

## User Assessment of Electronic Information Services in Federal University Gashu'a

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### Abstract

The paper is focused on user assessment of electronic information services provided by the Library and the ICT center of Federal University Gashu'a. Staff and students were the respondents, the research method was quantitative and design was survey whereas the sampling technique was purposive in selecting the respondents for the study. Findings indicated that electronic information resources were acquired through subscription and services offered comprise databases services, e-granary services and internet services amongst others. Majority of the respondents were not satisfied with the services provided by the library and ICT center due to epileptic connectivity and lack of standard internet facilities, others challenges are instability of electricity and inadequate support by the University Management. Recommendation to the University to give adequate support to the library in areas of prompt subscription to electronic resources, sponsorship and release to training as well as developing high ICT infrastructure that can enhance electronic information provision services in the University are prominent to improve and sustain electronic information services in the University.

**Keywords:** *Electronic information services (EIS), Resources, University, Satisfaction, Gashua*

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### **Background to the Study**

Electronic information services are activities or group of activities designed to enhance maximum utilization of subscribed electronic information resources by institutions of higher learning. Some of the prominent electronic services provided are access to e-newspapers, e-mails, e-books, e-journals, downloading and uploading of resources, e-registration, etc. Electronic information resources comparatively satisfy users' information needs within and outside the walls of the library where they are resident for as long as they are connected to the internet. K enchakkanavar (2014) maintain that the library and information services of the 21st century are fast changing and that with the rapid development of electronic publishing, information centers are not only acquiring reading materials such as printed books and journals but also arranging for providing access to various learning resources in electronic form. He also stated that the web resources and the use of web as a tool is changing the way users live and learn.

Members of the academic community in Federal University Gashu'a (FUGA) depend on the services provided by the University Library and the Information Communication Technology Center (ICT) of the University in gaining access to content of electronic information resources. Some of the information activities that are grouped by the University library to constitute electronic information resources services comprise mail based services, electronic reference services, electronic document delivery (EDD), online library database services, uploading and downloading services, e-granary services, portal registration service (for students), online newspapers and Internet based services. M ulla and Chandrashekera (2005) opined that electronic services have boosted a fundamental change in library services and that instead of users coming to the library time to time, the library reaches the users with directional, referral and wireless information services. This shift is the outcome of the introduction of current awareness and selective dissemination of information (SDI) services. Electronic information services have supported the University library and ICT center to attain end user empowerment, linking patrons with information without any intermediary or agency.

Mutula and Ojedokun (2008) stated that digital library resources and services are increasingly being implemented by several agencies – government, private sector and tertiary institutions. These resources and services make research easier for scholars and may ease budgetary constraints associated with the acquisition of print resources. Digital services help to reduce preservation problems or help libraries extend collections into new media. Above all, they help to make information readily available.

Tertiary institutions play different roles in national development, reiterating these roles, Okpareke (2007) and Akintoye (2008) reported tertiary institutions to develop manpower, research and development, moral development and training. Libraries are an integral part of tertiary institutions as they facilitate and support tertiary institutions with the requisite information resources that bridges knowledge gaps. That is why in providing services to their intended customers, libraries are dynamic and systematic institutions that provide information resources in diverse nature, contents and subjects, as well as employing appropriate measure to disseminate the acquired information acquired.

Electronic information resources and services are topical issues in information delivery in all types of libraries, including the libraries of tertiary institutions. Okorie (2010) stated that, the global development of information technology (IT) and its applications in libraries have generated changes in the pattern of information collection, processing, storage, and dissemination. Progressive developments in it have affected the way of library users in utilizing information. Librarians are involved in organizing knowledge and providing services to users. The adoption of new information technology has enabled librarians to perform traditional library responsibilities, such as acquisition, cataloguing, and access to online catalogues, more effectively, thereby enhancing their job performance. It has also reduced the amount of time and energy spent by users on seeking information.

