

Computer self-efficacy as correlates of electronic information resources utilization among law undergraduates in South-West, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study examines the correlation between computer self-efficacy and the utilization of electronic information resources among law undergraduates in South-West Nigeria. This research employed survey research design of correlational type and adopted multi-stage sampling techniques for the sample size, the population of the study comprised of 4,432 law undergraduates in universities in South-west Nigeria. The sample size is 870. The validity and reliability of the instrument was done using Cronbach alpha coefficient at 0.78. The data collected were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics while hypothesis was tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation and Multiple Regression Analysis at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study showed that majority of the respondents affirmed high level of confidence, competence and ability to use computer with a mean score of ($\bar{x} = 3.65$), ($\bar{x} = 3.58$) and ($\bar{x} = 3.71$) respectively. There was a strong positive correlation between computer self-efficacy and the utilisation of electronic information resources ($r=0.587$, $p<0.05$). The study concluded that students with high computer self-efficacy were able to use electronic information resources better than law students with low computer self-efficacy and the study recommended that universities should introduce digital literacy training to improve computer skills of law undergraduates in South-west, Nigeria.

Keywords: Computer Self-efficacy, electronic Information Resources, Utilisation, Law Undergraduates, South- West, Nigeria

Introduction

In the technological age, access to and use of electronic information resources have become indispensable in academic environment, most especially in the legal world which requires rigorous and extensive legal research. Law library collections are occupying new appearance from arrangement, contents, publishing, format and structures. According to Ebijuwa and Oladejo (2023), electronic resources are acquired by libraries to meet global best practices and to improve the academic performance of undergraduates in higher institutions and boost their digital literacy skills

Anand (2014) described that the EIRs today occupy a large portion of the global literature in different formats such electronic books, electronic journals, electronic databases, CD-ROMs, electronic conference proceeding, electronic reports, electronic maps, electronic pictures, electronic manuscripts, electronic thesis, electronic newspapers, internet, websites and list serves.

These resources represent essential tools needed for studying, learning and research. They are classified into online and offline e-resources. The online e-resources consist of information materials that are directly linked to the Internet or Web, such as e-textbooks, e-serials, Meta search engines, e-dictionaries, Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC). On the other hand, the off-line e-resources constitute the information contents that are not connected to the Internet or Web such as CD-ROMs and DVDs, local databases, intranet systems, USB Drives, Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) and Library catalogues.

The use of computer for learning and research activities by law students influences their computer self- efficacy. Computer self-efficacy refers to a person's belief in their aptitude to participate in definite activities that result in predisposition to engage in a cause of action. Self-efficacy is the belief individual has in himself to perform a certain task; it is not the skill an individual possesses but somewhat the judgments of what one can do with such skills. Self- efficacy is an individual belief in their own abilities which is defined as individual's judgments of their abilities to organise and perform courses of action. (Bandura, 2016).

Self-efficacy is the belief that can influence individuals to become committed to achieve their desired aspiration successfully. People who have high confidence with their capabilities are considered to have a strong sense of efficacy. They did not take difficult tasks as obstacles to avoid instead they take it as a challenge to develop their skills. They set challenging goals for themselves and they commit to them; and they quickly recover their sense of efficacy if they failed in a task. According to Fabunmi and Awoyemi (2017) the word self-efficacy is individual judgment and beliefs in their capabilities to systematise and coordinate a courses of action essential to yield given achievements, the level of confidence that someone has to perform a particular task, activity, action or challenge.

The inherent ability in an individual and regular usage of computer influences competence and confidence to utilise electronic information resources, Computer self-efficacy is a function of application of computers and its associated devices to enhance confidence and beliefs of individuals having capability to execute certain activities that requires computer usage. Students who engage in using computer for a cause of action with high ability will have strong computer self- efficacy in carrying out research activities in the academic setting (Obande & Abdulsalami, 2020). The ability and confidence in accessing EIRs brings computer self-efficacy to play in ameliorating the fear students have in using computers to access available EIRs in libraries.

