

Perception of the use of card catalogue and online public access catalogue (OPAC) among undergraduates of Kwara State University, Malete, Nigeria

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to identify the most employable and effective retrieval system between card catalogue and online public access catalogue (OPAC) among undergraduates of Kwara State University, Malete, Nigeria. Three research questions were raised in order to find out the perception of the use of card catalogue and online public access catalogue (OPAC) among undergraduates of Kwara State University. The study included a sample size of 360 students who were selected at random from the university's seven faculties. Data was obtained through administered questionnaires and the data was evaluated using descriptive statistics. The outcome of the research indicated that majority of the undergraduates were aware of the OPAC and were of the opinion that it is more current and accessible anywhere within and outside the university environment than the card catalogue that requires users to visit the library before it can be access. Many of the respondents preferred online public access catalogue to the card catalogue due to its flexibility, less time consuming, and because it provides easier reference point. It is advisable for the university library to mount more OPAC stands for the undergraduates and other users of the library.

Keywords: OPAC, card catalogue, library, university

Introduction

Knowledge management and transfer in higher institutions of learning cannot be attained or achieved without a reservoir of printed and electronic materials which is technically referred to as library. More especially, courses of study offered in the Nigerian universities would not be accredited by the National Universities Commission (NUC) without a full-fledged and well-equipped library system that will guarantee for the availability of adequate information resources and learning materials in various field of studies. In an attempt to provide a conducive atmosphere for research works and studies, the university library made available, a well-stocked current research materials and trained personnel. These personnel are to collect, organize, arrange and make information available to assist and motivate faculties, students and researchers in the access, retrieval and use of these resources. Access is provided by making available medium through which

what is provided will be known and how the can be retrieved. Academic libraries, particularly university libraries give access to information resources in both print and non-print formats to their users depending on their needs. Early libraries were traditionally known to provide access to library information materials through card catalogues system. A library catalogue connotes the list of materials available and ready for usage in the library. It also spells out where each item is located in the library. Depending on the library structure, the description and list of items may be typified or very comprehensive. A library system may include every item in its catalogue. The library may otherwise provide a separate list of its holding.

The library catalogues regardless of the format in use seeks to inform the library users whether the library owns a particular copy of a particular material or not, which works by a specific author are in their collection and which edition of a particular

work does the library own and made available. The library catalogues are in various forms which include: card catalogues, book catalogue and online public access catalogues (OPAC). In the 1970s, development and growth of computer technology and technical know-how have made the idea of online catalogue become evident. Due to the emergence and advancement in information and communication technology, the traditional card catalogue system in use was replaced and in some organization complimented with online catalogue as most libraries adopted the use of OPAC. Ebiwoleta (2010) observed that card catalogue is a list that itemized things exhibited, articles for sale, school courses offered, etc., which are often followed with a descriptive comments and illustrations. An online library catalogue serves the same purpose. It is a file of records for a library's collection. Salman (2016) posited that catalogue system ideally portrays an arrangement or enumeration while the card catalogue is a systemized and comprehensive records or listing of books and other information items in a specific library. A library catalogue consists of the entire holdings of a library, including the index to the library collections (Clark, 2010). Traditional library catalogue through card allows easy access to library resources which are very tedious to comprehend for library users. With the emergence of OPAC which is a fully networked universally accessible entity, it becomes possible to access the library collections without pulling the drawers of three by five cards (Butterfield, 2013). On the other hand with the help of OPAC, users search easily different types of sources like database, digital repository and different types of e-resources which are managed by the publisher or library. OPAC is a very strong and effective tool for quick and easy access to the library resources. Library is among the prerequisite part of the higher learning

centers (Kumar, 2017). However, Husain & Ansari (2016) observed that online public access catalogue (OPAC) contains all the bibliographic information of an information center. ALA Glossary (2000) defines OPAC as a computer database that supports library catalogue (bibliographic database), detailed to be accessed through terminals so that library users can directly and effectively search for and retrieve bibliographic data under the supervision of a trained member of staff in the library.

According to Husain and Ansari (2016), OPAC has made it possible for a changed card catalogue system. In the adopted system, data can be shared within computer and also the required entry can be retrieved and accessed immediately using the OPAC system in any format. Notwithstanding, user can search for information through OPAC and most recently through the web.

The present study examines perception of the use of card catalogue and online public access catalogue among undergraduates of Kwara State University, Malete.

