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INFLUENCE OF DIGITIZATION OF LOCAL CONTENT RESOURCES AND EFFECTIVE SERVICE DELIVERY TO POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN BENUE STATE – NIGERIA

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Abstract
This research work studied influence of Local Content Resources (LCR) and effective service delivery to postgraduate students in public universities in Makurdi, Benue State, Nigeria. The study had three specific objectives with three corresponding research questions. A descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised of 1,503 library staff and postgraduate students from the two public universities – Benue State University and Joseph Tarka University, Makurdi. The sample size was 301 using simple random sampling technique. Observation checklist titled: "Local Content Research Observation Checklist (LCROC), a structured Questionnaire Titled: Delivery Questionnaire (DLCREISDQ) and Interview guide were used as instruments for data collection. Simple percentages, mean and standard deviation were used for data analysis. It also adopted chi-square (X2) to test hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed local content resources available in university libraries, facilities for digitization, benefits of digitization of local content resources and influence of local content resources on information service delivery. The study recommended that efforts be intensified by collection developers to make available local content resources that facilities such as computers and scanners which are commonly and frequently used for digitization should be made available among others.
Keywords: Influence, Digitization, Local Content Resources, Service Delivery, Public Universities

Background to the Study

Over the years, innovations have brought about tremendous positive changes in each and every sector including universities. One of such changes is the introduction of electronic information resources which is made possible by direct

publishing or conversion of already materials into electronic form through the process of digitization. Digitization allows educational institutions and libraries to enhance teaching and learning experiences in many ways. Digitization refers to a wide variety of steps involved in the process of conversion and making of historical and other materials globally accessible through the application of digital processes (Otubelu and Ume, 2015). It involves the transfer of tangible information materials to digitized formats, thus protecting the original item from damage while providing public access to the material that might otherwise be restricted as a result of location.

According to Adegbeji and Akporhonor (2021), digitization is all the steps involved in the processes of making collection of historical and other materials available online. The duo noted that traditional library resources in the form of manual papers, documents, manuscripts are converted to electronic formats where images like photographs and maps are converted into digital representation using some devices such as scanners or digitizers so that they can be displayed and manipulated on the screen. Digitization therefore involves more than the conversion of analogue materials of the digital content into a navigable format.

Local content refers to the expression of the locally owned and adapted knowledge of a community, where the community is defined by its location, culture, language or area of interest (Global Knowledge Partnership, 2015). Local content has to do with using information technologies to create, adopt and exchange local information, the content of a community.

Abubakar and Zainab (2019) enumerated the types of local content resources found in university libraries. He maintained that local content resources found in a university community are primarily borne out of scholarly research. Some of the local content originating from university communities according to Uzuegbu include; books, theses and dissertations, practical research records, journal articles, project reports, working papers, inaugural lecture recordings and papers, conference proceedings, field trip films and records, evaluation reports, technical reports, workshop reports, invention and so on. Due to the extreme value attached to these special information resources, there is need for public universities to digitalize them.

Digitization of local content resources on the other hand could be seen as the use of innovative ways to convert, express, access and exchange local knowledge (in machine readable form) in both local and foreign languages thereby increasing the accessibility of the knowledge/ information for both the community and the people outside the community, thereby enhancing respect for

local culture and identity (Akande in Nsude, 2015). The digitization of cultural and literary heritage materials is commanding considerable popularity internationally and the countries' input to the Global Information Infrastructure (GII) grows by the second. In Nigeria, there are yet very few digitization projects and as such Nigeria's input to the Global Information Super Highway remains negligible.