Statement of the problem

The development of Information Communication Technology has dramatically changed the face of available information resources in libraries from physical to electronic formats around the world. Evolving technology affects legal resources collections and techniques of researching legal resources in the law library. Technology delivers information in various formats electronically for students inside and outside the library. Research have shown that a huge amount of money is being expended yearly on the subscription to different kinds of electronic information resources, however, these resources are inadequately utilised by students due to a lack of confidence, competence and ability in themselves as a result of low computer skills.

Research objectives

The main objective is to examine the relationship between computer self-efficacy and the utilization of electronic information resources (EIR) among law undergraduates in South-West Nigeria.

the specific objectives are

1. to ascertain the level of computer self-efficacy of law undergraduates in South-west Nigeria;
2. level of confidence and their computer skills as influence of the use of electronic resources;
3. examine their ability and competency to use electronic information resources
4. to provide recommendations for enhancing computer self-efficacy to improve the effective utilization of electronic information resources among law students.

Research Hypotheses

The hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance.

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between computer self-efficacy and electronic information resources utilisation among law undergraduates in universities in South west, Nigeria.

Review of literature

The advancement of electronic resources in libraries started with the Machine Readable Cataloging (MARC) format in the middle of 1960s before the arrival of World Wide Web (WWW). Libraries had been using data set as early as 1970s. by 1980s, libraries had revolutionalised with the microcomputer using software and data diskettes on CD-ROMs and online catalogs, this era was pre- internet period (Hawthorne, 2008).

In 1964, Machine – Readable Catalogue (MARC) was introduced by the Council on Library Resources in a conference called the Recording of Library of Congress Bibliographic Data in Machine Form which gave birth to MARC1 format designed using codes for place of publications, language and publishers (Eyaufe, 2018).

Olorunfemi and Mostert (2015) averred that technology has given birth to electronic resources such as internet, computer systems, online databases, electronic books and electronic journals, the author also claimed that the adoption of ICT for the delivery of information sources and services has caused spread of digital information resources in institution libraries. Additionally, electronic or digital information resources are materials in digital contents that can be retrieved through computer and other electronic devices, capable of carrying digital contents in the following format as data, texts, words, graphics audio and visual format. (Adeniran, 2013). consequently, users of library today have chance to access varieties of electronic information resources make desirable choices on available type of electronic resources with the help and support from librarians to facilitate quick retrieval of information.

Therefore, Electronic Information Resources as examined by Ashok and Sheetal (2020) identified the following as types of EIRs, electronic books, electronic journals, electronic databases, digital libraries, internet resources, Online Public Access Catalogue, institution repository system, CD-ROMs and DVDs, electronic theses and dissertation. Wang (2021) described EIRs as words, sounds, texts, images, multimedia, animation stored in the form of electronic data. According to Owolabi et al., (2016), the development and invention of EIRs made provisions for arrays of electronic resources for patrons of library with the benefits of innate capabilities to deliver affordable digital resources, huge storing size and ability for representing important components

of any library collections. Information technology has brought about the use of computers for the day to date activity of human being.

Singh and Prasad (2013) affirmed that the emergence and feat of new technology sectors in both new and established educational settings is intimately linked with individuals being able to identify new prospects and opportunities that can lead to exploitation, stressing those new technologies are driven by those with self-efficacy, that is, those with self-assurance in their potential to execute the task at hand.

The concept of self- efficacy was introduced by Albert Bandura and this was rooted in psychology as individual's belief in their ability to use technological tools for online teaching, online learning and online research. The concept is playing a critical role in the adoption and effective usage of new technologies especially in academic environment. The implication of self- efficacy on electronic resources usage has been a subject of discuss among researcher and professionals. A number of studies on self-efficacy were focused on the relationship between self-efficacy and performance, especially academic performance. It is the belief in one's ability to organize and perform the course of action required to manage potential situations (Flammer, 2015). Therefore, students with high self-efficacy as specified by Tella et al. (2017) will be more likely to take the benefit of what is around them. Such as electronic information tools and resources like OPAC, e-books, Internet, electronic journals, CD-ROM, online database. Ability to know the importance and benefit accrued from using electronic resources will surely enhance performance academically and yield productivity.