The University library, especially the e-library division provides users with electronic information services like; transferring of electronic books from CD to their personal computers or phones, browsing of assignment and sending it to flash drive or hard disc drive. The electronic library of Federal University Gashu'a also provides access to broadest range of electronic information services and resources.

#### **Electronic Information Services of Federal University Library Gashu'a**

“Electronic resources” refers to those materials that require computer, mainframe, or handheld devices to be operated successfully. Some of the electronic information services rendered to users by the University Library and the ICT center are as follows:

- (a) Electronic selective dissemination of information (ESDI)
- (b) Electronic current awareness services (ECAS)
- (c) Electronic journals
- (d) Electronic books
- (e) Scanning, typing and printing services
- (f) E-registration of New students and staff
- (g) Generation of online payment slip to students
- (h) Online search for University and research opportunities abroad

The University management of Federal University Gashu'a had put into consideration some measures that could enhance, facilitate and upgrade the University network. Sometimes users' patronizing the e-library Division and ICT center are discouraged from patronizing the library due to poor level of connectivity and some users do not perceive FUGA Library and ICT center as useful sources of electronic information services center for their teaching, learning and research activities due majorly to ignorance.

#### **Statement of the Problem**

A decline in the usage of the library services at the university level suggest that users are looking elsewhere for information resources. the libraries are losing clientele; students may come in the library to study, to socialize, to hit the newly installed café designed to lure them in, but they are not using library materials or library services at anything like the rate they did even ten years ago. Matusiak (2012) asserted that the library users especially students do not understand academic libraries as useful sources of digital files and

therefore use search engines when searching for visual resources. Students prefer tutorial groups and social media groups for academic brainstorming to the library; whose responsibility is to provide such platform to its users through electronic resource service delivery. This no doubt has resulted to the decline in library patronage; therefore necessitating the study.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The purpose of the study was to assess the electronic information services utilization among the patrons of Federal University Gashu'a. The study was guided by the following objectives:

1. Determine the types of electronic resources available in the Federal University Gashu'a.
2. Determine the frequency of use of electronic information resources and services in the Federal University Gashu'a.
3. Find out the library stockholders levels of satisfaction with electronic information resources and service in the Federal University Gashu'a.

### **Literature Review**

The rate at which electronic information services is been access in FUGA is of moderate limit. Konappa (2014) recommended that the World Wide Web is complex information medium. It is both a repository for information and a transmission vehicle. It provides open access and increasingly fee base access to the immense digital materials. A number of services are now offered online that, heretofore were provided in person or through other print means. Online information services includes; electronic reference services and electronic document delivery systems. These services have been expanded to include automated information delivery and build according to various interoperable standards. Electronic resources represent an increasingly important component of the collection building activities of libraries.

Gwazah, (2011) opined that, electronic sources of information have introduced changes to the services and operations of modern libraries and ICT centers that include rapid transmission of data across computer networks, sophisticated retrieval and processing of electronic documents and information. Against this background of increased availability of information and the technological innovations, libraries are developing new and revolutionary methods of providing users with access to information.

Uzuegbu, *et.al.* (2012) in his study asserts that, for effective assessment of electronic databases, computers and internet connectivity is necessary, also that creating a usable interface is indispensable. Corroborating, Ani, *et al.* (), Abdulmumin and Waldman () reported that a computer database interface aids access and retrieval of electronic information resources. Bashorun (2011) revealed that frequency of use of electronic information resources and the services administered to academic staff, students and user community of the Universities was low blamed on lack of awareness of electronic information services and resources provided by the library; power outage, ineffective communication channels, slow network and inadequate searching skills.

The availability of electronic resources in libraries from the aforementioned indicates that library resources and services are now highly liberalized so much so that use, retrieval and access to valuable information apart from causing the paradigm shift from traditional library services to electronic or digital-base library services, it also challenges responsiveness to the plight of patrons information needs and technological requirements. A study to assess the perceived provisions and satisfactions derived from electronic resources and services is very imperative to particularly show the extent to which libraries are meeting the information needs of users and the extent to which users of digital resources are achieving their goals of undertaking learning, teaching and research which the paper assesses in the case of FUGA.

