

# **Influence of Information and Communication Technology On current awareness services In Libraries of Federal Universities in South-South Nigeria.**

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## **Abstract**

*This study was carried out to investigate the Influence of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) on current awareness services in Libraries of Federal Universities in South-South Nigeria.*

**Design/Methodology/Approach:** *The Correlation research design was employed in carrying out this study. An objective was stated and a null hypothesis was formulated to guide the study.. The population of the study is 169 librarians of South-South Federal Universities in Nigeria. All the 169 librarians were used for the study. Instruments for data collection included two well-structured researcher-made rating scales. All the rating scales distributed to the respondents were returned. Pearson “r” statistic was used to answer the research question raised so as to establish the degree of relationships existing between the variables using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21 via the computer while the t-test significance of Pearson “r” statistics was used to test the hypothesis at the 0.05 level of significance.*

**Findings:** *The result revealed that there is a high relationship between availability of ICT facilities and current awareness services in libraries of Federal University in South-South, Nigeria and the relationship was found to be significant.*

**Implication:** *Since libraries are widely considered as a very vital part of the process of knowledge acquisition around which schooling revolves, ICT compliant level of every academic library has to be high because, some of these ICT resources are necessary for academic excellence.*

**Originality/Value:** *It was recommended among others that the government, the management of tertiary institutions and other education stakeholders should be encouraged to take the provision of adequate ICT facilities in all the academic libraries in Nigeria as policy matter. This will enable the libraries to have the needed ICT resources for smooth running of the library hence, their influence on current awareness services.*

**Keywords:** *ICT facilities, university libraries, current awareness*

**Paper type:** *Empirical research*

## **Introduction**

The new information age has strictly divided the work of the information professionals into two: creating access to, and the communication (dissemination) of information. ICT has become an integral and accepted part of everyday life for many people. ICT is increasing in importance in people’s lives and it is expected that this trend will continue to the extent that ICT literacy will become a functional requirement for people’s work, social and personal lives. ICTs are useful tools for socio-economic development because of their capabilities for wealth creation, jobs

creation, tele-education, tele-medicine and digital laboratories. According to Kpusamy and Santhappara (2005), developing countries have found significant relationship between ICT investment and economic growth.

In education, the delivery of knowledge using ICTs has influenced the design of various curriculum programs nationally and globally in launching of different educational programs. Ajayi and Ekundayo (2009) opined that ICT has made a very profound and remarkable impact on the quantity and quality of teaching, learning and research in educational institutions.

According to Kumar and Kur (2005), the current information and revolution and the increasing effect of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has gone a long way in modernizing the process of teaching and research in most universities. The use of computer and internet applications into library services has come to stay. This is because; computers have had significant effect on many libraries that use them across the globe. Due to technological developments, computers are now used virtually in all spheres of life including libraries.

Still on the area of education, information and communication technology is now considered as the most powerful means of education in contemporary days. The United Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (2002), listed the following points as the advantages of ICT integration in education: The use of ICT in education eliminates barrier to education for students and for teachers, it eliminates geographic barriers for students to be able to access knowledge resources from any location, it allows use of new methods of education, it provides a balanced combination of work and family life education, it increases the international dimension of education services, it allows education in the appropriate time and amount for employees of organizations, and ICT can also be used for non-formal education such as health campaigns for illiteracy. Different experiences have shown that investment in ICT for education sector contributes to the growth of knowledge and human capital, which provides many benefits for stakeholders.

Based on the foregoing, it is clear that the introduction of ICT to library services had led to positive change in the work patterns and demand for new skills. Many tertiary institutions around the world are now exploring ways in which ICT can be mainstreamed to give students and stakeholders easy access to a wide range of educational resources and services. Nigerian universities are not left behind in the embrace of ICT in carrying out their library activities but the impact of these ICT facilities on the library services of these universities may not be the same. It is against this background that this study is set to determine the impact of ICT on Current Awareness Services in libraries of Federal Universities in South-South Nigeria.

## 1.2 Objective of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to examine the influence of ICT on Current Awareness Services in Federal Universities in South-South, Nigeria. Specifically, this study sought to; Ascertain the relationship between availability of ICT facilities and Current Awareness services in libraries of Federal University in South-South, Nigeria.

## 1.3 Hypothesis

In line with the objective of the study, the following null hypothesis was formulated to establish the significance of the solution:

**HO<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant coefficient of relationship between availability of ICT facilities and Current Awareness Services in libraries of Federal University in South-South, Nigeria

## 2.1 Review of Related Literature

### ICT in Current Awareness Services

Current Awareness Services (CAS) has to do with keeping information needs. The library ensures that the users' information needs are satisfied through enlightenment or awareness programs or channels such as routing of periodicals, current contents of information resources, list of the bibliographic records, current awareness bulletins, press cuttings, list of on-going and anticipated seminars, conferences and workshops. These services are made simple, fast and interesting without errors through the use of ICTs.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has brought many revolutions in the human life. One very important, impressive and effective revolution is the enhancement in the speed and span of information production, sharing and recycling. It has changed the basic concepts of proprietorship into sharing, and preservation into access. According to European Commission's Actions (2013), Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) are rapidly changing global production, work and business methods, trade and consumption patterns in and between enterprises and consumers. ICT enables a radical change in structures of organizations and means of learning, researching, developing, producing, marketing, distributing and servicing digital and traditional goods and services. It also has a great potential to enhance the quality of life. According to a recent study by the IT and innovation foundation "money spent on computing technology delivers gains in worker

productivity that are three to five times those of other investments”.

