

# Use of Information Retrieval Tools by Registered Users of Federal University of Technology, Minna library.

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## **Abstract**

*The study investigates the Use of Information Retrieval Tools by registered users of Federal University of Technology, Minna library. Descriptive survey research design was adopted and the total population of study consists of 600 registered library users. Simple random sample was used to select a sample of 300 and the instrument for data collection is questionnaire. A total of 300 questionnaires were randomly distributed, of which 284 were returned successfully. Data collected was analyzed using (descriptive statistic such as frequency count and percentage). The findings of the study revealed that card catalogue, online database, classification scheme and internet search engine are the information retrieval tools available in the studied library, that information retrieval tools such as card catalogue and classification scheme are effective in futminna library. The study also revealed that funding, difficulty in retrieving card catalogue, lack of constant power supply, lack of adequate skills and knowledge to access online database and lack of orientation are they problems encounter by users of the library. Finally, the study recommended that there is need for the studied library to be automated and also adapt the practices of indexing and abstracting, library management should profound a solution on how best to handle students on the use of cataloguing and classification being the heart of the library, and also library management should endeavor to provide students with necessary skills, adequate power supply and proper funding to boost the use of information retrieval tools in federal university of Technology, Minna library.*

**Key words:** Information retrieval tools, Library, Registered Users, Use

## Introduction

Libraries have been in existence right from the ancient period where papyrus, artifact and tablet were used as a medium of storing and retrieving information. It should be noted that, libraries especially the university library aim at providing both print and non-print resources such as books, journals, magazines and online database that will enhance learning, research that will support the parent institution. Bamidele, Omeluzor, Onoyeyan and Aluko-Arowolo (2014) stated that university library provide information resources in both print and non-print formats to facilitate those key functions like research, learning, and teaching.

In order to have easy access to the much needed library resources, there is need to have a retrieval tools that will aid users in retrieving information resources. Information retrieval tools are tools that assist users in getting the much needed information resources easily and faster, either in the library or in an information Centre. However, Ajiboye, Oyedipe and Alawiye (2013) defined information retrieval tools as basic building blocks for a system that will organize recorded information that is collected by libraries, archives, museums, etc. In a related study Onwuchekwa and Jegede, (2011) revealed that, information retrieval tool are designed to retrieve the document or information required by the user community. Information retrieval tools are basically concerned with the aspect of locating and finding needed information resources. These retrieval tools include catalogue, classification, online database, indexing and abstracting.

Oyedum (2004) stated that, for clientele to have easy access in retrieving library resources there is need for the library to adopt the use of retrieval tools like cataloguing, classification, indexing and online database. Furthermore, Aina (2004) said libraries, have devised tools such as catalogues, bibliographies, indexes, and abstracts etc. which are expected to make users or readers aware of the variety of information carriers such as books, serials, audio-visual materials available in the library and information Centre's collections.

The Federal University of Technology library Minna is the central library of the university with a branch in Bosso campus. The primary aims and objective of the library is to provide the relevant information resources to support instruction, research and study by both students and staff of the university.

The library is responsible for acquiring new resources, stores and disseminates information to the clientele of the library. In order to make these information resources easily accessible to its users catalogues cards and online database are provided to enhance easy access to the relevant materials whenever it is needed.

## Statement of the Problem

Information retrieval tools have been an important component, when retrieving resources from libraries and information center. Therefore, it is very crucial for libraries to develop effective methods of retrieving its resources in a more faster and convenient way.

However, several researches has shown that despite the fact that many libraries have succeeded in developing retrieval tools such as catalogue cards, online database and Opac, undergraduate students still find it difficult in retrieving available library resources using those tools. These in turn will have effect in the use of library resources. It is in the light of this, that the present study investigates the effective use of information retrieval tools by undergraduate students of Federal University of Technology, Minna library.

## Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this study is to determine the effective use of Information retrieval tools by registered users of Federal University of Technology, Minna library

The specific objectives are to:

1. Determine the effective use of information retrieval tools by the registered users of Federal University of Technology, Minna library
2. Identify the available information retrieval tools by the registered users of Federal University of Technology, Minna library
3. Determine the problems encountered when using the information retrieval tools by users of Federal University of Technology, Minna library

## Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What are the information retrieval tools available in Federal University of Technology Minna library?
2. How effective is the use of information retrieval tools in the university library studied?
3. What are the problems encountered by registered users when using information retrieval tools in the university library under study?

## Review of Related Literature

Information retrieval tools are very essential in getting or locating library materials easily, the oldest retrieval device is the catalogue and the modern

device is online database. The important of information retrieval tool is to enable the user of the library get access to the information he or she may need. Ajiboye, Oyedipe and Alawiye (2013) defined information retrieval tools as basic building blocks for a system, that will organize recorded information that is collected by libraries, archives, museums, etc. This information retrieval device or tools serve as a platform between the user and the needed library material.

Onuoha, Umahi & Bamidele, (2013) indicated that, information retrieval continues to be an important issue for libraries and information services considering the Volume of information and diverse users they have to deal with. Similarly, Oyedum (2004) stress that for clientele to have easy access in retrieving library resources there is need for the library to adopt the use of retrieval tools like cataloguing, classification, indexing and online database. Therefore, libraries have devised tools such as catalogues, bibliographies, indexes, abstracts, online database to enable its resources to be accessed in good time by the patrons of the library. In a related study carried out by Clark, (2000) revealed that the most important retrieval device is the catalogue, because it has an index or a key to the entire library holdings.

Ebiwolate, (2010) established the fact that a catalogue is a list of things exhibited, articles for sale, school courses offered, etc. usually with descriptive comment often illustration. However, catalogue is the traditional tool use by the library user to locate its needed information resources. It is a record of all document held in the library and the process of recording describing, and providing the location of each document present in the library in a catalogue is called cataloguing. Musa & Dangani, (2013) sees catalogue as a useful method in locating a whole document, but it is still lacking. Furthermore, Oyedum (2004) explains that catalogue is also described as a list of books and other reading materials in the holdings of the library or arrangement of document in a definite order.

Another information retrieval device commonly use in this modern day libraries is online database. Online database is a very important modern retrieval device that contain different material in respect of the users needed information, this device serves as an intermediary between the material and the user. Nazim (2008) in a study conducted in Aligarh Muslim university (AMU) shows that internet search engines were the preferred information searching tools, other method such as online database, gateway were also

used. The fastest retrieval tools of getting access to library material were through online journal and databases. This process is very essential to the user because, it give access to the material easier and faster in respect to one of the laws of Raganattan, which says save the time of the user.

Information retrieval tool are essential in making the case for the library, users of the library are the primary concern of the library management. Fordjouret *al.* (2010) studied the prospects and challenges of information retrieval by the University of Ghana, Legion students. Findings show that the use of the information retrieval tools to obtain relevant information was a problem with all the faculties. The main reasons for the difficulties in retrieval of information was attributed to frequent disruption of Internet, inadequate time by students on campus and non-availability of training programme to educate students on how to use information retrieval tools to obtain relevant information.

Furthermore, Owolabi&Ajiboye, (2012) revealed that the constraint in the use of online database and other electronic resources in most of the universities in southwest Nigeria is bandwidth problem, while others identified finance as a major problem facing the use of online database and other electronic resources. In a related study conducted on Cataloguing in the Era of ICT in Public libraries of South-East Nigeria by Eze (2012) stated that Lack of fund was there major constraint in carrying out Automation and computerized activities like online database and online public access catalogue in these public libraries. The subvention and overhead funds given to these libraries from the state governments can barely carry their Salary paid to the workers leaving little or nothing to finance development of the library facilities.

### **Research Methodology**

This study was carried out at Federal University of Technology, Minna library. For the purpose of this study, descriptive survey research design was adopted. The total of 600 library users formed the target population of the study. Simple random Techniques were also employed to sample respondents. However, 50% of the total population was used as the sample size. Questionnaire was the instrument of data collection. A total of 300 questionnaires were randomly distributed, of which 284 were returned successfully. Data collected was analyzed using (descriptive statistic such as frequency count and percentage).