### Methodology

Survey research design was adopted to carry out this quantitative study. A total of thirty (30) respondents were selected purposively for the study because of their consistency with the use of the library electronic information resources and services as attested by the patronage entry and request register. Structured questionnaire that consisted of ten (10) items were administered to the purposively selected students, academic staff and other members of the academic community. Administration of the instrument was conducted within a period of three (3) weeks to ensure that those respondents were reached and the instrument duly completed. Data collected from the questionnaire were analyzed using frequency count and corresponding percentages.

### Data Analysis and Interpretation

All the 30 (100%) questionnaires administered to the respondents were returned and considered useable. Out of the thirty 30 respondents, 23 (76.7%) of the respondents were males and 7 (23.3%) respondents were females. It can be inferred from table 1 that males respondents were more in number than the females.

**Table 1: Classification of Users by Gender**

| Sex of users | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------|-----------|------------|
| Male         | 23        | 76.7       |
| Female       | 7         | 23.3       |
| Total        | 30        | 100%       |

Table 1 shows that there were more males than the females who patronizes and utilized electronic information resources and services of the university library.

**Table 2: Categories of users of Electronic Information Services**

| Categories of Users                       | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|-----------|------------|
| Staff                                     | 5         | 16.7       |
| Students                                  | 20        | 66.6       |
| Other members of the University Community | 5         | 16.7       |
| Total                                     | 30        | 100%       |

Categories of users of electronic information are given in Table 2. Students top the list of users with 20 (66.6%) respondents further indicating that students uses the electronic

information service and resources more than any other groups in the University community. Finding is closely related to the study of Min and Yi (2010) who reported that students use electronic information services at anytime and anywhere.

**Table 3: Types of Electronic Resources Available in the Federal University Gashu'a**

| Electronic resources available in the Federal University Gashu'a Library | Available  |               | Not Available |               |
|--|------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
|  | F          | P (%)         | F             | P (%)         |
| Indexing and Abstracting Databases                                       | 0          | 60%           | 30            | 100%          |
| Electronic newspapers  | 22         | 73.3%         | 8             | 26.6%         |
| Electronic Journals  | 24         | 80%           | 6             | 20%           |
| Electronic Books   | 19         | 63.3%         | 11            | 36.6%         |
| Statistical Database   | 2          | 6.6%          | 28            | 93.3%         |
| E-Thesis   | 1          | 3.3%          | 29            | 96.6%         |
| Reference database (Almanacs, Dictionaries, Encyclopaedias etc)          | 27         | 90%           | 3             | 10%           |
| Electronic Images  | 29         | 96.6%         | 1             | 3.3%          |
| Multimedia products (videos, audios and text)                            | 23         | 76.6%         | 7             | 23.3%         |
| E-Clipping (for retrospective search)                                    | 1          | 3.3%          | 29            | 96.6%         |
| Electronic databases e.g. E-Granary, OARE, AGORA, ARDI, HINARI etc       | 26         | 86.6%         | 4             | 13.3%         |
| <b>Total/Percentage</b>  | <b>174</b> | <b>639.6%</b> | <b>12</b>     | <b>519.6%</b> |

Table 3 depicts the types of electronic resources available in the federal university gashuá library. Topping the list of available e-resources in the library were Electronic images (96.6%), Reference database (Almanacs, Dictionaries, Encyclopaedias etc) (90%), Electronic databases e.g. E-Granary, OARE, AGORA, ARDI, HINARI etc (86.6%), Electronic Journals, Multimedia products (videos, audios and text), Electronic newspapers, and Electronic Books respectively. E-resources enable the librarian to provide better services to the user community. Ekoja, (2007) reported that libraries invest more in e-resources because e-resources enable users to get access to an information source by more than one users, E-resources can be searched quickly and can be found easily by the user most importantly, these resources can be stored in huge amount.

