Abstract
In the current dispensation, there is need for educational institutions particularly in Nigeria to move and be in tune with technological innovations across the globe. This will also help to position the institutions better to deliver effective and efficient educational services and thereby avail their products the opportunity for better education, learning and research in order to compete favourably across the globe.

Contemporarily, we have diverse means and media to process, organize and disseminate relevant information to community of library users; electronic library is one of such media and very prominent among the academic libraries. It is a way out to meeting users’ information curiosities at appropriate time, place, and convenience, of course it provides access to wide range of relevant information resources via computers,
Telecommunications and associate technologies, users can enjoy the euphoria of information access from distant libraries without being physically present. It as an organized collection of relevant digital resources designed to aid teaching, learning and research. This paper is an opinion oriented by nature, its discussed critical issues in terms of concepts, setting up requirements, benefits, challenges and way forward of electronic library set up in higher institutions for appreciable education, learning and research transformation agenda.

Keyword: electronic library, academic library, users, education, technology

Research of the university’s faculties and students. In the ancient times, before the advent of paper, information sources or collections of libraries were in media such as clay tablets, bones, stones, animal skin, parchment, papyrus etc, for example Ashurbanipal’s (Assyrian king of Mesopotamia Valley) thirty thousand (30,000) information collections were in clay tablets. Library collections later and popularly became in book format particularly with the advent of Guttenberg’s machine in the 15th century, when paper production became the order then.

The 21st century has brought diverse information media due to revolutions in technology, media such as computer, CD-ROM, Diskette, tablets, Websites/pages etc. In order to meet up with contemporary users’ information needs, academic libraries found it compelling and necessary to expediently subscribe to the current tide of information and communication technology (ICT) to facilitate information service delivery for users’ satisfaction. Chinga (2014) stated that advances in technology have changed the way even books are published. The concept, organization, function and management of libraries have also changed; the very natures of resources now in the custody of libraries require innovative and new ways of storage, management and dissemination. The new types of resources that are now available in virtual formats have changed the way library used to function as it now has to manage physical and electronic resources.

Information technology/information and communication technology (IT/ICT) is a technology that enhances data and information transfer among people, organizations etc. for the essence of communication. Ahmed (2018) stated that the advent of information and communication technology (ICT)
has brought certain changes in the format of information resources and technique of service delivery in libraries. Because of this development, many information resources are now published along with electronic copies while some only come in electronic format without any printed hardcopy. Books are now been published in print format with an attached CD-ROM for the benefit of electronic library services, some notable journals, magazines and newspapers have dual formats (print and electronic). Obviously, this modern trend is a transformational development from traditional information formats and services to digital or electronic information formats, devices and service. The academic libraries have seen the need to key into electronic library/digital library (E-Library) as a way out, this, is to meet users information curiosities at appropriate time, place, and at users’ convenience. Daniel (2014) stated that the American Digital Library Federation came up with a notion of e-library with emphasis on the traditional underpinnings of libraries selection, access and preservation as well as the fact that e-libraries will necessarily be set-up to serve particular community, hence, defined electronic libraries as organizations that provide the resources including specialized staff, to select, structure, offer intellectual access to, interpret, distribute, preserve the integrity of, and ensure the persistence over time of collections of digital works so that they are readily and economically available for use by a defined community or set of communities. Electronic library disseminate/provides information to user through the aid and combination of certain current technologies such as computer systems, printers, scanners, network environment, server, switches, routers, internet, and databases.

CONCEPT OF ELECTRONIC LIBRARY
Overwhelmingly, the growth rate of information resources and the challenge of manual system in information service delivery make it difficult to continue in the conventional way of library information services. Often, the term "e-library" has various interchangeable or synonymous terms such as "digital library," "virtual library," and "library without walls." Indeed, it has been defined variously by different scholars and/or organizations, depending on their perception of the concept, but elementarily, e-library can be viewed to be a library where provision of information service is carried out electronically. It is a collections of electronic information resources created, managed and maintained in order to serve the information needs of a
particular user population. Ahmed (2018) see electronic library as an alternative concept to digital library. Digital library has been previously used but the two concepts are presently being used interchangeably. It is a library that is charged with the responsibility of assembling digitized or electronic information resources, skilled personnel and infrastructural facilities for easy accessibility and use.