Generally, digitization has a lot of benefits such as quick and easy access to current and vast amount of information from remote sites as users can easily access local contents from different parts of the world no matter the distance. Other benefits, according to Osaheni, Lukman and Ismali (2018) include flexibility in information search and retrieval, better preservation of local content by reduced handling of the original analogue surrogate materials and alleviating the problems normally associated with the traditional library environment such as mutilation of local content information resources, theft, space constraints, scarcity or limited number of copies, limited hours of operation and poor storage environment normally associated with manual preservation. It is a veritable information resource for e-learning and it offers a platform for collaboration and interoperability of libraries globally. Udemba (2021) pointed out that digitization enhances reputation and visibility of an organization, showcasing the intellectual quality of an institution and removing delay in publishing of materials by postgraduate students.

It is also established that digitization tremendously influences delivery of information services. In line with this, Obiano (2021) conducted a study on the influence of digitization of local content resources on the provision of library services. The purpose of the study was to ascertain the influence of digitization of local content resources on library services. The research design adopted for the study was survey research design. The instrument adopted for data collection was a self-structured questionnaire of a four-point likert scale. The population of the study was 120 professional librarians from the tertiary institutions in the study area. Data collected was analyzed using tables and mean scores. The findings of the study revealed that digitization of local content resources enables university librarians to effectively offer information services. It therefore concluded that digitization of local content resources have positive influence on the provision of library services. Based on the findings of the study the researcher recommended that management of university libraries should attach optimum priority to the digitization of local content resources. The two studies are related in the areas of purpose of the study and research design.

Generally, public university libraries, just like other libraries have the main

purpose of rendering services to their users. More closely, the essence of digitization of local content resources is to improve the effective service delivery of information services in the present digital age. These services cannot be given without deliberate and conscious effort of digitization in public libraries. Its noteworthy that public university libraries can be said to maintain their pride of place in the universities they are established to serve only when their patrons can express their satisfaction with the quantum and quality of services offered or delivered. In a nutshell, this is tantamount to effective service delivery of public university libraries particularly in the area of postgraduate studies.

Statement of the Problem

Over the years, local content have been faced with the problem of space, accessibility and preservation in the library. Various efforts are been made by universities in Nigeria to digitize their local contents. This is as a result of importance attached to digitization of local content such as speedy access, effective preservation of local contents, accessibility to much larger students based within and outside the university, quicker and independent access with less stress. Despite the global call to digitize library resources, the researcher's personal investigation has shown that public university libraries in Benue State are very slow to digitize their local contents. It is worrisome that the local content resources, if not digitized, will hinder quick access, effective preservation and easy retrieval from the sources, inability to access information resources without stress and will consume time that will lead to low and poor service delivery to postgraduate students. It is against this backdrop this study is undertaken to investigate the influence of digitization local content resources for effective service delivery to postgraduate students in public universities in Benue State, Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study was to investigate the influence of digitization of local content resources on effective service delivery to postgraduate students in public Universities in Makurdi. The specific objectives of this study were to:

- identify local content resources available in public Universities resources and effective service delivery in Makurdi.
- determine the benefits of digitization of local content resources and effective service delivery to postgraduate students in public universities.
- ascertain the influence of digitization of local content resources and effective service delivery to postgraduate students in public Universities in Makurdi.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study

- What are the local content resources available for effective service delivery to postgraduate students in public universities in Makurdi?
- What are the benefits of digitization of local content resources for effective service delivery to postgraduate students in public universities in Makurdi?
- What is the influence of digitization of local content resources on effective service delivery to postgraduate students in public universities in Makurdi?

Hypothesis

A null hypothesis was formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

- Digitization of local content resources does not significantly influence effective service delivery to postgraduate students in public universities in Makurdi

Research Methodology

The study adopted descriptive survey research design. The study was carried out in Benue State, Nigeria. It particularly covered two public universities – Benue State University, Makurdi and Joseph Sarwuan Tarka Uiversity, Makurdi. The population of the study was 1,503 from the two universities studied. The sample size of 301 was determined using simple random sampling technique. The instruments for data collection were observation checklist, questionnaire and interview guide. Observation checklist was titled Local Content Resources Observation Checklist (LCROC). Questionnaire was titled Digitization of Local Content Resources and Effective Service Delivery Questionnaire (DLCRESDQ). It had four point rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strong Disagree (SD). Data collected was analyzed using percentages and frequency counts and mean and standard deviation. Thematic or content analysis approach was used for the interviews. Chi-square was used to test hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Data Analysis

Research Question 1: What are local content resources available for effective service delivery to postgraduate students in universities?

