



The Relevance of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) In Secondary School Media Resource Centres: A Study of Selected Secondary Schools in Imo State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This Paper studies the Relevance of Information and Communication Technology (I.C.T.) in selected Secondary School Media Resource Centers in Imo State. The researcher introduces the relevance of ICT to School Media Resource Centers. As new instructional and information technologies evolve, School Media Resource Centers, Librarians, and others information users, play greater role in using this new technology development to meet up with the new trends in information processing and dissemination. Descriptive survey design was used for the study. Random sampling technique was adopted in selecting (10) private secondary schools understudy in Owerri Municipal. Questionnaire was used to collect data. Percentages and pie chart were used to analyze the data collected. The result from the study shows that this new trend is very relevant for both the students and staff of secondary schools for their information seeking and processing. However is important to note that this new technology is not widely used in most Secondary School Media Resource Centers in Imo state public schools but mostly used in private secondary schools. The researcher therefore recommends that: the government, organizations, Information users, Vendors, and System educators, should work together to provide and encourage the use of ICT in secondary schools, as well as provide adequate staff and power to make ICT application in School Media Centers work. This will go a long way to appreciate and encourage the application of the new technologies in School Media Centers.

Keywords: School Media Centre, Information and Communication Technology, Internet

t1.1 Introduction

It is obvious that the 21st century has ushered in tremendous technology driven innovations which have changed the work flow in many spheres globally and the School

Media Centers in our post primary levels of education is not an exception. Today, digital technology has revolutionized not only the way information is packaged, processed, stored and disseminated but also how users

seek and access information. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has transformed school libraries to Media Resources Centre globally. According to Ameh (2010) information Communication and Technology in this 21st century has witnessed exponential growth and advance in technology based services, this invariably affects the traditional roles of the library. This could be felt in the areas of preserving, organizing and disseminating of information to users. Azubogu and Madu (2007) opine that Libraries today is not seen as only the store house of books but a compendium of processed information both in print and non print resources, thereby making information change from traditional to digitized resources which helps to change the global economy to a competitive business strategy. School libraries now use various types of technologies to aid the services they render to their students and teachers which span from collection development, circulation management, reference services, technical services etc.

Labara (2010), Dialoke (2013) and Ike (2013) all agree to the relevance of these new technological advances in our school media resource centers as it is a powerful instrument for research, preservation, retrieval and dissemination of information in all kinds of format either through prints and electronic resources. The impacts of new technologies are felt by the students and staff through Media Resource Centers in every aspect of information collection and disseminations. Computing Technology, Communication Technology and mass storage technology are some of the areas of continuous development that reshaped the way that libraries access, retrieve, store, manipulate and disseminate information to users.

There will not be an oversight on the usage of ICT in the school modernization of administration and education, since most of

the government/ administrative activities are (e- government, e-administration, e-learning, e-payment etc). This agrees with Ezeude (2001) where he posits that ICT in schools are examined in three respects: as an administrative and management tool, as a teaching medium, and as a learning object. As such the implementation of ICT in school environment may be characterized as having three primary functions, with new technologies as the focal point: Administrative- Library- Teaching.

1.2 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The following objectives were used to guide the study:

- 1) to ascertain the availability of ICT facilities in the schools media centers under study;
- 2) to find out if students appreciate ICT facilities in the schools media centers under study;
- 3) to determine the relevance of ICT in studies in secondary schools media centers under study.

1.3 Research Questions

In the same vein the following research question were used to analyze the study.

Q1: What kinds of ICT resources are available to students in your school library?

Q2: What ICT facilities are used and appreciated by students in the school library?

Q3: What is the relevance of the use of ICT facilities in your school?

2.1 Review of Related Literature

Peyala (2011) opines that the evolving of Information and Communication Technology, (I.C.T) in libraries is a very important factor which helps to access information quick and fast and it is the combination of informatics technology with other related technologies specifically communication technology. It is technology

that supports activities involving information. Such activities include gathering, processing, storing and presentation of data. This is in line with Ghuloum (2012) when he states that ICT services have greatly impacted on each sphere of academic work in any academic environment, as well as giving an opportunity to provide value-added information services and access to a wide variety of digital-based information resources to its users.

