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**Online Information Resources Utilization among Students in Adeyemi  
College of Education, Ondo, Nigeria**

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## **Abstract**

*The study is on online information resources utilization among students in Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo, Nigeria. Five research questions guided the research work. 150 copies of questionnaire were administered to students through face to face method in order to collect data. Simple Random sampling technique was also used for the study. In the data analysis, frequency counts, simple percentages, mean and standard deviation were used for the statistical analysis. The findings revealed that that the level of students' awareness of online information resources in Adeyemi College of Education Library is low. It also indicated the level of students' of online information resources is low. However, with the little awareness, online information resources is mainly used for academic work. The findings show the major challenges confronting students' use of information resources as high cost of internet subscription, unstable power supply and slow internet speed. The paper concluded and recommended that the lecturers should give assignments to students and tell them to go for online sources in doing it.*

**Keywords: Online, Information resources, Utilization, Students**

## **Introduction**

An online information (OI) resource is an integral part of education of students globally. Information and education are inseparable. To be an educated person, it is expected you are information literate. As such libraries grant access to both electronic and printed information, which provide key to education through many courses offered in learning institutions. Thus, library is information reserve for education.

Libraries are an important resource for academic activities such as study, teaching and research which encourage students and faculty to go beyond the classroom learning and laboratory experiments serve as marketplace of ideas which is the hallmark of higher education. Since much of the learning in higher education institutions takes place outside the classroom, libraries can be one important venue for such learning. And the library can play a critical role in learning directly related to courses, such as writing a paper, and processes related to lifelong learning. Libraries provide collections, organized information, systems that promote access to information, in-person and virtual assistance to encourage students to pursue their education beyond the classroom (Lippincott, 2017).

In this information age, there is a general shift from using print sources of information towards gathering, analyzing and sharing online source information from the web, such as grey literature, journal articles, unpublished papers, theses and dissertations, personal websites and blogs. According to Lamb (1995), Online Information resources are collections of indexed electronic databases with supporting distribution services.

Along with rapid change in the information environment, there is the notion that younger generations that can be called Google generation, now view and search for information in a different way. As a generalization, the Google generation tends to have a hypertext mindset. They like to 'power browse' - scan pages quickly, click on hyperlinks and read out sequence. For students, Google provides immediate results and sets the standard for quick and seamless access to information (Costa, 2009).

The nature of online information is different and varies with the application of ICTs. According to Ajuwon (2015), a great variety of information resources are now available and accessible online. These include among others search engines (Google, Yahoo, Alta Vista, Lycos, Mama, etc), databases (MEDLINE/PubMed, Scopus, Web Knowledge, EMBASE, and African Index Medicus), portals, gateways, digital archives, libraries and institutional repositories. Lee, Paik and Joo (2012) also listed online resources as search engines, individual Web pages, Organizational Web pages, Institutional repository, Digital libraries, Wikipedia or online encyclopedia, Online news and magazines, Scholarly online databases, Google scholar, College student report sharing site, Social Question & Answer services, online lectures, etc. In addition, Akpojotor (2016) indicated online resources as E-journals, E-books, E-databases, E-magazines, E-serials, E-dissertations and theses, World Wide Web, E-mails, CD-ROMs, Online Public Access Catalogues (OPAC), Reference Databases, E-Images, E- audio visual resources and so on.

Internet and online resources provide access to a variety of information ranging from primary to tertiary sources. The advancement in the information and communication technologies (ICTs) introduced new dimensions in the generation, acquisition, organization, processing, and dissemination of the information in the virtual environment. ICTs help users

in searching, accessing and using the information by crossing the barriers like time, distance, geography, size, and language. Thus, it brings information to the fingertips of information seekers (Kattimani, 2010).

Taking a consideration of the use of information, Hughes (2005) reported in a study carried out that most participants approached library staff for assistance with their online use. Users also frequently asked and assisted their friends. Several had also consulted their lecturers, one of whom referred the students back to the library. On this note, online information resources provide services supporting users to perform intense academic work that requires complex interaction activities with the various components of its resources in which library serves as a hub for the resources (Odede 2015).

### **Statement of the Problem**

In this digital age, online information resources serve as the most potent channel of getting recent information for consumption. Online information resources are easy to access, current and speedy. Unlike the traditional or manual system, the same information can be accessed by millions of users across the world at the same time. However, many undergraduate information users in the third world do not still have a good access to quality online information resources for use in the course of carrying out their academic or research activities. On this note, the researchers want to examine the extent of online information resources utilization among undergraduates in Adeyemi College of Education Library, Ondo.