E-library of course provides access to wide range of relevant information resources via computers, telecommunications and associate technologies, users can enjoy the euphoria of information access from distant libraries without being physically present. It as an organized collection of relevant digital resources designed to aid teaching, learning and research. Indeed, libraries in terms of service delivery have been changed and repositioned by the wave of technology, libraries greatness and vibrancy are now measured based on level of automation, subscriptions to standard and recognized databases, internet connectivity, accessibility to other libraries and quality of collection. Libraries that are manually driven are termed traditional while those who are ICT driven as identified are termed modern libraries, any library that accept to be traditional, accepts to be extinct and irrelevant.

Electronic libraries cannot exist without e-resources; e-resources have become part of the modern library and have brought new challenges and opportunities. According to Emeghara (2014), an electronic resource is a resource which requires access through computer or any electronic product that delivers a collection of data, be it text, referring to full text bases, electronic journals, image collections, other multimedia products and numerical, graphical or time based, as a commercially available title that has been published with an aim to being marketed. Electronic resources can be referred to any information source that is encoded and can be accessed through the use of a computer remotely or directly. Remote access is through computer network while direct access is through carriers such as CD-ROMs, Hard Disk, diskettes etc designed to be used with the aid of computerized device. Hence, e-resources such as e-books, e-journals, online databases, web sites etc could be accessed online, whether license/open databases. Examples are, Health Internetwork Access to Research Initiative (HINARY www.who.int/hinary), Access to Global Online Research in Agriculture (AGORA, www.aginternetwork.org), Online Access to Research in the Environment (OARE, www.oare.oaresciences.org), EBSCOhost (Sales
EBSCOhost databases and ebooks) ProQuest (Sales ProQuest databases and eBrary), Lexis Nexis (Law publications), Hein Online (Law publications) and Science Direct (Elsevier, www.sciencedirect.com). Electronic resources can also be accessed off-line through CD-ROM (Compact Disk Read Only Memory), Diskettes, Hard Disk eGranary Digital Library etc.

Pertinent and worthy to state, two major categories of e-library services exist, thus: off-line services and on-line services. Off-line service entails the provision of electronic information service through gathered CD-ROMs of certain e-books, e-journals, offline web based e-books or downloads of certain collections from open or licensed electronic information sources (mostly in PDF format) thus, stored and organized in computer systems for the accessibility and use by clientele directly. A good example of off-line service is the eGranary Digital Library, its serves researchers or users where there is no Internet/bandwidth provision. According to Missen (2005) the eGranary Digital Library uses innovative off-line storage technology to deliver millions of digital documents to schools, clinics, hospitals, and homes in the developing world with little or no Internet connectivity. It provides instant access to a broad range of Web pages, text, audio, video, animations, and multimedia resources from within the subscribed institution’s local area network (LAN), even when the Internet connectivity is non-existent.

Whereas, the on-line service is an electronic information service that requires Internet connectivity for the needed information, either from a Website or on-line database to be accessed. On this service, libraries pay subscription fee or charge to enable them access the needed information resources. Although, the free open information sources can also only be accessed with the Internet connectivity. Academic libraries in this current age can function better if online services are available, effective internet connectivity is sacrosanct to the survival and relevance of academic libraries. Acquisition of e-resources for library users could be through in-house digitization of hard copy library collections, acquisition of born digital materials (subscriptions to e-books, databases and e-journals), Pay-per-view (e-Books) and patron-driven/selection. Issues of cost, scope, proprietary rights, agreements, license, technical supports and training should fundamentally be adhered to before acquisition of e-resources.

Electronic library can be set-up within traditional library building and thus have hybrid library. E-library needs a very conducive atmosphere for users'
psychological stability and comfort for effective study and research. The e-library should be fully air conditioned, ergonomically sitting posture and good source of light.

COMPONENTS FOR ELECTRONIC LIBRARY SET UP

- **Trained & Skilled Personnel**
  Knowledge is the chief driver of every human endeavour and as such cannot be isolated in the establishment of electronic library. Personnel such as library professionals, information technology professional, and vendors are fundamentals to setting up electronic library, they can come together and share knowledge on establishment of electronic library; they can share knowledge on its location, targeted audience, content etc. After establishment, the electronic library can further service deployment effectively to users only with qualified personnel who can organize e-resources, manage and troubleshoot network, identify and correct network or computer challenges, handle
interpersonal relationship, and can install system and application software.

