

# Design Evaluation of Academic Library Websites in Nigeria

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## ABSTRACT

*Users are beginning to yearn that the academic library website becomes a replacement for the block and mortar libraries. The goal of the research was to evaluate academic library websites in Nigeria against recommended web design elements and use the outcome to rank the sites in the order of their performance on the availability scale. Sixteen (16) academic library websites selected were those identifiable, findable and verified to be available over a period of one month. The heuristic inspection method was adopted for the study. A designer's checklist comprising 47 web design elements (4 identification details, 5 primary web elements, 18 web design features and 20 web content elements derived from the literature) was used for the investigation. Each academic library was evaluated against the checklist and available items were recorded as 1(Yes/Available) and 0(No/Not available). The performance on the availability scale was used to rank the academic library websites. The research revealed that many of the items verified were available on the academic library websites. However, the researchers did not find name of webmaster and e-mail address of 9 and 11 academic library websites respectively; search tool, contact address and location information could not be found on a number of academic library websites; most of the primary web elements were available and placed on the top left and centre left of the homepages while web design features and web content elements were available in various degrees on the websites. On the availability index, American University of Nigeria Library, Yola was ranked 1 with availability index of 78.72 while Bayero University Kano Library was ranked 16 with availability index of 31.91. It was concluded that none of the academic library websites had all items verified. It was recommended that all the academic library websites should review their website design regularly so that they can be up to date on the availability of recommended web design elements.*

**Keywords:** Design evaluation; Design elements availability index; Design elements availability ranking; Academic library websites.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

University library websites have sprung up all over the world wide web as they become an extension of the block and mortar fixed libraries. The several advantages of

library websites over the block and mortar counterparts make them a source of information on the go and without registration of presence at the physical location of the libraries. University library websites are expected to perform all the services rendered by the block and mortar