CHAPTER TEN

USE OF THE INTERNET BY STUDENTS AND RESEARCH SCHOLARS OF FEDERAL COLLEGE OF DENTAL TECHNOLOGY AND THERAPY ENUGU, NIGERIA.

Abstract

The Internet is a major source of communication and dissemination of information in the twenty-first century. The Internet has become an important component in academic institutions, as it plays a pivotal role in meeting the information and communication needs of institutions. The study examines the use of the internet by students and research scholars in the Federal College of Dental Technology and Therapy (FCDT&T), Enugu. This study adopts a descriptive research design. The targeted population is one thousand, two Hundred (1200) of FCDT&T students, and Fifty (50) research scholars in the 2017/2018 academic session. From the forgone, a sample size of 200 students and 30 research scholars were selected using stratified random and purposive sampling techniques. The questionnaire was used as the research instrument for data collection. The data obtained through the questionnaire are presented in tables and analyzed using frequency and simple percentages. The findings from the study indicate that students (199:100%) and research scholars (29:100%) in the college are aware of the Internet. However, downloading (190:95.48%) irrelevant information, inadequate resources, and lack of knowledge about the internet and related applications (190:95.48%) are major challenges to the use of the internet in the college library. For this purpose, there is a need for effective user education, in order to develop the awareness and knowledge of the users and library staff at FCDT&T in the effective use of the internet, its techniques and applications. The findings of the study on "Use of Internet Resources by Students and Research Scholars" must be taken into consideration in the college's plan, for the effective and efficient use of the internet for research work, and the improvement of the library e-resources.

Key Words: Information Technology, Internet, Students, Research scholars, Federal College of Dental Technology and Therapy Enugu, Nigeria.

Introduction

One of the most significant achievements in the information and communication sector is the introduction of the internet."Internet" can broadly be defined as a worldwide network of computers communicating via protocol (TCP/IP). The internet today has become one of the most important modes of communication, with its services being used in various fields of life such as business, education, defence, medicine, etc. The internet has become one of the major contributors to economic growth in Nigeria. The use of the internet has increased in the last ten years. This rise has led to the growth of cybercafés and internet centres throughout Nigeria, with easy accessibility and cost-effective services by internet service providers. The enhanced speed of the internet makes life better, many would agree. In the field of library and information science, the Internet has become one of the most important subjects. In fact, the library profession is one that has been most affected by the challenges of the internet and the World Wide Web (WWW). The shift from collection management to information management, from ownership to access, and the change in nature, boundaries and structure of information, makes the library professionals position themselves in the fields of information, and information communication technology. Libraries can also project their collections and activities on the site and supplement their services by exploiting the internet. This can be done by the organisation and management of information on the internet by designing and maintaining a library website (Singh 2001). The use of the internet and e-resources, particularly the World Wide Web, as a new medium of information storage and

delivery represents a revolution ,which will have a lasting impact on the publishing and information delivery system in the twenty-first century. Increasing numbers of publishers both commercial and private as well as individuals are using the internet as a global means to offer their publications and writings to the international community of scientists and technologists, as well as students (Khan and Ahmad, 2009).

The internet has become a part of the library environment today. It has added great value to the library and information services. The internet presents a challenge for library and information professionals in providing information services. It has many resources that can be harnessed by academics for scholarly work (Edwin and Markwell, 2005). The internet plays a pivotal role in meeting information and communication needs of academic institutions, since "it makes it possible to access a wide range of information, such as up-to-date research reports, from anywhere in the world. It also enables scholars and academic institutions to disseminate information to a wider audience around the globe, through having web sites and a way to search them and organize the output."(Luambano and Nawe, 2004).

Federal College of Dental Technology Enugu Nigeria Library ICT developments

Federal College of Dental Technology and Therapy, Enugu, Nigeria was established in 1982 and has achieved academic and research excellence with four departments. The library has more than 5000 books, subscribes to 5 journals, and 3 CD-ROM databases. It also has bound archives of core medical and dental journals. 1000 peer-reviewed title journals and E-books are available online through a digital library program. The college has entered into an agreement with the various organizations and the Information and Library Network to participate in their e-journal consortium. The college computer network has a state-of-the-art fibre optic network and wireless network link to internet service providers. The library provides Internet Access Facility (IAF) service to all library members, with 50 computers, at a minimal fee for browsing e-resources. The library also offers a wide range of services, including Readers and Lending, Reference and Research, Reprographic, Information, Internet and Online E-resources, News Paper, Magazine and Journal, Special Category Membership, OPAC, Indexing, etc.

Objectives

The purpose of this study is to examine the use of internet facilities and resources by students and research scholars of the Federal College of Dental Technology and Therapy, Enugu, Nigeria. These include the following objectives:

i)   To identify awareness of the Internet and its resources.
ii)   To examine the use of the Internet by students and research scholars.
iii)   To identify the purposes for using the Internet.
iv)   To examine problems faced by the students and research scholars.
v)   To find out the satisfaction level with internet-based resources and facilities.
vi)   To suggest ways to improve the internet-based resources in the library.

