

An Assessment of Library Software and E-Resources Management Workshop: The Experience at Centre for Learning Resources, Covenant University, Ota, Nigeria

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Abstract

The importance of training and retraining of professionals for efficient service delivery cannot be overemphasized. This study evaluates the library software and E- resources management workshop organized for Library and Information Science professionals held at Covenant University, Ota Nigeria. Findings reveal that participant in the conference acquired new skills in e-resources management, marketing strategy, institutional repositories management and use of special media tools. The participant level of satisfaction with resources personnel and their teaching methodology were satisfactory. The challenges to skill acquisition at the conference includes: inadequate funds to procure materials, lack of access to computers and other facilities as well as inadequacy of relevant materials. More practical teachings, training on software installation, development of indigenous software and special training on e-resources acquisition, licensing, evaluation and monitoring were recommended. The study concludes that professional conferences on contemporary issues on the area of ICT should be practical oriented to ensure that the objectives of the conference are achieved.

Keywords: Library Software; E-Resources; E-Resources Management; Workshop; Covenant University, Nigeria

Introduction

Every profession in the modern era as pointed out by Dasgupta & Satpathi (2006) has to adapt itself to the rapidly growing knowledge society and each and every profession must keep in mind and be aware of the constant change and innovations that are taking place in our modern society. According to Sare, Bales & Neville (2012), librarians face a future thick with both uncertainty and possibility and they must come to grips with their identity as librarians to successfully propel the discipline through the information age.

New professionals of e-world of 21st century need to have not only knowledge and skills in the areas of information technology but also matching "will" to carry out the services in the new media and means (Sridhar, n.d). The library professional no doubt as pointed out by Abba & Dawha (2009) has become aware of the need for continuous training because of the increasing variety of information formats and increasing dependence on automated systems. In their view, there is so much professional expertise available locally and internationally that the librarian should tap these sources for training his staff.

The concept of library software and electronic resources (e-resources) is becoming very popular in the developing world but in spite of the popularity of these new concepts, it is apparent that most library and information science practitioners in Nigerian are not too conversant with the concept of library software and e-resources management in practice. This must have informed the Polytechnic and Monotechnic Library Foundation (POMLIF) in collaboration with Ifegrace Ventures Ltd and with support from Cambridge University Press, Havilah Merchants Nigeria Ltd, Bookworm Nigeria Ltd and Linkgibbor Ltd to organized a national workshop with the theme '*Library Software and E-resources Management: The demands for New Skills and Best practice*'.

Objectives of the workshop

The workshop was designed to equip participants with the necessary skills for coping with the demands of new technology in library practice, the selection acquisition and management of e-resource through various integration tools and in the selection of appropriate library software. The workshop brought together Library and Information Science practitioners. Papers were presented on different areas of library software and e-resources management with emphasis on the demands for new skills and best practice specific to library contexts. The papers include: Development of new technologies in library practice: an overview, selection, Acquisition, licensing, evaluation and monitoring techniques.

Having entered the electronic environment and shortly entering the 21st century the expectations from upcoming library professionals is quite high and complex (Sridhar, n.d). Most libraries have a mission to offer a high quality service to all of their customers (James, 2011). In the words of Lockhart & Majal (2012) a national skills development strategy is critical to ensure that skills development is taken seriously in organizations within a country and that enough funding is allocated to address the national skills shortages as well as other important skills. By attending seminars and conferences, the managerial staff can improve professionally (Eze, 2012).

In a changing world, we must create environment that promote strong development if we intend to ensure a viable future and a library that provides benefits to all our customer, in which case professional development is an essential component of this environment (Isberg, 2011).

Objectives of the study

- i. To establish if participants present in the conference were ICT compliant.
- ii. To determine if the participants acquire new skills relating to their professional practice.
- iii. To identify specific areas where new skills were acquired.
- iv. To establish the participants level of satisfaction with the resource personnel and their teaching methodology.
- v. To identify the challenges to skills acquisition in the conference.
- vi. To recommend solutions to the identified challenges

Methodology

This study was carried out on library and information professional from the various institutions that attended the workshop on library software and e-resources management: the diamonds for new skills and best practices at the Centre for Learning Resources at Covenant University, Ogun State between 13th and 15th August 2013. A total of forty five (45) copies of questionnaires were administered and thirty- eight (38) were retrieved showing a return rate of 84%. Data collected was analyzed using tables, percentages and mean. Out of the forty- five (45) questionnaires that were administered to those present at the workshop, thirty- eight (38) were duly completed, returning and found usable.

Data Presentation, Findings and Discussion

The finding of the study are presented and discussed below.

Table 1: ICT compliancy

	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	35	92
No	3	8
Undecided	---	---
Total	38	100

From table 1, 35 (92%) of the participants indicated that they are ICT compliant while 3 (8%) or the participant are not ICT compliant

Table 2: Acquisition of New Skills in the Conference

	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	38	100
No	---	---
Undecided	---	---
Total	38	100

From table 2, all the 38 (100%) confirmed that they acquired new skills in the course of the conference.

Table 3: Areas where New Skills were Acquired.