ICT is an umbrella term that includes any communication device or application, encompassing: radio, television, cellular phones, computer and network hardware and software, satellite systems and so on, as well as the various services and applications associated with them, such as video conferencing and distance learning. The term ICT is also used to refer to the convergence of audio-visual and telephone networks with computer networks through a single cabling or link system. Methods and applications involved in I.C.T are constantly evolving on a daily basis. The broadness of I.C.T covers any product that will store, retrieve, manipulate, transmit or receive information electronically in a digital form, for example, Personal computers, digital television, email, robots. Information and Communication Technology (I.C.T) has become within a very short time, one of the basic building blocks of modern society.

The Media Resource Centers as an information house constantly store, retrieve and disseminate information to its users with the help of I.C.T facilities like: Internet, Email, Video-conference, and Mobile phones Madu, (2006). The Internet is a global collection of many types of computers and computer networks that are linked together. It is increasingly becoming the solution to many information problems, information exchange, and marketing. Adesanya, (2002) describes the Internet as a mixture of many services which the two most commonly used: electronic mail (e-mail) and the World Wide

Web (www). It plays a significant role in education, health, political processes, agriculture, economy, business and newsgroups. Woherem (2000) states that with Internet connectivity, one can do business all over the world without physical contact with the buyer or the need for a business intermediary.

This is also applicable with students of the secondary school level, where students tour the whole world with the use of the World Wide Web (WWW) in search of any useful information to satisfy their quest. Electronic mail (e-mail) is the exchange of messages and computer files transmitted via communications networks such as the Internet. Anyakoha (2005) describes e-mail as an increasingly popular method of communication, especially in the workplace. The email is also used by students to do their home works/ class assignments and also submit to their teachers via their emails.

Mobile phone is another aspect of ICT, Bittner (1989) defines Mobile phone as a telephone system that can move or be moved easily and quickly from place to place. Mobile phones were once the tool of rich and busy executives who could afford the luxury. Mobile phones are now the I.C.T that is reshaping and revolutionizing the communications globally. Its impact on the economic activities of nations, businesses, and small entrepreneurs including education experts is phenomenal. According to Marcel (2000), the availability of this new technology has been reshaping the material basis of the society as well as bringing about a profound restructuring of economic, political, and cultural relations among states and nations. Nigeria is not an exception. Network in this concept could be either "the Internet Network", "the Local Area Network (LAN.)" or the Wireless Network. While the internet network aids School Media Centers users in accessing information materials from the wild world web (www), the Local Area Network (LAN)

on the other hand enhances communication within the school library.

Video conference is another great type of I.C.T that enhances transmission of information in the school libraries. This could serve as a part of library cooperation between students from different schools. This could work in cases where students engage themselves in a video conference for better resource sharing and global intellectual harvest. This not only helps the students academically but also brings good social interaction among students from different schools.

2.2 Relevance of ICT to Media Resource Centres

Information has emerged as the prime in the 21st century and its relevance cannot be over-emphasized. ICT has exerted a profound influence on traditional school libraries to Media Resources Centers. They have no option but to adopt themselves to new developments, notwithstanding the paucity budget allocation. Hence, networking of information centers is inevitable. The prime objectives of the library is pooling information resources and information related infrastructure and sharing them. In this process, many school libraries have remained in their traditional methods and services to overcome inadequacies through automation and computerization, which evolve the concept media resource centers.

The use of computers for library operation saves considerable amount of time, resources and labor. This agrees with Saiti and Prokopiadou (2009) where they stipulates that ICT provides the means for administrative transactions to be accomplished with electronic management tools in a digital environment composed of interconnected web-based services. Furthermore, ICT ensures efficient data flow and instant information services for the educators,

students and parents. It eliminates space and time restrictions and reinforces the information access rights of the school community. Igwe (2010) also affirmed that ICT enables various libraries to develop viable strategies for improved service delivery.

