

*Full Length Research Paper*

# Usage of electronic resources by undergraduates at the Redeemer's University, Nigeria

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**This study is conducted to examine the usage of electronic resources by undergraduates at the Redeemer's University library, Mowe, Nigeria. 256 students in 200 level and above who used the library during the period of the study formed the population for the study. The survey research method was adopted for the study. A questionnaire was used as a data collection instrument. Frequency counts and simple percentages were used in analyzing the data collected. The study revealed that the use of electronic resources has tremendous impact on the academic performances of the undergraduate students of Redeemer's University; however, there is need for them to acquire more skills in the use of electronic resources.**

**Key words:** Electronic resources, undergraduate students, Redeemer's University.

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## INTRODUCTION

The digital resources available in a library play a prominent role in facilitating access to the required information to the user in an expediency manner. Electronic resource is one of the emerging environment in libraries and information communication in the competitive service. E-Resources usually consist of e-books, e-Journals, articles, newspaper, thesis, dissertation, databases and CD-ROMs, which are likely to be the alternative to the print media. The familiarity and use of electronic information resources in the libraries for rapid development is necessary and important.

Commenting on the advantages of electronic resources, Dadzie (2005) writes that electronic resources are invaluable research tools that complement the print – based resources in a traditional library setting. Their advantages, according to her include: access to information that might be restricted to the user due to geographical location or finances, access to more current information, and provision of extensive links to additional resources of related contents. The rapid growth of new technologies has changed the communication process and reduced the cost of communication for individuals.

Electronic information sources can be seen as the most recent development in information technology and are among the most powerful tools ever invented in human history. Electronic information sources are becoming more and more important for the academic community (Kumar and Kumar, 2008). This study is a contribution to the analysis of how library usage is changing as a result of the advances in networked electronic services. It also suggests a methodology for collecting reliable information about the implications of networked electronic services usage patterns in the electronic information environment, which library directors and others can use for strategic planning and assessment purposes.

## BACKGROUND

### **Redeemer's University: The Beginning**

It has always been the desire of the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) to make a positive impact of University education in Nigeria, convinced that University

education can play a significant role in the social and technological development of a nation. The existence of Decree No 19. of 1984, which proscribed and banned the establishment and operation of private universities, prevented the realization of this desire.

However, the promulgation of a new Decree in 1993 by Federal Government opened the way for RCCG's involvement in university education. This decree allowed private individuals or organizations to establish universities in Nigeria, provided they meet the criteria laid down by the Federal government through the National Universities Commission.

The objective of the RCCG in initiating the University project is not only to increase the number of Nigerian youths seeking higher education, but also to arrest the decay in the educational system, through appropriate training. This is in line with the vision of Pastor E. A. Adeboye, the General Overseer of RCCG for the Redeemer's University.

Pastor Adeboye longs for the return to the glorious days of mission schools, where students acquire high quality education with the fear of God and become useful citizens.

Redeemer's University is one of the approved private universities in Nigeria, and commenced academic activities in 2005 with three colleges, namely: Colleges of Humanities, Management Sciences and Natural Sciences.

The University Library came into being when the parent institution received its license to operate. It is rich in current literature in the Natural Sciences, management Sciences and Humanities. There are current journals both foreign and local. The collection also includes non-print materials which is the main focus of this study. [http://www.run.edu.ng/index.php/?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=168&Itemid=28](http://www.run.edu.ng/index.php/?option=com_content&view=article&id=168&Itemid=28)

### **E-resource Collection in Redeemer's University Library**

The facilities consist of the following:

1. Internet source.
2. Online Databases.
3. CD-ROM.
4. OPAC (Online Public Access Catalogue).
5. E-Journals.

### **Objectives**

The main objective of this study is to examine the usage of electronic resources by undergraduates of Redeemer's University, Mowe, Nigeria, the perceived impact of the e-resources on their academic efficiency and problems faced by them while using the e-resources. This survey was particularly conducted to assess the benefits of the

e-resources over conventional sources of information. Some of the major objectives are to:

1. To know the different types of electronic resources and services available in Redeemer's university library;
2. To determine the level of awareness of electronic resources available in the library;
3. To study the purpose of use of the electronic resources and services available in the library by the undergraduates;
4. To determine the frequency of use of electronic resources available in the library by the undergraduates;
5. To examine the challenges faced by the undergraduates while accessing and using the electronic resources in the library;
6. To study the impact of electronic resources on the academic performance of the undergraduates.