The e-business readiness index reflects ICT uptake by firms in the European Union (EU) member states on the basis of a selected set of indicators stemming from Eurostat surveys. E-business allows for information to be acquired and goods and services purchased via the internet with increasing trust, speed and volume. E-business covers the internal process within a company as well as interactions between different businesses. It is much more than e-commerce, where the focus is on commercial transactions between companies and their customers (ECA, 2013).

Government of Seychelles (2015) on the importance of ICT noted that ICT advances over the last decades have led to the convergence of broadcasting, telecommunications, computing and content. According to the report, ICT has impacted the way business is conducted, facilitated learning and knowledge sharing, and generated global information flows, empowered citizens and communities, resulting in a global information society. Increasingly, ICT is playing the central catalytic role in pushing the development process forward and boosting the efficiency of the increasingly integrated global economy. It went further to say that in industrial countries; IT is widely acknowledged to be the engine of economic growth and directly linked to productivity. Hence, countries that have harnessed the potentials of ICT have attained significant social and economic development.

The advantages of ICTs have been recognized worldwide and national policy makers have realized its potentials to restructure organization, promote collaboration, increase democratic participation of citizens and improve the transparency and responsiveness of governmental agencies. It also fosters cultural creativity and enhances the social integration of individuals with different abilities and groups of different cultural backgrounds. Ajayi and Ekundayo (2009) supported this by noting that ICT has become key tools and had a revolution effect on how we see the world and how we live. They went further to say that the phenomena has given birth to the present e-government and e-education. To them, the field of education has certainly been affected by the penetrating influence of ICT worldwide particularly in developed countries.

According to Aliyu (2010), ICT is the world's most important and fastest growing industry

which is among the high growth industries in the emerging market economics. Also, the rapid growth in ICT has encouraged a greater level of technological inventions and strategies toward the management, organization, dissemination and the use of information.

With the invention and growth of ICT, librarians and libraries now have to adapt to the use of various types of technologies to aid the services they render to their clientele accurately and as fast as possible unlike the traditional library services which are characterized by delay and errors in the provision of services to clients. Oduwale and Akpati (2003) affirmed this by noting that before the advent of ICTs, University libraries were using manual services (systems) and it has become obvious that manual library system is inadequate for preservation, dissemination and or retrieval of massive volume of information. Daily technological advancement affects the way information is being handled and disseminated in libraries and information centres. Library archives and records are now preserved using computers which gives efficient and effective spread of information. In terms of management, ICT has also aided in the running of libraries making it easier than before. Ojedekun and Okafor (2011) reported that ICT has radically transformed most of the services provided by a library. ICT is heavily utilized in the storage, processing and dissemination of information and has made the organization of information very efficient, the delivery of basic information services more effective and the dissemination of information to users easier. It has eliminated a lot of routine and repetitive tasks in the library in other words; many libraries either have gone electronic or are going electronic. Nigerian universities as knowledge creators and their libraries as gate keepers of knowledge are rapidly witnessing the introduction of various information technologies. Some have moved to implement integrated library system to build digital collections, Institutional Repositories (IR), and to provide electronic services such as access to internet, online journals, e-mail, and workstations for general computing like word processing, spreadsheet, data analyses and a host of other computer-based applications. In other words, libraries are now putting more emphases on electronic and digital information resources (Ojedekun & Okafor 2011).

Users can now have access to a variety of information and digital archives of libraries from any corner, as well as can get update activities of libraries by the sms on their mobile phones. ICTs also help the users to access, manage, integrate, evaluate, create and communicate with other users more easily than ever. The library could also access a wide range of web-based current awareness services and download them into its database. By so doing, the library users could access them for current information. Some examples of web-based current awareness services are Entry Point myZD-Net IDEAL ALert, Wiley Book Notification Services, listserv, webzines, etc. (Madu, 2008).

With the proliferation of knowledge and writings, the library is not likely to be able to meet up with acquisition of all written materials (current materials) hence the importance of ICTs. For the individuals in the science and technology discipline, the advent of the internet might have been the best source of current and adequate information at their disposal judging from the fact that information in the science and technology are perishable and short lived, hence their need for current and up-to-date information through current awareness services from the librarians.