**Table 4: Respondents Frequency of use of Electronic Information Service Centers**

| Category of Users | Daily |       | Weekly |       | Monthly |       | Yearly |       | Never |       | Total     |             |
|-------------------|-------|-------|--------|-------|---------|-------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-----------|-------------|
|                   | F     | P (%) | F      | P (%) | F       | P (%) | F      | P (%) | F     | P (%) | F         | P (100%)    |
| Students          | 6     | 30%   | 6      | 30%   | 3       | 15%   | 0      | 0%    | 5     | 25%   | 20        | 66.6%       |
| Staff             | 0     | 0%    | 2      | 40%   | 1       | 20%   | 1      | 20%   | 1     | 20%   | 5         | 16.7%       |
| Community Users   | 0     | 0%    | 0      | 0%    |         | 0%    | 1      | 20%   | 4     | 80%   | 5         | 16.7%       |
| <b>Total</b>      |       |       |        |       |         |       |        |       |       |       | <b>30</b> | <b>100%</b> |

Table 6 revealed that frequency of use of electronic information resource and services is most patronized by students with frequency distribution of 20(66.6%) cumulatively. This

is at par with Hamade and Al-Yousef (2010) submission that students frequently used and prefer electronic information resources and services more than any other group within the academic cycle.

**Table 5: Students level of Satisfaction with electronic information services and resources provided by the library and ICT center of the University**

| Electronic information Services                                    | Rating levels of satisfaction by students |       |              |       |      |       |           |       |           |       |
|--|---|-------|--------------|-------|------|-------|-----------|-------|-----------|-------|
|  | poor                                      |       | satisfactory |       | Good |       | Very Good |       | Excellent |       |
|  | F   | P (%) | F            | P (%) | F    | P (%) | F         | P (%) | F         | P (%) |
| Electronic current awareness services                              | 5   | 25%   | 10           | 50%   | 3    | 15%   | 1         | 5%    | 1         | 5%    |
| Electronic newspapers  | 4   | 20%   | 6            | 30%   | 4    | 20%   | 4         | 20%   | 0         | 0%    |
| Electronic Journals  | 5   | 25%   | 10           | 50%   | 3    | 15%   | 1         | 5%    | 0         | 0%    |
| Electronic Books   | 5   | 25%   | 1            | 5%    | 7    | 35%   | 3         | 15%   | 3         | 15%   |
| Electronic document delivery                                       | 6   | 30%   | 9            | 45%   | 3    | 15%   | 1         | 5%    | 0         | 0%    |
| Uploading & Downloading services                                   | 10  | 50%   | 3            | 15%   | 8    | 40%   | 4         | 20%   | 1         | 5%    |
| Word processing & printing services                                | 5   | 25%   | 3            | 15%   | 6    | 30%   | 4         | 20%   | 1         | 5%    |
| Electronic Images  | 5   | 25%   | 5            | 25%   | 6    | 30%   | 0         | 0%    | 0         | 0%    |
| Electronic registration services                                   | 4   | 20%   | 3            | 15%   | 5    | 25%   | 4         | 20%   | 1         | 5%    |
| Electronic selective dissemination information                     | 4   | 20%   | 7            | 35%   | 6    | 30%   | 0         | 0%    | 0         | 0%    |
| Electronic databases e.g. E Granary, OARE, AGORA, ARDI, HINARI etc | 6   | 30%   | 5            | 25%   | 4    | 20%   | 0         | 0%    | 2         | 10%   |
| Total/Percentage   | 59  | 295%  | 62           | 310%  | 55   | 275%  | 22        | 110%  | 9         | 45%   |

Respondents rating of their levels of satisfaction with services and resources provided by the library and ICT centre of the University are given in table 3. The results showed that respondents indicating that they were highly satisfied scored 62 (310%), followed by poorly satisfied 59(295%), those saying it is good totaled 55(275%); very good 22(110%) and excellent number only 9(45%). It was observed that the results of table 3 cumulatively indicated that majority of users were not satisfied with the level of services and resources provided electronically. Therefore, challenging the actualization of the establishment of the electronic library and ICT centre to cater for such services and resources. It can be resuscitated by publicity and bringing to the knowledge of the patrons who are not aware of the available electronic resources and services.

