

DISADVANTAGES OF MOBILE LIBRARY USAGE FOR LIBRARY

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ABSTRACT

Mobile library back in the days refers to a vehicle usually a van or bus moving through the city or going to rural areas to make sure everyone gets the opportunity to read or learn. However in this modern days, mobile library also refers to the digital library that can disseminate information to patrons without even coming to library. All the same concept like a traditional mobile library would. However, even with all the advantages that a mobile library brings, there are some disadvantages of it. This study discussed about the disadvantages of mobile library in detail, focusing on a few aspects. This study will benefit the management of the library as well as the patrons. For solutions to these disadvantages, a further study would be needed.

Keywords: *mobile library, disadvantages, mobile technology, digital library*

INTRODUCTION

According to Walter, (1920 cited Bikos & Papadimitriou, 2017) in the 1800s, the term travelling libraries were used to describe a hand-pushed trolleys or horse drawn carriages that are filled with boxes containing a collection of 25 to 50 books, delivered by to any intended deposit stations. By the middle of the 20th century though the term gradually changes to mobile library. Mobile library, also known as book mobile, aim to serve the public and spread the information to everyone especially to rural, small or suburban areas that did not have a library building for them to go. Based

on International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) stated that “any library service that does not stay in one place is classed as a Mobile Library”. Hence the concept of mobile library is this era.

During its first debut, mobile library is known to be a specific vehicle designed to be use as a library according to Paterson & Low (2010 cited Vassilakaki 2014). The term mobile library nevertheless, began to be used interchangeably with the increasing years and much improved technology. Soon, it is beginning to refer to information services that is offered on mobile devices state Needham & Ally (2008 cited Vassilakaki 2014). Librarians are also in the move to ensure that they communicate well with their patron and providing in the most appropriate and effective ways their web content. (Nalluri, & Gaddam, 2016). In this literature review, the term mobile library refers to the latter meaning.

This research will explain to you about the disadvantages of mobile library. This literature review is based on a few countries such as Nigeria, Scotland, Pakistan, China, Canada and Croatia. There are three major disadvantages stated in this literature review, first is the mobile library is found to be costly. This statement is concluded from the previous study from a fair amount of researchers, Pažur, (2014), Bennett Thomas, (2015), Liu, & Briggs, (2015), Wilders, (2017) and a few others. Second, mobile library impose a great jeopardizing of privacy. The first study that can be found from Lambert, et. Al, (2015) and Bennett Thomas, (2015). Last but not least of the disadvantages is the technical issue of mobile library. This statement is proposed by Oluwaseye, & Abraham, (2013), Akpokodje, & Lawal, (2015) and Soraya, & Ameen, (2018).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Costly

The cost that a mobile library have to go through is known either by patrons of a library, or the management of the library especially. It is proved by a study done by Elahi, Islam, & Begum, in 2018 where the patrons believed that it would be difficult for libraries to afford a mobile library. According to Ward, Freeman, & Nixon, 2015 as cited by Wilders in 2017, Mobile library are relatively expensive with addition that is has a strict

usage restriction as stated by LaMagna, Hartman-Caverly, & Danowitz. (2015 cited Wilder 2017). Therefore, sometimes the library consider to buy more printed books as it lasts longer and many titles are still available in printed formats only. (Wilders, 2017).

Technologies to upgrade to a mobile library are also expensive (Beyene, 2017) especially with a budget constrain (Khan, & Bhatti, 2017) in a developing country. From these studies, it is also clear that the number of patrons being able to access and own mobile phones such as smartphones to be growing, which means that library must step up their game and provide more digital libraries. This is agreed by Liu and Briggs, 2015. However in their study, it is found that the way libraries offer mobile library services can be intimidating as it requires time, money and personnel. The combination of mobile and a traditional library, which combined analogue and digital method, also called as hybrid library takes up a lot of expenses in term of subscriptions and library space (Thomas, 2015). Carlucci Thomas also state that some library also choose not to follow this trend due to lack of time as well as the costs it would give (2010 cited Pažur 2014).

