining growth or to self-generating economy (Baldwin, 1988). Libraries are crucial to economic development as they contribute positively to human capital growth, aid reduction of poverty through the empowerment of citizens with lifelong skills and manage economic information necessary to make accurate decision crucial to economic growth and development.

The economic development roles of libraries were further amplified by Aabo (2005) who submitted that libraries have economic impacts as they contribute to development of individuals and nation. This corroborated Glass et al. (2005) that libraries play larger role in the local economic development by providing resources for existing businesses and for potential business startups. Moreover, Debono (2002) asserted that libraries sustain local community and identity and support people in the labor market. Business research (2007) also averred that libraries have direct economic benefits on communities. While there are several ways libraries drive development, this study focuses on economic integration as the vehicle by which libraries drive economic development and by extension national development.

Economic integration (EI) according to Igbinovia, Ambrose and Solanke (2017) is one of the dimensions of national integration with others been political, social and cultural integrations; and it depicts a situation where economic barriers to free trade among community of people are removed in a bid to facilitate trade. EI from international spectrum is described as a process whereby countries come together, coordinate and link their economic policies in order to remove trade barriers, leading to economic performance and welfare of their citizenry (Olayiwola et.al 2013). Golley (2007) defines it as the process of increasing interdependence of regions, either within or across countries, as reflected in the flow of goods, services and/or factors of production. EI involves liberalization of economic and trade policies to remove barriers among member countries in order to promote trade relationship among them. EI Research carried out by Kansas Univeristy (2000) shows that libraries support and stimulate activities of local business, supports the local government and authorities, carry out the activities of research and education.

Libraries provide individuals with equitable access to information for economic opportunities (Igbinovia, Ambrose and Solanke, 2017) which could instigate economic integration. This suggests a correlation between information and economic integration. On this, Colombatto (2006) opined those who are quick to acquire new information will be unlimited rewards on

trade offers. Also, Chadwick (n.d) noted that company's knowledge of their productivity information enables them make effective decisions on what products to introduce, discontinue, outsource, and innovate, or how to keep their management and workforce trained for necessary tasks and performing profitably. Therefore, information is crucial to the economic integration of business units at all levels resulting in economic development of the people. This is further in support of the assertion of Feldman, Hadjimichael, Kemeny and Lanahan (2014) that one of the reasons regions and particularly cities have become focus of attention because inventors heavily rely on local information or knowledge in generating novel products or processes. From the aforementioned, information availability and use could be said to predict economic integration of business units, and the roles libraries in this regard is thus the crux of this present study.

6. Methodology

The embedded type of the mixed research design was employed for the study. This type of research design according to Creswell and Piano Clark (2013) is used when a researcher needs to embed qualitative component within a quantitative design; premised on that fact that a single data is not sufficient, given that different questions need to be answered by different types of data. The quantitative component employs a survey research of the correlational type for research questions one to four and the research hypotheses. This was complemented or supported by a qualitative component that addresses research question five. The target population for the study comprises of sixty-two (62) small scale business owners in University of Ibadan community. Total enumeration was adopted as the sampling technique due to the manageable size of the population.

The closed-ended questionnaire, which is the main instrument for data collection was self-developed by the researchers based on literature on the variables understudy. The questionnaire contains four (4) sections which are: Section A (demographics), section B (information availability), section C (information use) and section D (economic integration). The items generated from literature were stated to elicit responses from the respondent on how they perceive information availability (IA), information use (IU) and economic integration (EI) using four likert scale format ranging from strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree, with scoring from 4-1 respectively. The instrument was validated by an expert in librarianship and the

corrected version was subjected to a pretest to ascertain its reliability coefficient which yielded 0.79 Cronbach alpha. Meanwhile, an interview was conducted to complement the questionnaire in a bid to answer research question five. A closed interview was carried out with four professional academic librarians of various designations within the university community, to seek their opinion on how libraries enhance information availability and use for economic integration.

Data collected from the questionnaire will be analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, means and standard deviation) and inferential statistics (correlation, multiple regression and ANOVA).

7. Presentation of Results

Out of the 62 copies of questionnaire distributed, 50 copies were retrieved and found useable for the study representing 81% response rate.