### **Research questions**

The following questions were raised to guide the study:

1. Are the undergraduate students aware of the types of electronic resources available in the library?
2. What is the purpose for which undergraduate students use electronic resources?
3. What is the frequency of use of electronic resources by undergraduate students?
4. What are the challenges faced by undergraduate students in their attempt to use electronic resources?
5. To what extent does the use of electronic resources impact on the academic performance of the undergraduates?

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Although information gathering and use patterns in the traditional print environment have been researched into over the years, the electronic environment presents a new and relatively unexplored area for such study. Some early effects of the increasing availability of electronic resources are already apparent. The emergence of electronic information resources has tremendously transformed information – handling and management in Nigerian academic environments, and University libraries in particular (Ani and Ahiauzu, 2008). These dramatic changes include the way in which information is provided to the University communities. A number of electronic resources initiatives have been put in place to assist in the development training and use of electronic resources in a number of academic institutions (Egberongbe, 2011).

For the current study, the primary as well as the secondary sources of literature has been consulted. Some journal articles and theses have also been consulted. A number of studies have been conducted. Manoj (2011)

**Table 1.** Respondents' gender.

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	89	34.8
Female	165	64.4
No Response	2	0.8
Total	256	100

**Table 2.** Breakdown of participants by colleges.

College	Frequency	Percentage
Humanities	36	14.1
College of Management Sciences	169	66
College of Natural Sciences	44	17.2
No Response	7	2.7
Total	256	100

on information resources on the internet for higher education and research (Parekh, 1999) resources by IT professionals (Gireesh and Rajashekara, 2009; Gowda and Shivalingaiah, 2009; Mendhe et al., 2009; Mishra and Gohain, 2010). Lohar and Roopashree (2006) studied the use of electronic resources and how the electronic resources are improving the academic carrier of the faculty and what are the problems that are faced in using the electronic resources has been the academic willingness of the users. The analysis was based on their faculty members only except the student and staff. Manohar (2007) analyzed the internet usage of agriculture scientist and impact to Internet users and other e- resources on academic efficiency whereas the study of Sornam et al. (2007) identified the different types of electronic resources used by the students of Kerela Agricultural University, its time spent, problems and prospects faced by the users. Manohar's (2007) find out the internet accessibility of agriculture scientists in the college of agriculture and analyze impact of internet, E-resources, print or electronic media on academic efficiency. Singh (2009) examined the search pattern of online journals among the faculty members, Research scholars and post-graduate students to collect the required data. The study revealed that the majority of users were aware of the availability of online Journals. It was found that users faced problem when using online journals. They are also interested in taking training in the use of online journals. From the review of literature on the usage of off-line and on-line e-resources (CD-ROM Databases and E-Journals), it has been found that most of the studies have been carried out in Northern India (Rajeev and Ampritpal, 2004; Singh et al., 2006; Mahajan, 2005; Madhusudan, 2007; Sharma et al., 2008; Rahman and Ali, 2010) and Southern India (Biradar et al., 2004; Khumbar and Vasuntha, 2007; Rao, 2010; Singson and Leeladharan, 2010; Lohar and Roopashree, 2006;

Manohar, 2007; Sornam et al., 2007; Singh, 2009) and no comprehensive and substantial studies have been carried out on the usage and access to e-resources available under UGCINFONET digital library consortium in north eastern region of India except a pilot study carried out by Sinha (2008, 2009, 2010) and Sinha and Sarkar (2010). This study summarizes conclusion from recent research studies and highlights some conclusion about how people use Electronic resources.

## METHODOLOGY

The survey research method was adopted for this study because it was considered more appropriate for this type of study. Data was collected for the study through the use of questionnaire. 256 students in 200 level and above who used the library during the period of the study formed the population for the study. The questionnaire was administered to 256 students who visited and used the library within the period of research through the assistance of the Library Assistants. The questionnaire was in four parts. Part A elicited background information such as gender and college of respondents. Part B elicited information on respondents' usage of electronic resources. Part C sought information on the challenges of using electronic resources while Part D elicited information on respondents' perception of the impact of electronic resources on their academic performance. The data was analyzed using simple percentages and frequency counts.

Table 1 shows that of the 256 (100) respondents, 89 (34.8%) were male, 165 (64.4%) were female while 2 (0.8%) did not respond to the question that sought to elicit their gender. This clearly reveals that female undergraduates are the most users of electronic resources in Redeemer's University.