- **Space/Location**
  Electronic library even though accessible without physical presence in the library can be located in a conventional library and be called hybrid library, all necessary or relevant hardware such as computer systems are placed in a location hence occupy space in the library. Electronic library location should be conducive for research and learning, well ventilated, ergonomically set-up, air conditioned and window blinded.

- **Hardware & Software**
  Establishment of electronic library cannot be complete without necessary hardware deployments, Hardware constitute the physical parts of computer related devices that we can see and feel (some are termed peripheral such as Flash drives, CD-ROM, external hard disc etc). Hardware to be deployed may include computer system, computer/network server, switches, routers, WiFi devices, scanners, printers/network printers etc. Hardware cannot function without relevant software deployment. Software is an application or programs that can be used to operate the hardware/computer (system software and application software). Software to be deployed may include computer operating system, network server operating system, antivirus software, and application software such as adobe reader, Microsoft office etc. the combination and deployment of necessary hardware and software can ease access and utilization of electronic library resources.

- **Communication Pathway/Network**
  Electronic library is accessed via network, among different users at different place and concurrently, it should enable share of resources (hardware, software and e-resources) among the client computers and hence the need for the following components and services for effective resource sharing, access and communication. Thus, computer server, Local Area Network (LAN), Wide Area Network (WAN), switches, WiFi devices, routers, bandwidth subscription/Internet Service Provider (ISP).

- **Content (Digitized/Born Digital E-resources)**
This refers to electronic information resources such as e-books, e-journals/articles, databases (e-Granary, AGORA, HINARY, EBSCOHOST, OARE, PROQUET, Elsevier Science Direct etc) that serve as sources of relevant information for research and learning. These resources if in hardcopy state can be digitized using certain technologies such as scanner and can also be acquired as born digital information resources in digitized format, for example book attached CDs, Internet accessed and downloaded documents and subscribed offline and online databases. Electronic resources may be in the form of image, video, audio, animation, web page, text, program, markup standards (Hypertext Markup Language), metadata standards (e.g Dublin Core) http://dublincore.org/). Electronic information resources weather digitized or born digital must be conformed to certain formats to be able to be accessed and utilize, for example portable document format (PDF), PPT (Power point document) etc.

- **User Community/Target Audience**
  This refers to library clients such as students and staff of a particular citadel of learning who needed to be studied and know what their information need is and in line with curriculum design of the institution. The user community must be computer literate to be able to judiciously access and utilize electronic library resources.

**THE NEED FOR ELECTRONIC LIBRARY**

The primary aim of academic library in our higher institutions of learning is to support learning, teaching and research. Library is the “heart” of any academic institution; academic activities revolve around academic libraries. Therefore, to a large extent, the quality of our learning institutions is measured by the library service provision because of its unique contributions in the over-all institution’s objective. Library collections must not only have quality and current books/journals, but also modern information sources in electronic formats, such as e-books, e-journals, subscribed online databases, internet in a box (e-granary) etc. Besides the availability of electronic information resources, such information resources must be easily accessed and retrieved by potential users at any time and convenience. Consequently, the demand for effective use of electronic library resources in our institutions of learning, calls for the need to ensure that users have effective and efficient
access to these resources, particularly with the advent of modern information technologies. Furthermore, users should be acquainted with how to search, identify, locate and select, and use electronic library resources relevant to their information needs. Contemporary library users, because of certain factors beyond their control prefer to use the library in a seamless manner. Libraries should strive to meet the need of their customers; this will keep the library relevant, up-to-date and avoid extinction as proliferations of technologies in various forms and functions have left libraries without choice than to embrace them to actualized and serve the users in a more modern way and convenience.

**BENEFITS OF ELECTRONIC LIBRARY**

Of course, and unequivocally, the electronic library provide numerous benefits to library users in their pursuit of knowledge and information. It provides learning flexibility and enhances access to digital information resources among students of higher education 24/7; this implies that learning can continue when time permits, particularly for those who are constrained by other engagements. Anasi (2012) stated that deployment of digital libraries in higher education acts as a catalyst for change, because it promotes the emergence of educational community that shares thousands and thousands of digital resources in a networked environment. Thus, technology of digital libraries helps to reduce the gap between those who have access to information and those who do not; this is often termed as digital divide. Digital libraries encourage resource sharing among members of a scholarly community. According to Rahman cited by Ikpaahindi (2006) these benefits include free flow of information resources, maximization of information resources, faster provision of information resources and literature support to users, avoidance of duplication of effort, and reciprocal exchange of local publications. Digital libraries are accessible in classrooms, and from homes as well as in central library facilities where access, display, and tools could be shared. Remote access provides possibilities for various field trips, virtual speakers, and access to rare and unique materials in classrooms and at home. This entails better learning through broader, faster and better information and communication service.