Arguably, Tella et al. (2017) in their opinion reiterated that self-efficacy is a concept and instrument for predicting usage of electronic resources in relation to students performance and efficiency. Uppal (2018) in a survey study found that there was a significant association between respondents' opinion regarding the need of self-efficacy for accessing and using EIRs. Thus, apart from ease of use, confidence in the ability to use the technology, that is self-efficacy, and belief in one's confidence and competency in using the technologies boosts the usage of the EIRs.

A survey was carried out by Sadiku et al. (2017) as to what level can computer self-efficacy influence easy access to electronic information among Nigerian students, the study employed descriptive survey research approach. Sampled survey of students from six universities across the six (6) geographical zones in Nigeria was carried out. Questionnaire were administered on the students to collect data on their library use, computer competency and computer use. The data collected were analysed and the findings showed that there was correlation between computer self-efficacy and electronic information resources and students' computer self- efficacy was high and students express great interest students in using the library's e-resources display higher self-efficacy.

According to Adeniran (2017) Computer self- efficacy is the capability to perform a particular task with computer and individual perceived competence to accomplish precise computer tasks and capable of using computers for various needed applications.

Computer self-efficacy is the perceived capability to perform specific computer tasks and to the level to which persons observe themselves capable of using computers for various applications. (Blackwood-Brown 2018; Mayasari & Gudono, 2015; Loar, 2018; Uppal, 2018) Laver et al., (2011) pointed out that computer self-efficacy influences expectations and emotional reactions regarding the effective use of modern technologies. Thus, persons who do not regard one another as skilled computer operators are less likely to use them. Computer self-efficacy effects the acceptance and use of technology, skill acquisition and computer-task performance (Mayasari & Gudono, 2015).

Bwenvu (2013) examined how self-efficacy influence academic performance of students in South Africa on usage of library's electronic resources, the result indicated a significant relationship between the use of the library electronic resources and computer self- efficacy among the students. The researcher conclusion was that students with high computer self-efficacy expressed interest in learning about the library's electronic resources could be regarded as individuals with high self-efficacy.

Research Methodology

This study adopted a survey research design of correlational type to investigate relationships among the dependent and independent variables. The study population were universities in South-west geo-political zone of Nigeria offering law as a course of study and have got approval either full or provisional from the two regulatory bodies (Council of Legal Education and National University Commission). Undergraduate law students in 200-400 level in twelve (12) law faculties from federal, state and private universities who are fully accredited to run law programme in South-west, Nigeria were selected for the study coupled with the twelve (12) law librarians in these universities. The total population of the study was 4,432 and multi stage sampling technique was employed for the sample size of 870 undergraduate law students in south- west, Nigeria. As such, 870 copies of questionnaire were administered to the undergraduate law students in the twelve universities faculties of law in South-west, Nigeria. Twelve law librarians were interviewed. The data was collated and analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics such as percentage and frequency counts, central tendency such as mean and standard deviation were used to analyse data. The hypotheses were tested using multiple regression analysis and Pearson Product Moment Correlation at 0.05 level of significance.

Results and Discussion

The results of the data collected from respondents through close and open-ended questionnaire based on the research objectives, research questions and the hypotheses. Consequently, a total of 870 copies of the questionnaire were administered on the respondents. Nevertheless, the return rate was 774 (91.0%), while 769 (90.5%) were found good and valid for analysis. This represents a response rate of 90.5% and 100% response rate recorded for the interview conducted from the law librarian.

Research Question 1: What is the level of computer self-efficacy of law undergraduates in universities in South- west Nigeria?

