

**ACCESS TO COMMUNICATION BASED TECHNOLOGY AS A
PANACEA FOR KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT AMONG
FACULTY OFFICERS IN AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY,
ZARIA, KADUNA STATE, NIGERIA**

**BEING A PAPER PRESENTED
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ABSTRACT

This article was undertaken to investigate Access to Communication based Technology as a Panacea for Knowledge Management among Faculty Officers in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Kaduna State, Nigeria. The study was guided by two research questions and objectives. The research methodology was purely quantitative and a descriptive research design was used. The study population includes 108 Faculty Officers in the five Ahmadu Bello University Teaching Hospital Schools, Shika Zaria. Yamani's formula was used to determine the target population sample of 91 respondents. A questionnaire was used to collect data. A simple random sampling method was used as the sampling method to collect data from the study area. The tool was subjected to face and content validity. The pilot study was conducted at Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria's main campus, which was outside the key study areas but with similar characteristics, and was also tested for reliability using a split-half test, and obtained a reliability coefficient of 0.81. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and Statistical Package for Social Science version 21.0. Among other things, the results of the study showed that the greater part of respondents indicated that email, online relay chats, Internet telephony, instant messaging, web services, and video conferencing were the types of Internet facilities or services required and accessible for Ahmadu Bello University Faculty Officers Shika Zaria. Most respondents indicated that some of the factors that discourage the use of Internet facilities by Faculty Officers are lack of Internet access and inappropriate research on Internet skills. It recommended, among other things, that the management of Ahmadu Bello University Hospital, Shika, Zaria, should make more computer systems available to the Faculty Officers in the various schools of the institution to allow them unproblematic access to the Internet facilities.

Keywords: Access; Ahmadu Bello University; Communication; Faculty Officers; Knowledge Management; Technology.

INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, technology has become an indispensable tool for development worldwide. The positive effects of technology have been incessantly acknowledged in business, manufacturing, education, politics, governance, culture and other facet of human life. ICT has tremendous potential to support lifelong learning for all groups of teachers, Faculty officers including students with particular educational needs. Likewise, the use of ICTs improves the self-sufficiency, inclusion and equal opportunity of these people, making easy their integration into society as respected members (Khushbu and Tabassum 2021). In higher education institutions, access to communication as a panacea for knowledge management relates to delivering information and communication technology in a way that has a major impact on teaching, learning, research, and other academic and professional activities through improved communication and access to information. In libraries, information and communication technology has simplified the method of obtaining, organizing, storing, retrieving, delivering, and using information. The Internet, for example, provides to a great extent enhanced access to a variety of modern information sources. In short, ICTs have improved the delivery of library and information services by overcoming time, distance and other obstacle.

On the other hand, the application of ICT has changed the teaching and learning process in which Faculty Officers and students engage with knowledge actively, autonomously and constructively. ICT is not only used

as a tool that can be added to existing teaching methods, but it is also measured an vital tool to sustain new approaches to teaching and learning processes. It is a fundamental part of the teaching and learning practice in various educational institutions in Nigeria and in the globe (Buhari and Nwoji 2015). The application of ICT in our institution is very important as it plays an indispensable role in providing quality education and education to colleges.

ICT has the needed character to allow Faculty Officers to be diligent members of the economic and social life of their neighborhood (Khushbu and Tabasum, 2021). Furthermore, this study focuses on the Internet, which is a priceless and valuable resource for enhancing learning, teaching, and research. For example, in developed countries and even in a number of developing countries (such as Nigeria), internet facilities are extensively used to make available services. Elementary and secondary school or Faculty Officer and administrators use the Internet to fulfill their legal and social responsibilities in terms of teaching and research (Oni, 2005; Watson, 1999). The use of the Internet for educational purposes has been around for a long time in technologically advanced countries, but it is a relatively new idea in developing countries. Nigerian universities only started turning to computers in the 1990s, and while Internet use has developed rapidly in the private sector, progress in the public sector, including the university environment, has been very slow (Abdullah, 2006; Banjo, 1998; Oyinloye, 1998; Odo, 1998).

Today, a good number of universities in Nigeria have a complete or partial Internet connection. The enormous potential of the Internet for academic purposes has not been fully subjugated. Chen and Fu (2009) found that Internet research helps university professors and students improve their intellectual development and career preparation.

