

## Perceived Usefulness of E-books by Undergraduates in Two Selected Private Universities in Kwara State, Nigeria

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### Abstract

*This study examined the perceived usefulness of e-books by undergraduate students in two selected private universities in Kwara State, Nigeria. Survey design was adopted while the target population was undergraduate students from Al-Hikman and Landmark Universities. Three research questions were developed to guide the study. The findings on the students' preference for e-books to printed books reveal that majority of the undergraduates indicated preference for e-book to print book. Findings show that undergraduates use e-books because it allow multiple access and use from remote locations, possession of better quality graphics, display flexibilities and colour. Similarly, they can easily copy and paste from e-books, couple with ease of storage, ease of reading on the screen and ease of sharing among colleagues. The findings further reveal that majority of undergraduates use e-books 2 to 3 times a month, followed by once in a month and 2 to 3 times a week. Majority of undergraduates perceived e-books is useful because it allows them to download and bookmark for future reference; and also that e-books contains citations and hyperlinks that links to other useful resources. The major challenges reported confronting undergraduates in their use of e-boos are development of eye problem, inadequate access to the internet and incessant power outage. Based on the findings, the study recommend among others that since majority of respondents prefer e-books, the two universities are encourage to make provision for more e-books. Doing this may perhaps change the mind of the limited percentage that indicated preference for print books over e-books.*

**Keywords:** *Perceived usefulness, Electronic books, Use of electronic books, Private universities, Undergraduate students.*

### Introduction

Library users of all categories are now embracing digital collections, although most libraries will continue to offer both print and digital collections for many years to come. New purchases of journals, magazines, and abstracting and indexing services are focused toward digital version. Similarly, e-books are now beginning to gain pace in library collections and among library users.

In academic libraries, e-book collections are built around titles that are Web-accessible. Online e-books work with libraries' and patrons' desktop computers, laptops, and other existing hardware; they also fit logically with other electronic collections. A definition from Armstrong et al, (2002) typifies librarians view of e-books as any piece of electronic text regardless of size or composition but excluding journal publications, made available electronically (or optically)

for any device, handheld or desk-bound that includes a screen. E-books are “text in digital form, or digital reading material, or a book in a computer file format, or an electronic file of words and images” (Rao, 2003). E-books are downloadable and are portable if they are stored in light portable devices such as pocket personal computers (PPCs) or smartphones.

With e-books and electronic texts, the errors in printed books can be discovered and changed easily. Electronic texts would allow new texts to be downloaded and installed almost immediately. Despite the numerous relative advantages of the e-book in e-book research, perhaps its biggest problems are the issues of the ownership of electronic text, its temporary nature, incompatibility, low adoption rates and problems of access in developing countries. There is little doubt that the e-book has superior features such as its formatting attributes and updating capabilities. Indeed several studies (e.g. Wilson & Maceviciute, 2016; Society of Chief Librarians and Publishers Association, 2015) have found that e-books’ usage will continue to escalate over the coming years and that by 2020, 90% of all books sold will be e-book titles and newspapers will have gone entirely electronic.

Snowhill (2001) identified e-books to include, text books, referencing materials and encyclopaedia. E-books are not new as they have been around since the 1970s (Askey, 2010) and have become available to a wider audience, through schools and libraries in Europe and America but largely through personal subscription to fee paying and free sources in developing countries such as Nigeria.

For most undergraduates in higher institutions nowadays, the issue of cost and accessibility has influence on their preference for digital books compared to other information resources. Users of academic libraries would prefer digital books for many reasons. These may include but not limited to the linked from and to indexing and abstracting databases; access from the user’s home, office, or dormitory whether or not the physical library is open; the library getting usage statistics that are not available for print collections; saving space and relatively easy maintenance. When total processing and space costs are taken into account, electronic collections may also result in some overall reductions in library costs (Bailey, Scott, & Best, 2015).

Such a dramatic switch from print collections to digital collections has an impact on library users and users’ perceptions of the library. Many researchers have attempted to predict or measure that impact through surveys, transaction log analysis, and other research techniques. Unfortunately, the conclusions of various studies sometimes seem contradictory, and it may be difficult to judge which research studies offer valid and reliable findings.

Many studies have found that users believe the main advantage of electronic journals is convenience of accessing articles any time from their desktop computer. Users perceive electronic resources in particular electronic journals and the Internet to hold many advantages examples of which includes; the ability to link to additional information, the currency of materials, comfort of use, fullest with no missing pages, immediate availability of any particular issue or edition, equal access to everyone, accessibility, browsing ability, portability, and availability of back files. Faculty members at Association of Research Libraries (ARL) institutions cited convenience, timeliness, and the ability to search text as the most important factors in choosing electronic journals over print (Muhammad-Al-Shboul, 2016; Sejane, 2017).

In other surveys, graduate students identified reasons for using electronic journals to include the ability to link to additional information, the ability to search, and the currency of materials (Tennant, 2016; Anderson & Raines, 2017).

