The Usage of Electronic Academic Database Resources Among Lecturers and Postgraduate Students in Western Delta University, Oghara, Delta State, Nigeria

Oghenetega Ivwighreghweta & Saadatu Eireyi-Fidelis

Abstract:

This study investigated the usage of electronic academic databases resources by lecturers and postgraduate students in Western Delta University, Oghara, Delta State, Nigeria. Four objectives with conforming research questions guided the study. The study adopted a descriptive research design. The population of the study consisted of 134 lecturers and postgraduate students in WDU. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire with the title "Usage of Electronic Academic Database Resources Questionnaire (UEADRQ)". Data was analyzed using frequency counts and percentages. The findings showed that there was a high level of awareness of the electronic academic database by the lecturers and postgraduate students. JSTOR, Elsevier, DOAJ, ProQuest, Science direct, and LexisNexis where been put to maximum usage. Meanwhile, NUC Virtual library, HINARI, Research4life, AGORA and EBSCO Host were used least frequently. The purposes of using the electronic academic datasets were for research, writing of seminar/conference paper, assignments/seminar presentations and getting up-to-date information with subject areas. Lack of search skill, slow internet bandwidth and incessant power outrage were some of the problems preventing against the effective usage of electronic academic database resources in WDU. Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that electronic academic databases are vital information resources that need to be readily available in academic libraries for use by lecturers and students in the pursuit of their academic advancement. This study recommended that orientation, workshop and seminar should be organized by librarians and university authorities on how to acquire the needed search skills in order to be able to make adequate use of these electronic academic database resources in order to advance academic excellence.

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The Usage of Electronic Academic Database Resources Among Lecturers and Postgraduate Students in Western Delta University, Oghara, Delta State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the usage of electronic academic databases resources by lecturers and postgraduate students in Western Delta University, Oghara, Delta State, Nigeria. Four objectives with conforming research questions guided the study. The study adopted a descriptive research design. The population of the study consisted of 134 lecturers and postgraduate students in WDU. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire with the title "Usage of Electronic Academic Database Resources Questionnaire (UEADRQ)". Data was analyzed using frequency counts and percentages. The findings showed that there was a high level of awareness of the electronic academic database by the lecturers and postgraduate students. JSTOR, Elsevier, DOAJ, ProQuest, Science direct, and LexisNexis where been put to maximum usage. Meanwhile, NUC Virtual library, HINARI, Research4life, AGORA and EBSCO Host were used least frequently. The purposes of using the electronic academic datasets were for research, writing of seminar/conference paper, assignments/seminar presentations and getting up-to-date information with subject areas. Lack of search skill, slow internet bandwidth and incessant power outrage were some of the problems preventing against the effective usage of electronic academic database resources in WDU. Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that electronic academic databases are vital information resources that need to be readily available in academic libraries for use by lecturers and students in the pursuit of their academic advancement. This study recommended that orientation, workshop and seminar should be organized by librarians and university authorities on how to acquire the needed search skills in order to be able to make adequate use of these electronic academic database resources in order to advance academic excellence.

Keywords: Electronic, Usage, Databases, Information Resources, Academic, Postgraduate students, Western Delta University

INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of information and communication technology (ICT) has led to major changes in how libraries and information centers provide services and information that are widely accessible and accessible simultaneously from anywhere (Toteng et al., 2013 and Obiamalu et al., 2021).

The World Wide Web has become the most reliable and potent source of information access at this time, providing access to academic journals, books, technical reports, theses and dissertations, and courseware (Sudhier & Seethalekshmi, 2013).

One of the most recent technical advancements and modernizations in libraries is the use of electronic academic database resources (EIRs). It is a priceless tool for education-related research development, teaching, and learning. This is a result of offering professors and students up-to-date and pertinent information resources to encourage their participation in academic activities, which enhances their academic capabilities (Tiemo) (2017).

Academic libraries now routinely include electronic databases as acknowledged and established parts of their collections. Journals, e-books, reference materials, seminar reports, conference papers, and other items are frequently found in these databases (Obiamalu et al., 2021).

They include resources that need payment as well as those that are free to use. According to the author, "non-fee based databases resources are those supplied online after one year of publication for free such as DOAJ, AJOL, book boon, and PDF drive.com." Furthermore, "non-fee base databases resources are those offered online after one year of publication for free" and "are those that most academic libraries purchase through subscription in order to give students, lecturers, and faculty members with online information resources such as EBSCO host resources, Scopus, Questia, ProQuest, Emerald, and HINARI" (Tiemo, 2017).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Several studies have been carried out on the usage of electronic academic databases resources in Nigeria. Globally, it has become an established element of academic libraries' collection. Technological growth and advancement have also changed traditional library services and introduced various kinds of electronic information resources which are attractive for libraries and its users (Obiamalu et al. 2021).

According to Lawal's study from 2021, most respondents used Internet search engines rather than specialist databases and full-text resources. Attending library training programs resulted in only 6.8% of participants becoming familiar with electronic resources. Lack of proper searching abilities was the main issue with the non-use of electronic database resources.