In spite of all these benefits, there are also challenges affecting ICT in school media resources in Nigeria which is at variance with school media resource centers in developed world. Ameh (2010), opines that paucity of funds, poor library infrastructures, and poor staffing are barriers to effective ICT usage in school media resource centers. This also compelled Ezinwanyi (2011) to itemize the following challenges hampering effective ICT in school media resource centers in Nigeria:

- Lack of funds
- Lack of professionals
- Problem of power
- Inappropriate building
- Lack of training
- Poor interest by the teachers
- Lack of ICT facilities, etc.

3.1 Methodology

The descriptive survey research design was adopted in order to obtain information from the students. The random sampling technique was adopted in selecting the study population. This is to ensure equal representation of samples in the schools. Hence 300 students constituted the sample size. Thirty (30) students from the Senior Secondary classes of the ten schools understudy formed the sample size. Ten (10) secondary schools in Imo State comprise; Alvana Secondary School Owerri, Madonna Secondary School, Owerri, St. Paul's International Boys' Secondary School Owerri, SuperStar Secondary School Owerri, Baptist High School Owerri, Startright Secondary School Owerri, Rochas Foundation Secondary School Owerri, Holy Rosary Secondary School

Owerri, Owerri Girls' Secondary School Owerri and Holy Ghost College Owerri. Data used for this study were collected using a questionnaire.

Research Question 1: What kinds of ICT resources are available to students in your school library?

4.1 DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Table 1: Availability of ICT facilities in the selected school library

S/N	ICT facilities	Available	Not Available
1	Computers	208 (83%)	92 (17%)
2	CD-ROM	147 (49%)	153 (51%)
3	Flash Drive	126 (42%)	174 (58%)
4	Internet connection (Wi-Fi)	240 (80%)	60 (20%)
5	E-mail	255 (85%)	45 (15%)
6	Printer	237 (79%)	63 (21%)
7	Scanner	114 (38%)	186 (62%)
8	UPS	195 (65%)	105 (35%)
9	Network	234 (78%)	66 (22%)
10	Photocopying machine	231 (77%)	69 (23%)
11	Projector	66 (22%)	234 (78%)

In order to identify the ICT facilities available to students in their school libraries, respondents were asked to comment on the available facilities listed in the table above. Table 1 above shows that the highest number of students (85%) responded that Photocopying machine is available in their school, 83% are aware of the availability of Computers, 80% Internet, followed by 79% Printer; 78% Network and 77% E-mail.

However, in order to identify the problems students face in the use of ICT facilities available to students of these schools, respondents were asked to comment on the usage of these ICT facilities. Their responses are shown in Table 2.

Research Question 2. What ICT facilities are used and appreciated by students in the school library?

Table 2: ICT facilities used and appreciated by students in the school library or school media resource centers by students

S/N	ICT facilities	Used	Not Used
1	Computers	240 (80%)	60 (20%)
2	CD-ROM	138 (46%)	162 (54%)
3	Flash Drive	120 (40%)	180 (60%)
4	Internet connection (Wi-Fi)	225 (75%)	75 (25%)
5	E-mail	246 (82%)	54 (18%)
6	Printer	210 (70%)	90 (30%)
7	Scanner	90 (30%)	210 (70%)
8	UPS	174 (58%)	126 (42%)
9	Network	213 (71%)	87 (29%)
10	Photocopying machine	204 (68%)	96 (32%)
11	Projector	60 (20%)	240 (80%)

Table 2, shows the responses on the usage and appreciated of ICT facilities in the school media resources centers. It was revealed that majority of the respondents' shows that the following ICT facilities are highly used and appreciated by students in the library: Email (82%) Computers (80%); Internet (75%); Network (71%); Printer (70%) and Photocopying machine (68%). The recorded scores above show that students use and appreciate the ICT facilities in their school libraries.

Research question 3: What is the relevance of the use of ICT facilities in your school?

