Enhanced Strategies to Utilization of Online Information Resources for Effective Services Delivery by Public University Librarians in South-East Nigeria

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Abstract
This study investigated the public university librarians' enhanced strategies to the utilization of online information resources (OIR) for effective services delivery in public university libraries in South-East, Nigeria. To guide the study, one objective, and one research question were used. A hypothesis was formulated for the study and tested at 0.05 level of significant. Descriptive survey was adopted for the study. The population of the study was 174 professional public university librarians. Total census was used for the study hence there was no sampling. The instrument of data collection was questionnaire. Validated copies of the questionnaire were tested for reliability using Cronbach Alpha, and the reliability coefficient obtained was high enough (0.94) confirming its reliability. The 174 copies of questionnaire were administered to the respondents through the help of research assistants one from each state of the South-East. 157 were returned representing 90% return rate. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics of mean frequency count and standard deviation. The mean was used for answering the research question while inferential statistics of t-test was used for testing the hypothesis. The result showed the grand mean at 3.46 level of acceptance by the respondents and agreeing conclusively that the public university librarians' utilization of enhanced strategies in online information resources for effective services delivery in public university libraries is potent and accepted in South-East, Nigeria. Hence the study recommends that university librarians should aptly direct for the utilization of enhanced strategies for OIR utilization for effective services delivery accordingly.

Keywords: Online, Information, Resources, Utilization, Services, University, University Librarians, and Strategy.

Introduction
All available library and information resource materials in a university library are for utilization. To this end, it is the availability of the required information resource materials that brings about their utilization. Utilization is the application or putting of various tools or facilities of work or any activity to achieve desired goals or expectations. In the words of Duranceau (2008), utilization is the degree to which people use a system or product to a successful completion of a task for which it was employed. Hornby, (2010) defines utilization as the process of using something. Online information resources as materials are utilized for
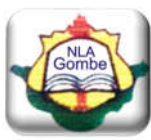
effective service delivery in university libraries. Uhegbu (2007) conceptualizes utilization in librarianship as the actual putting into appropriate use of acquired information. In this research work invariably, utilization of online information resources could be similarly applied.

Utilization of online information resources by librarians is the hub that results in effective services delivery in university libraries. Utilization in the concept of this work therefore refers to the application of numerous information resources uploaded and generated into the Internet (the cloud) respectively through the manipulation of computer networks and connectivity. Utilization of online information resources for effective service delivery differs from one library to another depending on needs of users, extent of ICT configurations on ground in the library and other variables. In the present age of information explosion and utilization, it is rare or strange to see a university library and its librarians not complementing and effectively consummating their services delivery without online information resources utilization.

Hornby, (2010) explains utilization as "to make use of available service resources at the individuals' disposal". Utilization therefore is a complex behavioral phenomenon that is related to availability. Online information resources utilization for effective service delivery in the university libraries therefore, is dependent on their availability. Isibor (2014) opines that for effective utilization, what to utilize must be made available in the right quantity and at the right time. Access to and utilization of online information no doubt would lead to effective services delivery and structural change in the perception of university libraries in the society. Utilization therefore relates to bringing into service actions, with the available and accessible online information resources for effective services delivery by university librarians/libraries.

