
Distance Learning in the Digital Age: Comments on the Role and Challenges to University Libraries in Nigeria

By

BLESSING C. ONU

*Department of Library and Information Science
Federal Polytechnic, Nekede,
Owerri*

And

C.P.C ONWUBIKO

*Department of Library & Information Science
Abia State University, Uturu.*

Abstract

The paper discusses distance education in Nigeria in this digital age of information superhighway. It periscopes the role university libraries could play to implement and realize the goals of the distance learning system. The paper gives an overview of distance education in Nigeria, which it reveals started right from the 1940s. The fundamental goal of distance education is to provide university education to working class citizens and train high level manpower for the nation. The contributions of the university libraries that run this programme is to provide the collection, services and facilities including ICT base library and information service for the successful implementation and achievement of the goals of DLS. The paper has among others identified the challenges to include university libraries inability to digitize their information resources, virtualize their libraries, create LAN and WAN, lack of ICT skills by staff, paucity of funds, improper accommodation for e-library service to distance education students, low level of ICT development in the country, etc. The paper concludes by being optimistic that if a holistic and strategic positive and proactive approach is adopted the challenges of providing e-based library and information service to distance education students by university libraries would be surmounted.