Thus, knowledge management plays an significant role in educational institutions and make possible the mixture of intellectual productivity of university institutions whilst they receive well-established technology (Ali, Muhammad and Al-Qasim, 2022)

Abbas (2018) in Ali, Muhammad and Al-Qasim, (2022) put forward knowledge management as an intentional and systematic coordination of people, technology, processes, and business organizational structure to create value through reuse and innovation. Knowledge management is the process of determining the value of intellectual assets and knowledge by coding, creating, distributing, and making better use of knowledge (Charles, Marie, & Jasmine, 2021; Saleh and Suleiman, 2022).

Knowledge management is the process of modifying information and thought. This allows users to learn how to be active when they need information (Suleiman & Sambo, (2021) cited in Hussaini Suleiman & Aminu Saleh (2022). According to Suleiman (2021) in Suleiman & Saleh, (2022), Higher institutions are the institutions located in higher education institutions, such as polytechnics, universities, colleges, monotechnics, etc. (Suleiman and Saleh, 2022).

BRIEF HISTORY OF THE SCHOOLS OF AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL, SHIKA ZARIA

Ahmadu Bello University Hospital, Shika was established by Decree No. 10 of 1985 and is headed by the General Director and the following legal representatives. The Administrative Center was formally based at the Ahmadu Bello University main campus in Zaria at Samaru, which was later moved to its final place in April 1997. Former President Olusegun Obasanjo commissioned the new state-of-the-art teaching hospital on 11th November, 2005 at the permanent site of ABUTH, Shika Zaria Mili Goma (mile 10) to bring all sister hospitals under one roof in the neighbouring country. Abuth has seven schools to teach, learn, research and train students at Tudun Wada Zaria, in particular: - School of Post-Base Nursing (PBN), School of Medical Laboratory Sciences (FMLS), School of Health Information Management (SHIM), School of Nursing Science (SON) College of Peri-operative Nursing (PON), School of Community Health Officers (CHO), School of Biomedical Engineering (SBET).

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following are the research questions to which the research seeks to provide answers:

1. What kinds of Internet facilities/Services are available/accessible to Faculty Officers in ABUTH School, Shika Zaria?
2. What are the factors that militate against a full and effective utilisation of Internet facilities for Faculty officers at ABUTH School, Shika Zaria?

STUDY SCOPE

The aim of this article was to examine *Access to Communication based Technology as a Panacea for Knowledge Management among Faculty Officers in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Kaduna State, Nigeria* paying particular attention to the internet facilities for Faculty Officers in Shika, Ahmadu Bello University Teaching Hospital Schools Shika, Zaria. Five schools were used for the study: SHIM, SON, PON, SBET, PBN. The schools were selected according to the availability of the school's Internet facilities for teaching, learning and research.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Azubogu and Madu (2007) performed a study on the use of computer and Internet technologies at Imo State University, Owerri. It was found that 89.1% use computers and the Internet to access information, while 10.9% do not. Birader, Rajashekher and Samphat Kumer (2006) carried out a study on Internet use at the University of Kovempur. The results show that most respondents use the Internet both in the library and in commercial settings. Raknuzzaman (2006) studied Internet access at a large public university in Bangladesh and established that 91% of respondents view the Internet as a tool for academic and professional excellence. According to ANI (2012), recent studies in Nigeria showed that commercial Internet cafes on university campuses were chief sources of Internet access for students and Faculty Officer, because most university libraries were not interconnected or accessible because access was not available and reliable. Another study on connectivity and accessibility in university libraries in Nigeria, conducted by Chigbu and Dim (2012), revealed that the greater part of respondents access the Internet via private Internet cafes on campus (68%). Mobile Internet access providers (such as Zain and Mobile Network) 66%; Residential connection to campus (66%); CyberCafé for University Information System (57%) and wireless connections prepared (52%). Ojedokun (2007) identified insufficient funds, epileptic power supply, limited computing/computer skills, ineffective planning, poverty, and a shortage of skilled and unskilled labor as obstacles to the effective implementation of ICT in Nigeria. Okore (2005) referring to Nigeria highlighted problems related to the use of information and technology in developing countries, such as power outages and the government's approach towards technological development.

METHODOLOGY

This research used a quantitative approach. Owing to the nature of the study and the subjects, a descriptive research design was preferred for this study. It was selected for the reason that it provides a precise description of the characteristics and knowledge of a particular person, situation, or group on a particular topic. The study population consisted of 118 Faculty Officers from five schools at Ahmadu Bello University Teaching Hospital, Shika Zaria (Source: ABUTH Zaria Registry office and Examination office, 2021). A sample of 91 respondents was taken from the actual study population using the Yamane formula. The questionnaire was used as a data collection tool. A simple random sample was used as the sampling method. The tool was subject to the validity of the face and content. A pilot study was conducted at Ahmadu Bello University, main campus in Zaria, which was outside the main study areas but had similar characteristics, and reliability was tested using the split-half test. A reliability coefficient of 0.81 was obtained, indicating that the tool was reliable. Out of 91 questionnaires distributed, the researcher collected 86 questionnaire, which represents a response rate of 94.5% of the respondents. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages and SPSS version 23.0.