Research objectives

The main purpose of this study was to evaluate the perception of undergraduates on card catalogue and online catalogue among students of Kwara State University, Malete. Specifically, this study aims to:

1. Compare card catalogue and online catalogue among undergraduates of Kwara State University, Malete.
2. Identify the purpose and assess utilization of card catalogue and online catalogue by undergraduates of Kwara State University, Malete.
3. Identify constraints to using card catalogue and online catalogues by undergraduates of Kwara State University, Malete.

Literature review

Catalogue system is designed to provide multiplicity of access and retrieval points such as author, title and subject. These process of entry points make it possible for user to confirm or know if a document requested and needed is present in the collection and where it can be located in the collection. Catalogue can be defined as a list that keeps records, describes and locates the material in a collection. A catalogue, assignment of subject entries depends on the dominant/over-all theme subject of the document. The process or method involved in assigning subjects to documents is termed classification. Opaleke *et al* (2016) noted that classification is an important tool in an organized setting as it guides the users to a specific subject, and group books on the same or interrelated discipline. Jimoh & Igwe (2011) affirms that there are multiple forms of catalogue and consist of card catalogue, book catalogue and electronic catalogue. Users can search for information via card catalogue, OPAC and most recently, the internet. Keyword searching and Boolean operators have made this feat even easier to find relevant information according to ones needs. The card catalogue and OPAC are the mostly used form of catalogue employed in the university library which promotes easy access and quick retrieval of documents in the library. The card catalogue has been one of the major tools in accessing library materials and it is replicate of an online public access catalogue. The card catalogue is very cheap to acquire and maintain but many libraries are converting their collections from the card catalogue to the online public access catalogue. The online public access catalogue (OPAC) performs all the functions of the card catalogue. Both card catalogue and OPAC have their own merits and demerits.

Tella, Adewoyin and Oso (2019) investigated card catalogue and online

public access catalogue (OPAC) preferences among student library users in selected universities in Nigeria. The study adopted a survey research design and data was gathered randomly from four selected university libraries. Data collected through a self-designed questionnaire were analyzed using frequency counts, simple percentage and cross tabulation. The findings revealed that the highest percentage of the university library users preferred OPAC to card catalogue because OPAC can be accessed anywhere in the campus unlike the card catalogue that can only be accessed within the library, OPAC saves time, convenient and more user friendly compared to card catalogue. Most prominent challenges identified associated with the two include lack of privacy when searching the OPAC, and need to wait until it is ones turn to use the OPAC. While on the other hand, spending a lot of time waiting to use the card catalogue, non-user friendliness, and difficulty in pulling the catalogue cabinet drawer are all associated with card catalogue; however, difficulty in interpreting the information retrieved is common to both. From the findings of the study, conclusion and recommendations were made.

Morupisi and Mooko (2016) undertook a study on the use of the online public access catalogue (OPAC) at the University of Botswana by sociology students and concluded that searching the library collection is the students' major reasons for adopting the OPAC. Husain and Ansari (2016) pointed that OPAC (Online Public Access Catalogue) has made possible the shift from the traditional card catalogue system. Academic libraries in Nigeria have adopted the use of OPAC and provide guides for the users on its usage. However, some libraries still adopt the use of the old card catalogue. This might be due to their limited resources to put OPAC in place or perhaps because they believe that card catalogue function better than the OPAC.

Husain and Ansari (2016) is of the view however that the OPAC has changed the traditional card catalogue system. According to Kumar and Singh (2014), several variations do exist between the card catalogue and OPAC. OPAC does provide for a more entry points in comparison to the card catalogue.

Kumar and Singh (2014) observed that OPAC has more than search access points in comparison to the card catalogue. Almost every single aspect of the bibliographic record is accessible by keyword searching; this facility helps users to find the data from the library database. OPACs always provide Author, Title, Subject, Call Numbers, ISBN, ISSN and Keywords, etc., access points. The use of Boolean operators OR, AND, and NOT in the OPACs can limit the search results. They can also limit the search results by language, date of publication and type of document. But these types of facilities are not available in card catalogue. In short, OPACs provide to users more searching and accessing facility in various formats than the card catalogues. Card catalogue can be searched only on the premises of library buildings while OPAC can be accessed through internet-enabled devices like computers, phones, tablets etc.