Methodology

This study adopts a descriptive research design. The targeted population is 1200 of FCDT&T students and 50 research scholars in the 2017/2018 academic session of which a sample size of 200 students and 30 research scholars have been selected using stratified random and purposive sampling techniques. The respondents were shared equally to the departments in order to ensure even representation for a better and more accurate result. The study used a structured questionnaire to collect data. From table no.1, a total of 230 questionnaires were personally distributed to the selected population in June 2018 and 228were returned with an overall 99.13 percent response rate within two weeks of distribution. The data obtained through the questionnaire were presented in tables and analyzed using frequency and simple percentages.

Results and Discussion

Table No. 1: Distribution of Questionnaires

	No Distributed	Frequency	Percentage
Research scholars	30	29 .	12.61%
Students	200	199	86.52%
Total	230	228	99.13%

Table No.1 shows the number of distributed questionnaires to respondents. A total of 230 questionnaires were distributed; 200 to Students and 30 to research scholars. A total of 228 valid questionnaires were collected from students (199: 86.52%) and research scholars (29:12.61%). The response rate was 99.13%

Table No. 2: Awareness of Internet

	YES		NO	
Academic Status	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Research Scholars	29	100%	0	0.00%
Students	199	100%	0	0.00%

Respondents were asked about awareness of the internet. The results in table No.2 show that students and research scholars have knowledge of the internet.

Table No. 3: Experience of Use of Internet

	Academic Status			
	Research Scholars		Students	
Experience	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 1 year		0.00%	5	2.51%
1 - 2 years	5	17.24%	10	5.03%
2 - 4 years	15	51.72%	116	58.29%
Over 4 years	9	31.03%	68	34.17%
Total	29	100%	199	100%

In Table No. 3, respondents were asked about their experience with the use of the internet. The majority of respondents had 2 -4 years of experience in accessing the internet. It is interesting to note that the students have a long experience of using the internet than research scholars and that nearly one-fifth of the students have been using the internet for less than a year.

Table No. 4: Frequency of Internet Use

	Academic Status			
Frequency	Research Scholars		Students	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Daily	11	37.93%	55	27.64%
2 - 3 times per week	15	51.72%	94	47.24%
Weekly	3	10.34%	35	17.59%
Monthly	0	0.00%	15	7.54%
Total	29	100%	199	100%

In Table No. 4, in order to assess the frequency of use, respondents were asked to indicate any of the four-time periods. The majority of the respondents use the internet 2-3 times a week, and nearly another third uses it daily. It also clearly shows that the maximum number of students and research scholars utilize the internet for their daily academic activities.

Table No. 5: Use of Internet of the Library

	YES		NO	
Academic Status	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Research Scholars	14	48.28%	15	51.72%
Students	98	49.25%	101	50.75%

Respondents were asked to answer in the two-point scale of yes or no regarding the use of the internet facility of the college library. From table No. 5, it is quite evident that the use of the internet facility of the library is low. The majority of research scholars and student have their own internet connectivity due to downloading problems, slow speed and lack of internet access time.

Table No. 6: Locations of Internet Access

	Academic Status			
	Research Scholars		Students	
Location	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
At cyber café	2	6.9%	50	25.13%
At Library	10	34.48%	84	42.21%
At Home	15	51.72%	10	5.03%
Via Cell phone	2	6.9%	55	27.64%
Total	29	100%	199	100%

Table No.6 shows where respondents can access the internet. It is important to note that research scholars access the internet at home (15:51.72%) and the library (10: 34.48%). The majority of students reported that they accessed the internet through the library (84:42.21%) and their mobile phones (55:27.64%), and slightly less than one-third at a cyber cafe. Mobile phone and cyber café were most popular with students, while research scholars chose the home and mobile phone.

Table No. 7:Instrument used to access the Internet

	Academic Status			
	Research Scholars		Students	
Instrument	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Cell phone	9	31.03%	56	28.14%
Laptop computer	15	51.72%	83	41.71%
Desktop computer	5	17.24%	60	30.15%
Total	29	100%	199	100%

Table No. 7 shows the instrument used to access the internet. It clearly shows that the majority of the respondents; research scholars (15:51.72%) and students (83:41.71%) access the internet using a laptop while research scholars (9:31.03%) and students (56:28.14%) access the internet using a mobile phone. This is sequel to advance technologies in mobile phones such as smartphones and I-phones which can access the internet effectively and efficiently.