Relevance of ICT facilities?

- Computers: They help us to do our data processing and ICT assignments especially in Microsoft Word and Excel.
- CD-ROM: We use CD-ROM to store information
- Flash drive: It helps us to copy from

one computer to another and to store information

- Internet: It helps us to search for information on the World Wide Web.
- Email: it helps us to communicate with our friends and relative anywhere in the world.
- Printer: We use it to print hard copies of processed information.
- Scanner: It helps us to make hard copy documents in a soft copy.
- UPS: It is called uninterrupted Power Supply. It powers the computers temporarily enabling us to save our work before shut down.
- Network: It helps us to get internet connection
- Photocopying machine: It helps us to make copies of a document.
- Projector: It helps us to watch presentations made by our teachers on a large screen.

Figure 1, below displays the details of responses on the relevance of ICT in a pie chart.

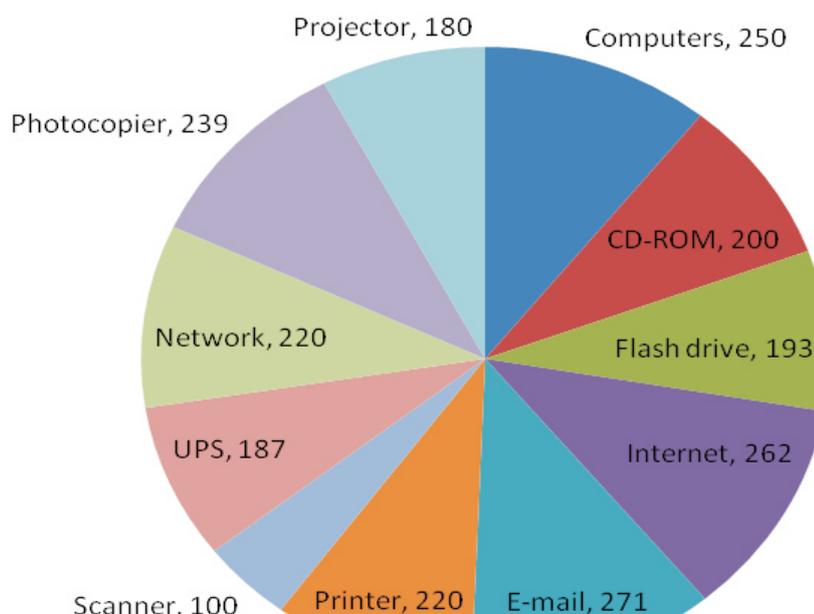


Figure 1: Pie chart of Responses on the relevance of ICT

Conclusion

The emergence of ICT have brought the whole world together to a global village and School Media Resource Centers or school libraries have never being left out of this great development. ICT has made the Media Centers or school libraries enjoyable by providing the various technological equipments which promotes communication and relaxation. It has also help to bridge the gap between the developing and developed countries as it has made the world be like a global village where information interactions can be taking place simultaneously without necessarily travels. In view of the aforementioned, is becomes very important for everyone, governments, organizations and all educational sectors to support and embraces ICT in all facets of educational activities and life in general. The government should make effort in providing funds for establishing/sustaining ICT in every public secondary school in the country.

Recommendations

Owing to the fact that many school libraries are yet to meet up with this high level of technological advancement, the researcher will quickly recommend the following;

- ❖ Proprietors of secondary school both government and private should as a matter of urgency upgrade the level of operation of their school libraries to e-library status where I.C.T is used for almost every in the library.
- ❖ There should be provision of adequate skilled staff in ICT to operate the equipment in the school media centers.
- ❖ The government should improve on the level of power being supplied or better still ensure there is alternative power supply so that our Media Resource Centers or school libraries will be making maximum use of their I.C.T facilities.

- ❖ School proprietors should source for enough funds for both procuring and maintaining the I.C.T facilities.
- ❖ Network providers like MTN, GLO and so on should upgrade their network services
- ❖ Complete training and retraining of school library staff should be encouraged.

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