7.1 Demographic information of respondents

Table 1 presents results on the demographic information of the respondents. Findings showed that a significant number of the respondents 17 (34.0%) were owners of business centres and cyber cafes, while the minority 1 (2.0%) had a poultry farm. Two fifths of the respondents 15 (30.0%) had 2 employees working for them, as 1 (2.0%) small scale business owner had 7 employees. Most of the respondents 25 (50%) had ND/HND and 1 noted that he/she did not have any qualification. There was parity in the number of male 25 (50.0%) and female 25 (50.0%) respondents for the study. Findings also showed that a notable number of the small scale business owners 15 (30.0%) were between 25-30 years of age, while 1 (2.0%) was between 46-50 and 51-55 years of age.

Table 1 Demographic information of respondents

Demographic variables	Frequency	Percentage
Nature of business		
Business centre/cafe operator	17	34.0
Confectionaries/restaurant	6	12.0
Fashion designing	5	10.0
Hairdressing/barbing	4	8.0
Laundry	4	8.0

Marketing	2	4.0
Poultry farming	1	2.0
Shoe making	2	4.0
Trading	11	22.0
Number of workers/employee		
0	12	24.0
1	7	14.0
2	15	30.0
3	7	14.0
4	2	4.0
5	1	2.0
6	3	6.0
7	1	2.0
8	-	-
9	2	4.0
Highest educational qualification		
None	1	2.0
SSCE	13	26.0
ND/HND	25	50.0
Bachelor	9	18.0
Masters	2	4.0
Gender		
Male	25	50.0
Female	25	50.0
Age		
Below 25	11	22.0
25-30	15	30.0
31-35	11	22.0
36-40	9	18.0
41-45	2	4.0
46-50	1	2.0
51-55	1	2.0

N=50

7.2 Answers to research questions

Research question one: What is the level of economic integration among small scale business owners in University of Ibadan?

Tables 2 showed the responses of the small scale business owners on the statements intended to measure the level of economic integration among them. In order to determine the level of economic integration, a test of norm was conducted. There are ten items in the scale that was used to measure economic integration and four measures (Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree). The ten statements were multiplied by the four measures, which gives a

score of 40. The division of 40 by 3 gives 13.3. Thus, the scale between 1-13.3 shows that the level of economic integration is low, the scale between 13.4.-26.7 indicates that the level of economic integration is moderate and the scale between 26.8-40 shows that the level economic integration among the respondents is high.

Results for the overall mean value of the economic integration among the small scale business owners was 27.96. This mean value falls within the scale "26.8-40", which signifies that the level of economic integration among the respondents was high.

Table 2 Economic integration among small scale business owners

S/N	Items	SA		A		D		SD		Mean	SD
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
1	I enjoy secure access to material well-being	8	16.0	33	66.0	9	18.0	-	-	2.98	.589
2	The university community is stable and secure for trade	6	12.0	32	64.0	12	24.0	-	-	2.88	.594
3	There is a mutual financial flow and independence on trade by all members of the university community	7	14.0	29	58.0	14	28.0	-	-	2.86	.639
4	Infrastructures are available and employed for economic benefits by all	4	8.0	33	66.0	13	26.0	-	-	2.82	.560
5	Economic policies are in favour of everyone without discrimination	4	8.0	27	54.0	17	34.0	2	4.0	2.66	.688
6	The policy within the university community makes it easy for exchange of goods and services	5	10.0	29	58.0	16	32.0	-	-	2.78	.616
7	There is freedom to provide services and sell goods within the university community	5	10.0	27	54.0	18	36.0	-	-	2.74	.633
8	There is little or no hindrance to my business operations within the university environment	6	12.0	26	52.0	18	36.0	-	-	2.76	.657
9	All businesses within the university community are united for easy partnership among one another	4	8.0	32	64.0	14	28.0	-	-	2.80	.571
10	Removal of obstacles to the free movement of people	3	6.0	29	58.0	17	34.0	1	2.0	2.68	.621

	within the university community									
Overall mean		**27.96**								

Research question two: What is the level of information availability to owners of small scale business in University of Ibadan?

The level of information availability to small scale business was measured through the test of norm. The scale for information availability contained ten items with four measures (Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree). The nine statements were multiplied by the four measures, which gives a score of 36. The division of 36 by 3(number of likert-scales) gives 12. Thus, the scale between 1-12 shows that the level of information availability is low, the scale between 13-24 indicates that the level of information availability is moderate and the scale between 25-36 shows that the level information availability among the respondents is high (Table 3).

