

**IMPACT OF LIBRARY AUTOMATION ON READERS SERVICES AT THE
UNIVERSITY OF BENIN LIBRARY**

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**A PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL
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CERTIFICATION

We, the undersigned names hereby certify that this research work was carried out by **Lawal Olalekan Abiodun** with Matriculation Number; **EDU1904065** of the Department of Educational Management, Faculty of Education, University of Benin, Benin City in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Bachelor Degree (B.Sc. Ed) in Library and Information Science.

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DEDICATION

This project work is dedicated to the Almighty God, the Alpha and the Omega who saw me through my Academic year in the University of Benin for my BSc program from the beginning to the end of it all. May his name be forever Praised and Glorified.

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ABSTRACT

This study investigate on the impact of Library Automation on the readers service section of the University of Benin Library (John Harris Library). In respect of this, four research questions were formulated. The descriptive survey research design was adopted, while the population study and sample consist of 50 Library staff randomly selected from the John Harris Library, University of Benin. The questionnaire was the instrument for data collection. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics comprising of mean. The findings from the study reveals that although there are factors militating against library automation at the readers service section of the University of Benin Library. But and if the necessary factors as regards automation in the library such as provision of adequate funding, proper planning, availability of power, availability of trained personnel and training of users on the use of automation facilities can be meet and subsequently fulfilled, the impact of library automation at them readers service section would be felt even much more better than the way it is presently seen at the University of Benin Library.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

Academic Library has no doubt a greater role to play and varieties of service to render to its user community which it is saddled with the responsibility of satisfying by its parent institution. As it is common to every Library whose mission and aim is to offer quality information services and products in both print and electronic format to users for the purpose of meeting their information needs, interests and desires. "Academic libraries are cost effective information and knowledge resource centres that serve a community of scholars." Dolapo & Joseph, 2019.

With the constant advancement in technology (especially in information communication technology (ICT)), the coming to limelight of Library Automation in the 1980's has without fail open a new chapter for the library in ensuring an enhanced library performance in its service to its patrons, clientele and users. And the Academic Library is not in anyway left out of this.

Librarians can now provide information services to users in a new and better way with the aid of library automation and electronic resources. They also offer personal help to users who utilize the library's resources. Another routine area where academic libraries use automation and electronic resources is in the area of interlibrary loan where service delivery is carried out through electronic network whereby resources can be shared among many users within Local

Area Network (LAN) or Wide Area Network (WAN). Apart from interlibrary loan, we also have the Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) which offers users the opportunity to access the library collections without making use of the catalogue boxes. Dolapo & Joseph, 2019.

This has no doubt helped to revolutionized the delivery of library products and services to the academic library users in the parent institution and thus help to erode and supplement the shortcomings that are common to the traditional library system with a much more better performance that has become a possibility with the advent of Library Automation.

The traditional library system has for ages been the only means by which the library renders it service to users. And although the system is stressful and time consuming, prone to errors and inconsistent in nature. These issues could not be addressed as at then because there was no any other better way by which things could be done. However, the introduction of technology and further development of Information Technology (IT) in the human society has brought about the inception of library automation to enable library activities become more effective and efficient in operation to a greater extent.

"Modern libraries are complex systems that consist of many procedures and functions. Traditionally, these functions have included acquisition of materials, cataloging and classification, circulation and interlibrary loan, serials management, and reference services. The

most important function, however, has been the provision of service to the users." (Library Automation, Encyclopedia of Communication and information, 2024).

With the introduction of automation to the library, the service of the library to its users has been made to become more better than what it used to be some ages back. Hence without much ado, a good definition of Library Automation as a concept is necessary for better understanding of what it is and how it has really helped in enhancing better performance of the readers service in an academic library.

According to Librarianship Studies and Information Technology, Library automation refers to the use of the computer to automate the typical procedures of libraries such as cataloging and circulation. This entails that a library make use of computers and other technologies to support its systems and services. Library automation is the conversion of a library's procedures from manual to computerized, such as from a card catalog to an OPAC, or from manual circulation cards to an integrated library system. Library Automation can simply be defined as the full application of information communication technology in the library for the performance of its housekeeping operation, activities and services to users. The Encyclopedia of Library and Information Sciences defines Library Automation as "The use of automatic and semi-automatic data processing machines to perform such traditional library activities as acquisitions, cataloging, and circulation". In summary, Library automation consists of the hardware and software used to

automate libraries. Library automation is most often associated with a library management system (LMS) which provides automated tools for managing a library's collections and usage of information.

It is imperative to say that, Through library automation, all library daily tasks and services can now be automated. There is no section of the library's service where automation is not applicable including in the collection development service, technical service and readers service. And this could be seen in the following areas namely;

- Circulation: Lending, renewal, return and on hold of books.
- Cataloging: Resource storage, management and retrieval.
- Acquisition: Acquisition process, order, receive, returns and cancellations.
- Serial Control: Placing orders, canceling, claiming, returning unwanted, defective, accounting, etc. Library Automation is also used to automate iOPAC, digital libraries, intranet access, and more.

The exponential growth of information has made the traditional library system redundant and thereby necessitating the demand for a computerized information storage and retrieval system. Effective and efficient handling of huge quantum of information will only be possible by using computers, which have the added advantage of being highly accurate, fast and timely and thus

adds value to information. According to Daniel and Raymond 2023, "The word "automation" was derived from the Greek word "automose" which means something that has the power of spontaneous motion or self-movement." This description fit no any other device than the computer which is key to the automation of any library. There are various types of automation system software that can be adopted by the academic library. And example of these include but not limited to the following namely; Libero, Librarika, BiblioteQ, NewGenLib, KOHA among others. iSLIM Library management system is also a web-based software that can be used by any type of library be it educational, public, or corporate.

The readers service section of an academic library which consists of the circulation unit, reference unit and serial unit are key to ensuring the successful performance of every university, polytechnic, monotechnic and other institution of higher learning and education. For they are the section responsible for the effective dissemination and utilization of the information resources and materials acquired, processed and organized by the library for it patrons and the user community as a whole. It is therefore for this reason that the library of every academic institution must deem it fit to have it readers service and other sections of the library automated.

Hence, the automating the academic library routines is particularly useful chiefly because of the following reasons, namely: It ensures effective and efficient library product and service delivery, enhances a quick and easy location, identification and retrieval of information resources in the

library for use, fosters interlibrary relationship and resource sharing among academic libraries, creates a friendly user interface for clientele and helps to improve the management of the library's physical and digital resources.

Although automation is a good, effective and efficient system worth putting into application in the library, but this doesn't mean it is not in any way prone to some limitation which are the constraints to the application of automation in an academic library. And these include the following as stated by Omorodion, 2024. Namely; high capital and maintenance cost, poor network connectivity, unstable power supply, frequent hardware and software obsolescence, lack of basic technological skills on the part of the library staff and users and poor planning of automation project.

However, knowing how to best handle these constraints will assist the academic library to leverage on library automation as an indispensable system that will be relevant, effective and useful in positively impacting the readers service section in terms of products and service delivery to its user community on a constant, continual and consistent basis, without experiencing a decline in the level of users patronage of the library.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Despite the effort made by the parent institution of a university library to automate the academic library as a repository of knowledge for its user community, there seems to be a decline in the

level of readers services offered to the users. And this could be traced to a low level of automation of library services in the affected university. According to Emasealu (2019), he explained that "the present automation project plans in various university libraries are defective and unrealistic. They appear to be too long to be achievable, too flexible and devoid of serious policy statement, and implementation plan, coupled with gross absent of documentation of automation activities, hence, their progress remains epileptic – neither moving forward nor maintaining the already standing process." Academic Libraries these days are seen as a store house of old, brittle and outdated books and magazines some of which have become dusty and covered with mould.