Kumbar and Mallaiah, (2018) noted that high percentage of users utilized OPAC as a search medium for retrieving documents. Study on changing pattern of user expectations regarding the library catalogue at Mangalore University reveals that most of the users were using library catalogue and giving first preference to author approach, second preference to subject approach and third preference to title approach under the guidance of library staff. Kumar and Vohra (2011) studied the use of OPAC at University of Punjab Library and discovered that a significant number of users searched information regarding the library material through OPAC despite

encountering problems. Kumar (2011) investigated the use of OPAC in Chandigarh and Punjab University libraries and concluded that majority of the users searched their required reading materials through OPAC by using simple search option. Babu and Naidu (2011) studied the use of OPAC in Tamil Nadu university and reported that less than half of the users (42.7%) searched their required information through OPAC by using author option, 32% by title and 26% by subject. The study of Central Libraries of IIT Delhi, Kanpur and Kashmir University reveals that a large number of users were using simple search and lesser number of users used advanced search. However, in IIT, the advanced search facilities were more popular in comparison to Kashmir University (Ahmad *et al.*, 2012).

Madhusudhan (2012) examined the use of Web-OPAC by the foreign students at the University of Delhi and reported that most popular search type or first choice of all the users was the title search and the known item searching was more popular than the unknown item searching. Study on the use of OPAC at Mumbai and Navi Mumbai reveals that majority of the users prefer author search option for searching the required reading materials (Sawant, *et al.*, 2012). Qadri (2012) assessed the use of OPAC as a document retrieval tool at University of Kashmir and revealed that most of the students searched their library materials through subject, author and title approach. Study conducted by Kumar (2012) on comparison of OPAC use between two university libraries of Kurukshetra and Panjab University reveals that users of both the universities mainly searched their documents through title, author, keyword and subject. Husain and Ansari (2016) conducted a study on 'From card catalogue to Web OPACs'. The study discussed OPACs and web OPACs technology in libraries and tried to explain various

features, applications and advantages of web OPACs. Web OPACs was reported to improve the quality, speed and performance of the services offered by the libraries. The inter-library loan becomes easier with the use of e-mail and web. Members can see the collection and issue status of each document of the information center. Another experimental study by Gouke and Pease (2012) compared use of card catalogue and OPAC at two Ohio State Libraries and surprisingly found that in title search, patrons were more successful in finding the targeted record in the card catalogue than in the OPAC. However, most new users of OPAC preferred to stay with it even after learning that searching may be more successful in the card catalogue.

Morupisi and Mooko (2016) in their study on the use of the online public access catalogue (OPAC) at the University of Botswana revealed that searching the library collection is students' major reason for using the OPAC. The study also revealed that students do not encounter many problems searching the OPAC. While Ampka's (2010) found out that majority of students did not use the library effectively due to lack of interest on the use of library catalogues.

Adedibu (2008) carried out a research on catalogue use by science students at the University of Ilorin. The study revealed that most respondents, (about three quarters) claimed to use the catalogues – card and OPAC, while 26% of the sample had difficulties in the effective use of the catalogues. A limited number of respondents sought the assistance of a library staff in the use of catalogue to the author/title catalogue; they still used a combination of both catalogue types. Use of the library catalogues was found to increase as the respondents' progressed in their academic career.

Gohain and Salki (2013) investigated the use and users satisfaction in online public access catalogue service among

B.Tech. Students of School of Engineering in Tezpur University. The study found that 51.03% (199) respondents used OPAC every day to locate document on the shelves. Lack of skills to use OPAC independently, lack of awareness about OPAC and lack of proper guidance to use OPAC were the major problems faced by the users while using OPAC. It was observed that 76.67% (299) respondents were aware that OPAC help borrowers to locate document by author, title or by subject on the shelves. It was also observed that 72.05% (281) respondents were aware that it facilitates easy search for different categories of documents such as book, thesis, report, etc. by changing the types of document categories. Finding revealed that satisfaction level of students were quite encouraging and they were very much satisfied with the performance and quality of OPAC services.

Thanuskodi (2012) examined OPAC usage by students, researchers in Annamalai University Library. Questionnaire was administered on various categories of users such as faculty members, research scholars and postgraduate students, covering different disciplines such as arts, science, engineering, and medicine and agriculture sciences. The study discusses various aspects of OPAC such as frequency of use, purpose, satisfaction level, etc. The results of the study showed that only one third of the respondents used OPAC frequently. Sujatha (2014) found out that majority of the users (74.19%) explored the OPAC facilities for choosing reading materials, to check whether the required books are available or not and to locate books in the library. Study on OPAC in Law University Libraries of South India reveals that majority of the respondents strongly agreed that they searched their required text and reference books in their library through OPAC (Devendra & Nikam, 2014). Kaur and Kathuria (2015) revealed that majority of the OPAC users at Punjabi University, Patiala

were using OPAC only to check the availability of documents in the library.