Privacy issues

Privacy issues in librarianship has been discussed in a few studies. It is known that attitudes towards it is different in every culture. The ALA Library Privacy Guidelines for E-Book Lending and Digital Content Vendors (2015) states that “most e-book and digital content vendors collect and use library patron data for a variety of reasons, including digital rights management, consumer analytics, and user personalization.” (Tummon, & McKinnon, 2018). It is mentioned that privacy and security is one of the disadvantages from having a mobile library (Oluwaseye & Abraham, 2013).

Libraries are required to work with multiple vendor to negotiate for the patron's privacy protection. Companies such as Adobe and Amazon who has their own privacy policies also has to be handled by the library. For a traditional library, libraries who want to protect their patron's privacy will delete all the circulation record right after the material is returned as an act of declining to keep records of patrons' in activity library to resist the force from government requests as said by Estabrook (1996 cited Lambert, Parker, & Bashir 2015). However, mobile library usually do not have control over their patron's records. The data also cannot be deleted, modify and shielded (Lambert, Parker, & Bashir, 2015). The integrity of

scholarly media is also a challenge for the library along with the challenge of keeping them in a safe, secure and effective manner (Soraya & Ameen, 2018; Kerr, & Pennington, 2018).

Technical issue

The technical issues of a mobile library such as speed really bothers the patrons (Soraya, & Ameen, 2018). The system response can be slow at times (Pu, et. Al, 2015) and low bandwidth problem is one of the problems (Elahi, Islam, & Begum, 2018). The patrons are also more likely to give up if the time taken to find an information is taking too long according to Pendell & Bowman (2012 cited Pažur 2014). Low usage of a mobile library can also happen due to lack of internet and power instability that should be handled by state government and school management (Oluwaseye, & Abraham, 2013). Next technical issue that has been mentioned includes difficulties of off campus patrons to access the resources through a proxy server and also compatibility issues among different browser, especially when it involves different type of devices (Liu, & Briggs, 2015). Another type of technical issues involves the space that promotes social networking, leaning, collaborative and independent research among students, (Akpokodje, & Lawal, 2015) and information technology (IT) infrastructure (Khan, & Bhatti, 2017).

From all of the research that has been studied, a fair number of disadvantages has been discussed. Technical issue is the most discussed followed by costly and lack of privacy.

Table 1. Review of analysis

AUTHORS	COSTLY	LACK OF PRIVACY	TECHNICAL ISSUE
PAZUR (2014)	/		/
LAMBERT ET AL. (2015)		/	
THOMAS (2015)	/		
OLUWASEYE & ABRAHAM (2013)		/	/
LIU & BRIGGS (2015)	/		/
AKPOKODJE & LAWAL			/
WIDERS (2017)	/		
SORAYA & AMEEN (2018)		/	/

TUMMON & MCKINNON (2018)		/	
PU ET AL. (2015)			/
KHAN & BHATTI (2017)	/		/
BEYENE (2017)	/		
ELAHI ET AL (2018)	/		/
KERR & PENNINGTON (2018)		/	

CONCLUSION

Mobile library brings quite a number of disadvantages despite the all perfect image that it has. It is undeniable that a mobile library would definitely be expensive. This is mostly due to the state of the material itself, the electronic books, journals and many more that is easy to access anywhere and anytime. However, the price even with all the goodness could still be unaffordable especially by small institutions in developing countries. This is proved through all the studies that has been discussed all over the countries involving few countries. This is also an evident that this matter is not just a minor problem, in fact it is really giving effect to the librarianship world. The next issue that has been discussed is the lack of privacy in mobile library. Privacy is a vital to anyone. Therefore, the fact that anyone can access the patrons' record is sometimes intimidating especially if the patron wanted to do his or her research or reading in secret. The last point is the technical problem that has been faced by few libraries mainly in the developing countries. Those libraries are having problem with the speed of the internet itself and as a result, the information will take longer time to be found. This will lead to low morality among the staffs as they need to spend unnecessary time waiting for the information to process. At the end of the day, the performance of the staffs will reduce periodically.

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