While electronic books lack the tactile appeal and some traditional advantages of their print counterparts, they can provide increased convenience and useful features unique to the electronic medium like remote access and the possibility for multiple patrons to use electronic reference materials at once. A great advantage of e-books is the ability to search the full text with more speed and versatility than when perusing print, particularly the ability to search within aggregated collections of electronic books. Other benefits of using electronic e-book include: information resources being available 24/7, the ability to access the book and work from any location. Internal hyperlink and more frequent updating of contents usefully linked with other library resources, such as the catalogue or a Meta search engine or worthy to mention.

The technology has also made possible a growth in the number of publications with shorter publishing times. The rising costs of paper books and the potential to link multimedia resources to e-books have major impacts on the strategies used by university libraries in their support of scholarly communication (Maceviciute, Borg, Kuzminiene & Konrad, 2014; Kuzminiene, 2014; Velagić, 2014).

The success of the e-book technology seems to rely heavily on the ease of the reading process. Users regard the layout of the e-book on screen as a strong motivating force; also important are the ease of navigation through a clear user interface, and a clear and logical structure to support readers' sense of place in the e-book. The optimal use of screen real estate is even more important with mobile e-books than with desktop computers. Features available on e-book readers can be extensive. Apart from page turning, scrolling of text, and searching, more advanced e-book related functionalities are constantly being developed. Wilson (2003), Wilson and Maceviciute (2016) through collecting user feedback on e-books usage, found that users appreciate a quick and accurate search function, an annotation function, and the inclusion of hypertexts and dictionaries on the reader.

As preference for e-books grows in the culture at large, academic environments have been ahead of general population trends regarding e-books and reference materials by countries in Europe and America. However, researchers in developing countries are skeptical about the device used in viewing e-books, technological devices like handhelds, laptops etc are very expensive and not all students in developing countries can acquire them. Also, e-book usage has a limited audience in developing countries because most citizens don't have access to internet services. Most academic libraries in Nigeria for instance have small collections of electronic books either from on-going digitization projects, e-library and subscription to e-book databases but the libraries hardly have analyses of the usage of their e-book collections which in most cases are often very limited (Ekenna, Ukpebor, 2012; Igbeka & Okpala, 2004).

Students, especially those in more developed countries, have embraced technology; as a result, e-books have become increasingly popular among these students, due to the perceived convenience that e-books offer (Elias, Phillips & Luechtefeld 2012: 262). In order to adopt the use of e-books successfully, universities, as well as other academic institutions, need to provide

students with the necessary resources and instructors to use them (Sun, Flores & Tanguma 2012: 63). The resources which are necessary to enable students to use e-books include e-readers or e-book reading devices. Examples include the desktop computer, iPad, Amazon Kindle, the Sony e-Reader Touch, Personal Digital Assistants (PDA), as well as mobile telephones (Weisberg 2011: 191; Wu & Chen 2011: 295). However, more importantly, students need to perceive e-books as useful. This perception has resulted to problem. This is because, there are mixed feelings among students on the use of e-books in an academic setting, as some students still prefer to use traditional printed books (Gregory 2008: 266).

Though the use of electronic resources like the Internet is gaining wide recognition among Nigerian undergraduates however, significant low usage was reported for e-books, bibliographic databases and e-journals. These attitudes might be a result of a lack of awareness about the e-resources provided by the library or due to ineffective channels of communication on campus as reported in the literature. It is important that students are greatly informed about the use and usefulness of e-book in higher institutions as most of them have had wrong perception about the usefulness of e-book to their academic activities. Some students have clearly indicated that they prefer using print books, because they perceive e-books as hard to navigate, despite the 'anywhere-and-anytime' access that e-books supposedly offer (Gregory 2008: 267). Students are also reluctant to use academic e-books, because some of the emotional elements are missing from the e-book experience, which are more immediately apparent in the use of print books (Shin 2011: 261). Weisberg (2011) reports that over time students' attitudes and behaviours will become more receptive to using e-books. The preference for print textbooks may thus be a reflection of their familiarity, rather than their actual experiences, with either print books or e-books (Sun, Flores & Tanguma 2012: 65). Research has shown that students have found searching for academic e-books much easier and faster than searching for print books and that they also have not experienced any major difficulties while using e-books (Wu & Chen 2011: 301).

### **Statement of the Problem**

The growth of electronic publications is reshaping the nature of collections and the mode of delivering and accessing information in libraries. The traditional print resources nowadays face challenges from their electronic counterparts due to faster and timely delivery of information as well as in improved access (Adeleke, Dare-Samuel & Emeahara, 2016). Due to this, the rate of production of electronic materials has exceeded that of print-based publications (Varsani, 2016). Despite the growth rate in the publication of e-resources, e-book adoption and use rates in Nigeria are still low particularly among undergraduate in private universities. Quite a number of reasons may affect the usefulness of e-books by the undergraduates in Nigerian private universities. Such may include limited availability of funds. It is clear from statistics that e-books are used (Sprague, 2008) but research reports on their perceived usefulness particularly from the perspectives of the undergraduates in the private universities context in Kwara State, Nigeria is mixed and not clear. Similarly, there are limited studies available on use of e-books' by undergraduates in private universities in Kwara State, Nigeria. These are the identified gaps in knowledge that this study endeavours to solve. Hence, the study investigated the perceived usefulness of e-book by undergraduate students in selected private universities in Kwara State.