Results for the overall mean value of information availability to the small scale business owners was 28.02. This value falls within the scale "25-36", which signifies that the level of information availability to the respondents was high.

Table 3 Information availability to small scale business owners

S/N	Items	SA		A		D		SD		Mean	SD
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
1	Information relevant to my type of business is abundantly available around me	14	28.0	32	64.0	4	8.0	-	-	3.20	.571
2	I readily have information on where to get my products in desired quantity and quality	13	26.0	35	70.0	2	4.0	-	-	3.22	.507
3	Information about how to make profit from my business is readily available to me	12	24.0	33	66.0	5	10.0	-	-	3.14	.572
4	I have information on how to reduce the cost that usually comes with my type of business	15	30.0	30	60.0	5	10.0	-	-	3.20	.606
5	Information on how to grow my business is readily available to me	9	18.0	36	72.0	5	10.0	-	-	3.08	.528
6	Information available to me is	14	28.0	32	64.0	4	8.0	-	-	3.20	.571

S/N	Items	SA		A		D		SD		Mean	SD
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
	sufficient and helps me in making good decision for my business										
7	I have adequate information about incentives provided by government to develop small business in Nigeria	6	12.0	29	58.0	12	24.0	2	6.0	2.76	.744
8	I know where to get business related information when it is required	12	24.0	33	66.0	5	10.0	-	-	3.14	.572
9	I do not lack the information materials and resources required to grow my business	12	24.0	30	60.0	8	16.0	-	-	3.08	.634
Overall mean		**28.02**									

Research question three: What is the level of information use by owners of small scale business in the University of Ibadan?

Table 4 showed the responses of the small scale business owners on their use of information. However, their level of information use was determined through the use of the test of norm. The scale for information use has ten items with four measures (Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree). The ten items were multiplied by the four measures, which gives a score of 40. The division of 40 by 3 gives 13.3. Thus, the scale between 1-13.3 shows that the level of information use is low, the scale between 13.4.-26.7 indicates that the level of information use is moderate and the scale between 26.8-40 shows that the level information use by the respondents is high.

Results for the overall mean value of information use by the small scale business owners was 32.84. This value falls within the scale "26.8-40", thus signifying that the level of information use by the respondents was high.

Table 4 Information use by small scale business owners

S/N	Items	SA		A		D		SD		Mean	SD
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
1	I use information frequently because it is important to my business	19	38.0	29	58.0	2	4.0	-	-	3.34	.557

#	Statement									Mean	SD
2	Information has brought positive change to my business	15	30.0	33	66.0	2	4.0	-	-	3.26	.527
3	I deliberately make use of business information without anyone compelling me	16	32.0	33	66.0	1	2.0	-	-	3.30	.505
4	Information has increased my turnover	15	30.0	35	70.0	-	-	-	-	3.30	.463
5	My business is flourishing because I make use of information consistently	15	30.0	32	64.0	3	6.0	-	-	3.24	.555
6	I seek for materials containing information related to my business	17	34.0	32	64.0	1	2.0	-	-	3.32	.513
7	I implement business ideas and strategies gotten from information materials	15	30.0	32	64.0	3	6.0	-	-	3.24	.555
8	I put into practice the knowledge acquired from reading information materials related to my business	14	28.0	33	66.0	3	6.0	-	-	3.22	.545
9	I easily make business related decisions upon the information I retrieved around me	14	28.0	35	70.0	1	2.0	-	-	3.26	.487
10	I use information available to me in growing my business	19	38.0	30	60.0	1	2.0	-	-	3.36	.525
Overall mean		**32.84**									

Research question four: What is the relative contribution of information availability and use to economic integration of small scale business in the University of Ibadan?

Table 5 reveals the relative contribution of the two independent variables to the dependent variable, expressed as beta weights; viz information availability (β = .021, P< .05) and information use (β =.249, P<.05). Hence out of the dependent variables, it is information use that predicts economic integration of the small scale business owners in University of Ibadan the more.