The result on the computer self- efficacy level of the undergraduates law students in universities in South- west Nigeria is as presented in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Frequency Count, Percentages, Mean and Standard Deviation of Respondents on Level of computer self – efficacy of law undergraduates in universities in South- west Nigeria (n=769)

Confidence Level at which:	VH		H		L		VL		$\bar{x}$	σ
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
I feel confident using computer to retrieve information for my academic work	459	59.7	217	28.2	46	6.0	47	6.1	3.65	1.07

I feel confident using a variety of computer programs such as MS Office Suites, Adobe and internet browser	400	52.0	277	36.0	46	6.0	46	6.0	3.59	0.60
I feel confident adding and deleting information from a data file using the computer	337	43.8	266	34.6	101	13.1	65	8.5	3.54	0.50
I feel confident using computer for learning	396	51.5	153	19.9	127	16.5	93	12.1	3.49	0.83
I feel confident using the computer to organise information	326	42.4	200	26.0	166	21.6	77	10.0	3.37	0.60
Weighted									3.53	0.72

Competence	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	$\bar{x}$	σ
Level at which:										
I can competently use the computer to access vital information	418	54.4	192	25.0	84	10.9	75	9.8	3.58	0.64
I can use the computer and internet to organise and manage information such as e-resources.	408	53.1	192	25.0	103	13.4	66	8.6	3.47	0.68
I can use various types of web browsers such as internet explorer, safari, Google Chrome and Mozilla Firefox to find high-quality e-resources online.	259	33.7	217	28.2	146	19.0	147	19.1	3.24	0.61
I can attach e-resources files or documents to emails, downloading OER, copying files, installing and downloading programs on the computer.	196	25.5	260	33.8	162	21.1	151	19.6	3.06	0.78
I can use storage devices such as flash drives, CD-ROMs or cloud storage services such as Drobox and Google Drive to store e-resources for academic activities	190	24.7	253	32.9	186	24.2	140	18.2	2.96	0.78
Weighted									3.26	0.70
Ability to Use	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	$\bar{x}$	σ
Level at which:										
I have the ability to use computer to access legal materials	449	58.4	200	26.0	91	11.8	29	3.8	3.71	0.82
I have the ability to work on a computer	436	56.7	152	19.8	86	11.2	95	12.4	3.66	0.54
I have the ability to identify and access e-resources relating to law	443	57.6	155	20.2	83	10.8	88	11.4	3.64	0.67

I have the ability to organise and transform information required for my learning	316	41.1	232	30.2	127	16.5	94	12.2	3.39	0.46
I have the ability to synthesize and share information through computer	401	52.1	132	17.2	138	17.9	98	12.7	3.34	0.50
Weighted mean									3.55	0.60
Overall weighted mean									3.45	0.67

Key: Very High (VH), High (H), Low (L) and Very Low (VL)

Results on computer self-efficacy of the law undergraduates in universities in South-west, Nigeria as shown in Table 4.2, revealed that computer self-efficacy was considered under three indicators namely confidence, competence and ability to use computer. The weighted mean for each indicator was used as the benchmark. For confidence, the weighted mean was 3.53 which indicated very high level of computer self-efficacy. Specifically, majority of the respondents affirmed that they had very high level of confidence in using computer to retrieve information for their academic work ($\bar{x} = 3.65$), variety of computer programs such as MS Office Suites, Adobe and internet browser ($\bar{x} = 3.59$) and adding and deleting information from a data file using the computer ($\bar{x} = 3.54$). This result showed high level of confidence by most of the undergraduate's law students in using computer for academic pursuit.

Also, the analysis showed a weighted mean for competence to be 3.26 signifying a high level of competence by the majority of the respondents in the use of computer and other incidental resources. The result affirmed a greater number of the respondents have a high level of competence in using the computer to access relevant information ($\bar{x} = 3.58$), using the computer and internet to organise and manage information such as e-resources ($\bar{x} = 3.47$) as well as using various types of web browsers such as internet explorer, safari, Google Chrome and Mozilla Firefox to find high-quality e-resources online ($\bar{x} = 3.24$), which infers high level of computer competence of undergraduates law students in universities in South-west, Nigeria.