### **Objective of the Study**

The main objective of the study was to investigate the perceived usefulness of e-book by undergraduate students in selected private universities in Kwara State. The specific objectives of the study were to:

- i. determine the undergraduate students' preference for e-books or printed books
- ii. examine the perceived usefulness of e-books by the undergraduate students.
- iii. determine the use and frequency of use of e-books by undergraduate students
- iv. identify the challenges faced by undergraduate students when using e-books.

### **Research Questions**

To achieve the stated objectives, the following research questions will be asked:

- i. What is the undergraduate students' preference for e-books and printed books?
- ii. What is the perceived usefulness of e-books by the undergraduate students?
- iii. What are the use and the frequency of use of e-books by the undergraduate students?
- iv. What challenges are encountered by the undergraduate students when using the e-books?

### **Literature Review**

Connaway (2007) defined e-book as a publication that characterized an electronic format, utilizing Internet technology to make it easy to access and use. Rao (2003) defined e-book as text in digital form, or book converted into digital form, or digital reading material, or a book in a computer file format, or an electronic file of words and images displayed on a desktop, note book computer, or portable device, or formatted for display on dedicated e-book readers. Furthermore, there is still confusion over the definition of an e-book (Tedd 2005). The JISC (2003) report promoting the uptake of e-books in Higher and Further Education identifies that source of confusion, and refer to it as a barrier to the uptake of e-books within the academic context, and that it's also responsible for the lack of an adequate definition. Armstrong et al. (2002) defines an e-book as any piece of electronic text regardless of size or composition (a digital object), but excluding journal publications, made available electronically (or optically) for any device (handheld or desk-bound) that includes a screen. Vassiliou and Rowley (2008) propose a two-part definition: An e-book is a digital object with textual and/or other content, which arises as a result of integrating the familiar concept of a book with features that can be provided in an electronic environment ... e-books, typically have in-use features such search and cross reference functions, hypertext links, bookmarks, annotations, highlights, multimedia.

There are some factors that influence the reading of e-books from the literature. Gregory (2008: 269) found that students' main reasons for using e-books were "research, followed by homework assignments or reference. Students indicated that they "read small portions of text on screen combined with printing portions of digital text needed and do not spend long periods of time reading from a computer screen, opting instead to read from printouts" (Gregory 2008: 270).

Gregory (2008: 268) found that "students used e-books in a manner similar to e-journals by randomly accessing segments of text rather than ... [reading] sequentially". Thus, students use e-books in the same way they do with e-journals, indicating a "use not read" approach. Various kinds of academic e-books are available such as textbooks, reference materials such as



dictionaries, scholarly monographs; directories, technical reports, working papers, conference papers and proceedings, official publications, trade literature and theses (Armstrong & Lonsdale 2003). However, in many research conducted in an academic setting, it is evident on closer inspection that, although authors refer to 'e-books' their investigations have mainly been around 'e-books in a classroom setting.

Tella, Oseni, Oguntayo and Akanbi (2018) examined the perception and usage pattern of e-book among LIS undergraduate students from selected five universities in Nigeria. Questionnaire was used to collect data from the respondents. Five research questions were developed and answered. The findings demonstrated that LIS undergraduate students use e-books more compare to print books. The results also reveal that LIS undergraduate students have positive perception of e-book as it enhance learning effectiveness, assist to finish course contents/outlines; makes reading faster; easy to use and with clear graphical illustrations. The usage pattern of e-books among LIS undergraduate students is majorly for research purpose and the majority is highly satisfied with reading e-books. The major problem encountered by the students with e-books is the difficulties reading on the computers or internet, followed by the cost of e-book reader. The study recommended based on the findings that university authority and library of the participating institutions should make e-books readers available in large quantity. Doing so is assumed will increase the use of e-books and further arouse the interest of other students.

Students are also reluctant to use e-books, because some of the emotional elements are missing from the e-book experience, which are more immediately apparent in the use of print books (Shin 2011: 261). Weisberg (2011) reported that over time students' attitudes and behaviours will become more receptive to using e-books. The preference for print textbooks may thus be a reflection of their familiarity, rather than their actual experiences, with either print books or e-books (Sun, Flores & Tanguma 2012: 65). Research has shown that students have found searching for academic e-books much easier and faster than searching for print books and that they also have not experienced any major difficulties while using e-books (Wu & Chen 2011: 301).

Oduwole and Akpati (2003) identified some of the constraints to accessing e-resources which also relate to accessing e-books. These include insufficient number of terminals available for use despite high demand and in adequate electricity supply. A major problem however identified by Egberongbe (2011) are lack of information retrieval skills for exploiting electronic resources, thus making the level of usage of resources by students is very low. Asheroft and Watts (2005) noted that high cost of hardware, software and particularly internet service providers were significant barriers to the provision of electronic resources. Isah (2010) found that Slow internet access (30.0%), lack of constant power supply (30.0%) were the major factors inhibiting the use of e-resources. However, other less limiting factors were non-availability of e-resources relevant to information needs (20.0%) and dislike for reading from screen (13.3%). In addition, Damilola (2013) found that poor electricity supply greatly hindered the use of electronic information resources. This was represented by 117(46.8%) of the respondents and poor internet connectivity was another hindrance which greatly affected the use of electronic information resources, this was confirmed 100(40%) of the respondents.