## **Review of Related Literature**

Users enjoy the convenience and other benefits of online access to information and are adjusting their behavior as encouraged by library policies. Total library use—physical plus virtual—is likely actually up in most institutions (Tenopir, 2003).

Internet network has eliminated the physical limits of printed information resources. The number of existing educational resources has increased so that it is possible to prepare assignments and projects in anyplace where the internet is accessible (Sahin, Balta and Ercan, 2010). For instance, in the past, the users of the libraries had access to very few information sources. In the last 15-20 years the situation has changed completely and the new technologies made possible the access to many information resources (Octavia-Luciana, 2013). Thus, libraries of this age provide access to both printed and online resources that users can access at any time in order to stay functional and up-to-date.

A study carried out by Waldman (2003) in Tenopir (2003) indicated that half of the students access the library's online resources from home, and only a quarter said that use of the online resources was a reason to visit the library. Dilevko and Gottlieb (2002) in Tenopir (2003) reported the efforts to attract undergraduates to the physical library as most undergraduates stated that they turn first to online sources which are not library-based. About 47% of undergraduates reported that they began their assignments with online sources 90% most of the time. With so much information available to Web surfers, it appears as if no-cost is the norm for online resources.

However, libraries can and do arrange for seamless authentication to fee-based resources, thereby eliminating the requirement for individual user passwords and identification information; thus, a resource appears “free” to end users (Michelle, 2005). Studies have cited the growing reliance on Internet research by the public for widely ranging issues from health to current awareness. This greatly increases accessibility and availability of information on a limitless range of topics (Michelle, 2005).

What are some of the major disconnects between many of today's academic libraries and Net Gen students? The most common one is students' dependence on Google or similar search engines for discovery of information resources rather than consultation of library Web pages, catalogs, and databases as the main source of access. Newly emerging services such as Google Scholar are providing access to more library resources in the general Internet environment (Lippincott, 2017).

According to *Perceptions of Libraries* (2010), the use of online information sources by college students increased since 2005. Use of most sources continues to be higher among college students compared to U.S. total respondents. College students have quickly adopted new resources, such as Skype and Twitter. E-mail use has hit saturation—99% of college students use e-mail and most e-mail daily.

E-mail has its rivals. Fast adoption of social networking and media has placed sites such as Face book and YouTube at the top of most-used online sources—going from almost nonexistent to ubiquitous in less than four years. Most (92%) college students use social networking sites; 81% use social media sites. Two-thirds of students who use social networking log on daily (*Perceptions of Libraries*, 2010).



Search engines continue to dominate, topping the list of online sources most used to in online content (93%), followed closely by Wikipedia (88%). The key difference in usage between search engines and Wikipedia is the frequency—75% of students who use search engines do so daily, compared to 20% of those who use Wikipedia. Thompson (2003) and Burton and Chadwick (2000) in Lee, Paik and Joo (2012) discovered that the majority of students began a research assignment with the Internet; most often commercial search engine and Web documents were the main sources for students in writing research papers.

Resources which are accessed through these engines are mostly used by students for gathering the required information for their projects. Information obtained from these sites changes according to the student's level and the importance of the project content. By using different filters in the advanced search tabs, direct access to resources provide more effective query results for specific types of documents such as documents with pdf, ppt, and doc extensions. This makes it possible to access the information required (Sahin, Balta and Ercan, 2010). Ajuwon (2015) posited that search engines are regarded as an easy means of searching online information. According to the author, this may be because search engines are easy to search and also load very fast. However, knowledge of different information sources by users will enable them to make efficient and effective use of the resources available on the internet in order to address their information needs. Also, Google and Yahoo are easily accessible to the respondents because they are free on the internet. And there are other free resources that were reported not to be easily accessible to the respondents probably due to lack of awareness.

The types of online access information systems by contents are documents (with or without hyperlinks), catalogues of publishers and bookshops, online public access library catalogues (OPACs), community/Campus-Wide Information Systems (CWIS), online access

databases about journal articles, electronic newsletters and journals, computer file archives (documents, programs), interest groups (for instance Usenet Newsgroups), dictionaries and encyclopedias through the WWW. Dictionaries and encyclopedias are the first choice among many types of information sources, where detailed information on a common topic is not required. However, they can be used to prepare a more detailed search on an unfamiliar topic, by searching for the right spelling, synonyms and context. Some dictionaries and encyclopedias are available through the WWW free of charge (Lippincott, 2017).

