

LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE STUDENTS' PERCEPTION ON THE USE OF ELECTRONIC INFORMATION RESOURCES AS A TOOL FOR NATIONAL PEACE

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Abstract

Purpose: This study investigated the perception of library and information science students of University of Benin and Abia State University, on the use of electronic information resources as a tool for national peace.

Design/Methodology/Approach: The study adopted the descriptive design survey type. A questionnaire titled: "Perception on Use of Electronic Information Resources for Information Provision Questionnaire" (PUEIRIPQ), was designed for data collection. There was no sampling so the entire final year students, totaling 138, were used for the study. Data from research questions were analyzed using mean statistics and a criterion mean of 3.50 was adopted. Null hypotheses were tested using the t-test statistics.

Findings: The study revealed that there was no difference in the perception of the student in the use of electronic information resources in the provision of information for national peace based on their institution or their gender. It was also discovered that the students were overwhelmingly positive in their perception of electronic information resources as best tool for information provision for national peace. Also, it was discovered by this study that students were unanimous in their agreement that among factors that militate against their use of electronic information resources in information provision for national peace include, unreliable internet connectivity, lack of ICT knowledge to effectively utilize the service; so many irrelevant information and high cost of access.

Implication: Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that the schools management should create access to electronic resources, make the acquisition of Information and Communication Technology skills a key learning objectives for their students and students should be encouraged to attend few conferences, seminars and workshops on the use of e-resources before their graduation

Originality/Value: Its originality lies in its ability to discover that use of e-resources is perceived to be a tool for providing information for national peace hence they will use it for same if adequately encouraged.

Keywords: Library and Information Science Students, Perception, Electronic Information Resources, Information Provision, National Peace, Nigeria.

Introduction

In today's technological environment, those in control of the nations are no longer the economic giants but the information giants. Globally, it is no longer the issue of who controls the economy but who controls information. However, information has become so proliferated that there is the danger of information users becoming confused. Epic (2001) noted this danger when he observed that the proliferation of sources for articles and the sheer amount of information now available may be confusing to some users, since retrieving too much information is a problem, as users may get lost and may not know when to quit searching.

On his own part, Gbaje (2007) noted that the almost unlimited availability of information due

to advances in digital technologies is creating, in the world today, information anxiety and new behavioural patterns. This assertion assumes that, since information is a product that is needed by all, and as the new technology has made so much information available, as observed by Oladapo (2018), there is great danger regarding the kind of information available to the different categories of people in the society. The available information could be constructive or destructive; it could build cohesion or create anarchy and a total breakdown of societal peace. The issue of peace in the Nigerian society has become the concern of both the

government and concerned individuals. There is apprehension in almost every quarters of the nation over the spate of violence and restiveness pervading every corner of the Nigerian society, with the attendant confusion as to the means of maintaining national peace. Adegbemi (2017), averred that good governance is a catalyst to national peace. While not trying to dispute his assertion, it is noteworthy that no real and lasting national peace can be achieved without the right kind of information. This is so because, it is the kind of information provided and received by a people that tailor their reasoning and behavior, either positively or negatively. This observation is supported by Wilson and Umar (2019), who noted that fake news (which is a form of information) propels disinformation and misinformation which can create public chaos. There must therefore, be the determination to use the new technology to make available the right kind of information that would create and maintain national peace. In this direction, the use of electronic information resources, by information providers, which in this case are Librarians, becomes a crucial topic for research. Nkanu and Okon (2010) rightly noted that, arising from global trend, librarians are now ...ready to play more affective role using the Internet, E-mail, CD-ROM, and other peripheral facilities as tools for generating, obtaining, processing, storing, retrieving as well as disseminating information services.

Library and information science students of today are the librarians of tomorrow upon whose shoulder would rest the responsibility of generating, processing, managing and providing the right kind of information for national peace. This was implied by Alyson (2020) who stated a graduate degree in library science trains aspiring librarians in areas such as selecting and processing materials, organizing information and research methods leading them into becoming librarians responsible for making libraries an important community resource.