According to Ntui and Udah, (2005), information or (any material) utilization is the practical and maximum use of the needed, identified, and acquired information by the consumer or clientele for decision making, solving a problem or achieving a set of goals. Utilization of online information resources refers to the use or converting into action the accessed, understood relevant materials to perform business or effective service delivery and in this case by the public university librarians. Online information resources are made more meaningful when they are appropriately and properly utilized for effective library services delivery, to meet the information needs of the university library patrons.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is holding sway all over the world in almost all spheres of life endeavours and activities. The online aspect of ICT has brought many changes that have exacted and impacted a lot of influences on various ways and means in the patterns of their utilization for effective services delivery in organizations/institutions that have Internet/online connectivity. Almost all professionals in various vocations and industries are integrating and utilizing online/Internet platforms for effective information/information resources conveyance and services delivery in their respective businesses. The banking industry indeed is a good instance where online cum Internet approach to services conveyance and delivery is significantly effective and has extremely displaced a lot of manual ways and means of the system's information links and services. The libraries (universities libraries particularly) are not left out of this wild fire of internet and online utilization for effective services delivery scenario. Utilization of online information resources (OIR) as a twig from ICT indeed has led to a lot of easier achievements and value additions to human life activities and endeavours. Its' overwhelming influence has brought new jargons into the information and communication industry. Prominent and universal among them are: "online", "Internet", "wireless", "inter face" "bandwidth" and "cloud". Their application and manipulations (utilization) have truly made services delivery effective like in locating, sorting, harnessing and
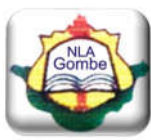
dissemination of information, more quantities of information resources among others both locally and globally with Local Area Network (LAN) or Wide Area Network (WAN) (Amadi, 2023). These are no longer news and cannot be over emphasized. The university librarians whose professional domains are the university libraries are really on the move with this trend and scenario in the present day librarianship and services delivery to the library users. As it stands, online information/information resources vis-a-vis sources are quite numerous and varied. Their common nature is that they are gathered, disseminated and utilized (as the case may be), by the manipulation of electronic gadgets and devices which the computer with its peripherals and connectivity is main and major.

Nonetheless, there have been inhibitions (constraints or challenges) to the utilization of OIR. These include but not limited to: poor supply of electricity power, inadequate bandwidth creation, indifference of the authorities concerned, poor knowledge ICT, lack of ICT training, poor funding, lack of long lasting policies about ICT etc. These constraints when regularly and properly fixed inversely are the enhanced strategies to the utilization of OIR. Well developed strategies therefore are the bases for effective performance. A good knowledge and application of the various online information resources tools in the university library services delivery evidently enhances a faster, timely and timeless services delivery. This is irrespective of the time, distance and location of both the service giver and receiver

However, there are elements that are quite necessary to the utilization of OIR for effective services delivery which should from onset be part and parcel of the laid down strategies for it all. Enhanced strategies in the opinion of this article therefore, are the making available of all the required tools and instrumentations, continuous up-grading of them to the required standard, their proper fixing and continuous functioning of all the needed tools and instruments for the functionality of OIR for effective service delivery in any organization including the public university libraries

Statement of the Problem

The achievements and success stories associated with the utilization (application) of onlineinformation resources and systems in the routine duty performances and services delivery in the university libraries are quite clear and very encouraging. In concrete terms, online information resources and services delivery are associated with the connectivity of tools and instruments of ICT speed, easy access to databases, accuracy and timely services delivery among many other advantages and benefits. To another condition however, these are not completely or exactly what the researchers have observed about the OIR utilization in the public university libraries of the area under study. Rather poor power supply, low or total absence of the required bandwidth, malfunctioning computers and other systems lapses are the bane of it all. Thus they are required to be properly fixed for success and achievement stories of services delivery. The required tools/instruments that are fit and should be strategically fixed up for the utilization of OIRs for effective services or to enhance services delivery is what this study intend to unravel empirically in public university libraries in the South-East, Nigeria.

Objective of the Study

The purpose of this study is:
 to determine the tools/instruments for enhanced strategies to the utilization of OIR for effective services delivery in the public university libraries by the university librarians in South-East, Nigeria.

Research Question
What are the tools/instruments for enhanced strategies to the utilization of OIR for effective services delivery in the public university libraries by their librarians in the South-East, Nigeria?

Hypothesis for the Study
There is no significant difference between the mean responses of librarians in federal owned and state owned public university libraries on the tool/instruments for enhanced strategies to the utilization of online information resources for effective services delivery by librarians in public university libraries in South East, Nigeria.

Literature Review
In the opinion of this article, the *Internet* as a generic term also implies *online* and can be used synonymously and interchangeably of the ICT. However the article prefer to use *online* instead of other synonyms. Online in the opinion of this article expresses electronic/electrical processes of harnessing stuffs/materials hoisted in the "cloud" (Internet) and the resources in and there from; as are accessible from any part of the globe, with good speed, timely and timelessly; in any required quantity, and their utilization for effective services delivery. Online/Internet information resources are in diverse and varied formats. They are used to edify the library with other materials/resources collection. Computerhope (2022) stated that "being online refers to a user, the computer, or another device connecting to a network, the Internet or another computer that allows communication with others".

