

ASSESSMENT OF MOBILE PHONES UTILIZATION AMONG LIBRARIANS OF FEDERAN UNIVERSITY GASHUA LIBRARY FOR INFORMATION SERVICE DELIVERY

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Abstract

This study assessed the use of mobile phones for enhancement of information services in the library of Federal University Gashua and two research objectives guided the study. The study adopted quantitative methodology and survey research design. The population of the study was twenty eight (28) which comprised the entire staff in the Library of federal University Gashua, Yobe State. Thus, the sample of the population of this study captured all the twenty eight 28(100%) of the staff in the library due to the size of the population. Observation and questionnaire were instrument used for data collection. Data were analyzed descriptively using frequency count and percentages. The findings revealed that Smart Phones, Cell Phones, Tablets, iPods and MP3 players are mobile technologies that are mostly used for information services. Moreover, Smart phones and Cell phones are mostly used in information service delivery among other mobile technologies. The findings further revealed that mobile phone/online information services were utilized on daily bases and most respondents were satisfied with the application of mobile phone for information services. Indeed, mobile phones enhanced User Friendly, Personalised service, Increased Access to Information, Time Saving, Users participation, Awareness, Limitless Access, Allow access to print-disabled Users and Access to e-library and e-resources. The recommendations made include the need for the university Management to regularly procure the latest mobile phone technologies for the library and ensuring proper management of the available ones which are in existence in the library in addition to training and retraining of the library staff on the latest telephone technologies that are in vogue.

Keywords: Mobile phone, Information Services Delivery, Utilization, University Library.

Introduction

The evolution of mobile phone has facilitated easy communication and sharing of knowledge globally because of its numerous features. Rouse (2022), define mobile phone as a wireless handheld device that allows users to make and receive calls. While the earliest generation of mobile phones could only make and receive calls, today's mobile phones do a lot more such like accommodating web browsers, games, cameras, video players and navigational systems. However, mobile phones is known as "cell phones" or cellular phones, today's mobile phones are more commonly called "smartphones" because of all of the extra voice and data services that they offer. Mobile phones can also be used to access and retrieve acquired and subscribed information resources and

services from libraries that have migrated onto the web. Library users are now not affected by traditional library operating barriers such as place and time. The incorporation of Information Communication Technology (ICTs) appliance in Federal University Gashua (FUGA) library, Yobe State is in line with the mission and vision that established the University. The FUGA library can accommodate 100 users at a time and it housed a collection of about 5,000 books and journals. Beyond functions such as administrative services, reader services, information/reference services, collection development/acquisition services, technical/cataloguing, classification services, audio/visual services and e-services. The library has incorporated the use of mobile device supporting platforms that use the online social media platforms for providing information services such as informing users' on new arrival of books, current awareness services, reference services, call and texts via SMS about overdue notices of non-returned and renewed books, books renewal and divert alerting services.

Statement of the problem

The impact of mobile phones in Academic Library cannot be over emphasized because these devices facilitate text messaging and open the opportunities to virtual information seeking and library services. Siti & Ramlah, (2016) found and reported that, despite the various information services provided through mobile phone it will be difficult render an effective services without identifying information service needs by library users. As a result of this, there is need to assess information services provided through mobile phone. Specifically, library users have been enjoying numerous services via mobile phone in FUGA Library. Despite this, there is no single study carried out to assess information services delivery through mobile phone in FUGA library, this implied that there is gaps that need to be bridged. There for this study is undertaken to bride such gap and suggest ways that information services provision through the use of mobile phones can help to enhance the library services.