The efficiency of Academic Journals Database is related to the number of periodicals covered and the evaluation techniques of them in order to form a universal academic index. They provide a rich source of specialized information, and are widely used by many academics and students. They are an essential reference tools for these people for detailed research into different subject areas, and are grouped into subjects according to the different disciplines (Sahin, Balta and Ercan, 2010).

Looking more specifically at the scholarly communications industry, there is a rapid growth in the number of articles available via Open Access. A study on the development of Open Access Journals from 1993 to 2009 estimated that there were around 19,500 Open Access articles published in 2000, increasing to 191,850 by 2009. The number of Open Access Journals in the same period also showed significant growth, increasing from 740 to 4,769; by the end of 2012 the Directory in significant growth has increased from 740 to 4,769. By the end of 2012 the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) listed over 8,000 titles (Taylor and Francis, 2013). Dalglish and Hall, (2000) as cited by Ahmad and Panda (2013) observed that users often prefer increased access to databases of online-refereed journals and to the Web which provides

information that is up to the minute, international in scope and sometimes not available elsewhere because they see these resources as easier to access and search on the internet.

In a study carried out by Tenopir (2003), it was reported that high school students and undergraduate students turn first to the Web for research but will change behaviors if they are given a specific assignment or are asked to use a particular resource. Graduate students are heavy and cyclical users of electronic journals, especially for research. Faculty members and professionals use electronic journals when they are convenient and to support their natural work patterns. Peer reviewed journals that are considered to be core to a researcher's work are sought regardless of convenience. In reference to Repanovici (2008), Octavia-Luciana (2013) reported that more than ever, users need information technology skills as these enable them "to use computers, software applications, databases, and other technologies to achieve a wide variety of academic, work-related and personal goals". This means that librarians should give more attention to assisting users to get this kind of skills.

In a study conducted on ICTs by Ajuwon (2003) as cited by Akpojotor (2016), majority of health science students at the University College Hospital (UCH) Ibadan could not access and use database due to lack of awareness, lack of access to computers, insufficient training and high cost of provision of electronic information resources subscription. Costa (2009) stated students experience difficulty in locating, choosing and searching databases as constraint to the use of the databases. The difficulties noted range across all aspects of their online use, indicating general limitations relating to awareness of online information resources available; formulation and implementation of search strategies; and evaluation of search results. According to Hughes (2005), at the international level, students experienced a range of difficulties in using online resources that associated with English language limitations, differences in approaches to learning

and unfamiliarity with study-related online resources. Linguistic attributes tended to have a greater adverse effect on their actual use of online resources when searching for and retrieving information. Cultural differences also appeared to have a greater impact on how they evaluated information and on teaching/learning relationships.

According to Ray and Day (1998) as cited by Tenopir (2003) the top three hindrances to online access is that it is time consuming, detracts from doing work, and lack of information technology knowledge hinders effective use. Ajuwon (2015) noted the constraints to use of internet health information resources among doctors in tertiary health institutions in Southwestern Nigeria as slow speed of Internet connection, login problems, low bandwidth, time constraint, high cost of access and slow information download, however, respondents did not indicate too much information on the internet, language of content and no access to computer as constraints to use of Internet information resources.

### **Objectives of the Study**

1. To identify awareness of online information resources among the students of Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo.
2. To examine the level of use of online resources among the students of Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo.
3. To identify the purpose of the use of online information resources among students of Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo.
4. To investigate the challenges encountered in the use of online information resources among students of Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo.
5. To proffer solutions to the challenges.

## **Research Questions**

1. What is the level of awareness of online information resources among the students of Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo?
2. What is the level of use of online resources among students of Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo?
3. What is the purpose of the use of online information resources among the students of Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo?
4. What are the challenges encountered in the use of online information resources among the students of Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo?
5. What are the strategies to enhance effective utilization of the online information resources?

## **Methodology**

### **Research Design**

The research design used for this study is descriptive survey design. This design will allow a population to be studied by collecting and analyzing data from only a sample considered to be representing the entire population.

### **Population and Sampling Technique**

The population comprises all the undergraduates in Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo. Simple random was employed for the study. One hundred and fifty users were sampled from the programme in all the schools in the college through library access.

### **Research Instrument**

The instrument used for data collection is questionnaire titled Online Information Resources Utilization Questionnaire (OIRUQ).

### **Method of Data Collection**

The researchers collected the data through face-to-face administration of questionnaire. This involved being stationed at the entrance of the library of Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo to administer the questionnaire to the students and responses were collected through the exit.