Table 1: Observation Checklist of Local Content Resources in Public University Libraries

S/N	Local Content Resources	Available		Not Available		Remarks
		Freq.	%	Freq.	%	
1	Project, Theses and Dissertation	2	100	-	-	Available
2	Inaugural lectures	1	50	1	50	Available
3	Institutional News Letter	2	100	-	-	Available
4	Conference Proceeding	2	100	-	-	Available
5	Examination Question Paper	1	50	1	50	Available
6	Students Term Paper	-	-	2	100	Not available
7	Institutional Bulletin	2	100	-	-	Available
8	Institutional handbook	2	100	-	-	Available
9	Senate paper/publication	-	-	2	100	Not available
10	Indigenous Journal	1	50	1	50	Available
11	Book Chapter	1	50	1	50	Available
12	Students Magazine	-	-	2	100	Not available
13	Faculty and Department Journal	1	50	1	50	Available
14	Textbooks by lecturers and staff	2	100	-	-	Available

Note: Percentage cut-off mark of 50 is regarded as available.

Table 1 presents an observation checklist of local content resources available in public university libraries. The checklist reveals that public university libraries have a strong presence of certain local content resources such as items such as projects, theses/dissertations, institutional newsletters, bulletins, handbooks, and textbooks authored by faculty staff all achieving full availability (100%). However, other local content resources including inaugural lectures, examination question papers, indigenous journals, book chapters, and faculty/department journals show only partial availability with a 50% presence across these categories. Moreover, several critical local content resources such as students' term papers, senate publications, and student magazines are entirely not available with a 100% non-availability status. This suggests that while essential local content materials are well-represented, there are notable gaps in other important areas of local contents particularly those that highlight student contributions and specific scholarly outputs. These findings present an opportunity for libraries to expand and diversify their local content collections to better support academic needs and research initiatives.

Research Question 2: What are the benefits of digitization of local content resources on effective service delivery to postgraduate students in public universities?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of the Benefits of Digitization of Local Content Resources in Public Universities

S/N	Benefits of Digitization of Local Content Resources	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	S.D	Decision
15	It enhances global visibility of local content resources from institutions	158	41	41	61	2.98	1.22	Agreed
16	Access to information is made possible in a short time	66	87	97	51	2.56	1.01	Agreed
17	Improved facilities for information sharing	86	127	29	59	2.80	1.06	Agreed
18	Improved collaboration with other information institutions and centers	24	159	68	50	2.52	1.05	Agreed
19	It enhances institutional visibilities on the web	158	41	41	61	2.98	1.22	Agreed
20	Promote quality of academic research	133	88	40	40	3.04	1.05	Agreed
21	It enhances the circulation of the researches	105	92	56	48	2.84	1.07	Agreed
22	It enhances researchers activities generally	63	142	32	64	2.68	1.03	Agreed
23	It expands search and browsing options	149	112	8	32	3.26	0.94	Agreed
24	Enhances quality of access to information	35	154	56	56	2.56	0.92	Agreed
25	It allows for the preservation and diffusion of indigenous knowledge	126	111	24	40	3.07	1.01	Agreed
26	It is a tool for documenting, preserving and disseminating indigenous knowledge	63	94	80	64	2.52	1.05	Agreed
	Clusters	**97**	**104**	**48**	**52**	**2.82**	1.04	Agreed

