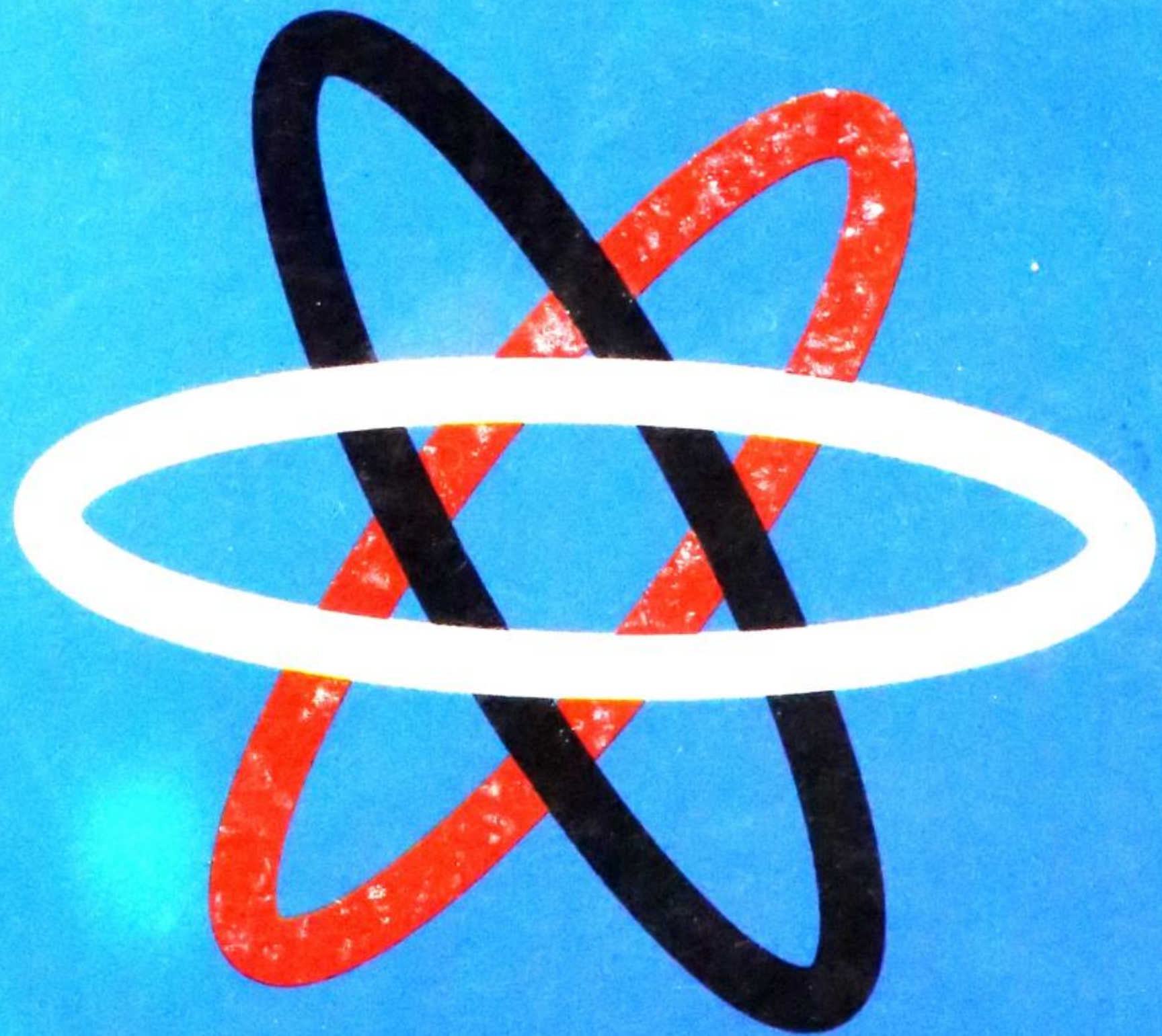


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Automation of Cataloguing Operations in the Nigerian University System: The Experience of University of Ilorin Library

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Abstract

This paper demonstrates how computer has increased the efficiency of cataloguing process at the University of Ilorin Library which in turn has resulted in increased productivity. Catalogues are being computerized the world over to facilitate better access points and multidimensional searches in the library holdings. There is now a changing role for the cataloguer, who has become the coordinator of bibliographic network. Survey method was used in carrying out this study while data collection was done by using a questionnaire that centered on University of Ilorin library. The findings of the study show that cataloguers accept the fact that the use of computer will make their services easier and faster and will enhance its delivery and as well promote inter library cooperation. The paper recommends that library budgets should be reviewed upward, the library management should provide effective infrastructure in the library and the federal government should reduce the tariff paid on the importation of ICT or computer facilities. This could be achieved when relevant processing tools are made available in the University of Ilorin.