Table 5 Relative contribution of information availability and use to the prediction of economic integration

 Coefficients[a]

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	18.976	5.247		3.618	.001
1 Information availability	.023	.177	.021	.128	.889
Information use	.254	.166	.249	1.533	.132

a. Dependent Variable: Economic integration

Research Question 5: How do libraries enhance information availability and use for economic integration of small scale business owners?

Four academic librarians across various designations were interviewed to find out their opinion on how libraries will enhance information availability and use for economic integration.

A Principal academic librarian, female with a MLIS degree noted that "libraries should give attention to the subject in their collection development policy. Also, the formats in which Small scale business owners (SSBOs) want their information should be given attention. Libraries could hold business awareness workshops for information needs' analysis of SSBOs". On how libraries spur information use, she opined that "through mobile library, library resources should be taken to SSBOs in their places of operations, libraries should participate in trade fair and showcase what they do so business owners will be aware of the library and use its information resources".

A senior librarian, male with a PhD noted that "libraries can work closely with agencies of government and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) that focuses on small and medium scale businesses. These agencies and NGOs produce lots of information materials that facilitate business processes from which libraries make available to small scale business owners". On information use, he asserted that "engaging the small business owners, either in the library environment or by visiting them in their business locations, in partnership with their trade unions/associations, as well as organizing seminars that will enhance the operations of these small scale businesses, will spur use of available information".

An academic librarian 1, male, and MLIS degree holder was interviewed on how library ensures information availability to small business owners and averred that "libraries should design services and package information specifically for small business owners, create awareness on what is available and deploy ICTs in providing specialized information. On how libraries spur information use for EI of small scale business owners, he was of the opinion that "all efforts to increase information availability will spur use of information, as information will be used when abundantly available".

An librarian 2, male and MLIS degree holder, who was interviewed noted that "libraries and librarians could make information available via social media, mass media, special conferences, book fairs, selective dissemination of information just to mention a few". On information use, he asserted that "resources that will specifically benefit this group of users should be prioritized in the library.Libraries should be overhauled in the area of effective reference services to all users. Also, mobile library: information resources could be sent to them physically or digitally".

7.3 Test of hypotheses

Hypothesis one: There is no relationship between information availability and economic integration among small scale business owners in the University of Ibadan.

Table 6 presented results on the relationship between information availability and economic integration among small scale business owners in the University of Ibadan. Findings showed that there is a positive relationship information availability and economic integration among the respondents (r = .146; df =49; p< 0.05). This indicates that the more information is made available to the small scale business owners, the more they experience economic integration. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative is accepted.

Table 6 Relationship between information availability and economic integration among small scale business owners in University of Ibadan

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	N	r	df
Information availability	28.02	3.384	50	.14649	

Economic integration	27.96	3.686	50		

Hypothesis two: There is no relationship between information use and economic integration of small scale business owners in the University of Ibadan.

Tables 7 showed that there is a positive relationship between information use and economic integration among the respondents (r = .260; df =49; p< 0.05). This means that as the level of information use by the small scale business owners' increases, the more they are economically integrated. As a result, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative accepted.

Table 7 Relationship between information use and economic integration among small scale business owners in University of Ibadan

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	N	r	df
Information use	32.843.61650	.26049			
Economic integration	27.96	3.686	50		

Hypothesis three: There is no relationship between information availability and information use by small scale business owners in the University of Ibadan.

Tables 8 captured the results of the correlation analysis done between information availability and information use by the respondents. It was discovered that there was a positive significant relationship between information availability and information use (r = .501**; df =49; p< 0.01). This signifies that as the level of information availability to the small scale business owners increases, the level of information use also increases. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative accepted.

Table 8 Relationship between information use and economic integration among small scale business owners in University of Ibadan

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	N	r	df
Information availability	28.02	3.384	50	.501**49	

Information use	32.84	3.616	50

Hypothesis four: The linear combination of information availability and information use does not significantly influence economic integration of small scale business owners in the University of Ibadan.