If the students do not perceive the use of electronic information resources as best tool for the provision of information, they will not be motivated to utilize its benefits in this direction. If on the other hand they do, there is the likelihood that they will apply it for a maximum

output in the area of information provision for national peace. As Agu (2002) puts it, "in this age, students must be critical users of information if they have to succeed in the future".

It therefore becomes necessary to carry out a research on the perception of library and information science undergraduate Students on the use of electronic information resources for the provision of information for national peace.

Statement of the Problem

Provision of the right kind of information has become pivotal to the issue of peace in the society and it is expected that library and information science students who are to become the information professionals of tomorrow should be conversant and skillful in the use of electronic information resources for the provision of information required for stability. This will however, depend absolutely on how they perceive the use of this technology as best tool for information provision.

The University of Benin and Abia State University have been training and graduating Library and Information Science students for a number of years now. Whether these undergraduates are taught how to use electronic information resources as best tool for the provision of information for national peace is at the level of speculation as there has not been any known empirical studies carried out to determine their perception on the use of electronic information resources as best tool for the provision of information for national peace. This research work therefore, seeks to investigate this.

Purpose of the Study

This major purpose of this research is to investigate the perception of the Library and Information Science undergraduate students of the University of Benin and Abia State University, Uturu, on the use of electronic information resources as best tool for information provision.

The specific purposes that the work sorts to find out are as follows:

1. To determine the perception of the students on the use of electronic information resources as best tool for

information provision for national peace and security.

2. To assess the extent to which the use of electronic information resources has equipped them with the skills for information provision for national peace and security.
3. To identify the students perceived barriers to the use of electronic information resources as tools in the provision of information for national peace and security.

Research Questions

1. What is the perception of students on the use electronic information resources as best tool for information provision for peace and security?
2. To what extent has the use of electronic information resources equipped the students with skills for information provision for peace and national security?
3. What are the students perceived barriers to the use of electronic information resources as best tool of information provision for national peace and security?

Hypothesis

Ho₁ There is no significant difference between the perceptions of the students of the University of Benin and those of Abia State University on the use of electronic information resources as best tool for information provision for national peace and security.

Ho₂ There is no significant difference between the perceptions of the male and those of the female students on the use of electronic information resources for the provision of information for national peace and security.

Literature Review

The emergence of electronic information resources according to Ani and Ahiauzu (2008), has tremendously transformed information – handling and management in Nigerian academic environments. Daramola (2016) noted a positive perception of the students to e-resources in the FUTA library. Bakare, Bamigboye & Chiemenem (2015), observed that students have the same perception to e-resources and the perception is that it has

helped them in their research work thereby implying a huge impact on the usage of these e-resources with all its attendant advantages despite all the challenges

Documenting the result of their findings, Bakare, Bamigboye, and Chiemenem (2015) said. it was observed that post-graduate students' and undergraduate students' of the Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta, Ogun State, Nigeria have the same perception to e-resources and the perception is that it has helped them in their research work ... despite all the challenges faced. Woodward (2007) noted that students said the top reasons for using online information resources were the ability to link to additional information, the ability to search, and the currency of materials. Goodyear (2012) believes that in this age, students must be critical users of information if they have to succeed in the future. A number of challenges in the students' use of electronic information resources, have however, been identified by researchers. These challenges as identified by Sohail and Ahmad (2017) include slow downloading and blockage of websites. For (Adeniran, 2013; Omosekejimi, Eghworo and Ogo, 2015); Omeluzor, Akibu and Akinwoye (2016), they are poor information technology infrastructure development, while yet others have identified the challenges as, large mass of irrelevant information, the need to filter the results from search, download delay, failure to find information, inadequate or lack of search skills, high cost of access, inaccessibility of some electronic resources and difficulties in navigating through electronic resources.