Tiemo (2017) discovered that professors and graduate students at federal and state universities used a variety of EIR databases. The survey discovered that these individuals' levels of utilization were generally high because the majority of respondents claimed that they used these resources frequently to fulfil their academic goals.

EBSCO hosts databases such as Elsevier, Thomson, AGORA, JSTOR, Questia, Scopus, ProQuest, Emerald, DATAD Science Direct, Springer Link, DOAJ, OARE, HINARI, TEEAL, AJOL and MIT Open Course Ware. EIRs databases, according to Kofi, are among the most extensively utilized academic database resources (2014). Print resources are used significantly less frequently than database resources.

According to Ndinoshiho's survey results, 87.3% of respondents said they used academic databases for class assignments (2010). Meanwhile, 54.2% of respondents said they used them to read newspapers, while 28.8% said they used them for other purposes. Furthermore, Ndinoshiho found that the examined electronic database was visited by 83.3

percent of users to obtain information for a school assignment, while only 10.1 percent used it for administrative chores.

In their survey, Shukkla and Mishra found that 44 (88%) of the academics acknowledged using electronic databases for research, 19 (38%) for publishing articles, 15 (30%) for looking for pertinent material, and 11 (22%) for keeping up with knowledge (2011).

Okunoye found that postgraduate students had limited awareness of electronic databases and little access to the accessible online databases, with JSTOR recording the highest percentage of familiarity with electronic databases (21.67%) (2020).

The goal of this study is to ascertain the extent to which lecturers and postgraduate students at Western Delta University in Oghara, Delta State, use electronic database resources.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

For the purposes of their research, lecturers, researchers, and postgraduate students now have access to information resources thanks to the availability of electronic academic databases in academic libraries in Nigeria. However, it has been noted in the majority of the literature, including those by Okunoy (2020), Lawal (2021), and Obiamalu et al., (2021), that there is a declining trend in the usage of electronic academic database resources among lecturers and postgraduate students who do not really use these electronic databases optimally in universities in Nigerian. The researcher's own observations revealed a similar circumstance at Western Delta University. These phenomena might not be unrelated to ignorance of the scholarly databases that are available. The association between knowledge of and use of electronic academic database resources among professors and postgraduate students may not, however, have been the subject of any empirical study. We conducted this study to better understand how lecturers and graduate students at Western Delta University in Oghara, Delta State, Nigeria use electronic academic databases. From the results, we have made suggestions for how to encourage more use of these databases.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The major drive or purpose of this study is to determine the usage of electronic academic database resources by lecturers in Western Delta University, Oghara. The specific objectives of the study are to:

1. identify the types of electronic academic database resources that lecturers are aware of in Western Delta University, Oghara.
2. identify the purpose of usage of electronic academic database resources among the lecturers and postgraduate students.
3. know the electronic academic database resources that are available and used by lecturers and postgraduate students in WDU.
4. determine the problems preventing the effective use of electronic academic databases resources among the lecturers and postgraduate students in WDU.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions guided this study:

1. What are the types of electronic academic databases resources that lecturers and postgraduate students are aware of in Western Delta University, Oghara?
2. What is the purpose of usage of electronic academic databases resources among the lecturers and postgraduate students?
3. What are the electronic academic databases resources that are available and used by lecturers and postgraduate students in WDU?
4. What are the problems preventing the effective use of electronic academic databases resources among the lecturers and postgraduate students in WDU?

METHOD

The descriptive survey design was used for the investigation. There were 134 lecturers and postgraduate students in the study's population. A self-created questionnaire titled "use of electronic academic databases resources" was the research tool employed for this study. 129 of the 134 questionnaires that were issued were collected. For this investigation, the total enumerative and accidental sampling strategy was used. The tool utilized to get the data was a questionnaire. To analyze the data, frequencies and percentage statistics were used.

RESULTS

Demographic characteristics of the study

Table 1

Respondents	Percentage (%)
Lecturers	99 (77%)
Postgraduate students	30 (24%)

Table 1 shows that out of 129 respondents, 99 (77%) are lecturers, while 30 (42%) of them are postgraduate students.

Research Question One: What are the types of electronic academic databases resources that lecturers and postgraduate students are aware of in Western Delta University, Oghara?

Table 2

Academic databases	Aware (%)	Not aware (%)	Remark
DOAJ	75 (58%)	54 (42%)	Aware
AJOL	81 (63%)	48 (37%)	Aware
EBSCO Host	100 (78%)	29 (22%)	Aware
JSTOR	101 (78%)	28 (22%)	Aware
HINARI	38 (30%)	91 (70%)	Not aware
AGORA	86 (67%)	43 (33%)	Aware
ProQuest	98 (76%)	31 (24%)	Aware
Research4life	78 (60%)	51 (40%)	Aware
LexisNexis	88 (68%)	41 (32%)	Aware
SCOPUS	75 (58%)	54 (42%)	Aware
NUC virtual library	81 (63%)	48 (37%)	Aware
Elsevier	30 (24%)	99 (76%)	Not aware
Science direct	67 (52%)	62 (48%)	Aware

Information on lecturers' and postgraduate students' knowledge of electronic academic database resources is shown in Table 2 above for WDU. Thirteen (13) academic databases that are being taken into consideration. Of these, eleven (11) were known to the responders. JSTOR, which was ranked first as the most scholarly database they were aware of, was known to the majority of the 101 respondents (78%) of the sample. EBSCO Host 100 (78%) came next in that order. This result is consistent with the research of Tiemo (2017), which found that postgraduate students and professors at federal and state universities were aware of the various types of EIR databases and that usage of these databases was generally high.

