

# USE OF ELECTRONIC LIBRARY (e-LIBRARY) IN COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, IKERE-EKITI, EKITI STATE.

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## **Abstract**

*The effectiveness of a library as a facility for education is determined by the success to which the library is able to provide and satisfy users' information need. This study is based on the use of electronic library in the College of Education, Ikere-Ekiti. The purpose of the study is to identify the facilities available, reasons why the students use e-library, how often are its uses and the challenges the students encountered in the course of accessing e-library. The research design for the study is a descriptive survey. Four research questions guided the study. The population of the study is 280 respondents from NCE students. Questionnaire was the main instrument used for data collection. The data collected was analyzed by frequency percentage and descriptive statistics mean with standard deviation. The study revealed that students used e-library sometimes to find solutions to their assignments, in-depth research work, and access online journals. The problems encountered when using e-library include inability to print out, shortage of time allocated to browse, insufficient facilities and unfriendly attitude of the staff. Based on the findings of the study, recommendations are made for the allocation of enough fund for the acquisition of appropriate e-library facilities; the management of library should allow the users to save information into storage medium; extend the closing time of the e-library and time allocated to students for browsing.*

**Keywords:** *Electronic library, ICT, Academic library, Information and Database*

## **Introduction**

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is the use of computer and other technologies for carrying out various activities both in the library and other sectors. However, before the emergence of ICT according to Haliso (2011), the operation of libraries in Nigeria had been cumbersome, time-wasting and without giving any room for flexibility. But with the introduction of ICT into library operation in academic libraries, it has enhanced users' accessibility to unlimited information resources and there is simultaneous access for many users at the same time. The rise of the e-library is linked to ICT advancement which is an integrated set of services for capturing, cataloguing, storing, searching, protecting and retrieving information. Therefore, the introduction of ICT into the library has brought what can be referred to as a digital or electronic library (e-library).

The term digital or e-library was first popularized by the National Science Foundation/Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency/National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NSF/DARPA/NASA) and initiated in 1994. Digital or e-library is a set of documents available through electronic means by the use of digital technologies that allow for retrieval, archiving, preservation, and dissemination of those documents (Fox, 1999). e-library according to Witten and Bainbridge (2009) is an online database of digital objects that can include text, still images; audio, video or other digital media formats. The objects can consist of digitized content like prints or photographs, as well as born-digital content like word processor files or social media posts.

The creation of electronic libraries was meant to solve the problems encountered in the traditional paper based libraries. Omagbemi, Akintola, and Olayiwola (2004) explained that e-library helps to close the global information gap and create brighter future for students. Therefore, modern academic library cannot be imagined without the presence of e-library because as an information industry, it should be applied for optimum productivity. Using e-library, modern libraries have not only achieved remarkable changes in their daily operations and services but have also identified new and active roles for librarians and users.

In fact, technology has virtually changed the ways people live and work. The application of ICT in the library according to Achufusi and Nwosu (2013) has greatly transformed the acquisition, organization, storage, retrieval, and dissemination of information in tertiary institutions' libraries. With the invention of e-library, libraries now use various types of database to aid the services rendered to users. The mission of e-library is to develop, store, provide access and electronically distribute collections of high-quality digital images (Donald, 2001). Having this same view are Ilorah, Nwofor and Onwudinjo (2007) who observed that the emergence of the computers with internet access has brought into the world wider databases for students and researchers to acquire knowledge or engage in

particular research. Computers with internet access enable the students to take charge of their own learning through direct exploration, expression, and experience.

Furthermore, Ashikuzzaman (2016) identified the benefits of e-library as it supports searching with the combination of keyword, best tool for providing online resources for research which will make it easy to its users, literacy is increased when searching is made by the educators, retrospective search is easy and more convenient than print resources. Other benefits according to Tsvetanka and Gabriela (2015) include provision for print out and saved the download items for future references, it provides the benefit for integrated search to dictionary, encyclopedia and almanacs through the reference desk and it facilitates its patrons for research solution. Uju and Obiora (2013) confirmed that students used e-library but occasionally to enhance their work. e-library enables the users to have access to more up to date information, easy access and downloading of information, provision and access to unlimited information from different sources and to provide lecturers, students, administrators, researchers and the general public with information more effectively.

In addition, digital library has important roles to play in learning setting by providing teachers and learners with knowledge bases in a variety of media. Etim, Onukwugha and Gilean (2017) confirmed that digital library system has supporting roles in education especially in the area of research. It is a working tool of researchers. It provides a means of up-dating one's knowledge on any discipline on a daily basis. Marchionini and Maurer (2018) opined that digital library allows teachers and students to take advantage of wider ranges of materials and communicate with people outside the formal learning environment. It allows learners of all types to share resources, time and energy and expertise to their mutual benefits. According to Oluka (2013) e-library accommodates different types of learning style. It encourages the students to peruse information by using hyperlinks and sites on the worldwide web; it encourages them to find information relevant to their personal situation and interest. Besides, it also allows students to select learning materials that meet their level of knowledge, interest and what they need to know to perform more effectively in an activity. The impact of e-library on learning activities according to Abiduna (2014) enabled the users to access current information, access to wide variety of information and faster access to materials.