	Frequency	Percentage
Software Management Skills	18	47.4
E-resources Management Skills	34	89.5
Marketing Strategy Skills	27	71.1
CD- ROM Management Skills	8	21.1
Institutional repositories Management Skills	19	50
Skills for Use of Social Media Tools	21	55.3%

Results from table 3 above shows that 18 (47.4%) of the participants acquired new skills in the area of software management, 34 (89.5%) acquired new skills in the area of E-resources Management. 27 (71.1%) acquired skills in the area of Marketing Strategy, 8 (21.1) in the area of CD-ROM Management, 21 (55.3%) acquired skills used for utilizing social media tools while 19 (50%) acquired new skills in the area of Institutional repositories Management. Finding revealed that the participants acquired new skills in the areas of E-resources Management, Marketing Strategy and Institution repositories Management. It was also clear from the responses of the participants that new skills were acquired in the use of social media tools.

Table 4: E-resources exposed to by reason of the workshop.

	Frequency	Percentage
ProQuest	20	52.6%
ebrary	15	39.5%
Heinonline	6	15.8%
EBSCO host	21	55.3%
Science Direct	18	21.1%

Table 4 above show that 20(52.6%) of the participants were adequately exposed to ProQuest, 15 (39.5%) were exposed to library 6 (15.8%) were exposed to HeinOnline, 21(55.3%) were adequately exposed to EBSCO host and 8(21.1%) were exposed to Science Direct.

Findings therefore revealed that the participants at the conference were adequately exposed to ProQuest and EBSCO host.

Table 5: Level of Satisfaction with Resource Personnel's'.

	Frequency	Percentage
Very Satisfied	11	29%
Satisfied	21	55.3%
Not Very Satisfied	6	15.7%
Never Satisfied	----	----
Total	38	100

From table 5 above, 11 (29%) of the participants were very satisfied with the resource personnel and their teaching methodology, 21 (55.3%) were satisfied and 6(15.7%) were not very satisfied.

Findings revealed that the participants at the conference were satisfied with the resource personnel and their teaching methodology.

Table 6: Challenges to Skill Acquisition in the Conferences

	Frequency.	%
Inadequate fund to procure materials	35	65.7
Inadequacy of relevant material	20	52.6
Language barrier	-	-
Lack of access to computers and other facilities	24	63.2
Opening and closing hour conference not suitable	8	21.1
Irregular power supply	-	-

From table 6 above, 25 (65.7%) of the participants views inadequate fund to procure materials as challenges to skill acquisition, 20 (52.6%) sees inadequacy of relevant materials related to the workshop as challenge, also 24 (63.2%) confirms lack of access to computers and other facilities as challenge.

The findings therefore revealed that inadequate fund to procure materials, lack of access to computers and other facilities and inadequacy of relevant materials are the challenges to skill acquisition in the conferences.

Discussion of findings

According to findings on Assessment of Library Software and E-resources Management Workshop, it was gathered that the participant were ICT compliant and they all acquired new skills in the course of participating in the conference. Findings also revealed that the participants acquired new skills majorly in the area of e-resources management (89.5%). However, it is disheartening to note that the participants were unable to acquire new skills in the area of CD-ROM and software management which was part of the objective of the conference.

Furthermore, the study shows that the participants were adequately exposed to e-resources like EBSCO host (55.3%) and ProQuest (52.6%). However, 53.3% of the participants were satisfied with the teachings methodology of the resource personnel's. Inadequate fund to procure materials (65.7%), inadequacy of relevant materials (52.6%) and lack of access to computers and other ICT facilities (63.2%) were the major challenges to skill acquisition in the conference.

Conclusion

It is obvious from the study that the workshop objectives were achieved to a reasonable extent. Participants were adequately exposed to Millennium software based on the fact that the host institutions used it in their library. They were also exposed to other library software's such as KOHA, LIBplus, and liberty software amongst others. Also cloud computing were employed in the course of the conference. Workshops are designed to enable the professionals improved their productivity levels and as well discover new ways of handling contemporary issues, hence, the bottom-line of this paper is that professional conferences on the area of ICT application to Library and Information services should be more of practical than theory in order to ensures that the objectives of organizing conferences will not be defeated.

Recommendation

In the light of the above, the following recommendations are proffered:

- 1). More practical teaching sessions:** In subsequent workshop, emphasis should be on practical demonstration rather than theoretical aspect. The ratio of practical to theory should be 70:30 respectively. It is not encouraging to travel from far distance without acquiring practical knowledge which is the basis for operating in an ICT compliant library.
- 2). More training on software installation:** There is need for more training on software installation and management. This will impart participants with the requisite skills which at the long run reduce the costs of living expertise and outsourcing of software maintenance.

3). **Development of Indigenous software:** It is important that library and information scientists liaise with computer scientists to develop and indigenous library software that can easily be adapted to our environment. More often than not, Nigerian libraries pay huge amount of money to procure foreign software which often is prone to underutilization. The huge resources used in procuring foreign library software can be channeled into Research and Development (R&D). To activate these, the various libraries can come together to form “Research and Development on Library Software”

4). **Special training on E-Resources Acquisition, Licensing, Evaluation and Monitoring.** There is need for adequate training on e-resources acquisition, licensing, evaluation and monitoring as this will go a long way in empowering library and information professional with the necessary skills required for e-resources management.

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