
**UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT OF HYBRID LEARNING MODELS
ON LIBRARY SERVICES IN THE NIGERIAN TERTIARY
EDUCATION SYSTEM**

***Adedayo Temitope Akinyemi**

Gani Belo Library Federal College of Education, Osiele, Abeokuta, Ogun State Nigeria.

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***Corresponding Author: Adedayo Temitope Akinyemi**

Gani Belo Library Federal College of Education, Osiele, Abeokuta, Ogun State Nigeria.

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the impact of hybrid learning models on library services within the Nigerian tertiary education system. Employing a mixed-methods approach, data was collected from 300 respondents comprising students, library staff, and academic staff across 10 institutions in South-West Nigeria through surveys and interviews. The findings reveal a significant "adaptation gap," where a rapid user shift towards digital resource consumption (e.g., online exam repositories, mean =4.4; e-books, mean =3.8) is met with institutional constraints. Key challenges identified include inadequate funding for digital resources (mean =4.7), unreliable power and internet connectivity (mean=4.6), and insufficient staff training (mean =4.0). Consequently, student perceptions of service adequacy were neutral to negative (overall mean=2.9), with particular dissatisfaction regarding the sufficiency of online resources and the adaptation of physical spaces. The study concludes that libraries are struggling to transition from traditional, physical-centric models to dynamic, service-oriented hubs for hybrid learning. It recommends strategic interventions, including dedicated funding for e-resources, robust infrastructure investment, continuous staff development, and a proactive marketing of existing digital services to bridge the identified gap and enhance library relevance in the evolving educational landscape.

KEYWORDS: Hybrid Learning, Library Services, Tertiary Education, Nigeria, Digital Resources, Adaptation Gap, Infrastructure.

INTRODUCTION

The emergence of hybrid learning models in the Nigerian tertiary education system has significantly transformed the way education is delivered. Hybrid learning, which combines face-to-face instruction with online learning, has grown in popularity due to technological advancements and global trends in education. The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated this transition, necessitating a shift in how educational institutions operate. As hybrid learning continues to evolve, it has profound implications for various aspects of academic support services, particularly library services. Traditionally, libraries in Nigerian tertiary institutions have played a central role in supporting research, teaching, and learning through physical resources and in-person services. However, the shift towards online learning and the integration of technology in education have raised new challenges and opportunities for library services. These changes require an examination of how libraries are adapting to support the evolving needs of students and faculty in hybrid learning environments. This research aims to explore the impact of hybrid learning models on library services in Nigerian universities and other tertiary institutions. It will investigate how libraries are adjusting their resources, services, and operations to meet the demands of hybrid learners and identify the challenges and opportunities presented by this new learning paradigm.

Research Questions

1. How has the adoption of hybrid learning models affected the usage of library resources in Nigerian tertiary institutions?
2. What are the key challenges libraries face in supporting hybrid learning?
3. How have Nigerian tertiary institution libraries integrated technology and online resources to cater to hybrid learners?
4. What strategies have libraries implemented to ensure equitable access to resources for both in-person and online learners?
5. To what extent do students and faculty members perceive the adequacy of library services in a hybrid learning environment?

Research Objectives

The primary objectives of this research are to:

1. Examine the ways in which hybrid learning models are influencing the demand for library services in Nigerian tertiary institutions.

2. Identify the strategies and adaptations made by libraries to support hybrid learning, including resource provision, technological integration, and service delivery.
3. Investigate the challenges faced by libraries in the adoption and implementation of hybrid learning models.
4. Assess the effectiveness of current library services in meeting the needs of hybrid learners and educators.
5. Explore the opportunities for enhancing library services to better align with the hybrid learning environment.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Existing literature highlights the increasing integration of technology in education and the shift towards hybrid learning across the globe. Research by Radford et al. (2020) and Mhlanga & Moloji (2020) has examined how libraries in higher education institutions globally have adapted to hybrid and online learning, noting shifts towards digital resource management, e-libraries, virtual reference services, and the creation of flexible learning spaces.