Research Question Two: What are the electronic academic databases resources that are available and used by lecturers and postgraduate students in WDU?

Table 3

Academic database	Used (%)	Unused (%)
DOAJ	98 (75%)	31 (24%)
AJOL	58 (45%)	71 (55%)
EBSCO Host	48 (37%)	81 (62%)
JSTOR	109 (84%)	20 (16%)
HINARI	12 (9%)	117 (91%)
AGORA	43 (33%)	86 (67%)
ProQuest	87 (67%)	42 (33%)
Research4life	30 (23%)	99 (77%)
LexisNexis	72 (56%)	57 (44%)
SCOPUS	71 (55%)	58 (45%)
NUC Virtual library	20 (16%)	109 (84%)
Elsevier	102 (79%)	27 (21%)
Science direct	76 (59%)	53 (41%)

Table 3 shows the electronic academic databases resources that are available and used by lecturers and postgraduate students in WDU. A sizable number of the respondents indicated that some of database were not used 851 (659%), such as NUC Virtual library 109 (84%), HINARI 117 (91%), Research4life 99 (77%), AGORA 86 (67%) and EBSCO Host 81 (62%). Meanwhile, JSTOR 109 (84%), Elsevier 102 (79%), DOAJ 98 (75%), ProQuest 87 (67%), Science direct 76 (59%) and LexisNexis 72 (56%) were most frequently used. This suggests that lecturers and postgraduate students used these academic database electronic academic database resources on average. This finding is consistent with that of Tiemo (2017), who found that lecturers and postgraduate students used various types of EIR databases and that their utilization of EIR databases was typically high in the federal and state university libraries in south-south Nigeria.

Research Question Three: What is the purpose of usage of electronic academic databases resources among the lecturers and postgraduate students in WDU?

Table 4

Purpose	Percentage (%)
Research	61(47%)
seminar/conference paper	31 (24%)
assignments/Seminar presentations	15 (12%)
up-to-date with subject	13 (10%)
up-to-date with subject	13 (10%)
literature searching	9 (7%)

Table 4 demonstrates the intent behind the use of electronic academic database resources by WDU instructors and graduate students. The majority of respondents, 61 of them constituting 47% said they used the academic database for research. Seminar/conference paper number 31 (24%) came next. This may be due to the fact that the majority of the responders are researchers who are still actively conducting research and using it to publish articles. This result is consistent with Shukkla and Mishra's (2011) study, which found that 44 (88%) of the researchers accepted using electronic database resources for research.

Research Question Four. What are the problems militating against the effective use of electronic academic databases resources among the lecturers and postgraduate students in WDU?

Table 5

Problems	Percentage(%)
Lack of search skill	42 (32%)
Slow internet bandwidth	30 (23%)
Incessant power outrage	21 (16%)
Irrelevant information	12 (9%)
Download delay	11 (8%)
Inadequate infrastructure for accessing electronic resources	9 (7%)
Lack of assistance by library staff	4 (3%)

Table 5 outlines the obstacles that prohibit WDU professors and postgraduate students from making effective use of the materials given by electronic academic databases. Majority 42 people (32%) reported being unable to search, 30 people (23%) experienced slow internet speed, 21 people (16%) reported frequent power interruptions, and 12 people (9%) reported irrelevant information. This shows that the biggest issue discovered was an inability to search efficiently. This finding is similar with Lawal's (2021) findings, which showed that the fundamental difficulty associated with the non-use of electronic database resources was a lack of basic searching skills. This finding backs with Lawal's findings.

CONCLUSION

The academic database resources at the library were used by lecturers and postgraduate students at WDU for research, drafting papers for seminars and conferences, and for assignments and presentations at seminars. Some of the issues preventing effective use of electronic academic database resources included a lack of search skills, slow internet connection, and constant power outages.

RECOMMENDATION

The following recommendations are given based on the study's findings:
1. Workshop, orientation and seminar should be organized by librarians on how to acquire the needed search kill in order to be able to make adequate use of all electronic academic databases resources available in the Library. Lecturer and postgraduates' attendance should be made mandatory by the university authority.
2. The University Libraries should make every attempt to acquire a backup generator. This will be especially critical if there is a breakdown in the delivery of electricity.

3. University libraries should invest in dedicated capacity as well as high-speed Internet connectivity. This will help to put an end to the slow speed that has been experienced while downloading information resources.

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