Other factors were insufficient skills, financial problem, poor training programme and excessive academic workload.

Olasina and Mutula, (2014) in their study on the acceptance and use of e-books in Nigeria, highlighted the problems of access. Even though this study found that more respondents had preference for print books, the high preference corroborates the findings of Christianson and Aucoin (2005) that print books are mostly used than e-books. Littman and Connaway (2004) reported a slightly different result with preference for e-books in a study at the University of Duke. Rowland and Nicholas (2008) in a study at the University of Illinois reported students were aware that e-books were offered by the library for their use, while 45% was not aware. These are similar to Levine-Clark (2006) in a study at the University of Denver that reported 56% of graduate students and 52.9% of the faculty were aware that the university library offered e-book services.

Wiese and Plessis (2014) in a study on the battle of the e-textbook: libraries' role in facilitating student acceptance and use of e textbooks in South Africa. The study reported that only 15% indicated that they would prefer e-textbook; 41% indicated that they would prefer a print textbook. However, 43% said that they would like to have both. A promising statistic suggests that combining the two offerings might be a strategy that publishers could use initially in order to motivate students to use e-textbooks, while still having the safety net of a printed copy. Students' preferences for e-textbooks are in line with their actual behaviour, as 70% of the students reported that they never or rarely take their electronic marketing textbooks to class; and only 13% indicated that they take their electronic marketing textbooks to all their classes. Similarly, De Oliveira (2012) reported that students were indecisive about statements such as "I know where to access e -books". When asked more specifically about their use of e-books in the library, the results were not very positive. Only 44% of respondents indicated that they knew how to access the e-book collection at the library; 24% said they rarely make use of it; 57% had never made use of e-books from the library. Only 15% indicated that they use the electronic collection occasionally and only 3% made use of e-books weekly.

The synopsis of previous related studies above have confirmed the fact that the results on the perceived usefulness or use of e-books by the undergraduate students are mixed and at the same time very limited particularly in the context of private universities in Nigeria.

## **Methodology**

### **Research Design**

This study adopted survey design, because it generally gathers data with the intention of describing the existing conditions, identifying standards against which existing conditions can be compared (Cohen & Manion, 1994). Survey research design is a research projects which collects standardized data about large numbers of people. Alan and Crow, (2001) argue that the key characteristic of a survey is the collection of the same information about all cases in a sample. The survey design was considered appropriate in this study as it allowed the use of questionnaires for data collection and enabling reaching out to a sizeable sample for representation thereby leading to generalisation of findings to the entire population of the study.

### **Population of the Study**

Best and Khan (2006) believe that population is any collection of individual that have one or more characteristics in common which are of interest to the researcher. Therefore the targeted population for this study comprised all the undergraduate students of Al-Hikmah University and Landmark University, Kwara State. According to the estimated statistics of students' record as the time this study was conducted in 2016, Al-hikmah University has 4,102 undergraduate students while Landmark University has 2,382. Therefore, the total population for this study is 6,484.

### **Sample and Sampling Procedure**

This study adopts stratified sampling techniques which ensure and guarantee that every respondent in the population have equal chance of being selected to participate in the research. From the population of 6,484, the sample size selected is 200. Using Israel (2003) model in determining the sample size which states that taking sample size for  $\pm 3\%$ ,  $\pm 5\%$ ,  $\pm 7\%$ , and  $\pm 10\%$  for precision levels where Confidence Level Is 95% and  $P=.5$ . If  $\pm 7\%$  was taken for precision as the population is 6,484, then the sample size should be 197. This justifies the 200 sample size selected for this study.

### **Instrument for Data Collection**

Questionnaire was used to collect data from the respondents. Questionnaire was chosen because it usually helps the researcher to reach out to a large sample within a short time. The questionnaire adopted both close and open-ended format focusing on perceived usefulness of e-book. The design of the questionnaire was informed by the objectives, research questions and reviewed literature in the study. The questionnaire divided into three sections; Section A required information on the bio-data of the respondents, Section B contained information on undergraduate use of e-book while section C featured information on perceived usefulness of e-book to undergraduate students.

### **Validation of the Instrument**

Validity is the degree or the extent to which an instrument measures what is expected to measure. To achieve this, the instrument was experts in Library and Information Science whose area of interest is in line with this study. The instrument was modified based on the suggestions and comments from the experts. This justifies validity of the instrument for it use in this study.

### **Procedure for Data Collection**

The questionnaire was administered during the time when undergraduate students were preparing for their second semester examination. A total of 200 copies of questionnaire were administered to the students; 60% (120) copies were administered to Al-hikmah University Undergraduates and 40% (80) copies were administered to Landmark University Undergraduates. Informed consent of the respondents was sought before the administration of the instrument and they were all given voluntary opportunity to participate in the study. Responses were collected immediately to guide against high attrition. Eventually, out of the 200 copies of questionnaire administered, 170 copies were returned completely filled and good for data analysis.