Tables 9 showed the joint contribution of information availability and information use to the prediction of economic integration among small scale business owners in University of Ibadan. The table showed a coefficient of multiple correlation (R=.260 and a multiple R^2 of .068). This means that 6.8% of the variance was accounted for by the two predictor variables when taken together. The significant of the composite contribution was tested at P<.05. The analysis of variance for the regression yielded F-ratio of 1.709 (P<0.01). The implication of this result is that the joint contribution of the independent variables to the dependent variables was significant and the other variables not included in this model may have accounted for the remaining variance. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Table 9 Joint contribution of information availability and information use to economic integration

Model Summary			
R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
.260[a]	.068	.028	3.634
ANOVA[a]					
Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	45.153	2	22.576	1.709	.192[b]
Residual	620.767	47	13.208		
Total	665.920	49			

8. Discussion of Findings

The study indicates high level of Economic Integration (EI) among small scale business owners under the study area. This can be attributed to favorable economic policies and limited hindrances to business operation within the university community. The finding is in line with Eniola and Entebang (2015) study on government policy and performance of small and medium scale business management and Kelly (2007) study where policies (inclusive of

economic) were found to be significant factors that influence small scale business performance, development and their integration.

The result from the study also depicts that small business owners within the study area have adequate information resources and government incentives which contribute to the growth and development of their businesses. The finding supports Canegham and Campenhort (2010) study on information availability, information quality and financial structure of Belgian SMEs. It was discovered in their study that small scale business with adequate information experience positive growth, higher profitability, reduction in cost and maximization of incentives relevant for business development. Moreover, Ojo, Akinsunmi and Olayonu (2015) study on Influence of Business Information Use on Sales Performance of SMEs in Lagos State also revealed that businesses with adequate information achieve improved sales performance, as well as gaining competitive advantage necessary for the overall sustenance of the enterprise.

There is positive relationship between information availability and EI of small scale businesses in the study area. This implies that the more information is made available to small businesses the greater the level of EI. This agrees with Mussa (2000) that another important mechanism through which economic activities in different parts of the world affect each other is through the communication of economically relevant information.

There is also positive relationship between information use and EI of small business owners under the study area. This means that increase in use of business information will lead to higher and stronger EI among small business owners. This favors the finding of United Nation Conference Information on Trade and Development Report (2011), where it was discovered that consistent use of business information influences business operation, economic development and hence, economic integration.

There is also positive relationship between information availability and use by small business owners in the study area. It was discovered that the extent of information use by small business owners is dependent on the availability of information. This affirms with the study of Ojo, Akinsunmi and Olayonu (2015) who affirmed that information use is predicated on its availability. The implication of this is that, the more business information is made

available to small scale business owners, the greater their chances of utilizing the information which invariable influences the propensity of increasing their profitability and contribution to economic growth and development.

9. Conclusion and Recommendations

The purpose of this study is to determine the influence of information availability and use on economic integration of small scale business owners and the resultant roles of Libraries. It was found that there is a high level of economic integration among small business owners under the area of study. It was also discovered that there is high level of information availability and use among small business owners at the University of Ibadan. Therefore, the two independent constructs of information availability and use have positive relationship with dependent variable economic integration. The two independent variables also have positive relation with each other and jointly influence economic integration. Therefore, how economically integrated small scale business owners will be, is determined by how much information they utilize which is a direct result of the amount of information available for such use.

In view of the findings and conclusion of this study, it is evident that libraries can facilitate economic integration and act as agents of positive change in the society. Hence, the following recommendations are made:

1. Libraries should provide the relevant business information resources both in print and electronic format in support economic growth of small business owners.

2. Libraries should engage small business owners through visitations or in the library environment.

3. Libraries should partner with small businesses trade unions or associations in order to ascertain the nature of information they required (needs assessment) and structure out a delivery mechanism by which information will get to all small scale business owners.

4. Library should organize seminars, workshops and trainings that will equip small scale business owners on how to retrieve available information (retrieval strategies) and its proper application or use for the operations of small scale businesses.

5. Libraries should revamp the use of mobile libraries that will continually provide business information to small scale business owners at their door-step.

Reference

Aabø, S. (2011). The value of public libraries: a socio-economic analysis.
https://www.kirjastot.fi/sites/default/files/content/804033post.pdf

American Library Association (2018). Economic importance of Library. Available at:
http://www.ala.org/tools/research/librariesmatter/taxonomy/term/131

Balassa, B. (1961). *The theory of economic integration: An introduction*. Greenwood publishing group.