A study by Veena *et al.* (2015) which examined online public access catalogue OPAC facility at SVC College, Bantwala, Manglore reveals that 36.22% of the users were using OPAC to locate the documents on shelves, followed by 25.86% to check the availability of the documents. Study on OPAC use at Central Library of Kurukshetra University reveals that the maximum users were using OPAC for finding the latest books on their subjects or for confirming the status of existing books available in the library (Kumar, 2016). Yusuf (2012) observed that 91.14% of the respondents used OPAC to retrieve materials in the library, while 8.86% of the respondents did not use OPAC to access library collections.

While accessing the use of OPAC in Great Lakes Institute of Management at Chennai, Kumar (2014) found that 43.52% of the users consulted OPAC only to know the location of the documents, followed by 24.70% availability of the documents, and indicated that most of the users locate their required documents through OPAC, while

some of them directly go to the shelves and browse books without using them. Moreover, Yusuf and Iwu (2010) examined the use of OPAC in Covenant University, Nigeria, and found that 61.9% of students used OPAC to access library materials.

Methods

The research design that was employed for this study was the descriptive survey method. Fox and Bayat (2007) asserted that descriptive survey is employed in a research to shed light on current issues or problems through the process of data collection that enables them to describe and determine the situation more completely than possible. This research design is used when the research seeks to gather opinion of a given set of individuals about a particular experience. Descriptive survey was employed for this study to determine the opinions of undergraduates who registered and use library materials such as card and online catalogues for retrieval of their information needs.

Results

Table 1: Distribution of respondents by gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Female	190	52.8
Male	170	47.2
Total	360	100

Table 1 shows that 190 respondents representing 52.85% are female, while 170 representing 47.2% are male. This shows the

there were more female participants in this survey than male.

Table 2: Distribution of respondents by age

Age range	Frequency	Percentage
18-21	116	32.2
22-25	136	37.8
26 and above	108	30.0
Total	306	100

Table 2 shows the age distribution of the 360 respondents. Ages 18 – 21, 116 representing 32.2%; Ages 22 – 25, 136 representing 37.8%; while 26 years and

above have 108 representing 30.0% of the respondents. This translates that ages 22 – 25 participated in this study than other ages.

Table 3: Distribution of respondents by level

Level	Frequency	Percentage
100	89	24.7
200	109	30.3
300	90	25
400	72	20
Total	360	100

Table 3 reveals academic levels of the participants. 89(24.7%) were in 100 level; 109(30.3%) were in 200 level; 90(25.0%)

were in 300 level; 72(20.0%) are in 400 level.

Table 4: Visit to library

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Once	49	13.16%
Twice	52	14.4%
Often	259	71.9%
Total	360	100%

Table 4 shows that 49 students which were 13.16% visits the library once, while

52(14.4%) students visits the library twice, 259 (71.9%) students visits the library often.

Table 5: Information and records are more current in OPAC than card catalogue

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	247	68.6
Disagree	113	31.4
Total	360	100

Table 5 reveals that 247(68.6%) of the participants agree that information records inside OPAC are always current than Card

catalogue while others representing 113(31.4%) disagree about the information records inside card catalogue.

Table 6: Information and records in card catalogue are more current than OPAC

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	99	27.5
Disagree	261	72.5
Total	306	100

Table 6 reveals that 261(72.5%) of the participants disagree that information

records inside card are always current than OPAC while others representing 99(27.5%),

agree about the information records inside card catalogue are more current than OPAC.

Table 7: Location of card catalogue is visible to users of the library

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	360	100
Disagree	0	0
Total	360	100

Table 7 shows that all the participants in this catalogue is visible to catalogue users of the study agreed that the location of card library.

Table 8: Location of OPAC is visible to users of the library

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	359	97.3
Disagree	1	0.3
Total	360	100

Table 8 above shows that 359(97.3%), and agree and 1(0.3%) disagreed on the visibility of OPAC to users of the library.

Table 9: Cards inside the card catalogue cabinet are labelled either by author, title or subject

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	360	100
Disagree	0	0
Total	360	360

Table 9 reveals that all the participants agree that cards inside the card catalogue cabinet are labelled either by author, title or subject.

Table 10: OPAC are always labelled either by author, title or subject

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	350	97.2%
Disagree	10	2.8%
Total	360	100%

Table 10 shows that 350 (97.2%) of the respondents agree that OPAC are labelled either by author, title or subject, while 10(2.8%) of the participants disagree, that OPAC are labelled either by author, title or subject.

Table 11: Content of card catalogue cannot be accessed anywhere in the library

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	358	99.4
Disagree	2	0.6
Total	360	100

Table 11 reveals that 358 (99.4%) of the respondents agree that content of card catalogue cannot be accessed anywhere in the library, while 10(2.8%) of the participants disagree that content of card catalogue cannot be accessed anywhere in the library.