Moreover, it also appears to be that users of academic libraries seems not to be finding it easy to locate, identify, retrieve and make effective use of materials within the library, perhaps also due to the lack of automation in the readers service. Hence this has given rise to the thought that, could the level of library automation be having an impact on the readers service of the University Library? It is against this backdrop that the researcher seeks to carry out this investigation on the impact of library automation on readers service at the University of Benin Library.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The Purpose of this study is to discuss how library automation can be used to impact the performance of the readers service at the University of Benin Library. Hence this study seeks to;

- identify the extent to which the readers service section of the University of Benin Library is automated.
- determine how well library automation has helped to enhance the readers service at the University of Benin Library.
- examine the factors influencing library automation at the readers service section of the University of Benin Library.
- identify the challenges facing library automation at the readers service section of the University of Benin Library.

1.4 Research Questions

To achieve the above stated purpose, the following research questions were raised to guide this study.

1. To what extent is the readers service section of the University of Benin library automated?
2. How has library automation enhances the readers service at the John Harris Library?
3. What are the factors influencing library automation at the readers service section in the University of Benin Library?

4. What are the challenges facing library automation at the readers service section of the University of Benin Library?

1.5 Significance of the study

This study which is based on the impact of library automation on the readers service at the University of Benin Library will be beneficial to students, government, higher institution and future researchers.

The study will be of benefit to students because it will help them to see the significance of library automation and how it is relevant in making it possible for the library to satisfy their information needs and interest in a much more effective and efficient manner.

The study will benefit the government because it will help them to see the need for library automation in the high institutions of learning as a way of enhancing advanced research and publicity. Thus making the government see the reasons why they need to provide adequate fund and resources to the parent institution in order to make it possible for the library to embark on automation as a project which will also inturn create job opportunity for the citizens such as information technologist, system librarian and system analyst.

The study will also be beneficial to higher institution as it will help them see ways by which library automation can make information, information resources and materials readily available to the library users at a reduced cost and in a timely manner with the use of information communication technology (ICT), thus preventing monotonous and ineffective effort of staff in library operation.

Finally, the result of this study will contribute to knowledge in the field of research by serving as a relevant source of information for future research relating to the subject matter, "*Library Automation*" as a research topic.

1.6 Scope and limitation of the study

The scope of this study is on the impact of library automation on the readers service at the John Harris Library which was established to cater for the research and information resource and material needs of it user community. The target section of the library is the readers service section which comprises of three main unit namely; The Circulation Unit, the Serial Unit and the Reference Service unit. This is the section where the focus of the research work is based on in the University of Benin library.

1.7 Definition of Terms

The following terms were defined in this study for the better understanding of readers;

Library Automation

Library Automation can be described as the use or application of computer and other information communication technology (ICT) in the performance of library operations, daily routines, tasks and services with the aim of increasing output in terms of products and services while reducing cost and human effort to the barest minimum.

Readers Service

Readers service is a term used to describe the sections of the library that are responsible for providing reference, information, serials and circulation service to library users with the goal of ensuring that their information needs are typically met within a given period of time.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter consist of reviewed literature related to this study. The review is organized into the following sub-headings, namely:

- Concept of Library Automation
- Concept of Readers Service.
- To what extent is the readers service in the University of Benin Library automated.
- How has Library Automation enhances the readers service at the John Harris Library.
- Factors Influencing Library Automation at the Readers Service Section in the University of Benin Library

- Challenges Facing Library Automation at the Readers Service Section in the University of Benin
- Summary of Literature Review

2.1 Concept of Library Automation

The concept of Library Automation begins with the use of computer and other information communication technology (ICT) tools, devices and applications in the library to enhance the performance of library activities, operation and daily routines as opposed to the way it is been done in the traditional library system.

Library Automation can be described as the application of computers and utilization of computer based products and services in the performance of different library operations and functions in the provision of various services and production of output products (Qudus, 2020).

The impact of Computer, Information Technology (IT) and Information Communication Technology (ICT) on every aspect of human endeavor since it inception till date cannot be overemphasized nor downplayed in anyway. And this could be seen in the way by which it has helped to make life much more easier, simple and convenient for mankind in his environment. As humans go about their daily life performing their various tasks, duties, assignment and responsibilities at home, in the office or place of work, and even the academic institutions which are the parent body of every academic libraries are not in anyway left out of this.

The fact that ICT and its components are aimed at making it possible for things that were once done with rigor and full strength to now be done with ease and convenience and in a way which requires little or no human effort is what has enabled it to find its way into the library as a means of making it possible for the library to render its service to its multiple users in a much more effective and efficient manner than the way it was formerly been done.

According to Okpodju 2020, Library Automation may be defined as the application of automatic data processing computers to perform traditional library house-keeping activities such as acquisition, cataloguing, circulation, reference and serials control. Automation itself means the application of machines to perform the different routines, repetitive and clerical jobs involved in functions and services of an organization (such as a library). Today, Library Automation is by far the most commonly used term to describe the mechanization of library activities using the computer.

Library Automation is principally the use of computers, associated peripheral media (magnetic tapes, disks, optical media, etc.), computer based products and services in library work (Olaiya, 2021). The invention and introduction of computer to the human society has greatly increased the possibility of library automation in every library. In addition to computer advancement, telecommunication and audio-visual technologies also gave way to new possibilities in information handling. The use and demand of computer therefore is on the increase even in some

specialized libraries in developed countries. According to Librarianship Studies, automation is "the technology concerned with the design and development of the process and system that minimizes the necessity of human intervention in their operation."

Automation of an academic library usually requires the program of defined sequence of instructions that computer execute in order to accomplish a given information processing task. One can refer to computer software as a computer program which is a set of instructions given to the computer to enable it carry out a specific task or desired operation. The software is what enables the computer to know what to do, as without it, the computer will be functionless.

Odinefeh (2023) stated some guidelines that are necessary to be followed in selecting application software for the automation of an academic library as including the following; hardware peripheral, rights in respect of software, history of the software and its supplier. The reason for this is to know whether or not the software and its supplier has been supportive to library operators and therefore compatible with the library's database or hardware.

2.2 Concept of Readers Service

The purpose of establishing a library in every society is to ensure that the information, information resource and material needs of users are met at least to a given level of satisfaction. And it is no doubt that the readers, patrons, clientele and other users are the chief reason why the library came into existence. However, to get the needs of the users met in the library after the

resources has been selected, acquired, catalogued and classified is the sole responsibility of the Readers Service Section. This unit of the library plays a significant role in the library by ensuring that the aim of the library in meeting and satisfying the information needs, desire and interest of users is accomplished, achieved and actualized within a stipulated period of time without wasting the time of the user.

Readers service is the section of the library that is responsible for providing reference, information and circulation service to library users, clientele, patrons and readers with the goal of ensuring that users information needs are typically meet within a given period of time.

The Library reader's services assist library users with effective, efficient, and easier access and retrieval of library materials from a library and Information center. Ashikuzamman, 2023. The activities of the readers service unit is key in every library especially in an academic library which is established to serve the needs of scholars, researchers, academicians, students and other patrons coming from within and outside the user community and who are constantly in need of information materials and resources in both products and services as it is relevant, effective and useful to their academic endeavor in their respective field of study.

This department of the library is dedicated to assisting library patrons in their search for reading materials from finding a book on a specific topic to recommending the latest bestsellers to and

other reading materials to users. They can help patrons find specific articles or issues of their favorite publications and recommend new magazines or newspapers.

The Readers' Services section of any academic library represents many things at the same time. This section may rightly be seen as the 'flag-ship' of the library as a result of variants but interrelated nature of the services it renders. In a broad spectrum, library service is all about satisfying the information requirements of users in teaching, learning, research and community service. Anything short of this is unacceptable and this is why the Readers' or Users' Services Librarian is always on his/her toes in terms of service provision (Clara and Itunu, 2019).