Butcher, H. (1997). Why don't managers useinformation. Infotoday. Retrieved from
http://www.aslib.co.uk/maninfmay97.article.html

Caneghem, V. & Campenhout, V (2010) Information Availability, Information Quality and the Financial Structure of Belgian SMEs Small Business Economics ; Finance and Corporate Governance Conference 2010 Available at: https://ssrn.com/abstract=1541793

Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) (2014). SME Finance.
http://www.cenbank.org/Devfin/smefinance.asp (Accessed on 26/01/2018).

Chadwick, B.P. (n.d).Information Technology Revolution in the Republic of Korea: Socio-Economic Development Issues and Policymaking Challenges *Available at:* apcss.org/Publications/Edited%20Volumes/BytesAndBullets/CH3.pdf

Colombatto, E. (2006). On economic growth and development. Rev Austrian Econ, Springer. Available at:
https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/b5d6/f1cfbefb87a0fb4355efb7061426e1f0a853.pdf

Creswell, J.W. & Piano Clerk, V.L (2013). *Choosing a mixed methods design*. Designing and conducting mixed methods research. SAGE publications Inc., California.

Eniola, A.A & Entebang H. (2015) Government Policy and Performance of Small and Medium Business Management. International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences. Available at http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v5-i2/1481

Federal Republic Of NigeriaNational Policy OnSmall and Medium Enterprises Development Agency in Nigeria (2018).Micro, Small And Medium Enterprises (Accessed on 31-01-2018, from https://smedan.gov.ng/images/PDF/MSME-National-Policy.pdf

Feldman, M., Hadjimichael, T., Kemeny, T. & Lanahan, L. (2014). Economic Development: A Definition and Model for Investment. Available at:
https://www.eda.gov/files/tools/research-reports/investment-definition-model.pdf

Golley, J., & Nicolaas Groenewold (2007. Domestic market integration and inter-regional growth spillovers. 176-196

Igbinovia, O. M., Ambrose, S.& Solanke, E. (2018). Library and social media use as correlates of national integration among distance learning students in Benin study center, Edo State, Nigeria. *International Information & Library Review,* 50(2): Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/10572317.2017.1368285

Kamunge, S. Njeru A, & Tirimba O (2014). Factors affecting the performance of small and micro enterprises in Limuru Town market of Kiambu County, Kenya. International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications, Vol.4 accessed on 31-01-2018 at http://www.ijsrp.org/research-paper-1214/ijsrp-p3618.pdf

Kelly, E (2012) The Role of Small and Large Businesses in Economic Development. Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City. Available at:www.KansasCityFed.org

McCarthy, D.M.P (2006). *International economic integration in historical perspective*. Routledge, New York.

McKay, J., Armengol, M.O. & Pineau, G (2005). Regional economic integration in a global framework. G-20 Workshop 22-23 September 2004. European Central Bank. Available at: http://www.regionaleconintegrationglobalframework2005en.pdf

Mussa, M (2000) Factors Driving Global Economic Integration. Available at: https://www.imf.org/en/News/Articles/2015/09/28/04/53/sp082500

Ojo.,A, Akinsunmi, S. & Olayonu O. (2015) Influence of Business Information Use on Sales Performance of SMEs in Lagos State. Library Philosophy and Practice (e-journal). Available at http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/1208

Olayiwola,W. K.,&Ola-David,O. A. (2013). *Economic integration, trade facilitation and agricultural exports performance in ECOWAS member states*. Paper presented at theEighth African Economic Conference on 'Regional Integration in Africa,' Johannesburg, South Africa.

Oyeronke, A. (2012). Information as an economic resource: The role of public libraries in Nigeria. *Chinese Librarianship: an International Electronic Journal*, 34. Available at: http://www.iclc.us/cliej/cl34oyeronke.pdf

Popoola, S.O., and Okiki, O.C.(2013).Information Availability and Utilization as Determinants of Creativity of Managers in Commercial Banks in Nigeria. Journal of Information and Knowledge Management, 3(3).

Robert H., Clifford, N., Harris B., Rose, C,. Krider, E,. Mercer,. S, Woolsey, C., Horak, C. (2000). The Role of Public Libraries in Local Economic Development

Stonier, T. (1991). Towards a New Theory of Information. Journal of Information Science, 17 (5) 257- 263

Uduak B. Ubom, Anthonia U. Ubom & Akpan J. Williams (2015). Economic Integration, Trade Balances and Socioeconomic Development in Nigeria. Global Journal of Management and Business Research Volume XV 2015