RESULTS

Question 1: What kinds of Internet facilities/services are available/accessible to Faculty Officers in ABUTH School, Shika Zaria?

Table 1: Kinds of Internet Facilities/Services Available/Accessible to Faculty Officers in Ahmadu Bello University Teaching Hospital School.

Internet facilities	Available	Percentage %	Not available	Percentage %
Electronic mail	80	69%	0	0
Telnet	0	0	32	28%
Newsgroup	5	4%	21	24%
Internet relay chat (IRC)	53	46%	0	0
Mailing list	43	50%	0	0
Internet telephony	37	32%	0	0
Instant messaging	79	68%	0	0
File transfer protocol	0	0	53	46%
Gopher	0	0	61	52%
Archie	0	0	38	33%
Web services	78	67%	0	0
Video conferencing	68	58%	0	0

Table 1 shows that the Internet facilities available and accessible to researchers, according to respondents, are email (69%), online chatting (46%), mailing lists (50%), Internet telephony (32%), and instant messaging (68%), web services (67%) and video conferencing (58%). Respondents also revealed that Telnet (28%), Newsgroup (24%), FTP (46%), Gopher (52%), Archie (33%). This study supports the study by Azubogu and Madu (2007) which found that 89.1% of respondents used computers and the Internet to access information materials, while 10.9% did not. According to Birader et al. (2006), the majority of those surveyed have access to the Internet both in the library and in commercial settings. Similarly, Raknuzzaman (2006) also supports the above, noting that 91% of respondents see the Internet as a tool for academic and professional excellence.

Question 2: What are the factors that militate against a full and effective utilisation of Internet facilities for Faculty officers ABUTH, Shika Zaria?

Table 2: Factors that Militate against the Utilisation of Internet Facilities

S/No	Factors	Frequency F	Percentage %
1	Lack of Internet access	84	97%
2	Lack of knowledge and experience	31	36%
3	Time consumption	8	9%
4	Difficulty in finding relevant information	13	15%
5	Network problem	27	31%
6	Finding nothing at all.	43	50%
7	Power outage	18	21%
8	Inadequate Internet skill search	41	48%

Table 2 provides data on the factors that hinder the use of Internet facilities. Eighty four (97%) of the respondents chose the lack of access to the Internet, 31 (36%) of the respondents said the lack of knowledge and experience was the main problem and 8 (9%) of the respondents chose the consumption of time as a problem. Thirteen (15%) find it difficult to find relevant information, 27 (31%) of respondents cited network problems as their main problem, 43 (50%) of respondents found nothing at all, 18 (21%) chose power outages as the problem, 41 (48%) of the respondents indicated that the main problem is the insufficient search for skills on the Internet. This study confirms the study by Okore (2005), which highlighted the problems associated with the use of information and technology in developing countries, compared to Nigeria: the poor economic situation of the nation, lack of infrastructure, access and connectivity in many regions. The implication of this is that, Faculty Officers would be unable to provide quality teaching, learning, research, and updated information to their students due to a lack of Internet access and insufficient Internet research skills.

SUMMARY OF THE MAIN RESULTS

1. The majority of respondents indicated that e-mail, online relay chat, Internet telephony, instant messaging, web services and video conferencing are the types of Internet facilities or services available/accessible to Faculty Officers in Ahmadu Bello University Teaching Hospital School, Shika Zaria.
2. Most of the respondents indicated that some of the factors that limit Faculty Officers use of Internet facilities are lack of Internet access and inappropriate search for skills on the Internet.

CONCLUSION

It concluded that the provision to access to internet is paramount to every institution who wished to make learning, reasearch and teaching easy for it's Faculty officers and students since it would help to provide the latest and a large amount of up-to-date information. Training sessions may also be organized from time to time to ensure that Faculty officers, researchers and students are equipped with the latest skills in terms of sources of information and on how manage the internet facilities

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The management of Ahmadu Bello University Hospital in Zaria should provide more communication technology systems to the faculty officers and students in its various colleges/schools in the institution so that they can easily access the internet facilities.
2. ABUTH Administration Shika, Zaria must urgently provide ICT facilities, especially internet facilities to the Faculty members by further optimizing their bandwidth and training them from time to time on various search skills which will provide easy and better access to internet.

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