Moreover, the activities of the readers service in the library cut across different endeavors that are aimed at ensuring that the library's collection serve the purpose for which it was acquired and actually meant to serve in the library. And these services include the following, namely; User education, charging and discharging of materials to users, shelving and shelf reading of materials, current awareness and selective dissemination of information service, interlibrary service, reservation service, reference service and reprographic service.

These services are imperative for the successful relevance of an academic library to its parent institution and user community. The inception of automation and its implementation and application in the academic library has therefore played a crucial role in assisting the library

through the reference section to achieve its goals, aims and objectives which are the reasons for its establishment by its parent body.

2.3 To what extent is the readers service of the University of Benin Library automated.

Although it is often said that Library automation started in Nigeria in the mid 1970s and early 1980s, when three notable universities - the University of Ibadan, the University of Lagos and Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria started computerization. Narrating from their reviewed literature on an article titled Perceived impact of automation on university library services by library personnel in south west Nigeria, Florence and Olayinka, 2021 stated that, "As many academic institutions did not have funds for computerization, the National University Commission (NUC) presented a microcomputer and local area network together with the Information Navigator (TINLIB) software to 20 academic libraries in Nigeria. Due to the efficiency in library operations and services as a result of using this software, many other academic libraries now began to introduce automation. In 1983 the University of Ilorin started automation and the Ahmadu Bello University (ABU) library in Zaria also started in the year 1980s, while in the year 1990, the University of Jos library joined in the automation movement.

As earlier reported, the University of Ibadan Library started library automation with TINLIB in 1994, as did the Federal University of Agriculture Abeokuta, but later migrated to the GLAS software. Olabisi Onabanjo University library in Ogun State started automation in 2000 using

Alice for Windows software but they later migrated to Koha. A notable private university, Bowen University, started library automation in 2007 using Koha Integrated Library Systems Software."

According to Olakoge and Kolawole (2019) automation software that has been introduced in Nigeria academic libraries includes: Alice for Windows, Web-Based Integrated Library System (WEBLIS), The Information Navigator Library Software (TINLIB), Automated Library (AUTOLIB), Graphic Library Automation System (GLAS), Koha, Automation of Libraries and Centres of Documentation (ABCD), Integrated Library Management System, Evergreen Software, Newgenlib, Computer Documentation System/Integrated Set of Information Systems (CDS/ISIS). Due to the limitation of some softwares, many libraries have migrated from one software to another in order to improve performance and services.

However Emasealu (2019), in his study on automation of academic libraries and web development, reported that libraries in Nigeria are yet to achieve full automated status. Some aspects of library services are still done manually because of lack of technical know-how to utilize the important features of automation.

Anyira (2020) assessed the need for adoption of Koha automation software management in Nigerian academic libraries. The theoretical literature gathered revealed that Koha automation software had been found to be effective in Nigerian academic libraries. According to the author,

the effectiveness of Koha automated library management software was in the areas of information outburst, speed of library operation in the area of charging and discharging, cataloguing and classification of library materials, acquisition, patron management, and OPAC, amongst others.

Also Nunekpeku (2019) assessed the level of satisfaction with automated library based services at a university library in Cape Coast, Ghana. In the study, a descriptive survey research design was utilized with a structured questionnaire and interview guide as the instruments adopted for data collection. Stratified random sampling was used to select three hundred and twenty two (322) undergraduates, postgraduates and academic staff of the university to participate in the study. The result indicated that more than 50% of the participants were satisfied with the state of automation at the Sam Jonah library. The level of satisfaction derived was as a result of effective service delivery brought about due to the automated system in place in the library.

It is good to say that automation was accepted and is been implemented in academic libraries in Nigeria and this could clearly be seen in the technical service such as the cataloguing and classification unit especially in the open access catalogue (OPAC). However, there are still some areas where automation has not been effectively implemented in the library and a good example of such area is the readers service. Although, there seems to have been new development that has help to bring about positive changes in the readers service section because of the application of

Information Communication Technology (ICT) in its service to users. But the extent to which this has been effected has is not really on the high side and thus still needs to be improved upon.

2.4 How has Library Automation enhances the Readers Service at the John Harris Library.

It is no doubt that the introduction of automation and its application in the Reader Services Department which is responsible for providing traditional circulation as well as periodical service has really helped to boost its activities. According to Soochow University Library. 2024, "The Department's duties include general bibliographical inquiries (OPAC), lending services, InterLibrary Loans, ordering, checking-in, claiming, and binding of periodical literature, etc."

As an advanced system of technology which has been incorporated into the library as a storehouse for information, information resources and materials, automation has impacted various sections of the library operations, services and activities in so many ways. And the readers service section is not in anyway left out of this. The impact of automation on the readers service is simply the perceived effect that automation has had on the readers service as a section in the library.

Nworie & Anunobi (2022) were of the opinion that "the provision of reference service is an important function of the library, though made on request by the users, librarians will stop at nothing in solving the information need of their users, and the computerization of the library

makes it more interesting and facilitating." The impact of automation on the library's readers service section are seen in its various units in the following ways, namely;

2.4.1 The Circulation Unit

The library's Circulation performs two major functions: inventory control and customer service. Inventory control takes place with the checking in and out of items borrowed by or loaned out to users. At all times, the location and status of every item must be known. While the customer service usually entails the registration of users and issuing of library identification card to patrons who have registered with the library.

The activities of the circulation unit in the library has also been positively impacted by the advent of automation in the library. And this include in the following ways, namely:

- **Registration of and Creation of Users Files:** With the introduction of automation to library activities, users no longer need to que for manual registration before they can be able to make use of the library. Registration of users can now be done online either by coming physically to the library to get it done or by simply visiting the library's website on your phone, palmtop or laptop at your convenience in your office, at home or anywhere and registering with it inorder to have your profile created with the library as a user so as to enable the individual have access to

the library's products and services whenever there is need for it. This registration will make it possible for the library to issue the user with a valid library identification card.

- **Updating, browsing and printing of records:** The use of the computer system in the library's readers section has made it possible for the circulation unit to be able to be involved in the constant updating, browsing and printing of users library record whenever there is need for it. This could not have been done in the traditional library system where there is no true technology in place except for the manual system.

- **Recording of books:** The use of the computer system and other information communication technology (ICT) in the library has enhance the library's ability to record the books it has in it collections for the utilization of users at the circulation and reference units. This will help the library to know what exactly they have to offer to the user community and what the user community should be expecting from them as available resources.

- **Charging and discharging of books:** The Introduction, implementation and application of library automation in the library's readers section has help to facilitate the effective and efficient loaning and retrieval of books and other information resources and materials to interested users. This is contrary to the way it was in the manual system where users will have to fill the book card, que and wait for their turn before they can be attended to by the library staff both when borrowing and returning the loaned book. Under the automated library system, users can now

return borrowed book to the library without even the library staff been physically present to collect it from them and neither can they leave the library with any material without due consultation with and authorization from the circulation unit. This safety is made possible with the aid of Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) system which are been placed on the library's book in connection with the library's alarm system to prevent unauthorized taking of book through the security check point. In such case, there will be the production of an alarm sound to alert the security to the situation.

- **Compiling of overdue notices and fines:** Unlike the manual system where records of indebted users are kept by recording in books that are subject to wear and tear or possibly misplacement by library staff thereby leading to no evidence of proof of debt of users. Automation makes it possible for the overdue notices and fines of users to be systematically recorded on the computer system for easy access to and retrieval for presentation to users as at whenever it is needed to serve as proof of evidence for users to pay that which they are owing to the library.

- **Keeping records of materials on reserve:** According to Library Guides, "materials on reserve consist primarily of books and articles that have been requested by faculty for the use of their students. Most of this material is held at the Circulation/Reserve Desk in the main library. All reserve material is for reference use only and may not be taken out." The systematic recording of

these materials on the computer are important for verification and reference purpose between the academic library and the various faculty in it parent institution it exists to serve.