The word/term, information in the opinion of this paper is universally used in every day moment by moment conversations or discussions of people. It could be applied as suitable as its user(s) in different walks of life activities put it and understand it to be. Information and information resources utilization cuts across disciplines as it cannot be easily pinned down to one particular profession or business. In the opinion of this article, information generally, implies any ideas or knowledge communicated, received and with the correct meaning either by symbols, signs, oral forms etc.

Resource including information resources are things that may be used to achieve an aim; usually for the purposes of effective services delivery. Books, newspapers, libraries, databases, computers and other media and their respective personnel even the radio, television etc. that provide information for teachers and students and others, are examples of resources for information (Hornby, 2010). Resources and sources are mostly confused to have the same meaning, which is not true (Pattar, 2017). According to Pattar (2017), resources are things that are readily available for utilization while sources are the places from where we get things from. This is corroborated by English, (2017); a source is that from which something comes.

 Online information resources (OIRs) as relates to this article, refers to all such information products that are hoisted in the cloud (networks) which are browsed to get relevant information resources that are utilized in various ways and for different purposes of business and services delivery, as is applicable to the university libraries. Resources online are manipulated through the use of computers with their peripherals and other relevant gadgets connectivity as tools as the case may be. Online information and information resources for effective services delivery therefore, are electronic and are manipulated electronically by the power of electricity. As Nwosu and Opara (2019) put it, online (electronic) resources are materials that require computer mediation, regular electricity power supply, increased bandwidth, trained and experienced personnel among other enhancing variables in order to be access and utilized if required or when required as the case may be. According to them both online and offline information material resources such as the CD-ROMs fall within this category. They refer to

all the resource products that a library provides electronically through the use of computer networks or connectivity. They are delineated in this paper to imply those information materials and tools (data and/or programs), suitable, relevant and encoded for manipulation by computerized devices either in a Local Area Network (LAN) or Wide Area Network (WAN), as described by Quadri, Adetimirin and Idowu (2014). According to Vasishta (2008), online information resources (OIR) is a broader term that encompasses abstracting and indexing services, full-text by materials such as newspapers and reference books, electronic journals and offerings of electronic "aggregators", articles delivery services and free resources on the internet. Arms (2018) define online information resources as "a managed collection of information, with associated services, where the information is stored in digital formats and accessible over a network". However, Bertroit (2004) is of the view that in libraries, online-based services and resources can take many forms/formats including: searching library holdings, placing a hold or recalling library materials, making an inter-library loan request, licensing online databases, e-journals, and e-books for customer access, digitizing library collections for online access, providing organized web pages that lead customers to library/non-library content, and providing real-time and asynchronous digital reference services.

Online information resources therefore, may include three types of networked information systems (Mritunjay, (2006): (a) Local Area Networks systems: The file servers in LAN are loaded with microcomputer based applications including various CD-ROM type databases. All microcomputers based workstations are linked to one or more file servers to share various applications and information. Thus, LAN is a distributed network system. (b) Online integrated library management systems (ILMS): also categorized as INTERNET. This type of network system handles traditional library functions such as circulation, interlibrary loan, cataloguing, acquisition, serial control and online public access catalogue (OPAC), which this paper also reflects. (c) Wide Area Network Systems: These systems communicate with the Internet through Gopher, World Wide Web (WWW), Wide Area Information Server (WAIS), and other Internet Index Tools. Online information resources (e-resources) are in the form of E-Books, E-Journals, Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC), CD-ROMs, Online database, Internet resources, electronic link and web publishing. Added and ascribed online information resources in this article are other off-line electronic information resource versions. They include; e-data-archives, e-manuscripts, e-maps, e-magazines, e-theses, e-newspapers, e-mails, e-research reports, e-bibliographic database which also are accessible through electronic machine systems' ways, patterns and protocols (Vasishta, 2008). They edify and make richer the libraries holdings, for effective services delivery (utilization) by the librarians to serve their varied clienteles.