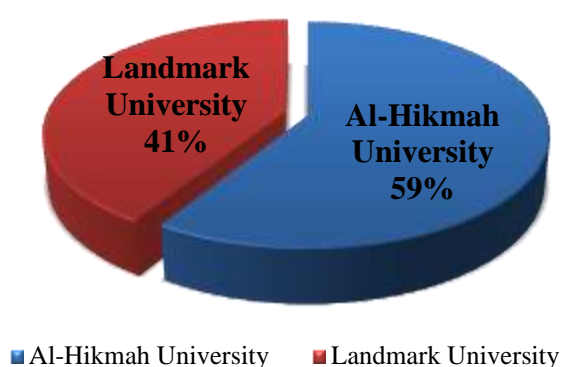


### Data Analysis

The data collected was analysed using descriptive statistics including simple percentage and frequency count. The descriptive statistical tool was adopted because of its relevancy in analyzing the nature of data collected.

### Results

#### Distribution of Respondents by Institution



**Fig. 1: Distribution by Institution.**

Fig 1 indicates that 100 (58.8%) of the respondents were from Al-Hikmah University while 70 (41.2%) of the respondents were from Landmark University. Fig 2 indicates the distribution of the respondents by college/faculty. The results reveal that 30 respondents (17.6%) were from the College of Education, another 30 respondents (17.6%) were from College of Agricultural Sciences. Furthermore, 25 respondents (14.7%) were from the College of Humanities, 25 (14.7%) were from the College of Natural Sciences, and 22 (12.9%) of the respondents were from the College of Business and Social Sciences, 20 respondents (11.8%) were from College of Management Sciences, while the College of Science and Engineering has the least number of respondents 18 (10.6%).