2.4.2 The Serial Unit

Serials are scholarly publications issued in successive parts and intended to be continued indefinitely. Serials include year books, calendar, magazines, news papers, newsletters, conference proceedings among others. They are peer-reviewed materials that are continually received by the library, hence they have to be ordered and paid for periodically. They are often catalogued with additional information, such as the frequency of publication and often the cataloguing information must be changed. information on the library holdings must be constantly updated, and even binding must take place repeatedly and precisely. The house keeping operation of serials are usually carried out independently. And this is the reason why the serial section is been considered as a library inside a library because it carries out it's activities solely by itself.

It is therefore imperative to say that the introduction of the use of computer into the library has really helped to enhance better performance of the serial section in the following ways namely;

- **Creation and Maintenance of Master Database.**

A master database, also known as a master data management (MDM) system, is a database that contains a single, authoritative source of data for a particular type of data, such as user

information, product information, or location data. Records created in the master to database are available to all the sub-modules under serials control and can thus be easily maintained. This reduces data entry work and ensures standardisation.

- **Subscription and Acquisition**

Library Automation has helped to make the process of collection development at the serial section smooth and easy unlike the way it used to be in the traditional library system. The process of collection development in the serial section which usually involves the following basic tasks:

Selection of serials for new subscription, Renewal or discontinuation of existing journals/serials, Selection of delivery mode, Selection of subscription mode, Formulation of terms of procurement, Selection of vendors, Approval from authority, Ordering and renewal, Payment; Receiving and registration; Reminder generation; and Adjustment of advance payment for non-receipted issues have now been computerized for effectiveness and efficiency of operation in the library's readers service.

- **Cataloguing and Article Indexing.**

Cataloguing by definition is the act of classifying and assigning of codes in the form of alphabet and numbers to information resources and materials acquired in the library using a given classification scheme in a systematic manner in order to enhance a quick and easy location, identification and retrieval before they are been arranged or shelved in the library for the effective utilization of users. Indexing on the other hand is the act of providing a guide or a pointer to a particular information or group of information in a document, book or other kind of information resources or materials in order to enable users retrieve such information for their use as soon as it is needed.

The process of cataloguing and indexing of articles are a tedious and time consuming practices which are usually done by library professionals and expert from different field of study who are knowledgeable in information science. However, the advent of automation in the library has made cataloguing of serials and indexing of published articles acquired by the academic library for its user community to become faster, less tedious and more accurate because it is now been computerized.

• **Circulation and Binding**

Although the circulation pattern of serials differ largely from that of books because they are generally reserved for reference use only. But if serials are available for ordinary loan, then the same circulation control system will suffice as for monographs, and the computer system can be

used in getting this done. In terms of binding, a further valuable feature of computer based serials control subsystems is their ability to inform the library staff of volumes that have been completed and are now ready for binding. It is a very helpful feature that assist in work scheduling and help to spread the binding load inorder to give an even distribution of work in the binding throughout the year.

2.4.3. The Reference Unit

The reference unit is a branch of the reference service that provides users with reference information materials, resources and services. They are to the library what the reception is to a business organization. And this unit is usually overseen by a professional known as a reference librarian. Since automation is the use of machines such as robots and computers or other information, communication and technology (ICT) tools, devices and applications in performing a task which was once done manually inorder to make it more effective and efficient. "The application of automation in providing reference services therefore, can generally be referred to as the use of information communication technology (ICT's) in providing effective references services to library users." Daniel and Raymond, 2023.

The following are the areas in which automation has helped to impact the reference service unit in an academic library;

- **Communication**

Communication is the act of sending and receiving information from one person or place to another. At present, the use of email is one sure, and best way by which electronic information resources could be shared across to the information users by the library in a timely, effective and efficient manner.

- **Digital Reference Service**

Digital reference can provide support for users who find online tools and resources unfamiliar, difficult to learn, or insufficient to answer their information needs. It can also provide valuable user feedback to collection builders so that they may better tailor their resources and maximize their investment in content creation. (Okoli, ukwedeh, and Joseph, 2021).

A digital reference transaction will usually include the following elements:

- The user
- The interface (web form; e-mail; chat; video etc.)

- Electronic resources (including electronic or CD-based resources; web resources; local digitized material etc.), as well as print resources.
- The information professional.

• **Library Resources and Information Sharing**

The use of computer system and other ICT tools in the library has made the sharing of resources and materials among library very simple and easy to do, and this has thus enhance collaboration between libraries from different parts of the world.

• **Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI)**

Aside from making users aware of the newly acquired materials for patronage through the current awareness service (CAS) rendered by the library, information can now be selectively disseminated to users in a quick and timely fashion through selective dissemination of information service (SDI). According to Twinamatisko. 2022, "This involves the use of computers such as smart phones, laptops etc to select from a flow of new documents, those of interest to each of a number of users. This process may be thought of as the inverse document. In SDI a document precipitates the search of a standing file of user interests, Through the computer, the profile and document of user are prepared and aligned. As per the need of the users or area of

interest, various online databases, electronic resources and other materials are viewed and selected, and finally required information is sent to library users" for their effective utilization.

In summary, users are the reasons why the library exist especially in an academic community. The use of automation in the library's readers section therefore has really helped to play a great impact on the activities and operation of the library in achieving it aims and objectives in information products and service delivery to a greater extent as it is seen in various Academic Libraries in the world today where library automation is in place.

2.5. Factors Influencing Library Automation at the Readers Service Section in the University of Benin Library.

As Library automation presents new opportunities to all types of libraries including academic libraries to enhance their services, some of the functions of libraries are changing in this present digital age and providing promising opportunities for the acquisition, organization and bibliographic control of the available vast knowledge that are available in the library. Elijah & Oluwole, 2023. However, there are some factors that influences the practice of automation in the library. And these factors are what eventually usually serve as a yardstick in determining whether or not the library will be able to make headways in it endeavor to automate it activities and operation.

According to Janet & Grace (2019), the following are the factors that influences and thus serves as prospect for improving automation (in the readers service section) in an academic library. And these include;

1. Availability and Release of Funds: This is by far the most important of all the factors that influences automation of an academic library. Funds should be made available and released by the government and or parent institution to libraries for the purchase, installation and implementation of adequate ICT tools, software and applications that are needed for the automation program embarked on by the library to become exceedingly successful.

2. Availability of power: Automation will work well and efficiently in an academic library where there is constant and steady supply of electricity.

3. Good Software Design: Acquiring a good and well designed software will greatly help to improve upon the use of such software in libraries to serve the purpose it is meant to serve in the user community. Automation will work well when their is a good software design in place.

4. Friendly User Interface: Whatever system of automation it is that the library may want to put in place must be that which is user friendly and enables them to navigate through with ease and without complexity. Having a kind of system in place which the user is familiar with little or no attention needed from the reference service librarian to put them through in it use will make users feel at home in the use of the library resource and services.

5. Proper Staff Training: The more the library staff are trained on the use of the software packages, the more this will ensure maximum utilization of the software for the derivation of desired result and vice versa.

6. Purchase of the right software packages: Purchasing the right software packages will ensure that the software serves all the needs of the library. The software to be purchased must be scalable enough to accommodate new changes and later development in the activities of the library.

7. Sorting of Network problem: The availability of troubleshooting guide, manual, system and procedure will help to ensure that network problems are handled as soon as possible. Hence helping to prevent the sudden crashing of the library's management systems.

8. Working environment: A good, cool and conducive working environment for the library personnel and system is also a major factor that influences automation in the library. Computers are to be always in an air-conditioned room. Hot environment can affect the systems and it operators. In such situations, the systems will break down, thereby affecting the use of the software.

9. Frequent maintenance of the systems: Constant, continual and consistent updating of the library management system and software will help to ensure it continual use and durability, and thus helps to enhance preservation of the library's database.