Table 12: OPAC can be accessed anywhere in the university and outside

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	238	66.1
Disagree	122	33.9
Total	360	100

Table 12 shows that 238(66.1%) agree that OPAC can be accessed anywhere in the university and outside, while 122(33.9%) of

the participants disagreed that OPAC can be accessed anywhere in the university and outside

Table 13: Card catalogue is used more than OPAC

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	62	17.2
Disagree	298	82.8
Total	360	100

From Table 14, it can be seen that 62 (17.2%) participants agree that OPAC catalogue is used more than card catalogue,

while 298(82.8%) disagree that OPAC catalogue is used more than card catalogue

Table 15: OPAC is used more than card catalogue

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	224	62.2
Disagree	136	37.8
Total	360	100

Table 15 reveals that 224(62.2%) agree that OPAC is used more than the card catalogue,

while 136(37.8%) disagree that OPAC is used more than the card catalogue.

Table 16: Usage of card catalogue by students of KWASU

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Very high	348	96.6
Very low	12	3.3
Total	360	100

Table 16 sought to find out the respondent's usage of card catalogue. 348(96.6%), 12(3.3%) say the usage of card catalogue by students of KWASU is very high and very low, respectively.

Discussion of findings

The research work investigated the perception of Kwara state University undergraduates on the usage of card catalogue and OPAC and it was revealed that students had more preference for OPAC. This finding corroborates with the findings of Tella and Oso (2019) which revealed that the highest percentage of the university library users preferred OPAC to card catalogue because OPAC can be accessed anywhere in the campus unlike the card catalogue that can only be accessed within the library. It also posits that OPAC saves time, it is more convenient and user friendly compared to card catalogue.

About seventy two percent (71.9%) agree that they often visit the Library. This is in agreement with the study of Tella Table 5 shows that 247(68.6%) of the participants agree that information records inside OPAC are always current than card while others representing 113(31.4%) disagree respectively about the information records inside Card Catalogue than OPAC. Also, in Table 6, it reveals that 261(72.5%) of the participants agree that information records inside OPAC are always current than card catalogue while others representing 99(27.5%), disagree respectively about the information records inside OPAC. Therefore, the 72% of the respondents has the higher proportion that information on OPAC is more current in OPAC than card catalogue because of its remote access.

While in Table 7, it shows that 359(97.3%) agree, while 1(0.3%) disagree respectively of the visibility of OPAC to users of the library. Table 8 shows that 360(100%) of the participants agree respectively that cards inside the card catalogue cabinet are labelled either by author, title or subject. Table 9 shows 350 (97.2%) of the respondents agree that OPAC are labelled either by author, title or subject, while 10(2.8%) of the participants disagree, respectively that OPAC are labelled either by author, title or subject. Table 10 shows 358 (99.4%), of the respondents agree that content of card catalogue can be accessed anywhere in the library, while 10(2.8%) of the participants disagree, respectively that content of card catalogue can be accessed anywhere in the library. The table shows that the students can identify that content in the card catalogue can be accessed anywhere in the library. Similarly, Table 11 above reveals that 238(66.1%) agree that OPAC can be accessed anywhere in the university, while 122(33.9%) of the participants disagree that OPAC can be accessed anywhere in the university.

It is deduced from Table 12 that 298(82.8%) participants agree that card catalogue is used more than OPAC, while 62(17.2%) disagree that card catalogue is used more than OPAC. This table shows that many of KWASU students prefer to use OPAC to access the library. Table 13 reveals that 224(62.2%) agree that OPAC is used more than the card catalogue, while 136(37.8%) disagree that OPAC is used more than the card catalogue. So, from the research output it's deduce that many undergraduates of Kwara State University prefer to use OPAC.

Conclusion

From the above discussion, the users perceived that the usage between the card catalogue and online catalogue among undergraduates of Kwara State university students is crystal clear and that both methods are important sources of retrieval in the library. However, due to advancement in technology online public access catalogue was viewed to make more effective, employable, less time consuming and accessible link to information resources provided by the library.

The following recommendations are made for Kwara State University Library.

1. The library should train and re-train students on how they can access OPAC especially the newly-admitted students (freshmen) of the university.
2. More OPAC stands should be made available at all the wings of the library owing to the fact that there are insufficient OPAC stands thereby allowing students to take turns in using the OPAC.
4. Power supply should be given priority in the library.
5. Internet connectivity should be consider as priority for users of the library.
6. Procurement of more computers to facilitate OPAC usage and supervision of students during its usage.

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