Peace at the inter-group, inter-communal, inter-ethnic, national and international levels is a recurrent theme. It is perhaps the most sought-after condition by individuals, groups, societies, communities and states. According to Ota (2009) while the instrumentalists see peace as an end which is necessary for social progress and development; the functionalist see peace as the absence of war, fear, conflict, anxiety, suffering and violence. From the above opinions, the leaders of tomorrow (the librarians and information scientists need to know how to obtain information for peace and national security decision making using not only

print-based resources but electronic information resources as well.

Research Methodology

The research adopted the descriptive survey design. The population for the study was the entire one hundred and thirty eight (138) final year Library and Information Science students of the two universities (UNIBEN=98, ABSU=40). Due to the manageable size of the population, there was no sampling. Therefore, the entire 138 students were used for the study. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled, "Use of Electronic Information Resources for Information Provision Questionnaire" (UEIRIPQ), which was divided into two parts for demographic information clustered items used to answer the research questions raised in the study. The questionnaire was structured on four point Likert's scale.

The instrument was face validated by four experts, one each from the Department of Library and Information Science and

Table 1: The composition of respondents by institution (N=110)

Institution	N	%
University of Benin	91	71.7%
Abia State University, Uturu	36	28.3%
Total	127	100%

Table 1 above showed that University of Benin has a total of 91 respondents which constituted 72.8% of the total respondents from both

Measurement and Evaluation from University of Benin and Abia state University. Reliability obtained using Cronbach Alfa coefficient formula was 0.82. One hundred and thirty eight (138) questionnaires were administered from which (127) copies of were appropriately filled and returned, giving a response rate of 92% which was considered adequate for analysis. Data from research questions were analyzed using mean statistics and a criterion mean of 3.50 was adopted. Null hypotheses were tested using the t-test statistics. The null hypothesis of no significant difference was accepted for group whose p-value is greater or equal to 0.05 while for any group whose p-value is less or equal to 0.05 shows that there is significant difference of perception, hence hypothesis rejected.

Analysis and Presentation of Result

Section A: Biographic Data of the respondents

Below is the summary of the composition of respondents by institution and gender.

institutions; it is 92.9% of the population of UNIBEN. The respondents from Abia State University are 36 which is 27.2% of the respondents and 90% of ABSU population.

Table 2: The composition of respondents sampled by gender (N=110)

Gender	N	%
Male	49	38.6%
Female	78	61.4%
Total	127	100%

Table 2 above, showed that majority of the respondents are women with a total percentage of 61.4% while the male has a total percentage of 38.6%.

Section B: Results based on the Research Questions. The data collected were analyzed to provide answers to the research questions

Research Question 1: What is the perception of students on the use of electronic information resources as best tool for information provision for national peace and security?

Table 3: Mean Responses of Respondents on the Perception of students on the use of information resources for information provision for national peace and security

Perception of Students on e-resources as best tool for information provision	UNIBEN		ABSU		OVERALL		Remarks
	X	SD	X	SD	X	SD	
I have a good exposure to the Use of electronic information resources for information provision	4.11	0.95	4.23	0.85	4.17	0.90	positive
Electronic information resources are valuable and easy to use and disseminate	4.61	0.55	4.56	0.60	4.59	0.58	positive
The use of electronic information resources aids my quick assessment to needed information	4.47	0.56	4.35	0.78	4.41	0.67	positive
Each time I use electronic resources for learning I am motivated to use it more and more for information searching	4.33	0.68	4.39	0.77	4.36	0.73	positive
E-resources provide current and update information than printed materials	4.36	0.76	4.36	0.73	4.36	0.75	positive
I feel I gain a lot by using e-resources for Learning	4.39	0.80	4.25	0.82	4.32	0.81	positive
Electronic information resources make my study easy because most of the resources I need are found by it.	4.47	0.70	4.23	0.94	4.36	0.82	positive
It is worthwhile using E-resources and I consider the use of electronic information resources as best tool for information provision	4.74	0.44	4.60	0.59	4.67	0.52	positive

From table 3 above it can be seen that all the items have mean values that is above the cut-off point of 3.50. The indication of this is that the students of both institutions agree that all the items in table 3 are true in relation to the perception of students on the use of information resources for information provision for peace. The Standard Deviation (SD) of the

items ranged from 0.52 to 0.90, indicating that the respondents were not far from each other in their responses.