Meanwhile, Ringeera (2007) who researched on the challenges facing the use of digital libraries in Kenya identified the challenges that affect the use of e-libraries which include, lack of reliable system power (UPS), lack of awareness about the digital library and poor reliability of information system for running the digital library. Others are inappropriate search engine, lack of knowledge in the use of the information system, poor internet connectivity, slow speed of information search retrieval, lack of stand by generator and poor ICT infrastructural facilities. Haliso (2010) investigated the factors affecting ICT use by academic librarians in

Southwestern Nigeria and confirmed that lack of institutional commitment is the factor. Mairaj and El-Hadi (2012) who researched on the application of ICT in libraries in Pakistan identified lack of co-operation from staff as a problem. Uju and Obiora (2013) who investigated the extent of the use of ICT in Federal polytechnic Oko, Anambra State confirmed that users are not allowed to save information into media and limited duration to access the internet are the problems. Abiduna (2014) who researched on the need for and use of electronic resources and services for learning among students in Federal College of Education Katsina confirmed that poor internet connectivity, lack of adequate and trained ICT staff, frequent power failure, lack of functional facilities and difficulty in downloading are the problems faced by students while using e-resources.

However, the extent to which the e-library in College of Education Ikere-Ekiti is used and the challenges encountered when accessing it by students is yet to be determined. This is what the research sets out to find and this is also the gap to be filled as no research work has been carried out to the best of knowledge of the researcher in the library.

### **Background of College of Education e-library, Ikere-Ekiti, Ekiti State**

The e-library of College of Education came into limelight on 15<sup>th</sup> October 2015 when it was commissioned by the governor of Ekiti State, His Excellency, Dr. Ayodele Fayose. The major objective of the e-library is to facilitate access to scholarly information resources. The library is located on the ground floor, close to the circulation cubicle of the main library. The e-library is equipped with 100 state of the art high-speed desktop computers with internet access. The registered users are welcomed to use the very rich resources, surf the net to access database (Ebcobhost) and consult online journals, books and other periodicals.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The creation of e-library is meant to enhance efficiency in the use of libraries and solve the problems encountered in the traditional paper based libraries. e-library enables the users to have access to more up to date information, easy access and downloading of information, provision and access to unlimited information from different sources and to provide lecturers, students, administrators, researchers and the general public with information more effectively. However, it was observed by the researcher that there are insufficient ICT facilities, many students do not understand the relevance and purpose of e-library to their studies, the students do not make use of the e-library and there are challenges like lack of space, inability to print out, unawareness of the e-library, unfriendly attitude of library staff and shortage of time allocated to browse that they encountered when they make use of the College of Education e-library, Ikere-Ekiti.

This is what the research sets out to investigate and this is the gap to be filled as no research work has been carried out to the best of knowledge of the researcher.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study is to find out the use of the e-library in College of Education, Ikere-Ekiti, Ekiti State. The specific purposes are to:

- Identify the facilities available in e-library
- Find out what the students use e-library for
- Ascertain how often the e-library is used
- Identify the challenges students encountered in the course of using e-library

### **Research Question**

- What are the facilities available in e-library?
- What are the purposes of using e-library?
- How often do the students use e-library?
- What are the challenges students encountered in the course of using the e-library?

### **Methodology**

The research design for this study is a descriptive survey. The population consisted of all the NCE students who registered in the College of Education e-library, Ikere-Ekiti. No sample was drawn since the population was small. The questionnaire was given to three experts for vetting before it was administered. However, 300 copies of the questionnaire were given by hand with the help of trained e-library staff to the students coming into the e-library during the period and only 280 (93.33%) copies of the questionnaire were returned. Frequency distribution and percentages were used to analyze research question 2 while descriptive statistics mean with standard deviation were used to analyze other research questions. Any item with mean scores ( $\bar{X}$ ) of  $\geq 1.50$  was accepted while  $\leq 1.49$  was rejected.

## Analysis of Data

**Research Question 1:** What are the facilities available in the e-library?

Table 1: **Facilities available in e-library**

Items	Mean	SD	Remark
Internet	2.00	0.03	Accepted
Photocopier	1.18	0.02	Rejected
Digital camera	1.11	0.02	Rejected
Scanner	1.91	0.03	Accepted
Computer	2.00	0.03	Accepted
Projector	1.06	0.03	Rejected
Internet telephone	1.01	0.03	Rejected
Printer	1.71	0.01	Accepted
Fax machine	1.04	0.03	Rejected
Database	1.96	0.03	Accepted

Table 1 shows the respondents representing 1.71 to 2.00 in the items accepted that the internet, computer, database, scanner, and printer are available.