Table 2 shows the mean scores of benefit of digitization of local content resources; it enhance global visibility [2.98], access to more information is made possible [2.56], improved facilities for information sharing [2.80], improved collaboration with other information institution and centers [2.52], it enhance institutional visibilities on the web [2.98], promote quality of academic research [3.04], it enhance the circulation of the research [2.84], it enhance research activities generally [2.68], it expands search and browsing option [3.26], enhance quality of access to information [2.56], it allows for the preservation and diffusion of

indigenous knowledge [3.07], it is tool for documenting, preserving and disseminating of indigenous knowledge [2.52] and cluster [2.82]. With corresponding standard deviations of 1.22, 1.01, 1.06, 1.05, 1.22, 1.05, 1.07, 1.03, 0.94, 0.92, 1.01, 1.05 and 1.04 respectively. The mean values for all the items range between 2.52 -3.26 are within the limits of agree (2.50-3.49). This means that respondents agreed that enhancement of global visibility of local content resources, access to information is made possible in a short time, improved facilities for information sharing, improved collaboration with other information institutions, enhancement of institutional visibilities on the web, promoting quality academic research, enhancement of circulation of researches, expanding search and browsing options, enhancement of quality access to information, allowing for the preservation and diffusion of indigenous knowledge and serving as a tool for documenting, preserving and disseminating indigenous knowledge are the benefits of digitization of local content resources in public universities for information service delivery to postgraduate students. The cluster mean of 2.82 was also within 2.50-3.50 indicating that digitization of local content resources in public universities have a lot of benefits to postgraduate students.

Research Question 3: What is the influence of digitization of local content resources on effective service delivery postgraduate students in public universities?

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation of the Influence of Digitization of Local Content Resources on Service Delivery to Postgraduate Students in Public Universities

S/No	Influence of Digitization of Local Content Resources	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	S.D	Decision
27	Digitization of local content resource enhances research effort of postgraduate students	149	112	32	8	3.34	0.77	Agreed
28	There is increased access to projects, these and dissertations to postgraduate students when there are digitalized	56	117	56	72	2.52	1.05	Agreed
29	Digitization of faculty and department journals exposes postgraduate students to wider research output or findings	149	104	40	8	3.31	0..80	Agreed
30	Postgraduate students have unhindered access to indigenous journals when they are digitized	35	186	64	16	2.80	0.71	Agreed
31	Term papers in the academic world when digitized help postgraduate students in their research activities	157	112	16	16	3.36	0.81	Agreed
32	Digitization of senate paper publication exposes postgraduate students to latest happening in the university	107	55	98	41	2.76	1.08	Agreed
33	Digitization of inaugurate lectures by professionals makes postgraduate students conversant with the current trends in all disciplines/fields	126	38	91	46	2.81	1.14	Agreed
34	Postgraduate students are carried along when institutional bulletins are in e-format.	7	190	56	48	2.52	0.79	Agreed
	Clusters	**98**	**114**	**57**	**32**	**2.93**	**0.89**	**Agreed**

Table 3 shows that items had mean sores as follows; digitization of local content resources enhance research efforts of postgraduate students [3.34], there is increase access to projects, theses, and dissertation to postgraduate students when there are digitized [2,52], digitization of faculty and department journals exposes postgraduate students to wider search output or findings [3.31],

postgraduate students have unhindered access to indigenous journals when they are digitized [2.80], term paper in the academic world when digitized help postgraduate students in their search activities [3.36], digitization of senate paper publication exposes postgraduate students to latest happening in the university [2.76], digitization of inaugural lectures by professionals makes postgraduate students conversant with current trends in all discipline fields [2.81] and postgraduate students are carried along when institutional bulletins are in e-format [2.52], with corresponding standard deviations of 0.77, 1.05, 0.80, 0,71, 0,81, 1.08, 1.14 and 0.79 respectively. The mean values for all the items 33-40 range between 2.52-3.36 are within the limits of 'agree'(2.50-3.49). This means that respondents agreed that enhancement of research effort of postgraduate students, exposing postgraduate students to wider research output of finding through departmental journals, increased access to projects, theses and dissertations, unhindered access to indigenous journals, term papers in academic world being of help to research activities, exposing postgraduate students to latest happenings in the university, inaugural lectures by professionals making postgraduate students conversant with current trends in all disciplines or fields and carrying along postgraduate students are the positive influence that digitization of local content resources has on information service delivery to postgraduate students in public universities. The cluster mean of 2.93 was also within 2.50-3.49 indicating that digitization of local content resources positively influences information service delivery to postgraduate students in public universities.