### **Method of Data Analyses**

The data generated were interpreted using percentages and frequencies; mean and standard deviation through Likert scaling of the responses where applicable. The criterion mean for the scale is 2.5 as the rating was based on 4 points.

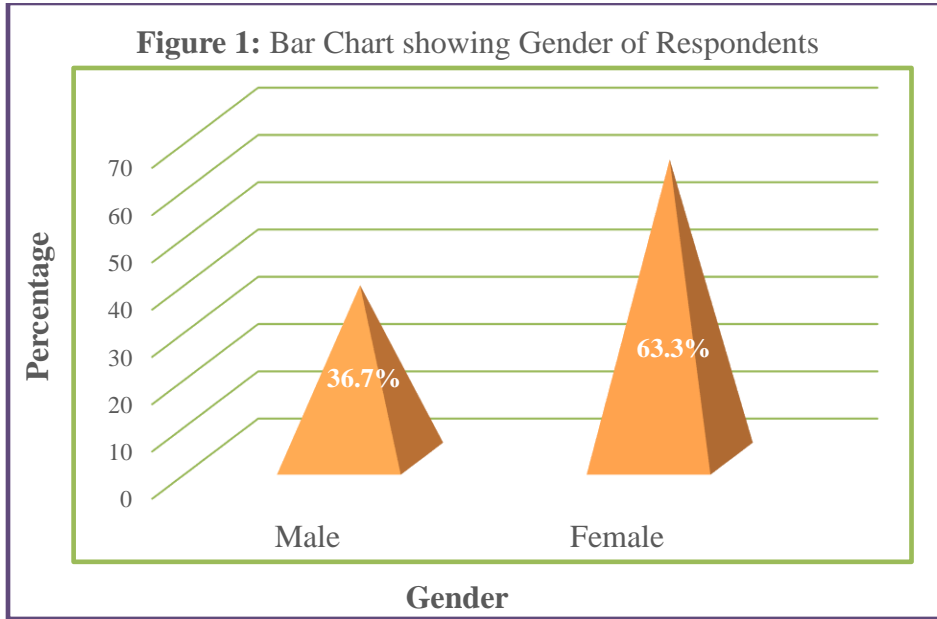
## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Demographic Information of Respondents**

**Table 1: Gender Distribution of Respondents**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Male	54	36.7
Female	93	63.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 1 shows the gender distribution of the students. The table shows that 54(36.7%) of the respondents were male while the remaining 93(63.3%) were female. The result from this table implies that more of the respondents were female. Figure 1 below further presents the result from the table in bar chart.



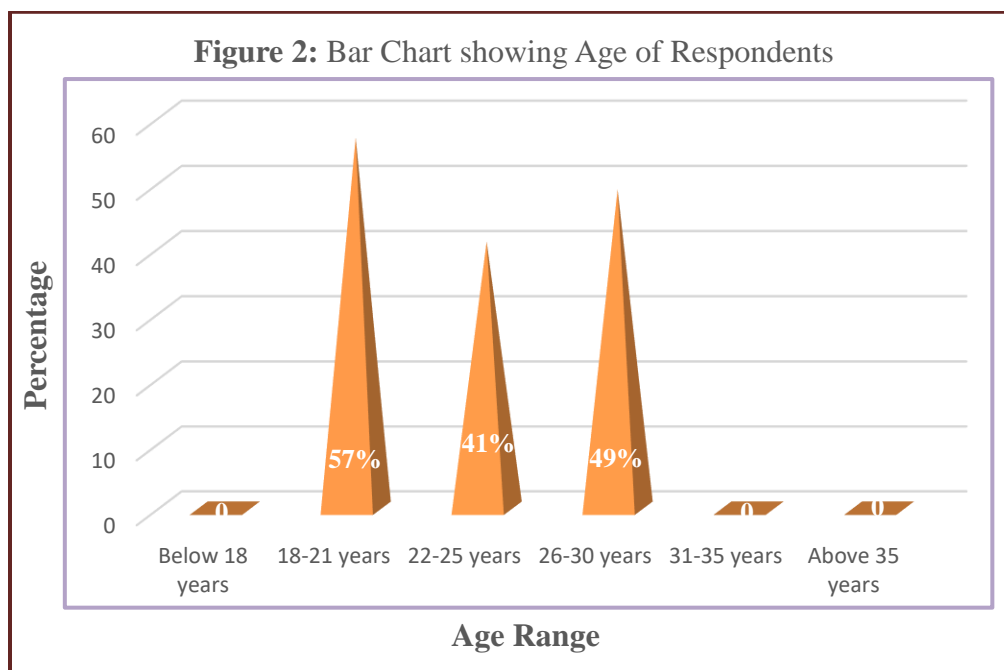
**Table 2: Age Distribution of Respondents**