Keywords: Computer Application, Cataloguing Operations, University Library Catalogue and online catalogue

Introduction

Academic libraries are the kind of libraries that serve as appendages to institution of higher learning such as university, polytechnic and college of education. Most importantly, they constitute the nerve center as well as the heartbeat of their parent institution's intellectual repository and knowledge domain. In advocacy to the foregoing Eligial (2000) pinpointed that academic library serves as the creation of new knowledge and transmission to learning and culture of the present and the past. Academic libraries in Nigeria are compelled to join the race in the provision of information resources electronically so that students and faculties can benefit from a wide range of current information globally. According to Adekanye (2011) university library is a dynamic unit within a dynamic system which underscores the need for the library to be productive in its thinking. The library as the storehouse of knowledge is concerned with the acquisition of materials for teaching and research, processing of materials for easy retrieval, and the dissemination of information

to facilitate the active and effective exploitation of the acquired resources.

According to Aina (2004) libraries are concerned with the collection, processing, storage, and dissemination of record information for the purpose of reading, study and consultation. In order for a library to attain this goal, many activities are performed by the library which translates to library information services. The thrust of all library services is the provision of up-to-date and timely information to her clients. Over the years, the external environment has been having a tremendous impact on the practice of the profession. The computerization of the academic library and digitization of records are significant changes that will shape the delivery of services and potentially affect the image of the librarian and status of the university library. The rising costs of books and journals and the drastic reduction in library purchasing power without commensurate increase in the book budget compelled the university libraries to appreciate the value of cooperation and computerization.

In library and information science, cataloguing is the process of creating bibliographic records (metadata) representing information resources, such as books, sound recordings, moving images, etc. Cataloguing provides information such as: creator names; titles, and subject terms that describe resources, typically through the creation of bibliographic records. The records serve as surrogates for the stored information resources. Bair, Sheila (2005) defines cataloguing as the processes of putting the bibliographic information of library resources on a catalogue card, or on-line catalogue such information include: Author, title, edition, place of publication, date of publication, number of volumes and inclusion of illustration. All these constitute the bibliographic information of the book or non-book media. The origin of cataloguing dates back thousands of years. With such a long history, it is remarkable how the need for revisions, classification and addition are required for a system that has withstood the test of time. A library catalogue is a record of the holdings of a library. In order to meet the requirement of users, it is prepared to consist of various unit records called entries. Each entry is designed for satisfying a particular approach of a user. Entries are prepared according to a set of rules contained in a catalogue code.

Automation is the use of machines, on the other-hand Library Automation refers to the implementation of computer software that allows previously manual tasks to be completed in computer system. The term library automation is being used extensively in library science to mean the application of computer to perform some of the traditional library activities such as acquisition, cataloguing, circulation, stock verification etc. Automation of the cataloguing process has increased the efficiency of the cataloguing processes in the Nigerian university libraries, which in turn has resulted in increased productivity.

Information and Communications Technology is the science and skills of all aspects of computing, data storage, and communications. It is a new, rapidly growing area that is radically changing the old by making possible new ways of doing business, making entertainment, and creating art. The information and Communication Technology

(ICT) has proven its role in accelerating sustainable development and bridging the ever-growing gap in our present day society. There is however, a critical need to channel the vast potentials of ICT in the right direction for the betterment of society and effective human development. ICTs present a revolutionary approach to addressing developmental questions due to their unequalled capacity to provide access to information instantaneously from any location in the world at a relatively low cost. (Arinola et al, 2012). This has brought down global geographic boundaries faster than ever thought possible. The resulting new interconnected digital world heralds the fluid and seamless flow of information, capital, ideas, people and products (Padmamma, 2008). Development of Information and Communications Technology is playing a crucial role in restructuring of libraries.