Test of Hypothesis

Test of hypothesis is done in line with the hypothesis formulated using chi-square (x^2) at 0.05 level of significant.

Table 4: Chi-Square Analysis of the Significant Influence of Digitization of Local Content Resources on Effective Service Delivery in Universities

Responses	Fo	Fe	*P*	Df	x^2 Cal.	Remark
SA	98	75.3				
A	114	75.3	0.000	3	56.116[a]	Rejected
D	57	75.3				
SD	32	75.3				
Total	**301**					

Table 4 reviews chi-square analysis of the significant extent of digitization of local content resources influence effective service delivery in universities. From the table above $x^2(3, N = 301) = 56.116^a$, Hence the significant value of 0.05 was greater

than the probability value (*P*-value) 0.000, the null hypothesis of no significant influence was rejected. This therefore indicated that digitization of local content resources to high extent effectively influence service delivery among postgraduate students in Universities.

Discussion of Findings

The findings are presented based on the analysis of research questions and testing of hypothesis of the study.

The first finding of the study revealed that local content resources available in public universities for effective service delivery to postgraduate students are conference proceedings, inaugural lectures, institutional newsletters, conference seminar papers, institutional bulletins, student' s term papers, faculty/departmental journals, indigenous journal articles, textbooks, students' magazines. Similarly, responses from the interviews granted to two ICT Librarians of Benue State university and Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University revealed that majorly theses and dissertations are local content resources for digitization. Findings of this study agree with that of Nsude (2015) who observed that local content resources such as these dissertations, projects, inaugural lectures, institutional bulletins, conference proceedings, past examination question papers, institutional handbook, students, term papers among others are available for digitization.

The second finding of the study revealed that digitization of local content resources is of tremendous benefits for effective services delivery to postgraduate students. Such benefits include enhancement of global visibility of local contents, accessing information in short possible time, improving facilities for information sharing, enhancing institutional visibilities on the web, expanding search and housing options among others. Similarly, responses from the interviews granted two ICT Librarians of Benue State University and Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University revealed that one can have access to the resources of the library without physically coming to the library. The findings of this study agree or collaborate that of Uzonmaka (2010) which observed that improved library services, increased access to information, speedy retrieval of documents and effective preservation are the benefits of digitizing local content resources in public university libraries.

The third finding of the study revealed that digitization of local content resources positively influence information service delivery to postgraduate students in public university libraries. Specifically, digitization enhances research effort of postgraduate students, exposes PG students to wider research output, making PG students conversant with comment trends in all disciplines among

others. Similarly, responses from the interviews granted two ICT Librarians of Benue State University and Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University revealed that supposing digitization programme is fully functional, service delivery to postgraduate students will be greatly enhanced. Their responses were in a supposition though. The findings of this study are in agreement with that of Obiano (2021) which observed that digitization of local content resources enables university librarians to effectively offer information services such as CAS, SDIs etc to postgraduate students.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher drew conclusion that public university libraries should device all ways possible to digitize all their local content resources giving their positive influence and benefit on information service deliver. Also, facilities that are used for digitization of local content resources such as computers, scanners among others should be improved on for a hitch free digitization process in university libraries.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

- That considering the positive influence of local content resources on information service delivery in university libraries by postgraduate's students, all efforts should be intensified by collection developers to acquire them and make them available.
- That considering the tremendous benefits of local content resources to postgraduate students, collection developers should leave no stone unturned in ensuring that all kinds of local content resources are procured for public university libraries.
- That giving the positive influence that digitization of local content resources has on information service delivery, every bit of local content resources, irrespective of types, most especially theses and dissertations available in public university libraries should be digitized. .

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