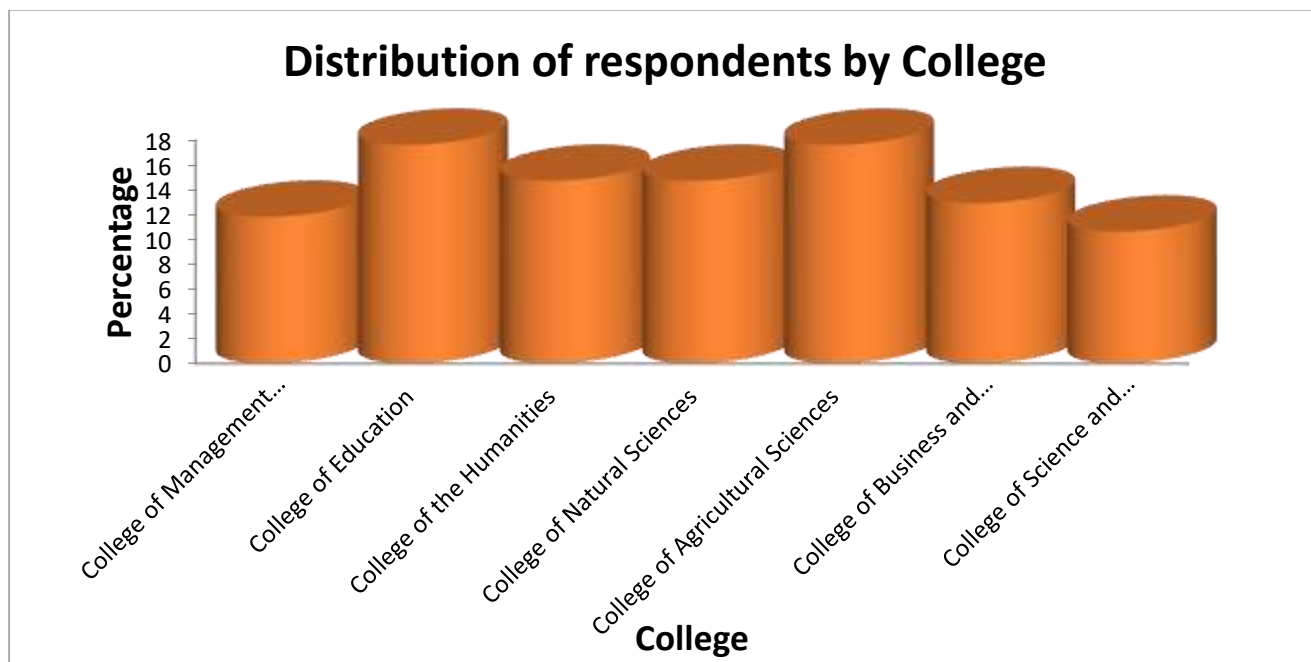


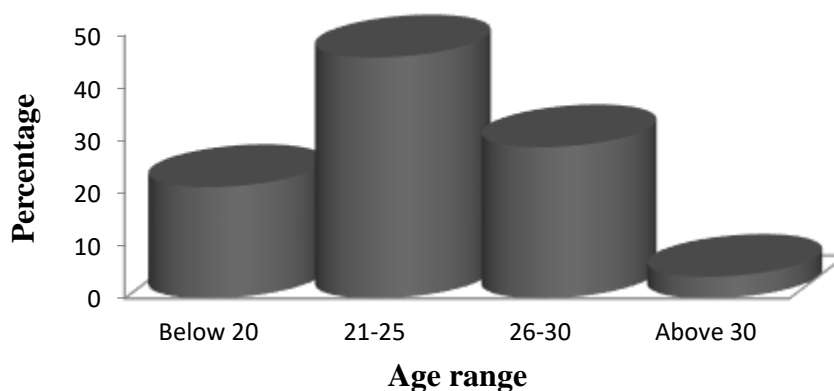
Fig 2: Distribution by College/Faulty

**Table 1: Distribution of the Respondents based on Gender**

Gender	Frequencies (N)	Percentage
Male	57	33.5
Female	113	66.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 1 shows the distribution of the respondents base on gender. It is clear from the table that the majority of the respondents were female, 113(66.5%), while 57(33.5%) respondents were male.

### Percentage distribution by age



**Fig 3: Age Distribution of Respondents**

Fig. 3 shows the distribution of the respondents with respect to age, it ranged between 20 and 30 and above years. The majority of the respondents, 78 (45.9%) were between 21 to 25 years of age, 49(28.8%) respondents were between 26 to 30 years of age. Others, 36(21.2%) respondents had their age fallen below 20 years and 7(4.1%) respondents had age between 30 years and above.

**Table 2: Distribution of Respondents by Year/Level of Study**

Level	Frequency (N)	Percentage%
100	17	10.0
200	50	29.4
300	57	33.5
400	46	27.1
500	0	0
Total	170	100.0

Table 2 shows the distribution of the respondents with respect to their level/year of study. The majority of the respondents, 57 (33.5%) were in 300 level/year 3, 50 (29.4%) respondents were in 200 level/year 2, 46(27.1%) respondents were in 400 level/year 4 and 17(10%) of the respondents were in 100level/year 1.

Use of e-book by undergraduates

**Table 3: Use of e-book**

Do you make use of e-book	Frequency (N)	Percentage%
Yes	61	35.9
No	109	64.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 3 shows whether respondents make use of e-book or not. A total of 109 respondents (64.1%) indicated that they don't make use of e-book while 61 (35.9%) indicated they do make use of e-book.

**Preference for e-book or printed book**

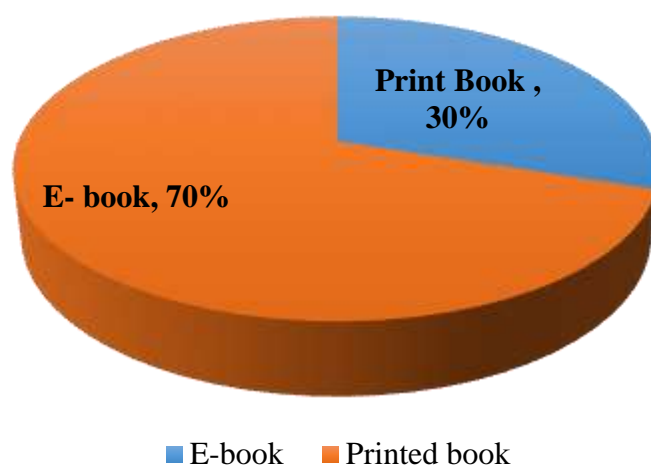


Figure 4: Preference for E-book

Fig 4 indicates that majority of the respondents 119 (70%) indicated preference for e- books while 51 (30%) preferred print book.

**Table 4: Purpose of Using E-books**

S/N	What are your purposes for using e-books?	Agree	Disagree
1	e-books are easier to search compared to printed books	52 (30.6%)	118 (69.4%)
2	Online access of e-books is better and easier	45 (26.5%)	125 (73.5%)
3	e-books allow for multiple access and use from remote locations	143 (84.1%)	27 (15.9%)
4	I can easily copy and paste from e-books	118 (69.5%)	52 (30.5%)
5	e-books are easy to read on screen	116 (68.2%)	54 (31.8%)
6	e-books are easy to share and are more up to date	116 (68.2%)	54 (31.8%)
7	There is better quality graphics, display flexibilities and colour	145 (85.3%)	25 (14.7%)
8	e-books is easy to store	118 (69.5%)	52 (30.5%)
9	e-book is not expensive	113 (66.5%)	57 (33.5%)
10	I can read from my phone, laptop, ipad and other devices easily	57 (33.5%)	113 (66.5%)

Table 4 shows that e-books are not easier to search compared to printed books as 52 (30.6%) only agreed while 118 (69.4%) disagreed. A total of 45 (26.5%) respondents agreed that online access to e-books is better and easier while 125 (73.5%) disagreed. When respondents were asked about their reasons for using e-book, 143 (84.1%) indicated that e-books allow multiple access and use from remote locations but 27 (15.9%) of the respondents disagreed. A 118 (69.5%) of the respondents agreed that they can easily copy and paste from e-books while 52 (30.5%) of the respondents disagreed. Also 116 (68.2%) agreed that e-books are easy to read on screen but 54 (31.8%) of the respondents disagreed. Another 116 (68.2%) of the respondents agreed that e-books are easy to share and are usually up to date while 54 (31.8%) disagreed. 145 (85.3%) of the respondents agreed that there is better quality graphics, display flexibilities and colour with e-books but 25 (14.7%) of the respondents disagreed. The table also shows that 118 (69.5%) agreed that e-books is easy to store but 52 (30.5%) disagreed. On whether or not e-book is expensive, 113 (66.5%) of the respondents agreed while 57 (33.5%) disagreed. 57 (33.5%) of the respondents agreed that they can read e-books from their phone, laptop, Ipad and other devices easily while 113 (66.5%) disagreed.