Attah (2014) opined that benefits of electronic library could entail the followings.
• Access to a wide range of resources.
• Ease of storage and manipulation of resources locally.
• Conservation and preservation of information resources.
• Ease in searching.
• Service to non-traditional students.
• Unlimited opening hours.
• Remote access to information.
• Significant time saving.
• Thousand and millions of users can access the same content at the right time.
• Sharing of electronic resources is easy.

CHALLENGES OF ELECTRONIC LIBRARY SET UP
Integration and setting-up of e-library of course can be associated with so many challenges such as fund for initial set up. Some of these challenges could be immediate in identification while some could be later after the set-up. Some of the challenges as identified by Daniel (2014) include issues of the technical architecture components, such as high speed local networks, Internet connection and relational databases that support a variety of e-formats. Also, full text search engines to index and provide access to resources, availability of server such as web server.
Right staff, trained with professional skills such as hardware & software skills, customer service skills, teaching and presentation skill etc, is one major challenge in setting-up e-library. The library schools particularly in Nigeria need to thoroughly review their curriculum on current trends, to capture relevant courses on information and communication technology (ICT); this will provide background knowledge to students of Library and Information Science (LIS) to be able to provide information services through electronic library and to compete favorably with their counterparts. The new role of e-librarian particularly could also be spelt out such as metadata producer, multi-media user, good communicator, innovator, team player, project manager, educator, evaluator etc.
According to Pavani (2007), over the years, digital libraries face many challenges ranging from issues of interoperability, 24/7 operation, multi-language, multi-legislation situation, multi-types of information and ever
changing digital formats; information asset security, digital preservation and intellectual property rights. He further affirmed that the last two are seem to be the most crucial, many efforts have been devoted to the study of these two topics and to finding solutions to the problem they represent in the use of digital contents.

Acquisition of e-resource is very challenging. Selection and acquisition process is far more complex, liaising with supplier, organizing trials and demonstrations, formal evaluation. Acquisition of e-resources can often take longer than hard copy information resources and can however, sometimes frustrate the expectations of users.

Challenges of licensing and pricing, the relationship between publishers and libraries have changed overtime because of e-resources. In licensing, the provider is placed in much stronger position to determine who uses the information and how. Pricing model and variation cannot be ascertained by the library, should the pricing be based on use, size of user community, specific time frame? This is hard to determine, on most cases the publisher already has a fixed price for the e-resources and this makes e-libraries set-up and maintenance very expensive.

Other challenges could be issues of continuous institutional funding, systems and technological obsolescence, power instability, content creation, digital preservation and changes in format, organization of e-resources, authentication, personalization and authorization, marketing, liaison and training, cross searching & linking and priority issues.

CONCLUSION/WAY FOREWARD

Electronic libraries have undoubtedly contributed immensely to the provision of information services for library users and unequivocally have come to stay as means to an end. The dynamic world of information resources and their various formats and contemporary library users’ information demands have left libraries particularly the academic libraries with no option than to have electronic library. However, it may not in total replace the physical existence of conventional/traditional libraries and sometimes the later can be combined with the former to have what is known as hybrid (function as a hybrid - traditional and modern) libraries.

Challenges such as inadequacy of funds, fast obsolescence of applied technology, lack of technical knowhow and show how, inconsistent power
supply, etc could be managed and overcome through available means such as provision of alternative power supply, training and retaining and to be up-to-date on emerging technologies. Cost for initial set-up may be so tasking but once its introduction, management and maintenance can be bearable. It is therefore advised, for posterity, keeping up with current trends and in library’s relevance to the academic community particularly higher institutions of learning, setting-up and maintenance of electronic library should form part of the institution’s budgeted allocation.

REFERENCES
building workshop on the acquisition and management of e-library for librarians in public tertiary institutions.