Research Question 2: To what extent has the use of electronic information resources equipped the students with skills for information provision?

Table 4: Mean Responses of Respondents on the extent of possession of use of electronic information resources skills

Extent of possession of use of electronic information resources skill	UNIBEN		ABSU		OVERALL		Remarks
	X	SD	X	SD	X	SD	
Use of electronic information resources has helped in my ability to search for information	4.49	0.73	4.41	0.93	4.45	0.83	positive
With the use of e-resources I can access all database simultaneously	4.50	0.65	4.32	0.81	4.41	0.73	positive
Electronic Information Resources widen my scope of information access It has enabled me gain access to	4.56	0.55	4.61	0.60	4.59	0.58	positive
current up to date information access to a wider range of information	4.33	0.76	4.17	0.94	4.25	0.85	positive
I have been equipped with good skill in the use of electronic information resources for information provision for peace	4.47	0.74	4.40	0.90	4.44	0.82	positive

Table 4 above revealed that all the items have mean values that is above the cut-off point of 3.50 being within the range of 4.25 to 4.59. This indicated that the students of both institutions are equipped with skills in the use of electronic information resources for information provision for peace. The Standard Deviation (SD) of the

items ranged from 0.58 to 0.85, indicating that the respondents were near to each other in their responses

Research Question 3: What are the perceived barriers to the use of electronic information resources as best tool of information provision for national peace?

Table 5: Perceived barriers to the use of electronic information resources as best tool of information provision for national peace

Barriers to the use of electronic Information resources as best tool of information provision	UNIBEN		ABSU		OVERALL		Remarks
	X	SD	X	SD	X	SD	
Lack of IT knowledge to effectively utilize the services	4.31	0.67	4.30	0.71	4.31	0.69	positive
So many irrelevant information	4.72	0.51	4.60	0.72	4.66	0.62	positive
Lack of internet access to information resources available on the web	4.58	0.73	4.41	0.93	4.50	0.83	positive
High cost of access	4.61	0.55	4.56	0.60	4.59	0.58	positive
Unreliable internet connectivity	4.33	0.76	4.17	0.94	4.25	0.85	positive

Table 5 above revealed that all the items have mean values that is above the cut-off point of 3.50 being within the range of 4.25 to 4.66. This indicated that all the items listed on table 5 constitute challenges to the use of electronic information resources for information provision for national peace. The Standard Deviation (SD) of the items ranged from 0.58 to 0.85, indicating

that the respondents were near to each other in their responses

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference between the perceptions of the students of University of Benin and those of Abia State University on the use of electronic information resources as best tool for information provision.

Table 6: t-test of Differences between the Perceptions of the Students of University of Benin and those of Abia State University on the Use of Electronic Information Resources as Best Tool for Information Provision

Group	N	Mean	Std dev	t-cal	df	Sig.p	Remark
University of Benin	91	25.40	3.82	0.507	109	0.61	NS
Abia State University	36	25.78	3.36				

Table 6 reveals that the P-value of 0.37 is greater than 0.05 level of significance. This implies that there is no significant difference between the mean scores of students of University of Benin and those of Abia state university, in the perception of the students, on the use of electronic information resources as best tool for information provision. The null hypothesis is therefore accepted.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference between the perceptions of the male students and those of the female students on the use of electronic information resources for the provision of information.

Ho₂ There is no significant difference between the perceptions of the male students and those of the female students on the use of electronic information resources for the provision of information.