Objectives of the Study

The study sought to address the following objectives:-

1. To find out the available mobile phone technology that facilitate information service delivery in FUGA library
2. To examine the mobile phone application programs that enhances information services delivery in the Library of Federal University Gashua

Literature Review

Review of literature is necessary in order to know similar studies carried out in the past and uniqueness of the present study.(Nalluri,& Brahmaiah, 2016) revealed that mobile technology in general is any technology of mobility such technology as in cars industry, notebooks, personal digital assistant, sand, cellular phones. Mobile technology devices are combination of hardware, operating systems, networking and software. Mobile technology used in a specific way as the communications technology using unguided media transmission such as radio wave, infra-red and Bluetooth to transfer any type of data with mobile technology such as voice, video texts, images etc. According to Shelly, Cashman & Misty, (2008), mobile devices often connected to a personal computer to exchange information between the computer and the mobile phone. Some mobile devices are internet enabled, meaning they can be connected to the

internet wirelessly. With an internet-enabled device, users can chat, send e-mail and instant messages and access the web. Mobile communication technologies have brought some changes and facilitated easy communication and the transfer of information namely from business to business, business to customers, employers to employees, etc. and in providing more and more added value services (Steenderen, 2002).

Types of mobile phone technologies used for information deliveries in academic libraries

Mobile technology refers to devices that are portable and provide instant access to information (Coates, et al 2009). “iPods, MP3 players, Personal Digital Assistants, USB Drive, E-Book Reader, Smart Phone, Ultra-Mobile PC, and Laptop / Tablet PC” are examples of the technology (Adeeb & Hussain, 2009, p.48). Smartphones and Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs) are mobile devices that enable real-time communication (Chang, Tseng, & Yan, 2012). Similarly, Saxena and Yadav (2013) revealed that PDAs (Personal Digital Assistant), Smart Phones, Cell Phones, Tablets, iPods and MP3 players are mobile technologies. According to Abdulkarim, Siti & Ramlah, (2016), Wireless technology involves mobile phone access to the internet via WAP. WAP is a specification for a set of communication protocols to standardize the way that wireless devices, such as cellular telephones and radio transceivers, can be used for internet access, including e-mail, the World Wide Web, newsgroups, and internet relay chat (IRC). (Rice & Katz, 2003) shows that internet and mobile phone usages were very similar and that several digital devices exist with respect to both internet and mobile phone usage. Mobile devices and services offer tremendous flexibility for those who want to take advantage of library services. With a simple 3G connection, a user lying on a beach can access e-books and multimedia content from a local library. Smartphones can access networks and content can be continually streamed over a network, providing content on demand and making it unnecessary to maintain a paper copy of the material. Google is developing for mobile first and the desktop second. Apple is in the midst of making its desktop computers behave more like its mobile devices. Aside from offering convenience, mobile technologies present new opportunities for libraries to promote access and expand reach, Saxena &Yadav (2013).

Mobile phone application programs that enhances information services delivery in the academic library

The incorporation of ICT devices such as smart phone has improved effective information services in the library. The academic libraries have changed their services and home keeping operations in the age of information communication technology in order to provide access to their collection. Libraries are really interested in information dissemination channels, including mobile, telephone, mobile, and internet. Academic libraries have faced challenges in meeting their user requirement, because they are a demanding and dynamic target market (researchers, lecturers and students). With the Internet and the World Wide Web (www), university teachers, researchers and students have the opportunity to find what they need without going to their library. Academic libraries need to market its products in the same way as most of the service institutions (Mustapha, A., Ibrahim, F. A., Garba, K. D., and Mohammed M., 2021). According to Choy (2010) posits that most universities and other higher education institutions, these devices are an important part of student activities, Libraries, particularly academic libraries, develop strategies for the design of mobile technology-based services so as to meet

their employers' ever-changing demands of information (Lippincott, 2010; Vila, Galvez & Campos, 2010). The following are some of service delivered through mobile technology and they are embarked by some academic libraries.

I. Mobile interfaces and online public catalogue: Libraries are developing and providing access to their customers with mobile versions of its OPAC to deliver timely and unimpeded services and resources to their employers, in their quest to provide tailor-made services. These included collections and e-journals and the opening of the library (Murray, 2010; Vila, Galvez & Campos, 2010). Mobile OPAC (MOPAC) guarantees the quick and quick retrieval of a product, according to Vila, Galvez & Campos (2010:327). Paterson and Low (2011) confirmed that 60% of interviewed students felt that the catalog should be searched everywhere, every time.