In Nigeria, studies like those of Akinbote (2021) and Alabi & Oyediran (2020) explore the challenges faced by libraries in providing adequate digital resources and services, citing infrastructural deficits, limited access to technology, and inadequate training. While there is some understanding of hybrid learning's impact on teaching and learning, less research has been focused on its specific effects on library services within the Nigerian context.

This literature gap presents an opportunity to explore how libraries in Nigerian universities are responding to hybrid learning models and whether they are adequately meeting the needs of students and faculty.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study adopts a combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches. The design is appropriate for capturing the multifaceted impacts of hybrid learning models on library services, exploring both statistical trends and deeper contextual insights.

Study Area

The study focused on tertiary institutions in Nigeria, including universities, polytechnics, and colleges of education. These institutions represent diverse educational frameworks and provide insight into how hybrid learning affects library services across different academic environments.

Population of the Study

The population includes librarians, academic staff who integrate library resources into their teaching and research, library assistants, and IT personnel involved in library operations, undergraduate and postgraduate students utilizing library services.

Sampling Techniques

Purposive sampling was employed to select 10 institutions with active hybrid learning models within southwest Nigeria. Within these institutions, stratified random sampling was used to ensure representation among library staff, students, and lecturers.

Sample Size: Library Staff: 50 respondents. Students: 200 respondents. - Lecturers: 50 respondents.

Data Collection Methods

Survey Questionnaires: Structured questionnaires was be used to collect quantitative data on frequency and type of library services utilized, challenges encountered in hybrid learning contexts, perceptions of the effectiveness of library services in supporting hybrid learning. The Likert scale of (1 - 5) where 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree will measure satisfaction and perceptions.

Semi-structured interviews was conducted with key informants (e.g., head librarians, IT managers, and senior academic staff) to further explore adaptation strategies for hybrid learning, institutional challenges and success stories.

Instrument Validation.

The survey questionnaire and interview guides went through content validation by educational technologists and librarians to ensure relevance.

A pilot study with 20 participants was conducted to assess the reliability of the instruments. A Cronbach's alpha value of 0.81 was obtained which certified reliability of the instruments.

Data Analysis

Data from the questionnaires was analyzed using descriptive statistics (mean, and percentages) to summarize responses. Interview transcripts were analyzed using thematic analysis, identifying patterns and insights related to library adaptation and user experiences.

RESULTS

Table 1: . Demographic Profile of Respondents.

| Category | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|----------------|-----------|----------------|
| Students | 200 | 66.70% |
| Undergraduate | 150 | 75% |
| Postgraduate | 50 | 25% |
| Library Staff | 50 | 16.70% |
| Academic Staff | 50 | 16.70% |
| Total | 300 | 100% |

Table 2: Frequency of Library Service Usage (Mean Scores, 1-5 scale).

| Library Service | Mean Score |
|--|------------|
| Accessing past questions/exam repositories online | 4.4 |
| Using the library's e-book collection | 3.8 |
| Accessing online databases (e.g., JSTOR) | 3.5 |
| Physical visit to the library building | 3.2 |
| Using virtual reference services (e.g., email, chat) | 2.1 |
| Attending online library training/workshops | 1.8 |

Table 2 reveals a distinct shift towards digital resource consumption, with high use of exam repositories and e-books. However, there is a significant underutilization of interactive and instructional services like virtual reference and online training. This indicates a pattern of independent, transactional use of digital libraries rather than engaged, support-seeking behavior. The moderate score for physical visits suggests the library space remains relevant, likely for focused study and access to non-digital materials.

Table 3: Student Perceptions of Library Services (Mean Scores, 1-5 scale).

| Statement | Mean Score |
|---|------------|
| I find it easy to access and use the library’s digital resources from off-campus. | 3.1 |
| The library staff are responsive and helpful. | 3 |
| The library provides sufficient online resources for my hybrid courses. | 2.8 |
| The library’s physical space is well-adapted for hybrid learning. | 2.5 |
| Overall, library services effectively support my academic success. | 2.9 |

The overall perception is neutral to slightly negative (Mean = 2.9). The lowest scores relate to the adequacy of online resources and the adaptation of physical spaces. This points to a critical gap: while students are trying to use digital resources, the collection is perceived as insufficient. The physical library has not yet been reconfigured to serve the new needs of hybrid learners (e.g., for group projects in hybrid courses or as a technology-rich hub).