Table No. 8: Purpose of Use of Internet

| Purpose | Academic Status | | | |
| | Research Scholars | | Students | |
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Communications	7	24.14%	40	20.1%
Education	10	34.48%	65	32.66%
Research activity	10	34.48%	74	37.19%
Entertainment	2	6.9%	20	10.05%
Total	29	100%	199	100%

The main objective of the study is to know the purpose of internet use. Table No 8 clearly shows that the majority of the respondents access the internet for research activity i.e. research scholars (10:34.48%) and students (74:37.19%). Also, an almost equal number access the internet for education, and about one-third for communicating with colleagues and editors of scholarly journals, with only 16 percent reporting using it for entertainment.

Table No. 9: Browsing Method of Internet

| Browsing methods | Academic Status | | | |
| | Research Scholars | | Students | |
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Search Engine	12	41.38%	175	87.94%
Website Address	10	34.48%	20	10.05%
Internet Gateways	5	17.24%	2	1.01%
Use Subscription Databases (USD)	2	6.9%	2	1.01%
Total	29	100%	199	100%

In Table No. 9, respondents were asked about the method used to browse the internet. The majority of the respondents use search engines; research scholars (12:41.38%) and students (175:87.94%), while research scholars (10:34.48%) and students (20:10.05%) type the web address directly. Research scholars (5:17.24%) and students (2:1.01%) use internet gateways, and less than 7 percent use subscription databases (USD).

Table No. 10: Search Engine Most Preferred

	Academic Status			
	Research Scholars		Students	
Search Engine	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Google	21	72.41%	195	97.99%
Yahoo	5	17.24%	3	1.51%
MSN	3	10.34%	1	0.5%
Lycos	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Alta Vista	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Others	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Total	29	100%	199	100%

Search engines are the main tool for locating information. In Table No. 10, respondents were asked about the search engine most preferred. Google is by far the most preferred by the majority of the respondents; Research scholars (21:72.41%) and students (195:97.99%), while research scholars (5:17.24%) and students (3:1.51%) prefer Yahoo. Also, research scholars (3:10.34%) and students (1:0.5%) use MSN.

Table No. 12: Challenges faced while accessing the Internet

	Academic Status			
	Research Scholars N = 29		Students N = 199	
Challenges	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Limited access time	22	75.86%	188	94.47%
lack of training	25	86.21%	190	95.48%
Slow speed	26	89.66%	189	94.97%
Limited no of computers	20	68.97%	170	85.43%
Finding relevant information	15	51.72%	186	93.47%
Downloading	28	96.55%	196	98.49%
Irrelevant information	20	68.97%	190	95.48%

Respondents were asked about challenges faced while accessing the internet in the library and were requested to indicate more than one response to the items in the questionnaire. Table No. 12shows a majority of the respondents; researcher scholars (28:96.55%) and students (196:98.49%) state "downloading: as a major problem, while "irrelevant information" is chosen by researcher scholars (20:68.97%) and students (190:95.48%). "Lack of training"; researcher scholars (25:86.21%) and students (190:95.48%), is also a problem."Slow speed" is indicated by researcher scholars (26:89.66%) and students (189:94.97%). Also, "limited access time", and "finding relevant information" are indicated as challenges faced while accessing the internet in the library.

Table No. 13: Satisfaction with Internet Resources

Satisfaction level	Research Scholars		Students	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
25%	12	41.38%	75	37.69%
50%	15	51.72%	120	60.3%
75%	2	6.9%	4	2.01%
100%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Total	29	100%	199	100%

(Header "Academic Status" spans Research Scholars and Students columns)

Respondents were asked to indicate their satisfaction with internet resources in the library. Table No. 13 shows the majority of the respondents; researcher scholars (15:51.72%) and students (120:60.30%) rate internet resources and connectivity at 50% of their satisfaction level.

Findings

- Research scholars and students have experience using the internet.
- Academic research and education are the main reasons for accessing the Internet in the library.
- Search engines are the most common ways of accessing information by respondents, with Google as the most preferred.
- E-mail and search engines are the most popularly used internet services.
- Downloading problems, slow speed, lack of access time, irrelevant information, finding relevant information, and information overload are the major problems faced by students and research scholars in accessing internet services in the library.

Conclusion

The Internet is a major source of communication and dissemination of information. The use of the internet in educational institutions has increased access to information and resources in the library. The study shows that most of research scholars and students are impacted by the internet and electronic resources in their information-seeking retrieval method and gathering behaviour. Research scholars and students in college make use of the internet for teaching, learning and research work, but do not know all its applications and techniques. The library can access open-source journals as well as satisfy the scholarly information needs of library users. Also, the internet has provided the opportunity to introduce ICT services viz. online retrieval, e-mail, networking of libraries, sharing, remote information use, electronic SDI, Document Delivery service, etc. in the college library.

Recommendations

There is a need for adequate resources and effective user education, to develop the awareness and knowledge of the users and library staff on the effective use of the internet and its techniques and applications at FCDT&T.

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