II. Mobile collections and databases: Lippincott (2010) states that database publishers can access e-books and e-journals via their mobile devices with innovative strategies for mobile versions of their databases for their clients.. These databases are said to make it easy for mobile devices to interface (Murray, 2010; Bucznski, 2008). These publications include social science research networks and online music services which provide both video and audio recording access (McKiernan, 2010). Ebscohost provides a mobile interface for Ebsco products that is regarded as highly useful for mobile library platforms under (Hadro, 2009). Murray (2010) says that e-book readers allow access to such databases regardless of their location.

III. Mobile instructions and mobile tours of the library: Every year, new students who undertake their academic journey are introduced to the academic library's education services. The services libraries offer through mobile devices, such as library orientation and information literacy. Kroski (2008) noted that Youtube can be one of the best examples for library tours, another tool for mobile teaching is the use of podcasting. Murray (2010) & Choy (2010) have stated that both distance students and those from abroad benefit from the podcast content. Awareness services such as "Call Guide" and "Self Service" library instruction services also add value to services available already (Murray, 2010)

IV. Short message system reference: SMS reference in academic library services is widely known among mobile technology. Paterson & Low (2011) said this service is intended to provide users with services from anywhere. It permits a librarian to send a text via their mobile telephones to a librarian. The librarian can also provide information to employers to warn them that new arrivals, reserved books and other library news are available (Pearce, Collard & Whatley, 2010).

V. My library: My library is a personal library space where users can find information and resources of their choosing. Users can read alerts, check records, renew resources, request items, track interlibrary loans and document delivery requests, set up email notices of new books and journal articles, set up preferences for catalogue searching, etc.

Methodology

Qualitative research approach was adopted using research survey method to carry out this study, the population was twenty eight (28) which comprised the entire staff in the Library of Federal University Gashua, Yobe State. Thus, the sample of the population of this study captured all the twenty eight (28) 100% of the staff in the library due to its population size. The instruments used for data collection was structured questionnaire. Data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics, frequency, percentages and the results presented in tables.

Result and Discussion

Out of 28 copies of the questionnaire distributed to respondents, a total of 25 (89.3%) copies were returned duly completed and all returned copies found valid. This high response rate was realised due to the fact that the respondents were given up to one day to fill the questionnaire. The remarks was on a benchmark mean value of two point one zero (2.10) upward to indicate high mean value, and below two point one zero (2.10) downwards to indicate low mean value.

Table 1: Types of Mobile Phone Technologies Used for Information Services

S/N	Options	Agree		Disagree		Undecided		Mean	Remark
		F	P	F	P	F	P		
1	PDA's (Personal Digital Assistant)	5	20%	17	68%	3	12%	2.08	Disagreed
2	Smart Phones	20	80%	3	12%	2	8%	2.72	Agreed
3	Cell Phones	20	80%	2	8%	3	12%	2.68	Agreed
4	iPods and MP3 players	15	60%	4	16%	6	24%	2.36	Agreed
5	Tablets	17	68%	5	20%	3	12%	2.56	Agreed

Source: Field survey, 2023.

Table 1 above, showed the mobile technologies used for information services in the library of Federal University Gashua. The result revealed that 17(68%) of the respondents disagreed on PDA's (Personal Digital Assistant), 20(80%) of the respondents agreed on Smart Phone, 20(80%) agreed on Cell Phones, 15(60%) of the respondents agreed on the use of iPods and MP3 Players while 17(86%) of the respondents agreed on Tablet respectively. Generally, during interview with the library staff, the researchers observed that the library staff used their personal mobile phones for rendering information services. Table 1, indicates that majority of the respondents did not use PDA's (personal Digital Assistant), this was due to its high price, In a nutshell, Smart Phones, Cell Phones, Tablets, iPods and MP3 players are mobile technologies that are mostly used for information services. It was also revealed that Smart phones and Cell phones are mostly used in information services delivery among others mobile technologies due to their relatively low cost. This finding was similar with the study of Saxena and Yadav (2013) who said that PDA's (Personal Digital Assistant), Smart Phones, Cell Phones, Tablets, iPods and MP3 players are mobile technologies used for library services.