Table 4: Level of Service Implementation (Library Staff Responses, %).

| Service/Initiative | Not Implemented | Planned/Partial | Fully Implemented |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| Expansion of e-book/e-journal subscriptions | 10% | 75% | 15% |
| Reconfiguring physical spaces | 25% | 60% | 15% |
| Online information literacy tutorials | 15% | 70% | 15% |
| Virtual reference services (live chat) | 40% | 45% | 15% |
| 24/7 remote access to digital resources | 5% | 50% | 45% |

Table 5: Significance of Challenges (Library Staff, Mean Scores 1-5).

| Challenge | Mean Score |
|---|------------|
| Inadequate funding for digital resources | 4.7 |
| Unreliable power supply/internet connectivity | 4.6 |
| Inadequate ICT infrastructure | 4.4 |
| Lack of staff training on new technologies | 4 |
| Digital literacy gap among students | 3.8 |
| Resistance to change among staff or users | 3.2 |

Tables 4 and 5 tell a cohesive story of institutional struggle. Libraries are caught in a cycle of wanting to adapt (Table 4 shows most initiatives are only planned or partially implemented) but being hamstrung by profound systemic barriers (Table 5). Funding and infrastructure are the dominant, interconnected challenges. The successful implementation of 24/7 access (45%) is a positive step, but the inability to fund the resources to be accessed undermines its value. The high score for "lack of staff training" indicates a human resource gap that compounds the technological and financial issues.

Biggest Challenges and Suggested Improvements (Qualitative Data)

Student-Cited Challenge: The most frequent challenge cited by students (65%) was unreliable internet access off-campus, followed by insufficient online textbooks or journals for courses (20%).

Staff-Cited Opportunity: A common theme from library staff was the "Opportunity to transition from a physical warehouse to a dynamic, 24/7 digital service hub, reaching more students than ever before."

Key Recommendation from Staff : The most frequent recommendation to management was "Create a dedicated and sustained annual budget line for e-resource subscriptions and platform maintenance."

CONCLUSION

The adoption of hybrid learning models has significantly strained library services in Nigerian tertiary institutions, creating a pronounced "adaptation gap." While user behavior has swiftly shifted towards digital resource consumption, institutional response has been hampered by chronic under funding, inadequate infrastructure, and a slow pace of strategic change. Consequently, libraries risk becoming increasingly peripheral in the hybrid learning ecosystem. Students perceive the library's digital offerings as insufficient, and staff feel ill-equipped to bridge the gap. The vision of the library as a proactive partner in hybrid education remains largely unfulfilled, not due to a lack of awareness, but because of foundational resource constraints.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

- **Prioritize Funding for Digital Resources:** Establish a dedicated and substantial annual budget faculties.
- **Invest in Core Infrastructure:** Upgrade campus-wide internet connectivity and ensure reliable power supply (including solar-powered backups) to support digital library services.
- **Develop a Strategic Library Transformation Plan:** Create and fund a 5-year strategic plan specifically for modernizing library services, encompassing technology, staffing, and space reconfiguration.
- **Aggressively Promote Existing Services:** Launch a sustained marketing campaign to educate students and faculty on how to access and use existing e-resources and virtual services like reference chats.

- Initiate Progressive Space Redesign: Begin incremental changes to the physical library to create flexible spaces for collaboration, multimedia production, and quiet study, aligning with hybrid learning needs.
- Forge Strategic Partnerships: Collaborate with ICT departments for technical support and with academic departments to align e-resource acquisition with curriculum needs.
- Implement Continuous Staff Training: Mandate regular training programs for library staff on emerging technologies, digital literacy instruction, and providing support in virtual environments. This is crucial for shifting the library's service paradigm.
- for e-resource subscriptions, including e-books, journals, and databases relevant to all

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