**Table 6: Staff level of Satisfaction with Electronic information Services and Resources provided by the library and ICT center of the University**

| Electronic information Services                                      | Rating levels of satisfaction by staff |       |              |       |      |       |           |       |           |       |
|--|--|-------|--------------|-------|------|-------|-----------|-------|-----------|-------|
|  | Poor                                   |       | Satisfactory |       | Good |       | Very Good |       | Excellent |       |
|  | F                                      | P (%) | F            | P (%) | F    | P (%) | F         | P (%) | F         | P (%) |
| Electronic current awareness services                                | 3                                      | 60%   | 0            | 0%    | 2    | 40%   | 0         | 0%    | 0         | 0%    |
| Electronic newspapers  | 2                                      | 40%   | 2            | 40%   | 1    | 20%   | 0         | 0%    | 0         | 0%    |
| Electronic Journals  | 2                                      | 40%   | 1            | 20%   | 2    | 40%   | 0         | 0%    | 0         | 0%    |
| Electronic Books   | 3                                      | 60%   | 1            | 20%   | 1    | 20%   | 0         | 0%    | 0         | 0%    |
| Electronic document delivery   | 2                                      | 40%   | 1            | 20%   | 1    | 20%   | 1         | 20%   | 0         | 0%    |
| Uploading & Downloading services                                     | 1                                      | 20%   | 1            | 20%   | 1    | 20%   | 1         | 20%   | 1         | 20%   |
| Word processing & printing services                                  | 0                                      | 0%    | 1            | 20%   | 1    | 20%   | 2         | 40%   | 1         | 20%   |
| Electronic Images  | 3                                      | 60%   | 1            | 20%   | 1    | 20%   | 0         | 0%    | 0         | 0%    |
| Electronic registration services                                     | 1                                      | 20%   | 2            | 40%   | 1    | 20%   | 1         | 20%   | 0         | 0%    |
| Electronic selective dissemination information                       | 1                                      | 20%   | 1            | 20%   | 1    | 20%   | 1         | 20%   | 1         | 20%   |
| Electronic databases e.g. E - Granary, OARE, AGORA, ARDI, HINARI etc | 4                                      | 80%   | 1            | 20%   | 0    | 0%    | 0         | 0%    | 0         | 0%    |
| Total/Percentage   | 22                                     | 440%  | 12           | 240%  | 12   | 240%  | 6         | 120%  | 3         | 60%   |

Table 4 Results revealed that poor level of satisfaction is also reported by staff on electronic information resources and services utilization. The distribution of satisfaction ratings show that those who claim the services and resource use to be poor scored 22(440%) followed by satisfactory 12(240%), good 12(240%), very good 6(120%) and excellent with 3(60%). Implication of this finding is that staff hardly get connected to net in order to support their teaching and learning process which finding is closely related to the study of Sarasvady and Khatri (2009) in their study of use of electronic resources for implementing library consortia discovered that lack of net connectivity is a main cause for the non-preference of electronic resources and services by respondents. This has been corroborated by the findings of this study.