Table 3: How Mobile Phones Enhance Information Services

S/N	Options	Agree		Disagree		Undecided		Mean	Remarks
		F	P	F	P	F	P		
1	User Friendly	23	92%	0	0%	2	8%	2.84	Agreed
2	Personalised service	23	92%	0	0%	2	8%	2.84	Agreed
3	Increase Access to Information	25	100%	0	0%	0	0%	3.00	Agreed
4	Time Saving	24	96%	0	0%	1	4%	2.92	Agreed
5	Users' participation	17	68%	0	0%	8	32%	2.36	Agreed
6	Awareness	25	100%	0	0%	0	0%	3.00	Agreed
7	Limitless Access	16	64%	6	24%	3	12%	2.52	Agreed
8	Allowed access to print-disabled Users	10	40%	8	32%	7	28%	2.12	Agreed
9	Access to e-library	16	64%	0	0%	9	36%	2.28	Agreed

Source: Field survey, 2023.

Table 3 showed how application of mobile phones enhanced information services in the library of Federal University Gashua. The result showed that 23(92%) of the respondents agreed that it was User friendly, 23(92%) of the respondents agreed that it aid personalised services, 25(100%) of the respondents agreed that it increased access to information, 24(96%) of the respondents agreed that it is time saving, 17(68%) of the respondents agreed that it aid Users' participation, 25(100%) of the respondents agreed that it created awareness, 16(64%) of the respondents agreed that it allow limitless access to information, 10(40%) respondents agreed that it allowed access to print-disabled Users, and 16(64%) respondents agreed that it allowed access to e-library resources. As noted in the above table 3, majority of the respondents indicated that mobile phone enhanced User Friendly, Personalised service, Increased Access to Information, Time Saving, Users participation, Awareness, Limitless Access, allowed access to print-disabled Users and Access to e-library and e-resources. This implies that mobile phones have the potential to greatly facilitate teaching and learning process. It also aids in providing library services outside the library building and accessing information at User's convenience irrespective of place and time. This finding is in line with the study of Nallirui & Gaddam, (2016) who stated that mobile phones supported learning by making library resources more omnipresent, bringing new users to the library through increased accessibility to the library resources and thereby by creating a new way to enhance connections between patrons and libraries. The increased use of mobile phone provided untapped resources for delivering library resources to patrons. They further stated that the mobile web is the next step for libraries in providing universal access to resources and information. Similarly, Abdulkarim, Siti and Ramlah (2006) stated that mobile phone provide convenience access to library services beyond the limitation of time, physical boundary and at individual convenience time and place.

Summary of findings

- Mobile phone technologies used for information service delivery in the library of Federal University, Gashua, Yobe were Smart Phones, Cell Phones, Tablets, iPods and MP3 players.
- However, the mobile phone appliance have been proved to be satisfactory in ensuring that they were all user friendly, provide personalised services, increases access to information, time saving however, users participation, awareness, limitless access, allowed access to print-disabled users and access to e-library and e-resources.

Conclusion and Recommendations

In conclusion mobile technologies promote and enhance information services. Most library Users prefer mobile phone services due to their portability, easy to operate and time conveniences. It is seen from thus study that, the most used mobile devices for online/information services are Smart phones, Cell Phones, Tablet, iPods and MP3 Players. These mobile phones have positive consequences toward enhancing information services in and outside the library's premises. The enormous positive impact of m-phones for enhancement of information services requires its adoption for library services so as to cope with the contemporary technological evolution. Viewing from the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made for improving the application of mobile phones for enhancement of information services in the library of Federal University Gashua, Yobe State.

1. There is the need for the University management to upgrade and regularly procure latest mobile phone technologies and also ensure proper management of the mobile phone technologies that are currently available in the library.
2. There is also the need for the University management to ensure that staff are properly trained and retrained so as to acquaint them with the available and the latest mobile phone technologies.

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