All the information resource materials harnessed in a university library are for utilization. Utilization in library parlance for the purposes of this study is the application or putting of various tools or facilities of work to achieve desired goals (effective service delivery). In the words of Duranceau (2008), utilization is the degree to which people use a system or product to a successful completion of a task for which it was employed or intended. Hornby, (2010) defines utilization as the process of using something. Online information resources as tools or materials are utilized for effective service delivery in university libraries. Uhegbu (2007) conceptualizes utilization as the actual putting into appropriate use of acquired information. In this article invariably, utilization of online information resources is similarly applicable.

Utilization of online information resources by librarians is the hub that results in effective services delivery in university libraries. Furthermore, utilization in the concept of this article, refers to the application of numerous information resources uploaded and generated into and

from the Internet respectively through the manipulation of computer networks and connectivity. Utilization of online information resources and effective services delivery differs from one library to another depending on needs of users, the extent ICT configurations are on ground in the library and other variables. In the present age of information explosion and utilization, it is rare or strange to see a university library and its librarians not complementing and effectively consummating their services delivery without online information resources utilization.

Hornby, (2010) explains utilization as "to make use of available service resources at the individuals' disposal". Utilization therefore is a complex behavioral phenomenon that is related to availability.

Online information resources are made more meaningful when they are appropriately and properly utilized for effective library services delivery, i.e. in meeting the information needs of the university library patrons.

Services refer to the duties an individual or groups of individuals renders as professionals or not professional, to person(s) in society, organizations or establishments which the service receivers find useful in satisfying their needs. Services are either for free or for fee. This however, depends on the institution/organization involved. Services also are valuable actions, deeds or efforts performed to satisfy needs or demands (Hornby, 2020). Ultimately, they are actions of activities that are rendered to someone or doing something for someone. In respect of library services in the context of this paper, the concept of services delivery is the ability of librarians to professionally strive to process and organize information resources (both online and traditional) made available, and the ability to utilize them in meeting the overall information needs, queries, and demands of the library users (Olanlokun, 2013). There are both outreach and in house library services. Outreach library services take services to the clienteles' domain or abode, while the in house services are the opposite. Utilization of online information resources in library services delivery makes both modes of services (outreach and in house) effective. It is in this light and focus that *effective services delivery* in this paper implies; a timely, timeless, speedy, accurate, simple and easy provision of profuse online information resources that meets the information needs of the library users. Services of this nature can take place with or without a one-on-one interface irrespective of the location of the patrons in the university.

The university is a formalized institution. Academic institutions particularly the universities world over, are up hailed as purveyors of knowledge as a result of the regular studies, researches, teaching and learning with other community services that take place in and around them. According to Okezie (2015), universities are knowledge factories which pursue academic excellence and intellectual transmissions from generation to generation through their prescribed functions of research, teaching and public services or functions. Hornby (2010), define university as "an institution of the highest level of education where you can study for a degree and do research". Given the above assertions, the establishment of any university attracts different other arms, components and faculties that truly make it a complete institution as a university with structure, and the university library is one major arm of the required structures among others. And the librarians work in the university libraries are referred to as the university librarians.

This category of librarians are fashioned a bit differently in orientation to curiously and constantly put efforts that help to increase and up-hold the information resources knowledge base of the university staff and students for research, teaching and learning. They are academics
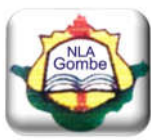
sui generis, and serve the colleges or faculties of the universities. Today's university (academic) librarians are involved in a variety of challenging library services delivery. They may consult with individual library users in analyzing, identifying and fulfilling their information needs; create campus wide information literacy programs and deliver classroom instructions to strengthen information literacy skills; select, organize and facilitate access to information in a variety of formats; keep abreast of technological advancements and develop strategies to take advantage of them; plan, implement and administer computer based systems electronic databases design and manage web sites; collaborate with classroom faculty computer specialists and instructional developers; contribute to effective teamwork among colleagues, and participate in the public relations efforts to promote and raise funds for academic libraries. All these are done in and from the library because, historically, university libraries (academic libraries) are the natural destinations for students, faculty staff and researchers seeking for relevant information (Ozioko, 2007). Ozioko further asserts that academic libraries serve as the repository for published information as well as the intermediary for acquiring materials from every part of the globe. The university libraries where the university librarians have their domain to deliver services are major and an integral department of university education; established to meet the information resource needs for study, research, and teaching to students, (Pandey, 2015). To this end, the application or incorporation of online information resources for effective services delivery in university libraries by librarians are quite expedient and needful. However, no one can deliver what he or she does not have, even what one has without the strategies to do so.