**Research Question 2:** What are the purposes of using e-library?

Table 2: **Purpose for using e-library**

Items	Mean	SD	Remark
For communication	1.04	0.03	Rejected
For in-depth research work	1.95	0.03	Accepted
To update knowledge	1.93	0.03	Accepted
For leisure/recreation	1.09	0.03	Rejected
To consult reference materials	1.23	0.02	Rejected
To find solutions to the assignments	1.99	0.03	Accepted
To update lecture notes	1.82	0.02	Accepted
To access on-line journals	1.96	0.03	Accepted

Table 2 shows the respondents representing 1.93 to 1.99 accepted that the purposes for using e-library are to find solutions to their assignments, for in-depth research work, update knowledge, update lecture notes and access on-line journals.

**Research Question 3:** How often do the students use e-library?**Table 3: Frequency of using e-library**

Many times		Sometimes		Rarely	
F	%	F	%	F	%
80	28.57	160	57.14	40	14.29

Table 3 shows that 160(57.14%) respondents used e-library sometimes.

**Research Question 4:** What are the challenges students encountered in the course of using e-library?**Table 4: Challenges the students encountered when using e-library**

Items	Mean	SD	Remark
Slow internet connectivity	1.26	0.01	Rejected
Unstable power supply	1.07	0.03	Rejected
Shortage of time allocated to browse	1.96	0.03	Accepted
Lack of space	1.95	0.03	Accepted
Inability to print out	1.94	0.03	Accepted
Unfriendly attitude of staff	1.86	0.02	Accepted
Inability to save information into external device	1.95	0.03	Accepted
Poor maintenance of ICT facilities	1.04	0.03	Rejected
Insufficient of ICT facilities	1.79	0.02	Accepted
Lack of regular cooling environment	1.03	0.03	Rejected
Lack of awareness	1.04	0.03	Rejected
Inappropriate search engine	1.01	0.03	Rejected
Lack of knowledge in the use of computer	1.18	0.02	Rejected
Slow speed of information search	1.11	0.02	Rejected
Opening time is late	1.15	0.02	Rejected
Closing time is early	1.71	0.01	Accepted

Table 4 shows the respondents representing 1.79 to 1.96 accepted that the problems encountered when using e-library are a shortage of time allocated to browse, lack of space, inability to save information into the external device, inability to print out, unfriendly attitude of staff, insufficiency of ICT facilities and closing time is early.

**Discussion of Findings**

From the study, it was found that in the College of Education e-library, Ikere-Ekiti:

The ICT facilities available are the internet, computer, database, scanner, and printer. The finding supports that of Jibia, Mubaraka and Jirgi (2013) that internet, printer and computer were available in the academic library.

The finding revealed that students used e-library to find solutions to their assignments, in-depth research work, update knowledge, lecture notes and access on-line journals. This finding is supported by the findings of Abiduna (2014), Uju and Obiora (2013), and Ringeera (2007) that the students used ICT to enhance their work, access to current information, access to wide variety of information and access online journals and books.

The finding also revealed that students used e-library sometimes. This study is in supports of Uju and Obiora (2013) that students used e-library occasionally.

Furthermore, the findings of the study revealed that inability to print out, shortage of time allocated to browse, inability to save information into the external device, lack of space, unfriendly attitude of staff, insufficient of ICT facilities and closing time is early are major problems the students encountered when using e-library. The finding is supported by the findings of Abiduna (2014), Uju and Obiora (2013), Haliso (2011), Mairaj and El-Hadi (2012) and Ringeera (2007) that lack of cooperation from staff, inadequate ICT resources, users are not allowed to save information into storage media, limited duration to browse, frequent power failure, difficulty in downloading and poor infrastructure of ICT facilities are the problems facing the use of digital library.

## **Conclusion**

The study established that the uses of e-library are to find solutions to their assignments, in-depth research work, update knowledge, lecture notes and access on-line journals while the challenges faced in the course of accessing e-library are inability to print out, shortage of time allocated to browse, inability to save information into the external device, lack of space, unfriendly attitude of staff, insufficient of ICT facilities and closing time is early. Hence, e-library provides a means of up-dating one's knowledge on any discipline on a daily basis. Therefore, the use of e-library will be easily achieved more if the library and institutional administrators provide channels to address the challenges identified by this study.

## **Recommendations**

From the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Management of the College of Education Ikere-Ekiti should endeavour to allocate enough fund for the acquisition of appropriate e-library facilities.
2. The management of e-library should allow the users to save information into a storage medium, extend the closing time of the e-library and time allocated for students for browsing.
3. The library porters and members of e-library staff must be friendly and cheerful.



4. The management of library should re-invigorate their awareness campaign strategy to students and other members of staff about the existence and relevance of e-library.

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