**Table 7: User Community level of Satisfaction with Electronic Information Services and Resources provided by the library and ICT center of the University**

| Electronic information Services                                    | Rating of user community levels of satisfaction |       |              |       |      |       |           |       |           |       |
|--|---|-------|--------------|-------|------|-------|-----------|-------|-----------|-------|
|  | poor  |       | satisfactory |       | Good |       | Very Good |       | Excellent |       |
| <b>Electronic information Services</b>                             | F   | P (%) | F            | P (%) | F    | P (%) | F         | P (%) | F         | P (%) |
| Electronic current awareness services                              | 1   | 20%   | 4            | 80%   | 0    | 0%    | 0         | 0%    | 0         | 0%    |
| Electronic newspapers  | 1   | 20%   | 3            | 60%   | 1    | 20%   | 0         | 0%    | 0         | 0%    |
| Electronic Journals  | 1   | 20%   | 5            | 100%  | 0    | 0%    | 0         | 0%    | 0         | 0%    |
| Electronic Books   | 1   | 20%   | 3            | 60%   | 1    | 20%   | 0         | 0%    | 0         | 0%    |
| Electronic document delivery                                       | 1   | 20%   | 3            | 60%   | 1    | 20%   | 0         | 0%    | 0         | 0%    |
| Uploading & Downloading services                                   | 1   | 20%   | 4            | 80%   | 0    | 0%    | 0         | 0%    | 0         | 0%    |
| Word processing & printing services                                | 1   | 20%   | 0            | 0%    | 3    | 60%   | 1         | 20%   | 0         | 0%    |
| Electronic Images  | 1   | 20%   | 4            | 80%   | 0    | 0%    | 0         | 0%    | 0         | 0%    |
| Electronic registration services                                   | 1   | 20%   | 1            | 20%   | 1    | 20%   | 2         | 40%   | 0         | 0%    |
| Electronic selective dissemination information                     | 1   | 20%   | 4            | 80%   | 0    | 0%    | 0         | 0%    | 0         | 0%    |
| Electronic databases e.g. E-Granary, OARE, AGORA, ARDI, HINARI etc | 1   | 20%   | 4            | 80%   | 0    | 0%    | 0         | 0%    | 0         | 0%    |
| Total/Percentage   | 11  | 220%  | 35           | 700%  | 7    | 180%  | 3         | 60%   | 0         | 0%    |

Findings on the community levels of satisfaction with the electronic information resources and services is given in table 5. User community here refers to members of the academic community such as members of council, army, police, staff relatives and other members of the locality who patronize the library. Those who indicated that that they are satisfied with the level of services and resourced provided to them by library and ICT centre of the University were 35(700%) followed by those who reported it to be poor 11(220%), good 7(180%), very good 3(60%) and lastly excellent with 0(0%).The implication of this isa clear indication that the acquisition of these resources and service provided by the library should be undertaken in such a way that the image of the university is enhanced because it is these categories of patrons that will serve as brand ambassadors of the library and university, they can also destroy such image when asked of their opinion concerning the commitment and efforts of the university and its library on matters of effective and efficient service provision.

### Conclusion

The study clearly revealed that the Federal University Library Gashua and its ICT centre subscribed to numerous electronic resources and provide responsive services to facilitated and support the teaching, learning and research activities of the university. The commitment of the library management to ensure effectiveness and efficiency of its

services is attested by students, staff and university communities. The assessment of its electronic resources and services is not contestable as revealed by the perceptions of the respondent's opinions and a leveraging point to arouse the University management to do more to improve the library services and corresponding subscription of electronic resources as well as infrastructure necessary to enhance service delivery.

### **Recommendation**

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made by the researchers:

1. The management of Federal University Gashu'a (FUGA) should ensure that the acquisition of Information and Communication Technology skills prioritized so that resources acquired that depend on technical know-how are judiciously put to use to satisfy the user needs as well as utilized for the education and sensitization of patrons.
2. Support is highly needed for periodic training on the use of electronic information resources and types of services available in the library for client to utilize during their information needs.
3. User education should be systematically package to target all stakeholders of the university so that the skewed distribution of those aware and uses the subscribed electronic resources and administered services is improved and justified of the huge financial commitment by the university management when it is made mandatory.

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