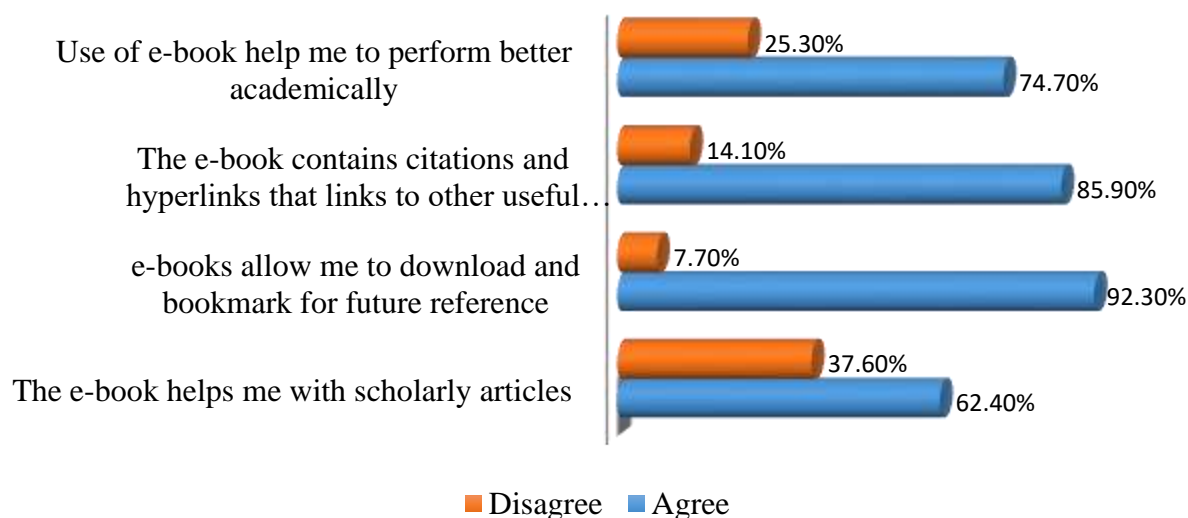


**Table 5: Frequency of Using e-book**

How often do you use e-book	Frequency	Percentage
Daily	11	6.5
2-3 times a week	34	20.0
2-3 times a month	74	43.5
Once in a month	38	22.4
Never	13	7.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 5 shows how often students use e-book. Most undergraduates, 74 (43.5%) use e-books 2 to 3 times a month, 38 (22.4%) of the respondents indicated that they use e-book once in a month, 34 (20%) of the respondents use e-books 2 to 3 times a week while 11 (6.5%) use e-books daily. However, 13 (7.6%) of the respondents have never used e-books before.

### Perceived usefulness of ebook



**Fig 5: Perceived Usefulness of e-books**

Fig 5 shows the perceived usefulness of e-books by undergraduates. Majority of the respondents 157 (92.3%) see e-books as useful because it allows them to download and bookmark for future reference. 146 (85.9%) of the respondents agreed that e-books contains citation and hyperlinks that links to other useful resources while 24 (14.1%) disagreed. Likewise, 127 (74.7%) of the respondents agreed that the use of e-books helps them to perform better academically but 43 (25.3%) disagreed. 106 (62.4%) of the respondents agreed that e-books help with scholarly information while 64 (37.6%) of the respondents disagreed.

**Table 6: Challenges faced by undergraduate students in their attempt to use the e-book**

S/N	Challenges faced by undergraduate students in their attempt to use the e-book	Agreed	Disagreed
1	Reading e-book on the screen usually causes eye problem	144 (84.7%)	26 (15.3%)
2	Inadequate access to the internet	144 (84.7%)	26 (15.3%)
3	My library does not have or subscribe to e-books	128 (75.3%)	42 (24.7%)
4	Most e-book are too expensive	91 (53.5%)	79 (46.5%)
5	Power outage	144 (84.7%)	26 (15.3%)
6	Lack of computer/internet service skills	122 (71.8%)	48 (28.2%)
7	Slow bandwidth which make heavy e-books difficult	139 (81.8%)	31 (18.2%)

Table 6 reveals the challenges undergraduate students face when using e-books. Results indicate that 144 (84.7%) of the respondents agreed that reading the e-book usually cause eye problem while 26 (15.3%) disagreed. 144 (84.7%) of the respondents agreed that there is inadequate access to the internet while 26 (15.3%) disagreed. Power outage was indicated as another challenge to e-books by 144 (84.7%) of the respondents while 26 (15.3%) disagreed. 139 (81.8%) of the respondents agreed that there is slow bandwidth which make heavy e-books difficult to download but 31 (18.2%) of the respondents disagreed. Likewise, 128 (75.3%) of the respondents agreed that the library does not have or subscribe to e-books while 42 (24.7%) disagreed. Results also indicate that 122 (71.8%) agreed to lack of computer/internet access skills while 48 (28.2%) of the respondents disagreed. 91 (53.5%) of the respondents agreed that most e-books are too expensive while 79 (46.5%) disagreed.