2.6. Challenges Facing Library Automation at the Readers Service Section in the University of Benin Library.

Challenges are constraints that prevents, hinders or inhibit the effective running, management, implementation and operation of a program or system in place in a particular organization or enterprise. The challenges facing library automation in the readers service section are therefore the problems that are tied to the implementation and use of automation in this section of the library. Although automation has made the services of the library more effective and efficient like never before. But this does not in anyway mean that it is totally perfect and without any deficiency.

Hence, according to Chioma & Chinyere (2021), some of the challenges of library automation in academic libraries as (in the readers service section) include the following;

1. Shortage or lack of adequate funding: Conceiving the idea of automating the readers service section in the library alone is not enough. Adequate fund should be provided by the government and or the parent institution's management to enable the library bring it to realization, accomplishment and actualization. The shortage or absence of fund will mean a setback for automation program in the library.

2. Improper planning: The lack of proper planning before the adoption of library automation and haphazard or inefficient implementation of the automation tools will definitely have a not so good effect on its utilization at the readers service section.

3. Shortage of trained personnel: It takes an individual who is well trained and skilled in information communication technology (ICT) related skills and practices to operate an automation system effectively and efficiently. The lack or shortage of these personnel in the library to operate the system and attend to the users' needs will be a disadvantage to the automation of the readers service section.

4. Insufficient automation facilities and tools: The lack and/or unavailability of automation facilities, tools and devices to provide the essential readers services such as registration of, charging and discharging of books to users is also a major challenge facing automation in the academic library.

5. Lack of Stable power supply: The importance of a stable power supply in every aspect of automation cannot be overemphasized. This is not only applicable to the academic library alone but also to other information communication technology (ICT) programs. Lack of a stable, constant and steady power supply in the library is a disadvantage to its automation because without it, the library will not be able to carry out any meaningful activities with the automation system.

All the above are some of the challenges facing library automation as a system in the readers service section of the John Harris Library University of Benin.

2.7. Summary of Literature Review

The study reviewed related literature on Impact of Library Automation on the readers service section in the library. It was discovered during the review of related literature that the readers service section more than every other section or unit of the library renders service to users in that they are responsible for the intake of users as bonafide patrons of the library and subsequently serve their information needs in terms of products and services as made available by the library. Moreover, the advent of library automation has changed the face of operation and activities of the readers service and thus made them more relevant, effective and useful in the discharge of their duties and responsibilities to the library users, clientele, patrons and readers more than ever before and in an efficient manner.

However, even though library automation has been helpful to the readers service section in the library there are still some deficiencies that it is prone to as a modern system in the library such as inadequate funding, improper planning, shortage of trained personnel, lack of needed automation tools and facilities and lack of stable power supply. It is therefore become imperative

for the researcher to determine what the cause of these deficiencies is all about and thus profer a viable solution to them.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This chapter present the method used for this study. The subheading under this study are as follows:

- Research Design
- Population of the Study
- Sample and Sampling Technique
- Instrument of Data Collection
- Validity of the Instrument
- Reliability of the Instrument
- Method of Data Collection
- Method of Data Analysis

3.1 Research Design

The study employs a descriptive survey research design to gather information on Impact of Library Automation on the readers service section in John Harris Library. A descriptive survey design entails the studying of a group of persons or items by collecting and analyzing data from only a few number of selected person or item from among a sect which is or are usually considered to be a representative of the entire group. This research design was adopted because it is based on the views and opinions of the respondents as well as the record available in the given area of study.

3.2 Population of the Study

The population of the study comprises of the library staff (professional and para-professional) at the John Harris Library University of Benin, Benin City Edo State. The total population of which is 86 persons (From the reference librarian desk). They are the target respondents whom the research instrument was specifically designed for. Their response was what eventually gave rise to the findings, conclusions, suggestions and recommendation in this research work.

3.3 Sample and Sampling Technique

For the sake of this study, the population sample size was fixed at 50 respondents which comprises of professional and para-professional staff of the John Harris Library. The sampling technique used for the study is proportionate stratified random sampling.

3.4 Research Instrument

The research Instrument used for this study was questionnaire. A questionnaire entitled "Impact of Library Automation on the Readers Service at the University of Benin Library" was designed by the researcher and this was divided into six sections (Section A- E). With Section A focusing on the respondent's bio-data and Section B focuses on knowing the level of automation at the various units in the readers service sections of the University of Benin Library. Section C aimed at knowing how well library automation has helped to enhance the readers service at the John Harris Library. Section D focuses on knowing what are the factors influencing library automation at the readers service section in the University of Benin Library. While Section E aims at knowing the challenges facing library automation at the readers service section of the John Harris Library.

Section B was measured using a four point likert scale commonly used in determining the level of any given subject concern. These include; Very High Level (VHL), High Level (HL), Low Level (LL) and Very Low Level (VLL). While Section C-E had multiple items which were also measured using a four (4) point likert scale namely; Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) to determine the respondents opinion and perception about the impact of library automation on the readers service section at the University of Benin Library. The four likert scale of each section represents the point 4, 3, 2, 1 respectively.

3.5 Validity of the Instrument

The instrument was validated by the researcher's supervisor and two other lecturers from the department of library and information science who studied the items and access the suitability of the language, the adequacy and relevance of the items in addressing the research questions bearing in mind the purpose of the study. The correction, comment and observation made was used to modify the final questionnaire which was later used for the study. The essence of this was to ensure the face and content validity of the instrument been used.

3.6 Reliability of the Instrument

In determining the reliability of the research Instrument, the test -retest method was used to ascertain the consistency of the opinion of the respondents. The questionnaire was administered twice to 12 librarians at the University of Benin in an interval of one week. The Pearson Product Moment correlation Co-efficient (PPMCC) was used in analysing the feedback gotten from the librarians.

3.7 Method of Data Collection

The questionnaire was administered by the researcher to the library staff of the John Harris Library, University of Benin. And this exercise lasted for a period of one week. The instrument was retrieved immediately from respondents upon completion inorder to ensure a high return rate.

3.8 Method of Data Analysis

The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics. Frequency was used in analyzing the bio-data of the respondents. While statistical mean was used to answer the research questions. The criterion mean was placed at 2.50. This was because of the descriptive nature of the data. The data collected was presented in tables and percentages for the sake of clarity, better analysis and discussion in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

A total of fifty (50) copies of the questionnaire were distributed to respondents and they were all completely retrieved. This represents a 50 percent response rate. The analysis of the data collected from the respondents would be done using statistical tools in the form of tables and percentages as seen below.

Table 1: Questionnaire Distribution Table

ITEM	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
No. Distributed	50	50%

No. Returned	50	50%
No. Not Returned	0	0%

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

In table 1 above, a total of 50 questionnaires were distributed to the respondents and they were all filled and returned. This total number of the filled and returned questionnaire was good enough and considered well appropriate to provide the necessary data for this research.

4.2 Data Presentation and Analysis

SECTION A: Bio-Data

Table 2: Gender

SEX	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
Male	22	44%
Female	28	56%
Total	50	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

Analysis of data in table 2 above shows that 22 (44%) of the total respondents were male, while 28 (56%) were female.

Table 3: Age Distribution of Respondents.

AGE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
20- 30 years	3	6%
31- 40 years	16	32%
41- 50 years	19	38%
51- 60 years	12	24%
61 years and above	0	0%
Total	50	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

The Analysis of Age distribution of respondents as captured in Table 3 above shows that majority of the respondents been 19 persons were within the Age bracket of 41- 50 years which account for 38% of the total respondents. This was followed by the respondents within the Age bracket of 31-40 years been 16 persons amounting to 32% of the total respondents. The next after this in the order of majority were the respondents within the Age bracket of 51- 60 years been 12 persons amounting to a total of 24% of the respondents. While the respondents within the Age bracket of 20-30 years consisting of 3 persons amounting to a total of 6% of the total respondents were the lowest in terms of majority. None of the respondents falls within the Age bracket of 61 years and above, hence they have 0% of the total respondents.