Table 2 shows that of the 256 respondents, 36 (41.1%) were from the college of humanities, 169 (66%) were from the college of management sciences. 44 (17.2%) were from the college of natural sciences while 7 (2.7%) of the respondents did not respond to the question. This reveals that majority of the users of electronic resources in Redeemer's University are from the college of management sciences.

Table 3 represents the breakdown of the responses of the participants when they were asked if they were aware of the electronic resources listed in the table. Of the 256 (100%) respondents, 249 (29.8%) agreed they were aware of the availability of internet in Redeemer's University. 157 (18.8%) agreed they were aware of the availability of online facility in Redeemer's University. 73 (8.7%) said they were aware that CD-ROM was available while 102 (50.5%) disagreed that they were aware of the availability of CD-ROM in Redeemer's university library. 20 (24.2%) agreed they were aware of the availability of the Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) while 155 (18.5%) of them agreed they were aware of the availability of electronic journals in Redeemer's University. This shows that a majority of the respondents were aware of the availability of electronic resources in the library.

As is shown in Table 4, 241 (21.0%) out of the 256 (100%) of the respondents, agreed that they used the electronic resources for research purpose. 147 (12.8%) indicated that they used them for current awareness purpose. 232 (20.3%) agreed they used them to acquire information, 250 (21.8%) indicated that they used electronic resources for assignment. 135 (11.8%) agreed that they used them for e-mail purpose while 140 (12.2%) of them indicated that they used electronic resources for news acquisition. From the table, it is revealed that majority of the respondents used the electronic resources for research, current awareness, information acquisition, assignment, e-mail, and for acquiring news.

Table 5 reveals that 90 (73.2%) of the 256 (100%) respondents

**Table 3.** Respondents' Level of Awareness of electronic resources

Resources	Agreed	%	Disagree	%	Undecided	%	Total
Internet	249	29.8	3	1.5	4	1.6	256
Online	157	18.8	37	18.3	62	25.6	256
CD-Rom	73	8.7	102	50.5	81	33.5	256
OPAC	202	24.2	4	2.0	50	20.7	256
E-Journals	155	18.5	56	27.7	45	18.6	256

**Table 4.** Respondents' purpose of use of electronic resources

Purpose	Agreed	%	Disagreed	%	Undecided	%	Total
Research	241	21.0	5	4.0	10	5.9	256
Current Awareness	147	12.8	57	45.6	52	31.1	256
Information	232	20.3	15	12.0	9	5.4	256
Assignment	250	21.8	0	0	6	3.6	256
E-mail	135	11.8	3	2.4	19	11.4	256
News	140	12.2	45	36.0	71	42.5	256

**Table 5.** Respondents' frequency of use of electronic resources.

Resources	Regularly	%	Occasionally	%	Rarely	%	Not at all	%	Total
Internet	90	73.2	66	36.9	43	7.8	57	13.3	256
Online	19	15.4	45	25.1	87	15.9	105	24.4	256
CD-Rom	3	2.4	9	5	99	18.1	145	33.7	256
OPAC	4	3.3	25	14	165	30.1	62	14.4	256
E-Journals	7	5.7	34	19	154	28.1	61	14.2	256

used the internet regularly, 66 (36.9%) used it occasionally, 43 (7.8%) used it rarely while 57 (13.3%) indicated that they did not use it. 19 (15.4%) said they used the online regularly, 45 (25.1%) used it occasionally, 87 (15.9%) used it rarely while 105 (24.4%) said they never used it. 3 (2.4%) said they used CD-ROM regularly, 9 (5.0%) used it occasionally, 99 (18.1%) used it rarely while 145 (33.7%) said they did not use it. 4 (3.3%) of them used the OPAC regularly, 25 (14.0%) used it occasionally, 165 (330.1%) used it rarely while 62 (14.4%) said they did not use it. 7 (5.7%) of them indicated that they used e-journals regularly, 34 (19.0%) used it occasionally, 154 (28.1%) used it rarely while 61 (14.2%) did not use e-journals. This reveals that majority of the respondents do not use the electronic resources available in Redeemer's University regularly. This corroborates Islam (2010) when he argued 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.