Strategies are for proper execution of projects. Strategies generally involves the overall planning and conduct of any fares or actions intended to accomplish a specific goal be it in business, politics or war prosecutions (Hornby, 2010). Strategy as identified also refers to the long term goal or roadmap to be taken towards reaching a person's or organizations' goal or target. Strategic approach to anything brings about tactics, which are the specific set of actions to achieve set objectives (IIMD, 2022).

In summary, the literature review to this study is general yet specific in the area or topic of study- i.e. strategies that can enhance OIRs utilization for effective services delivery in public university libraries in South-East, Nigeria. None of the literature could definitely establish if the university librarians have inhibitions to utilization of OIRs and/or the extent they can be. It is this gap in literature that this work intends to fill.

Methodology
The study was conducted in the South-East, Nigeria. Structured questionnaire was the instrument used for data collection for the study. Data collected was analyzed using the population mean (x) statistics and standard deviation to answer research question. The cut off score for decision making was obtained by summing the value in the rating (1+2+3+4=10) and divided by 4 to obtain 2.50. Any mean value ranked 2.50 and above was positive i.e. agree, otherwise it was negative i.e. disagree. In interpreting the items with the response mode, very high extent, high extent and low extent and very low extent, the real limit of numbers was used: 1.0-1.49 (Very low extent), 1.50-2.49 (low extent), 2.50-3.49 (High extent), 3.50-4.00 (Very high extent). The null hypothesis was tested using t-Test statistical tool to test hypothesis about the difference between variables. If the t-Test calculated value was less than the t-Test table value at 0.05 level of significance, that means that there was significant difference between the two variables the null hypothesis was rejected, but if otherwise, the null hypothesis was accepted.
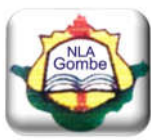
Reliability of Instrument

The reliability index of the instrument was determined by administering the instrument (i.e. questionnaire) to thirty (30) librarians at the university, South-South, Nigeria who were not part of the study area, but have similar characteristics based on their training, profession and work environment. Their responses were computed and the internal consistency coefficient was determined using Cronbach Alpha statistics. The reliability coefficient obtained was 0.94. The coefficient is very high, hence the instrument was considered reliable.

Result and Discussion of Findings

Table 1: Mean ratings on tool/instruments for enhanced strategies to the utilization of online information resources for effective services delivery in public university libraries in South-East, Nigeria

S/N	Items	$\bar{X}$	State SD	$\bar{X}$	Federal SD	Grand $\bar{X}$	Remarks
1.	Increase of institution's bandwidth	3.75	.44	3.24	.664	3.50	A
2.	Improving ICT skills through organized trainings, re-trainings, workshops, seminars etc	3.84	.576	3.59	.507	3.72	A
3.	Persuasion of authorities of universities/heads of libraries to adopt utilization of OIR for effective service delivery	3.46	.744	3.24	.664	3.35	A
4.	Organizing of workshops on application of online information resources in library services delivery	3.57	.876	3.00	.866	3.29	A
5.	Orientation and re-orientation to develop interest in adopting ICT and change to new technologies in services delivery patterns	3.39	8.75	3.41	.618	3.40	A
6.	Provision of adequate funds by the university authority to enable librarians undergo trainings, re-training, workshops, seminars etc.	3.61	.567	3.39	.772	3.50	A
7.	Selection of the best and simple online databases and software packages which are not prone to complexities	3.54	.508	3.24	.562	3.39	A
8.	Developing/establishment of strong online information resources policy	3.68	.548	3.58	.772	3.63	A
9.	Provision of alternative power supply in libraries e.g. solar energy	3.50	.504	3.30	.628	3.40	A
	Grand mean	**2.86**		**2.95**		**3.46**	**A**