Table 4: Working Experience.

Years of Working Experience	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1- 10 years	11	22%
11- 20 years	31	62%
21- 30 years	8	16%
Total	50	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

From the table analysed above, it is shown that respondents with 1- 10 years of working experience were 11 in number, representing 22% of the total respondents. 31 of the respondents with a total percentage of 62% have 11- 20 years of work experience. While a total of 8 persons amounting to 16% of the total respondents have 21- 30 years of work experience.

RESPONSE TO THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

SECTION B

RESEARCH QUESTION 1: What is The Level of Automation at The Readers Service Section of The University of Benin Library.

In this research question, respondents were asked to state the level of automation at the John Harris Library, UNIBEN. And they were asked to select from either of the following options; Very High Level (VHL), High Level (HL), Low Level (LL), Very Low Level (VLL).

Table 4.1

S/N	Level of Automation at the Readers Service Section of the University of Benin Library.	VHL	HL	LL	VLL
1	Circulation Unit	20 (40%)	28 (56%)	2 (4%)	0 (0%)
2	Serial Unit	6 (12%)	31 (62%)	10 (20%)	3 (6%)
3	Reference Unit	11 (22%)	29 (58%)	7 (14%)	3 (6%)

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

From the data presented in table 4.1 above, question 1 shows that out of the total respondents, 20 (40%) voted very high level, 28 (56%) voted high level, 2 (4%) voted low level and none (0%) voted very low level of automation at the circulation unit of the John Harris Library. Question 2 in table 4.1 above shows that out of the total respondents, 6 (12%) voted very high level, 31 (62%) voted high level, 10 (20%) voted low level and 3 (6%) voted very low level of automation at the serial unit of the University of Benin Library. On the question 3 of Table 4.1, out of the total respondents, 11 (22%) voted very high level, 29 (58%) voted high level, 7 (14%) voted low level and 3 (6%) voted very low level of automation at the reference service unit of the John Harris Library, UNIBEN.

SECTION C

RESEARCH QUESTION 2: How has Automation enhances the Readers Service at the John Harris Library?

This research question focuses on finding out how automation has helped to enhance library activities at the readers service section in the John Harris Library, UNIBEN. Respondents were asked to tick either of the following options; Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) or Strongly Disagree (SD) to indicate their point of view in this regard.

Table 4.2

S/N	How has automation enhances the Readers Service at the John Harris Library?	SA	A	D	SD
4	Library Automation enhances quick registration of and creation of users file at the circulation unit.	27 (54%)	22 (44%)	0 (0%)	1 (2%)
5	Library Automation enhances quick charging and discharging of books to and from users at the circulation unit.	29 (58%)	21 (42%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
6	Library Automation makes the compilation of users overdue notices and fines effectively and efficiently possible at the circulation unit.	26 (52%)	20 (40%)	3 (6%)	1 (2%)
7	Library Automation enhances the creation and maintenance of master database at the serial	15 (30%)	26 (52%)	9 (18%)	0 (0%)

	unit.				
8	Library Automation makes the subscription and acquisition of serial materials simple and easy for the serial unit.	20 (40%)	26 (52%)	4 (8%)	0 (0%)
9	Library Automation helps to computerize the process of cataloguing and article indexing at the serial unit.	29 (58%)	17 (34%)	4 (8%)	0 (0%)
10	Library Automation helps to enhance digital reference service at the reference service unit.	20 (40%)	24 (48%)	5 (10%)	1 (2%)
11	Library Automation fosters library resources and information sharing among libraries in the reference service unit.	22 (44%)	22 (44%)	6 (12%)	0 (0%)
12	Library Automation enhances selective dissemination of information (SDI) service in the reference service unit.	18 (36%)	25 (50%)	6 (12%)	1 (2%)

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

From the above data in Table 4.2, question 4 shows that 27 (54%) of the total respondents strongly agree, 22 (44%) agree, none (0%) disagree and 1 (2%) strongly disagree that library automation enhances the quick registration and creation of users file at the circulation unit. Question 5 reveals that 29 (58%) of the total respondents strongly agree, 21 (42%) agree, 0 (0%) disagree and no (0%) respondents strongly disagree that library automation enhances quick charging and discharging of books to and from users at the circulation unit. Question 6 shows that 26 (52%) of the total respondents strongly agree, 20 (40%) agree, 3 (6%) disagree and 1 (2%)

strongly disagree with the fact that library automation makes the compilation of users overdue notices and fines effectively and efficiently possible at the circulation unit.

In question 7, the data shows that 15 (30%) of the total respondents strongly agree, 26 (52%) agree, 9 (18%) disagree and no (0%) respondents strongly disagree that library automation enhances the creation and maintenance of master database at the serial unit. The data in question 8 reveals that 20 (40%) of the total respondents strongly agree, 26 (52%) agree, 4 (8%) disagree, and no (0%) respondents strongly disagree that library automation makes subscription and acquisition of materials simple and easy for the serial unit. In question 9, the data shows that 29 (58%) of the total respondents strongly agree, 17 (34%) agree, 4 (8%) disagree and none (0%) of the respondents strongly disagree that library automation helps to computerize the process of cataloguing and article indexing at the serial unit.

The data in question 10 of Table 4.2 shows that, 20 (40%) of the total respondents strongly agree, 24 (48%) agree, 5 (10%) disagree, 1 (2%) strongly disagree that library automation helps to enhance digital reference service at the reference service unit. Question 11 reveals that 22 (44%) of the total respondents strongly agree, 22 (44%) agree, 6 (12%) disagree and no (0%) respondents strongly disagree that library automation fosters library resources and information sharing among libraries in the reference service unit. In question 12, the data shows that 18 (36%) of the total respondents strongly agree, 25 (50%) agree, 6 (12%) disagree and 1 (2%) of the

respondents strongly disagree that library automation enhances selective dissemination of information (SDI) service in the reference service unit.

SECTION D

RESEARCH QUESTIONS 3: What are The Factors Influencing Library Automation at the Readers Service Section in the University of Benin Library?

This question is concerned about factors that influence Library Automation at the readers service section of the University of Benin Library. And respondents were asked to tick the their desired option indicating their level of acceptance as appropriate in this regard.

Table 4.3

S/N	What are the factors influencing library automation at the readers service section in the University of Benin Library?	SA	A	D	SD
13	Availability and release of funds will foster a successful automation of the readers service.	34 (68%)	16 (32%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
14	Good software design is a major factor that will help to enhance library automation at the readers service.	26 (52%)	23 (46%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)
15	A friendly user interface will make automation effective in the readers service.	21 (42%)	29 (58%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

16	Proper staff training on needed ICT skills enhances automation at the readers service.	29 (58%)	20 (40%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)
17	Availability of power will make automation relevant in the readers service.	33 (66%)	17 (34%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
18	The input of the library staff and feedback generated from users will support effective implementation of automation at the readers service.	26 (52%)	23 (46%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

Analysis of Data from table 4.3 above shows that in question 13, 34 (68%) of the total respondents strongly agree with the fact that availability and release of funds will foster automation of the readers service. While 16 (32%) agree, no one (0%) disagree and none (0%) strongly disagree with this. In question 14, it was clearly revealed that 26 (52%) of the total respondents strongly agree, 23 (46%) agree, 1 (2%) disagree and none (0%) strongly disagree that Good software design is a major factor that will help to enhance library automation at the readers service section. Question 15 shows that, 21 (42%) of the total respondents strongly agree, 29 (58%) agree, none (0%) disagree and no one (0%) strongly disagree that a friendly user interface will make automation effective in the readers service. In question 16, 29 (58%) of the total respondents strongly agree that proper staff training on needed ICT skills enhances automation at the readers service, 20 (40%) agree, 1 (2%) disagree and none (0%) of the respondents strongly disagree. Question 17 clearly shows that 33 (66%) of the total respondents

strongly agree, 17 (34%) agree, no one (0%) disagree, and none (0%) strongly disagree that availability of power will make automation relevant in the readers service. While question 18 reveals that 26 (52%) of the total respondents strongly agree, 23 (46%) agree, 1 (2%) disagree and none (0%) strongly disagree that the input of the library staff and feedback generated from users will support effective implementation of automation at the readers service.