One of the most important function of a library from myriad and avalanche of other functions and activities is cataloguing and classification, which ensure that orderliness are strictly adhered to in term of collections arrangement in the library. Cataloging and classification operation in the library foster easy access to library information resources. However, manual cataloguing and classification is time consuming and energy sapping. On the verge of cutting cost and the same time improve productivity, libraries; most especially academic libraries are automating their operations as they are becoming technology perspective. Computer and telecommunication technologies have empowered librarians to select, organize and disseminate information effectively and efficiently to users (Encyclopedia of Communication and Information, 2019). Sequential to foregoing, academic libraries are now migrating from manual cataloguing to automated cataloging operation. Meanwhile, University of Ilorin Library is not left in the scheme of technology revolution.

The University of Ilorin Library was set up and started functioning since 1976. The library which is the life wire of the institution was created alongside with the university. The University of Ilorin main campus library was built and commissioned in 1990. It is located

at permanent site of the university which houses the University librarian's office, Technical Services and Readers' Services Divisions. Technical Services Divisions of University of Ilorin Library comprises cataloguing and classification and acquisition units. Cataloguing and classification unit started operation along with university of Ilorin library in 1976 with manual cataloguing and classification operations.

Automation of cataloguing and classification unit of the university started 1997 when the library management set up a committee to study the possible computerization of library in the year 1997. University of Ilorin library started computerization of library operations in some sections such a circulation, cataloguing and classification, acquisition etc. After some years, it was stopped. The resuscitation of library automation service commenced on the online public access catalogue (OPAC) module of KOHA library software on February 2013. Before installing KOHA software, university of Ilorin Library was using TINLIB and ALICE FOR WINDOWS software and LC online catalogue for copy cataloguing of Library materials.

Review of Related Literature

Literature on computer application in libraries are rich and elaborate, therefore, efforts was made to review relevant literature in this study. Nwalo (2006) asserts that prolonged shift in application of innovative IT to library and information profession can be attributed to the changes emanated from the last 2 decades. Ajibero (2003) also notes that as a result of the impact of ICT on technical services, the roles of cataloguers have completely changed. Their roles now involve operations that have become integrated. He further asserted that cataloguers have become inter-dependent in their pursuit to provide bibliographic control and access. Coyle and Hillmann (2007) assert that changes in the context in which libraries function have brought the library and its catalogue to a crisis point. According to them, the development of computer technology and electronic document production presents a significantly different challenge than libraries had only fifty year ago, a time when information resources were rooted in the era of books and periodicals, and the card catalogue was the entry point to the

library's physical holdings. Resources sharing in classification help to foster the quality and quantity of work produced. Manual cataloguing does not give room for sharing in cataloguing. The cards produced are filed in the cabinets, which are confined to a particular library. It is not possible for other libraries to see the stock of that same library so as to share in copy cataloguing, even when the need is there (Ilo, 2008). Nwalo (2006) notes that resource-sharing is of immense benefits to libraries and their users as it makes information more readily available, saves costs and prevents duplication of effort especially in cataloguing and classification. In addition to impact of cataloging automation to library services, Nwalo (2006) stated that paraprofessionals in libraries can now effectively perform much of the duties that hitherto were the exclusive preserve of professionals.

Yusuf and Nkiko (2010) examined cataloguing practices of three University Libraries and found out that cataloguing practice in academic libraries had witnessed significant changes as a result of the application of ICT in organizing library materials. Adekanye (2011) describes how some Nigerian academic libraries have applied the computer to automate their libraries and how they have exploited the immense resources available on the internet in order to provide up-to-date and timely information for their clientele. Nwalo (2003) added that computerization of libraries in Africa will permit the acquisition and use of literature on integrated library information system, which has immense benefit both in terms of cost, resource sharing and accessibility. It saves time, space as well as reduces the incidence of mutilation, defacing and theft of library materials. Lang (2007) noted that cataloguers use the internet as a tool for locating cataloguing documentation and other information. She posited that the main strengths of electronic cataloguing over traditional cataloguing are its ease of use and its ability to reduce the amount it usually takes to access information. Manjunath (2004) added that automation eliminates cumbersome job of printing the cards. It enhances simultaneous access to the same database as well as quick and remote access to information on the network. An endless supply of information is

continuously generated in the library and anyone can readily access it regardless of time and space, thanks to the rapid advancement of computer technology in contemporary society (Mishra, Thakur & Singh, 2015).