Table 6 is a summary of the challenges participants face in their use of electronic resources in Redeemer's University. 54 (9.0%) of the respondents responded in the affirmative when they were asked if insufficient familiarity with electronic resources was a challenge to their use of electronic resources while 202 (13.9%) of them said no. 55 (9.2%) of the respondents agreed that inability to use electronic resources is a challenge to them while 201 (9.2%) said they had no problem with that. 90 (15.1%) of the respondents noted that their challenge is the none availability of electronic resources which they wished to use while 166 (11.4%) of them said they had no problem with that. 99 (16.6%) of the respondents noted that their challenge

with the use of electronic resources in Redeemer's University is in continuity of some electronic resources while 157 (10.8%) of them responded in the negative. 208 (43.8%) of the respondents noted that technical issues related with the use of electronic resources was their challenge while 48 (3.3%) of them did not see that as a challenge. 26 (9.4%) of the respondents agreed that reading from the screen was a challenge to them while 230 (15.9%) did not see reading from the screen as a challenge while using electronic resources. 37 (6.2%) of the respondents noted that their challenge with the use of electronics resources was their inability to find what they wanted while 219 (15.1%) of the them did not see that as a challenge. 28 (4.7%) of the respondents said the use of electronic resources did not pose any challenge to them while they used the resources. 228 (15.7%) of them said they had challenge while they used the resources. It is revealed from the table that majority of the respondents had challenges with the use of electronic resources. This confirms Islam (2010) when he noted that high quality user education is the solution to the problems encountered by students in using the catalogue. There is need for the library management to organize periodic user education programme for the undergraduates in order for them to make adequate use of the E-resources.

Table 7 indicated that 207 (80.9%) of the respondents confirmed that the use of electronic resources had positive impact on their academic performance, 207 (80.9%) of the 256 (100%) respondents responded in the affirmative. 42 (16.4%) of them responded otherwise. 7 (2.7%) of them did not respond to the question. This revealed that the use of electronic resources had positive impact on the academic performance of the respondents. Dadzie (2005) noted that electronic resources are invaluable research tools that

**Table 6.** Challenges with the use of electronic resources.

Problem	Response	%	Response	%	Total
	Yes		No		
I am not sufficiently familiar with electronic resources	54	9.0	202	13.9	256
I am not able to use the electronic resources properly	55	9.2	201	13.9	256
The materials I need are not in use or are not available	90	15.1	166	11.4	256
I have some doubts about the permanence of the materials (changes in service content, discontinuing of journals, transfers, etc	99	16.6	157	10.8	256
Technical problems	208	34.8	48	3.3	256
It is difficult to read from the screen	26	4.4	230	15.9	256
I cannot find the electronic resources I need	37	6.2	219	15.1	256
The use of electronic resources does not present any particular problems	28	4.7	228	15.7	256

**Table 7.** Impact of electronic resources on respondents' academic performance.

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	207	80.9
No	42	16.4
No Response	7	2.7
Total	256	100

complement the print – based resources in a traditional library setting. Their advantages, according to her include: access to information that might be restricted to the user due to geographical location or finances, access to more current information, and provision of extensive links to additional resources related contents.

## DISCUSSION

The findings of this study revealed that the respondents even though were aware of the different types of electronic information resources available in the university library; their use rate of these resources is low. It was also discovered that a large proportion of the respondents made use of the electronic resources mostly for research, assignment, current awareness, information acquisition, and e-mail and news acquisition. Various factors that militate against effective utilization of electronic resources by undergraduate students were discovered during the course of the study. Among the factors are: 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. In consonance with this findings was a study by Ejibuwa (2005) who found out that the absence of basic infrastructure like constant electricity necessary for ICT

growth, lack of facilitation for network resources sharing, inadequate professionals with requisite ICT skills and above all, inadequate fund to support development in their direction were impediment to the use of electronic resources.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher concluded that the use of electronic resources had tremendous impact on the academic performance of the undergraduate students of Redeemer's University; however, there was need for them to acquire more skills in the use of electronic resources. The purpose of this study was to enable the library improve on the provision of electronic resources to meet the academic needs of the undergraduate students of the university. This paper expected to be helpful to libraries to improve library services, especially in assisting the undergraduate students in their academic work. This study will be made available for the university library management for implementation.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1. The management of Redeemer's University should ensure that the acquisition of Information and Communication Technology skills is acknowledged as one of the key learning objectives for its students so that students will be fully equipped to cope with the information intensive world. To this end more practical courses on Information Communication Technology should be inculcated into the curriculum.

2. The library management should organize periodic training on the use of electronic resources for the undergraduate students.
3. The paper has shown high level of acceptance of electronic resources by undergraduates in Redeemer's university. The University management should as a matter of importance acquire, subscribe and create access to electronic resources.

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