Where X = Mean, SD = Standard deviation, A= Accepted, NA = Not accepted

From the finding, it was established that there are various tools/instruments that can combine to form or be part and parcel of enhanced strategies to utilization of online information resources for effective services delivery by public university librarians in South-East, Nigeria. This is in corroboration with Nwosu and Opara (2019), who stated that OIR utilization are enhanced strategically by providing adequate electricity power supply training and retraining of personnel (the university librarian), providing required bandwidth to avoid congestion of network searching and general funding among others. The data in Table 1 show that all the 9 items measuring the strategies employed for enhancing the utilization of online information
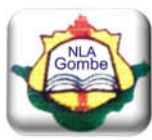
resources had mean above 2.50 for federal universities as well as state owned universities. The group mean of 2.86 and 2.95 obtained indicated that respondents agreed that all the itemized strategies are employed among many others that enhance the utilization of online information resources for effective services delivery. These strategies include: Improving ITC skills through organized trainings (3.72), Developing/establishment of strong online information resources policy (3.63), Increase of the institution's bandwidth and provision of adequate funds at (3.50) levels of acceptance respectively among others.

Hypothesis
There is no significant difference between the mean responses of librarians in federal and state owned public university libraries on the strategies that can be employed to enhance the utilization of online information resources for effective service delivery in public universities in South-East, Nigeria.

Table 2: t-test analysis of mean difference between the librarians in federal and state owned public universities on the benefit librarians derive from the utilization of online information resources for effective service delivery in public university libraries in South-East, Nigeria.

| Variable	N	$\overline{X}$	SD	Df	T	Sig	Decision
Federal	122	31.95	.723				
				172	3.304	0.01	Reject Ho
State	52	26.69	.892				

* Significant at P<0.05

The result in Table 2 above reveals t-calculated value of 3.304 at df = 172 where p < 0.05. This indicate that there was a significant difference between the mean score of librarians in federal and state-owned public university libraries on the strategies of OIR utilization by librarians for effective services delivery in public university libraries in South-East, Nigeria. Hence the null hypothesis was therefore rejected at 0.01 significance against the base 0.05 significance.

The implication of the study is that with both the state and federal university librarians commonly agreeing and accepting that all the items, (tools and instruments) as listed are enhanced strategies for the utilization of OIR in the public university libraries, it will be easy to combine efforts to present a common front or voice in things concerning OIR utilization matters without discordant opinions, because the situation is generally the same, and therefore can be holistically and collectively tackled for enhanced online information resources utilization in the public university libraries. In other words more funding support and detailed strategic planning about the university libraries online services delivery are required. This position corroborates Akpoghome and Chinedu (2019), who stated that both the federal and state governments' owned hospitals and schools do not receive adequate funding for the up-date of facilities for effective operations (services delivery) as should be. The availability of appropriate bandwidth, regular electricity power supply, proper trained personnel, general funding adequately among others are truely the enhanced strategies for the utilization of OIR for effective services delivery in the public university libraries in South-East, Nigeria.

Conclusion
The study was on enhanced strategies for effective services delivery by public university librarians in South-East, Nigeria. Professional librarians in ten (10) public federal and state university libraries formed the population of the study. The instrument for data collection was a well structured closed ended questionnaire. The result of the findings showed that the
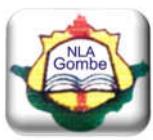
strategies for enhanced utilization of online information and information resource materials as itemized were all agreed to and accepted tools/instruments for effective services delivery in the public university libraries in South-East, Nigeria. The grand mean figures obtained were 2.86 and 2.95 for states and federal public university librarians respectively, and the overall grand mean was 3.46 which is a general high level of acceptance.

Recommendation
From the findings, librarians should aptly direct for the fixing of all the itemized tools/instruments as accepted and more if found and accepted for enhanced strategies for the utilization of online information and information resource materials for effective services delivery in public university libraries in the South-East, Nigeria.

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