Therefore, the analysis on the ability to use computer as shown in Table 4.2 followed by the weighted mean of 3.55 representing that there was a high level of ability in the use of computer by most of the undergraduate's law students. For example, most of the respondents confirmed strong ability to use computer to access legal materials ($\bar{x} = 3.71$), ability to work on a computer ($\bar{x} = 3.66$) and the ability to identify and access e-resources relating to law ($\bar{x} = 3.64$),

Overall, the weighted mean was 3.45. This suggests that the level of computer self-efficacy of undergraduates' law students in universities in South-west, Nigeria.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between computer self-efficacy and electronic information resources utilisation among undergraduates' law students in universities in South-west, Nigeria

The finding of hypothesis, tested using Pearson Product Moment correlations is hereby shown in Table 4.3

Table 4.3: Showing the relationship between computer self-efficacy and electronic information resources utilisation among law undergraduates (n = 769)

Variables	Mean	STD	N	R	Sig p	Remark
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Computer Self-efficacy	51.69	10.08	769	.587	.000	Significant
EIR Utilisation	42.11	22.53				

The result in Table 4.3 showed a significant positive strong correlation between computer self-efficacy and electronic information resources utilisation among undergraduates' law students in universities in South-west, Nigeria ($r=0.587$, $p<0.05$). The correlation showing a statistically significance level at five percent. This suggests that there is a significant and strong relationship between computer self-efficacy and electronic information resources utilisation among undergraduates' law students in universities in South-west, Nigeria.

Discussion of findings

The findings of this study revealed that majority of the respondents were computer literates, exhibited high level of computer self-efficacy with confidence, competence and ability in using computer, use internet to retrieve electronic information resources for legal research, moot and mock programmes and other intellectual activities, this assertion corroborated the findings of Clayton et al. (2017) in their study on college student's computer self-efficacy, preferences and benefits where the students rated themselves high on using the internet, web-based search engine to retrieve information resources. (Sadiku & Kpakiko 2017; Bello & Bokoh 2021) averred in their research that majority of the students have the needed skills to manage resources, search the internets, troubleshoot, manage data and navigate through other online resources, he further reiterated that Nigerian students in higher institutions can compete successfully with their counterparts around the world.

The findings of this study showed positive relationship exist between computer self-efficacy and electronic information resources utilisation among law undergraduates in universities in South-west, Nigeria corroborating the findings of Adeniran (2013). In addition, the findings of this study agreed with the findings of Popoola and Adedokun (2023) who reported that there was significant positive relationship between computer self-efficacy and electronic information resources utilisation by social science undergraduates in a tertiary university in Nigeria.

Conclusion

Computer self-efficacy emerged as a critical factor, strongly influencing electronic information resource utilisation. Overall, the study underscores the need for universities to address infrastructure issues, improve computer literacy, and promote effective electronic information resources utilisation by undergraduate law students.

Recommendations

The study recommends that ICT skills training to law undergraduates. Workshops, seminars, and courses on computer literacy and effective utilization of electronic resources should be integrated into the curriculum. This will boost students' confidence in utilizing digital tools for academic research and assignments.

In addition to ICT skills training, universities should focus on enhancing students' computer self-efficacy. Providing hands-on experience, tutorials, and support from experienced ICT personnel can help build students' confidence in using computers for academic purposes.

Universities should work towards mitigating internet connectivity challenges faced by students. This includes engaging with service providers to improve coverage and reliability, and establishing dedicated helpdesk support for troubleshooting connectivity issues.

Universities should design user-friendly online platforms for accessing electronic information resources. The interfaces should be intuitive, easy to navigate, and should offer search functionalities that simplify resource discovery.

Regular evaluations of electronic resource utilisation and student feedback are essential to identify trends, areas for improvement, and emerging needs. Conducting periodic surveys and focus groups can provide valuable insights for enhancing resource access and utilisation.

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