SECTION E

RESEARCH QUESTION 4: What are the Challenges Facing Library Automation at the Readers Service Section in the University of Benin Library?

This question focuses on knowing the challenges facing automation at the readers service section of the John Harris Library, UNIBEN. Respondents were asked to tick their level of agreement or disagreement on the stated challenges which the readers service section of the library is prone to experiencing.

Table 4.4

S/N	What are the challenges facing library automation at the readers service section in the University of Benin Library.	SA	A	D	SD
19	Improper planning is one of the challenges facing library automation at the readers service.	20 (40%)	18 (36%)	10 (20%)	2 (4%)
20	Insufficient automation facilities and tools is one major problem affecting library automation at the readers service.	20 (40%)	24 (48%)	5 (10%)	1 (2%)
21	Absence of stable power supply is a constraint facing automation at the readers service.	26 (52%)	19 (38%)	4 (8%)	1 (2%)
22	Lack of adequate funding is a major problem affecting automation at the readers service.	28 (56%)	20 (40%)	2 (4%)	0 (0%)
23	Shortage of ICT skilled staff is a factor affecting library automation at the readers service.	18 (36%)	18 (36%)	12 (24%)	2 (4%)
24	Digital divide is a challenge facing the effectiveness of library automation at the readers service.	18 (36%)	23 (46%)	7 (14%)	2 (4%)
25	Wrong attitude of staff to automation program is a problem facing automation at the readers service.	14 (28%)	19 (38%)	11 (22%)	6 (12%)

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

From Table 4.4 above, the analysis of data shows that in question 19, 20 (40%) of the total respondents strongly agree, 18 (36%) agree, 10 (20%) disagree and 2 (4%) strongly disagree that

improper planning is one of the challenges facing library automation at the readers service section. Question 20 shows that 20 (40%) of the total respondents strongly agree, 24 (48%) agree, 5 (10%) disagree, 1 (2%) strongly disagree that insufficient automation facilities and tools is one major problem affecting library automation at the readers service. In question 21, it was revealed that 26 (52%) of the total respondents strongly agree, 19 (38%) agree, 4 (8%) disagree and 1 (2%) strongly disagree that absence of stable power supply is a constraint facing automation at the readers service. In question 22, 28 (56%) of the total respondents strongly agree, 20 (40%) agree, 2 (4%) disagree and none (0%) strongly disagree that lack of adequate funding is a major problem affecting automation at the readers service. Question 23 reveals that 18 (36%) of the total respondents strongly agree, 18 (36%) agree, 12 (24%) disagree and 2 (4%) strongly disagree that shortage of ICT skilled staff is a factor affecting library automation at the readers. In question 24, 18 (36%) of the total respondents strongly agree, 23 (46%) agree, 7 (14%) disagree and 2 (4%) strongly disagree that digital divide is a challenge facing the effectiveness of library automation at the readers service. And finally in question 25, 14 (28%) of the total respondents strongly agree, 19 (38%) agree, 11 (22%) disagree and 6 (12%) strongly disagree that wrong attitude of staff to automation program is a problem facing automation at the readers service.

4.3 Discussion of Findings

From the Data analysis arrived at after the use of the research Instrument, it could clearly be seen that there are more females than males in the total number of staff at the John Harris Library, University of Benin. With the female taking up a larger number of 28 (56%) and the males taking 22 (44%) of the total respondents. And this could be said to be as a result of the dominance of women over men in the total number of population around the world. Moreover there is a contrast between the age of staff at the University of Benin library as there are more younger staff than older staff in terms of age. This could be seen in the large number of staff between the ages of 31- 40 years been 16 (32%) of the total respondents, as the highest figure recorded so far in this research. Compared with the number of staff that falls within the range of 51- 60 years been 12 (24%) of the total respondents. While the number of staff between the ages of 20- 30 years were the lowest, been 3 (6%) of the total respondents. Also, it was discovered that John Harris Library is filled with a good number of highly experienced staff. As this could be seen in the higher rate of staff that falls within the 11-20 years of working experience been 31 (62%) and 1- 10 years of working experience been 11 (22%) while 8 (16%) of the total respondents were with 20- 30 years of working experience.

The data analysis on the level of automation at the readers service section of the University of Benin Library reveals that all the various departments in the readers service are on a high level of automation. This could be seen in the response gotten from the respondents. As a greater percentage of them voted both the circulation, serial and reference unit as been on a high level of

automation in question 1, 2 and 3. Although a significant number of 10 (20%) out of the total respondents voted automation at the serial unit as been on a low level. Thus this therefore agree with the opinion of Emasealu (2019) who reported that, "libraries in Nigeria are yet to achieve full automated status. Some aspects of library services are still done manually because of lack of technical know-how to utilize the important features of automation."

Also it was seen from the data analysis that automation has really helped to enhance the readers service at the John Harris Library with a greater percentage of the respondents strongly agreeing to this in question 4,5,6,8,9, and 11. Especially in Question number five where 29 (58%) of the total respondents strongly agree and 21 (42%) of agree that Library Automation enhances quick charging and discharging of books from users at the readers service. With no respondents disagreeing or strongly disagreeing to this. There was also a greater percentage of agreement on the part of the respondents on how library automation has helped to enhance the readers service in the University of Benin Library as seen in question number 12 and on an equal basis in question number 4 &11 and 7 & 8 respectively.

And although a slight number of respondents disagree that automation has helped to enhance the readers service at the John Harris Library, UNIBEN. Especially in question number 7 where 9 (18%) of the total respondents disagree that library automation enhances the creation and maintenance of master database at the serial unit. However there was no strong disagreement on

this. But it is the highest number of disagreement so far on how automation has helped to enhance the readers service at the John Harris Library. While question 8 & 9 and 11 & 12 shows an equal percentage of disagreement from respondents on the impact of library automation to the readers service. There was no respondents strongly disagreeing that automation has helped to enhance the readers service section except for question number 4, 6, 10 and 12 where we have just 1 (2%) respondent each expressing a strong disagreement on this.

A greater percentage of the respondents strongly agree and agree with only one respondent each expressing disagreement on the stated factors Influencing Library Automation at the readers service section in the University of Benin Library in question number 14, 16 and 18. None of them strongly disagree to these stated factors. The bulk of this is seen in question number 13 where 34 (68%) of the total respondents strongly agree and 16 (32%) agree that availability and release of funds will foster a successful automation of the readers service with none of them disagreeing or strongly disagreeing to this. Another similar case is found in question number 15 and 17. This further proves that the stated factors influencing library automation at the readers service in the John Harris Library, UNIBEN are actually true and valid indeed. And of which if implemented will produce a great and desirable result for the betterment of the readers service section of the University of Benin Library in it service to the user community.