Table 6: t-test of Differences Between the Perceptions of the Male and Female Students on the Use of Electronic Information Resources as Best Tool for Information Provision

Group	N	Mean	Std dev	t-cal	df	Sig.p	Remark
Male	36	32.39	2.42	0.89	109	0.37	NS
Female	74	31.82	3.37				

Tab 7 reveals that the P-value of 0.37 is greater than 0.05 level of significance. This implies that there is no significant difference between the mean scores of male and female students' perception of the students, on the use of electronic information resources as best tool for

information provision. The null hypothesis is therefore accepted.

Findings of the study

Findings from the study revealed that there is no difference in the perception of the students in the use of electronic information resources in the provision of information for national peace based on their institution or their gender. The implication is that there is a shift from Daramola's (2016) findings that noted male dominance in the use of e-resources. The study also indicated that Library and Information Science undergraduate students of University of Benin and Abia State University have begun to make good use of several electronic resources such as e-books, e-journals, online database and all other e-resources mentioned in the instrument. The implication of this finding is that students are beginning to deviate from the findings of Islam (2010) who in his study then, noticed that Students preferred browsing through the shelves to locate books, which can lead to frustration and which has caused many to view the library as just a reading place rather than seeking for assistance on how to use the available electronic resources. The findings revealed that the students were overwhelmingly positive in their perception of electronic information resources as best tool for information provision for national peace. This finding agrees with the findings of Daramola (2016) who found out that FUTA undergraduate students perceived that FUTA electronic resources at FUTA library were valuable (tools for information sourcing).

We noted that the students were unanimous in their agreement that among factors that militate against their use of electronic information resources in information provision for national peace include, unreliable internet connectivity, lack of ICT knowledge to effectively utilize the service; so many irrelevant information and high cost of access. The findings agreed with the findings of Omeluzor et al (2012) and that of Ugwu and Orsu (2017)), who discovered that the factors militating against effective utilization of electronic resources by undergraduate students includes large mass of irrelevant information, the need to filter the results from search, download delay, failure to find information, inadequate or lack of search skills, high cost of access, inaccessibility of some electronic resources,

difficulties in navigating through electronic resource etc.

Conclusion

The study examined the perception of students on the use of e-resources for information provision. Based on the findings of this study, the researchers concluded that the students see the use of electronic information resources as best tool for information provision for national peace and this is bringing increase on use of electronic information resources, a departure from past observations. However, they will make greater and better use of the resources when all or at least majority of the challenges they pointed out are mitigated, if not totally eliminated. The goal of this study is to determine the perception of the students in order to know the areas in which Libraries, Library schools, higher institution management, school administrators and probably government should be focusing in their bid to make Library and Information Science Students, who become the librarians of tomorrow, become skilled, willing and proficient in the use of electronic information resources for information provision for national peace. It is anticipated that this paper will achieve this lofty goal. This study will be made available to the aforementioned for implementation.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study and our conclusion, the following recommendations were made.

1. The paper has shown a unanimous agreement by the students of both institutions in their perception of electronic information resource as best tool for the provision of information for national peace. The Universities and their Libraries management should as a matter of urgency take all necessary steps to create access to electronic resources. To this end, they should acquire and provide sufficient networked computers, subscribe to more databases, provide alternative power supply, and all other ICT facilities.
2. The management of University of Benin and Abia State University should make

the acquisition of Information and Communication Technology skills a key learning objectives for their students as this will help the students to be equipped with the capacity and capability needed to use e-resources to provide vital information in the information explosive society of today. To this end, while the inclusion of more practical courses on Information and Communication Technology into the Library and Information curriculum is advocated, the feasibility of teaching "use of e-resources" as a course should also be explored.

3. The students should be encouraged to from time to time attend few conferences, seminars and workshops on the use of e-resources before their graduation. This will help to expose them and reduce any tensions associated with use of e-resources.

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