Successful process of library automation has many issues and challenges which are: need of a proper planning, sound budget, lack of manpower, lack of awareness of standard format etc. Emezie and Nwaohiri (2014) study of challenges of library automation in Nigerian universities of technology, reported that insufficient power supply, insufficient funding, absence of administrative support and inadequate staff training among other factors militating against full implementation of library automation.

Statement of the Problem

The use of information communication technology in the library is simply meant, carrying out the manual activities and services in the library electronically with the help of computer networking. This makes it easier for the handling of information generation, processing and dissemination in the libraries. Today, it is very obvious that, the use of information communication technology system in all areas of human endeavor is now known and widely acceptable.

The automation of library operations is crucial to cataloguing and classification unit. Many scholars assert that the high cost of maintenance of the software such as TINLIB, ALICE FOR WINDOWS and KOHA were the major problems of computer application in cataloguing operations. Other constraints include poor computer library on the part of the librarians, incessant power cuts, lack of infrastructure, lack of fund etc. Against this back drop, this study investigations automation of cataloguing operations in the Nigeria University System.

Objectives of Study

The objectives of the study were:

1. To find out the extent of computer application to cataloguing in the University of Ilorin Library.
2. To find out the impact of computer application to cataloguing in the University Library under study.
3. To identify the problems militating against computer application to cataloguing operations in the University Library under study.
4. To find solutions to the problems militating against computer application to cataloguing operations in the University Library under study.

Methodology

A survey research method was used in carrying out this study while data collection was done using a questionnaire, interview guide and personal observation, which centered on University of Ilorin Library catalogue automation. A questionnaire was prepared and personally delivered to the respondents. The University Librarian was interviewed in order to collect data to augment the weakness of the quantitative data collected with questionnaire. The researchers personally observed automation operations in the cataloguing section of the library.

Data Analysis/Data Collection

As can be seen in Table 1 the profiles of the responding library were given. Responses in the table suggest that automation in University of Ilorin library started in 1997 which then indicate that they have some form of automated activities in cataloguing units.

Table 1: The profiles of the responding library

Item	Profile
Duration of Computer Usage	22 years
Types of Computer in Use	Pentium 111
Number of Computer Available in the Cataloging Unit	18
Types of Software in Use in Cataloguing Unit	KOHA from 2013 up to date

Table 2: Extent of Computer Application to Cataloguing Operations in the University of Ilorin Library

Extent of computer application Cataloguing Unit	University of Ilorin Library
To list new arrivals.	√
To check catalogues and classification.	√
To sort cards into various units.	√
To produce centralized copies units.	√
To produce multiple copies.	√
To produce centralized data system.	√
To merge different sources.	√
To produce the main cataloguing.	√
To check added copies.	√

Table 3: Impact of Computer Application to Cataloguing Operations in the University of Ilorin Library

Impact of Computer Application to Cataloguing Unit	University of Ilorin Library	
	Positive	Negative
Bibliographic searching	√	X
Checking	√	X
Sorting cards	√	X
Vetting stencils	√	X
Collating stencils	√	X
Copy of CIP books	√	X
Labeling of books	√	X
Checking filling, checking LC subject heading and checking of LC schedule	√	X

Table 4: The Problem Militating Against Computer Application in Cataloguing Operations in the University of Ilorin Library

Extent of computer application in the Cataloguing Unit	University of Ilorin Library
Poor funding	√
Inadequate professional cataloguing staff	√
Erratic power supply	√
Problems of records conversion	√
Poor training facilities	√
Inadequate space	√
Negative attitude by library management towards computer	√
Inadequate system analysts	√

Table 4 above revealed Table 2, above shows that, computers are used to perform certain duties including listing new arrivals, check cataloguing and classification, produce multiple copies etc.

Table 3, shows that the respondents were of the opinion that computer had positive impact on bibliographic searching, checking LC subject heading, checking LC schedule, sorting cards,

Copying of CIP Books, and labeling of books etc.

that the respondents identified poor funding, lack of manpower, erratic electricity supply, problem of retrospective conversion etc. as the major problems of computer application in the University of Ilorin Library cataloguing operations.

Table 5: Solutions to the Problems militating against computer application to cataloguing unit at University of Ilorin Library

Solutions to the Problem militating against Computer Application in the University	University of Ilorin Library
Adequate fund	√
Adequate professional library staff	√
Sufficient generating power supply	√
Positive attitude by library management	√
Adequate access to records conversion	√
Adequate training facilities for staff.	√

Table 5 above shows that all the respondents indicated that provision of adequate fund, sufficient electricity supply, (generator), adequate provision of staff, and Positive attitude by library management, adequate training facilities etc. will be needed in order to improve electronic cataloguing service.