### Discussion of Findings

The findings on the students' preference for e-books to printed books reveal that majority of the undergraduates indicated preference for e- book to print books. Littman and Connaway (2004) findings corroborates this present finding by indicating that undergraduates prefer e-books to print books. However, the finding on preference for e-books in this study contradicts Christianson and Aucoin (2005) who reported that print books are mostly used than e-books and Wiese and Plessis (2014) whose study revealed that limited percentage of respondents in their study preferred e-book. Similarly, the finding also contravene the report by Woody, Daniel, and Baker (2010) who surveyed 91 undergraduate students in their use of an e-textbook in a psychology course with the report that the majority of students indicated a preference for the print textbook over e-textbooks. The reason for the variation in the results of the current study and the other previous studies might be because of the fact that, there have been more technological advancement compared to five years ago when Wiese and Plessis (2014) study was conducted. As there is advancement in technology, the number of people getting along with the pace of development is also increasing. Similarly, research has shown that students have found searching for academic e-books much easier and faster than searching for print books and that they have not experienced any major difficulties while using e -books (Wu & Chen 2011: 301). This might be the reasons for the preference of e-books by undergraduates in this study.

Findings on the purpose of using e-books by undergraduate students show that they use e-books because it allow multiple access and use from remote locations, possession of better quality graphics, display flexibilities and colour. Similarly, one can easily copy and paste from e-books, couple with ease of storage, ease of reading on the screen and ease of sharing among colleagues. As reported by Tella et al. (2018), the usage pattern of e-books among LIS undergraduate students is majorly for research purpose and the majority is highly satisfied with reading e-books. This is contrary to the finding in the current study on the purpose of using e-books.

On the frequency of use of e-book by undergraduate students, the findings reveal that majority of undergraduates use e-books 2 to 3 times a month, followed by once in a month and 2 to 3 times a week. This finding corresponds with the report by Falc (2013) whose survey indicates that majority of the students surveyed were using e-textbooks regularly.

The results on the perceived usefulness of e-books to the undergraduates reveals that majority of them sees e-books as useful because it allows them to download and bookmark for future reference; and also that e-book contains citations and hyperlinks that links to other useful resources. This commensurate with the Simon's (2001) survey result which indicate that about half of the students used bookmarking and highlighting functions available on an e-reader to read e-books.

The major challenges reported confronting undergraduates in the use of e-boos are development of eye problem, inadequate access to the internet and incessant power outage. Previous findings from the literature support this current finding in this study. For instance, Oduwole and Akpati (2003) identified some of the constraints to accessing e resources which also relate to accessing e-books. These include insufficient number of terminals available for use despite high demand and in adequate electricity supply. A major problem however identified by Egberongbe (2011) are lack of information retrieval skills for exploiting electronic resources, thus making the level of usage of resources by students is very low. Asheroft and Watts (2005) noted that high cost of hardware, software and particularly internet service providers were significant barriers to the provision of electronic resources. Isah (2010) found that Slow internet access, lack of constant power supply were the major factors inhibiting the use of e-resources. However, other less limiting factors were non-availability of e-resources relevant to information needs (20.0%) and dislike for reading from screen. In addition, Damilola (2013) found that poor electricity supply greatly hindered the use of electronic information resources. All of these reports confirm that there are associated challenges when discussing the issue of undergraduates' use of e-books.

## **Conclusion**

The findings on the students' preference for e-books to printed books reveal that majority of the undergraduates indicated preference for e- book to print book. Findings of the purpose of using e-books by undergraduate students show that they use e-books because it allow multiple access and use from remote locations, possession of better quality graphics, display flexibilities and colour. Similarly, one can easily copy and paste from e-books, couple with ease of storage, ease of reading on the screen and ease of sharing among colleagues. On the frequency of use

of e-book by undergraduate students, the findings reveal that majority of undergraduates use the e-book 2 to 3 times a month, followed by once in a month and 2 to 3 times a week. The results on the perceived usefulness of e-books to the undergraduate reveals that majority of them sees the e-book as useful because it allows them to download and bookmark for future reference; and also that e-book contains citations and hyperlinks that links to other useful resources. The major challenges reported confronting undergraduates in the use of e-boos are development of eye problem, inadequate access to the internet and incessant power outage.

### Recommendations

Based on the findings in this study, the following are recommended. Since majority of respondents in this study prefer e-books, the two universities are encourage to make provision for more e-books. Doing this may perhaps change the mind of the limited percentage that indicated preference for print over e-books.

The study reported development of eye problem, inadequate access to the internet and incessant power outage as the major problems encounter when using e-books. This study therefore recommends that each of the screens where students read e-books should be protected. More access should as well be provided in terms of workstations whereby each student will be to a workstation at a time. Similarly, standby generating set should be provided as alternate source of power to solve the problem of power outage.

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