Finally it was seen that one major challenge facing library automation at the readers service section in the University of Benin Library is lack of adequate funding as seen in question number 22. This was followed by absence of a stable power supply as seen in question number 21, insufficient automation facilities and tools as seen in question number 20 and digital divide as a factor affecting the effectiveness of library automation at the readers service in the John Harris Library as seen in question number 24. The highest disagreement so far was seen in question number 23 where 12 (24) of the total respondents disagree that shortage of ICT skilled staff is a factor affecting library automation at the readers service of the University of Benin Library. This was followed by 11 (22%) of the respondents disagreeing and 6 (12%) strongly disagreeing that wrong attitude of staff to automation program is a problem facing automation at the readers service. But then 18 (36%) respondents strongly disagreeing to the stated challenge in number 23 and 19 (38%) of the total respondents agreeing to the proposed challenge in question number 25 is enough to counter the opposition to this constraints as been true. The library automation at the readers service of the John Harris Library is indeed faced with challenges that are capable of preventing it from been relevant, effective and useful in positively impacting the library service. However, the possible remedy to these factors militating against it successful implementation, operation and effectiveness will be provided in the recommendation section of this research work.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

In summary, the impact of automation on the University of Benin Library is obvious enough to be seen both in practical and in reality as discovered from the findings arrived at by the researcher based on the perception of the respondents to the research questions raised in respect of this study. However it is imperative to say that the John Harris Library, UNIBEN must endeavor to do the needful always by keeping up with the current and latest trend in automation

at it readers service section in order to make it continually relevant, effective and useful in serving the information, material and resource needs of it user community in an efficient manner.

5.2 Conclusion

Automation has played a significant role in enhancing library activities and operation. And the readers service is not in anyway left out of this. The impact of automation on the readers service at the John Harris Library, University of Benin cannot in anyway be downplayed as this could be seen in how it has helped to foster quick registration of and creation of users file, compilation of users overdue notices and fines including timely charging and discharging of books to and from users at the circulation unit. It has also help to enhance subscription to and acquisition of materials, catalogue and article indexing and in the creation and maintenance of master database at the serial unit. Digital reference service, library resources sharing and selective dissemination of information (SDI) service promotion at the reference service unit are also among the great impact of automation on the readers service.

And although library automation has been very instrumental in enhancing the readers service section, but there are constraints that tends to pose challenges to the effective implementation and application of automation to the readers service in the library including lack of adequate funding, improper planning of the automation program, insufficient automation facilities and tools, absence of stable power supply, shortage of ICT skilled staff in the library, digital divide

and wrong attitude of library staff to automation. However these constraints can be managed by the library by providing adequate resources necessary for the acquisition, implementation, installation and application of automation at the library and by staying resilient to the challenges that tend to pose a threat to the successful performance of automation at the readers service section.

5.2 Recommendation

Upon the conclusion of this research work on Impact of library automation on the readers service at the University of Benin Library, I verily recommend that the library take the following steps as a way of countering the challenges which position itself against library automation at the readers service section. And this include the following;

- The government and the parent institution of the library should endeavor to provide adequate funding to enhance the successful acquisition, implementation, installation and application of automation facilities in the library.
- There should be a proper planning in place for the automation program which the library intend to embark on in order to know how this program will be executed. And the library staff must be very much part of this planning and its implementation thereby making it possible for the library staff to carry out troubleshooting on any of the automation facilities and tools whenever the need for such arise.

- The importance of power in the successful performance of automation in every organization cannot be overemphasized. There should be availability of power to provide energy for the automation facilities used by the library.
- The library should provide and make available well trained personnel to handle the automation facilities and tools acquired for effective utilization and generation of desired result.
- In solving the problem of digital divide, the library should endeavor to provide the necessary training support for its users in order to enable them make use of the automation facilities in place in the library with little or no supervision from the library staff.
- Finally I will recommend that the library staff exhibit the right attitude to automation program and not see it as a threat to their employment. Rather, they should be open to learning and acquiring new skills and techniques that will enable them relevant in the new system. A positive change for the better in library operations and activities should always be welcomed and not frowned at by the library staff because it is usually for the benefit of all in the long run.

5.4 Limitation of the Study

The major limitation encountered and experienced during the course of carrying out this study is the shortage of fund to carry out the research much more than I have done. Also the stress of going all about distributing and retrieving the research Instrument from respondents was a constraint for me because I do not have an assistant researcher to provide me with support in this regard during the course of carrying out this study. The unwillingness and unreadiness of some respondents to fill the questionnaire given to them for the purpose of this study was another challenge I faced in the course of carrying out this research. Some respondents were not just willing to fill the questionnaire and others were giving the excuse of not having the time for this. But in the long run, I thank God I was able to get it done and here is the outcome.

5.5 Suggestion for Further Study.

Although this research has been done successfully, but I strongly recommend that further research be carried out on this specific topic titled "Impact of Library Automation on The Readers Service at The University of Benin Library" as an academic library. The reason for this is because, probably there are still some areas of concern in this regard which the researcher could not or did not extend his research findings to. Hence, the need for more study to be carried

out in order to arrive at some more valid conclusion based on findings arrived at from such area of concern to the academic world.

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APPENDIX
QUESTIONNAIRE
LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT
FACULTY OF EDUCATION
IMPACT OF LIBRARY AUTOMATION ON READERS SERVICES AT THE
UNIVERSITY OF BENIN LIBRARY

Dear Respondents,

This questionnaire is designed to investigate on the impact of Library Automation on the University of Benin Library.

I deem it fit to let you know that this research work is purely and strictly for academic use and purpose and your response to it will be treated as confidential. I therefore crave your indulgence by asking that you please kindly and honestly help respond by providing answers to the following questions as you deem appropriate.

Thank you so much.

Researcher

LAWAL OLALEKAN

Instruction: Please tick (✓) where appropriate.

Section A

Sex: Male () Female ()

Age: 20-30 years () 31-40 years () 41-50 years () 51-60 years () 61years and above ()

Years of Working Experience: 1-10 years () 11-20 years () 21-30 years ()

SECTION B

Keywords: Very High Level (VH L), High Level (HL), Low Level (LL), Very Low Level (VLL).

S/N	Level of Automation at the Readers Service Section of the University of Benin Library.	VHL	HL	LL	VLL
1	Circulation Unit				

2	Serial Unit				
3	Reference Unit				

SECTION C

Keywords: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD).

S/N	How has automation enhances the readers service at the John Harris Library	SA	A	D	SD
4	Library Automation enhances the quick registration of and creation of users file at the circulation unit.				
5	Library Automation enhances quick charging and discharging of books to and from users at the circulation unit.				
6	Library Automation makes the compilation of users overdue notices and fines effectively and efficiently possible at the circulation unit.				
7	Library Automation enhances the creation and maintenance of master database at the serial unit.				
8	Library Automation makes the subscription to and acquisition of serial materials simple and easy for the serial unit.				
9	Library Automation helps to computerize the process of cataloguing and article indexing at the serial unit.				
10	Library Automation helps to enhance digital reference service at the reference service unit.				
11	Library Automation fosters library resources and information sharing among libraries in the reference service unit.				
12	Library Automation enhances selective dissemination of information (SDI) service in the reference service unit.				

SECTION D

Keywords: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD).

S/N	What are The Factors Influencing Library Automation at the readers service section in the University of Benin Library?	SA	A	D	SD
13	Availability and release of funds will foster a successful automation of the readers service.				
14	Good software design is a major factor that will help to enhance library automation at the readers service.				

15	A friendly user interface will make automation effective in the readers service.				
16	Proper staff training on needed ICT skills enhances automation at the readers service.				
17	Availability of power will make automation relevant in the readers service.				
18	The input of the library staff and feedback generated from users will support effective implementation of automation at the readers service.				

SECTION E

Keywords: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD).

S/N	What are the challenges facing Library Automation at the readers service section in the University of Benin Library?	S/A	A	D	S/D
19	Improper planning is one of the challenges facing library automation at the readers service.				
20	Insufficient automation facilities and tools is one major problem affecting library automation at the readers service.				
21	Absence of stable power supply is a constraint facing automation at the readers service.				
22	Lack of adequate funding is a major problem affecting automation at the readers service.				
23	Shortage of ICT skilled staff is a factor affecting library automation at the readers service.				
24	Digital divide is a challenge facing the effectiveness of library automation at the readers service.				
25	Wrong attitude of staff to automation program is a problem facing automation at the readers service.				