Highlight of the results: The University Librarian interviewed noted that university of Ilorin application of computer to cataloging operations has brought about positive change to cataloging unit. It was found from University Librarian that a feasibility study was conducted in cataloguing unit before application of computer. He also rated the computer facilities that are available for cataloguing operations as good.

However, he noted that computer application to cataloguing operations faced some problems. These problems included poor funding, lack of electricity supply, lack of manpower, etc. Generally, some solutions to the problem militating against computer application to cataloguing operations were suggested. These include adequate funding, sufficient electricity supply, adequate manpower supply, positive attitudes by library management etc.

Summary of the Findings

The following constitute a summary of the major findings:

- Computerization of cataloguing operations has brought about positive changes to cataloguing unit.
- The rating of computer facilities that are available in the cataloguing operation at University of Ilorin is high.

- Lack of manpower is another challenge facing computerization of cataloguing unit of University of Ilorin Library.
- Poor electricity supply which affects the cataloguing work due to lack of standby generating plant.
- The study showed that cataloguers accept the fact that the use of computer will make cataloguing work easier and faster.
- From the literatures reviewed in this study, it showed that the use of computer in Nigerian University Libraries has not been widespread.

Discussion of the Findings

Findings from the study showed that all the respondents that indicated that they have some form of automated activities in cataloguing unit. The university of Ilorin library cataloguing unit stated automation in 1997. The respondents indicated that University of Ilorin cataloguing unit uses Pentium III computer in library. The total number of computer in use is eighteen (18). The type of software in used at University of Ilorin cataloguing unit is KOHA software.

On the extent of computer application to cataloguing operations in the University of Ilorin Library, all the respondents showed that, computers are to perform certain duties including listing new arrivals, check cataloguing and classification, produce multiple copies etc. this finding is in consonance with (Nwalo 2006) and (Eseohe and Ehikioya 2014) who indicated that computers are used to improve productivity.

On the impact of computer application to cataloguing operations in the University of Ilorin Library, all the respondents indicated

that computer had positive impact on bibliographic searching, sorting cards, copy of CIP books, labeling of book etc. This is backed by the study of (Mishra, Thakur & Singh, 2015; Oduwale 2005; Nwalo, 2003), who concluded that computers application in cataloguing operations have great impact on library operations.

Concerning the problems of computer application to cataloguing operations in the University of Ilorin Library, all the respondents indicated that computer application in cataloguing operations has some problems. These include: poor funding, inadequate power supply, problem poor training facilities and many more. This findings is in consonance with (Emezie & Nwaohiri, 2014) who indicated that insufficient power supply, poor funding, absence of administrative support and inadequate staff training militate against full implementation of library catalogue automation.

On the solution to the problems of computer application to cataloguing unit at University of Ilorin Library, all the respondents indicated adequate fund, sufficient power supply, adequate staff, positive attitude on the part of library management, adequate training facilities etc. will be needed in order to find solution to the computer application of cataloguing operations in the University of Ilorin Library.

Conclusion

Although the study focused only on University of Ilorin Library as one of the Federal University Libraries in Nigeria the results can be generalized to others because all the Federal Nigerian universities experience similar funding situation and face similar constraints that affect library automation. The data analyzed in this study supports the conclusion of previous studies which showed that cataloguers accept the fact that the use of computer will make cataloguing work easier and faster and will enhance its delivery and inter library cooperation.

The results of this study also showed that the University of Ilorin library lacked manpower necessary for information services. This survey is seen as a step in finding out the state of

computer application to cataloguing operations in the University Library.

Recommendations

The findings of this study pose some challenges to library managements/librarians. Therefore, library authorities should embark on training and retraining of their staff to enable them apply computer in their operations including cataloguing operations.

Library budgets should be reviewed upward in order to meet all the needs of users in the information technology delivery service.

The Library Management should provide effective infrastructure in the library to enable library personnel utilize an improved internet facilities so that it can assist cataloguers to catalogue as many books as possible.

Library managements should provide facilities such as electricity, telephone, office equipment, internet facilities etc to enhance the automation of the university libraries.

Federal Government should reduce the tariff paid on ICT/computer facilities so that the facilities will be affordable to Libraries.

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