### 3.1 Research Methodology

Correlation research design was employed in carrying out this study. According to Nworgu (2015), correlation research design establishes the linear and non linear relationship between

dependent and independent variables of a study. The population of the study is 169 librarians of south-south federal universities in Nigeria and the universities are: federal university of Benin Edo State, Federal University of Calabar, Cross Rivers State, Federal University of Uyo, Akwa Ibom State, Federal University of Port-Harcourt, Rivers State, Federal University of Otuoke, Bayelsa State and Federal University of Petroleum Effurun, Delta State. All the 169 librarians from the involved universities were used for the study, which is called census enumeration. The 4-point researcher made rating scale was used to collect data that provided answers to the research question and hypothesis raised in this study. To answer the research question so as to determine the linear relationship between dependent and independent variables of the study, PPMCC was used while the hypothesis was tested using t-test at 0.05 level of significance.

### 4.1 Data Analyses and Presentation

**Research Question:** What is the extent of relationship between availability of ICT facilities and Current Awareness Services in libraries of Federal University in South-South, Nigeria?

**HO:** There is no significant coefficient of relationship between availability of ICT facilities and Current Awareness Services in libraries of Federal University in South-South, Nigeria.

**Table 1:**

*Summary of Analyses Concerning the Research Question and the Hypothesis*

Var	N	R	r <sup>2</sup>	Df	t <sub>cal</sub>	t <sub>tab</sub>	Decision
1	169	0.60	0.36	167	9.74	1.96	High Relationship
3	169		(36%)				Reject H <sub>0</sub>

It is shown on table 1 that with sample size of 169, the correlation coefficient of 0.66 was obtained with a coefficient of determination of 0.36. The coefficient of determination of 0.36 implies that 36% of the variation in current awareness services could be attributed to availability of ICT facilities. The conclusion is that there is a high relationship between availability of ICT facilities and current awareness services in libraries of Federal University in South-South, Nigeria. The table also shows that with a high relationship of 0.60

at 167 degree of freedom, the t-cal of 9.74 is significantly greater than the t-tab of 1.96, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis and concluding that there is a significant relationship between availability of ICT facilities and current awareness services in libraries of Federal University in South-South, Nigeria.

### Summary of Findings

The following findings were made from this study:

1. There is a high relationship between availability of ICT facilities and current awareness services in libraries of Federal University in South-South, Nigeria since the coefficient of 0.60 found is high. When tested, the relationship was found to be significant.

### Discussion of Findings

The researcher presents discussion of the results based on the research questions and hypotheses. As part of the discussion, the results of the study were compared with some of the issues treated in the review of literature. The implications of the findings were also discussed on the basis of which recommendations were made.

It was revealed in this study that there is a high relationship between availability of ICT facilities and current awareness services in libraries of Federal University in South-South, Nigeria and the relationship was found to be significant. The result could mean that ICT may have influenced current awareness services of the University Libraries, as current awareness service is made simple, fast and interesting, library users now have access to a variety of information and digital archives of libraries from any locations within the libraries, ICT has made our users to have access to wide range of web based current awareness services like Entry point, My ZD-Net Ideal Alert, with ICT, users to receive lists of on-going and anticipated seminars, list of new publication are received or sent automatically through the use of ICT, ICT has made flexible the submitting of request e.g. email, www and our users get up to date activities of the library through ICT. In line with this, Edem (2009) in his study reported that internet is now the fastest medium of transferring and receiving information about an on-going research, outcome of research and publication of all kinds and so librarians must not be left out in this application for the provision of quality library services. Olurunsola (2007) supported this by noting that through ICT, educational needs have been met, according to him, messages can be communicated through the e-mail, telex or telephones particularly the mobile ones. In line with this, Bushati (2012) reported that the use of ICT in education eliminates barrier to education for students and for teachers, it eliminates geographic barriers for students to be able to access knowledge resources from any location. Ojedekun and Okafor (2011) also reported that ICT has radically transformed most of the

services provided by a library. This is to say that ICT has brought about what is known as 'library without wall', library clientele do not have to visit the library building before getting the information they need. The finding here is also in line with Madu and Ezeani, (2010) who reported that ICT allows users access to a variety of information and digital archives of libraries from any corner, as well as can get update activities of libraries by the SMS on their mobile phones. ICTs also help the users to access, manage, integrate, evaluate, create and communicate with other users more easily than ever. Each library can choose any means convenient to them in rendering current awareness services to their users depending on the ICT resources that users have. Some users may decide to get information through their hand sets, Ipad, laptop or just as the case may be thus; the difference impact of ICT on current awareness services.

### Recommendations

Based on the findings from the study, the researcher wishes to recommend as follow:

1. There is a need for periodic ICT orientation, workshop, and seminars for users and staff of the libraries to sensitize and acquaint them with the use of ICT facilities. This is a kind of instruction that will keep them abreast of the new changes in ICT usage and operation.
2. The provisions of ICT resources to the libraries should be improved on since the accompanied services are functions of the available resources.
3. The libraries should establish an enabling policy guide that will aid in the provision, maintenance, and training on ICT utilization for effective library service provision.

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