Age Range	Frequency	Percentage
Below 18 years	0	0
18-21 years	57	38.8
22-25 years	41	27.9
26-30 years	49	33.3
31-35 years	0	0
Above 35 years	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 2 shows the age distribution of the respondents. The table shows that none of the students were below 18 years, 57(38.8%) of them were between the ages of 18 to 21 years,

41(27.9%) of them were between 22 to 25 years, 49(33.3%) of them were between the ages 26 to 30 years, while none of the students were between the ages 31 to 35 and 35 years old and above.

Figure 2 below further presents the result from the table in bar chart.



**Research Question1:** What is the level of awareness of online information resources among the students of Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo?

**Table 3: Level of Awareness of Online Information Resources in ACE**

Item	SA	A	FA	NA	Mean	Std. D.
e-mail	94	36	0	17	3.40	.97
e-books	47	36	35	29	2.68	1.12
CD ROM Databases	30	35	36	46	2.33	1.12
e-journal	12	48	41	46	2.17	.97
e-document delivery	17	55	40	35	2.36	.97
e-theses	6	18	47	76	1.68	.84
e-reference materials	29	54	29	35	2.52	1.06
e-conference proceedings	23	29	36	59	2.11	1.10
<b>Weighted Average</b>					<b>2.40</b>	



**Key: SA** = Strongly Aware, **A** = Aware, **FA**= Fairly Aware, **NA**= Not Aware

**Decision Value: 0.00 - 2.49 =Low, 2.50 - 4.00 = High**

Table 3 shows the level of awareness of online information resources among the students in Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo. The table shows that the students are aware of the following online information resources: e-mail ( $\bar{x} = 3.40$ ), e-books ( $\bar{x} = 2.69$ ) and e-reference materials ( $\bar{x} = 2.52$ ). The table further shows that the students are fairly aware of the following: CD ROM Databases ( $\bar{x} = 2.33$ ), e-journals ( $\bar{x} = 2.17$ ), e-document delivery ( $\bar{x} = 2.36$ ), e-theses ( $\bar{x} = 1.68$ ) and e-conferencing proceedings ( $\bar{x} = 2.11$ ). Meanwhile based on the value of the weighted average (2.40 out of 4.00 maximum values obtainable) which falls, within the decision value for **low**, it can be inferred that the level of awareness of online information resources among the students of Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo is low.

**Research Question 2:** What is the level of use of online information resources by students in Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo?

**Table 4: Students’ Utilization of Online Information Resources in ACE**

Item	VHU	HU	FU	NU	Mean	Std. D.
e-mail	63	43	34	7	3.10	.91
e-books	7	50	57	33	3.07	.89
CD ROM Databases	1	12	37	97	1.43	.67
e-journal	1	0	61	85	1.44	.53
e-document delivery	1	16	70	60	1.71	.68
e-theses	8	0	33	106	1.39	.75
e-reference materials	2	34	72	39	1.99	.74
e-conference proceedings	0	31	21	95	1.56	.82
<b>Weighted Average</b>					<b>1.96</b>	

**Key:** VHU = Very Highly Used, HU = Highly Used, FU= Fairly Used, NU= Not Used

**Decision Value:** 0.00 - 2.49 =Low, 2.50 - 4.00 = High

Table 4 shows the rate of students’ utilization of online information resources in Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo. The table shows that the online information resources that are highly used by the students are: e-mail ( $\bar{x} = 3.10$ ) and e-books ( $\bar{x} = 3.07$ ). In support, Perceptions of Libraries (2010) analyzed that E-mail use has hit saturation—99% of college students use e-mail and most e-mail daily.

The table further shows that the following online information resources are not used: CD Rom database ( $\bar{x} = 1.43$ ), e-journal ( $\bar{x} = 1.43$ ) and e-theses ( $\bar{x} = 1.38$ ). Furthermore, the table shows that the following are fairly used by the students: e-document delivery ( $\bar{x} = 1.71$ ), e-reference materials ( $\bar{x} = 1.99$ ) and e-conferencing proceedings ( $\bar{x} = 1.56$ ). Meanwhile based on the value of the weighted average (1.96 out of 4.00 maximum value obtainable) which falls,

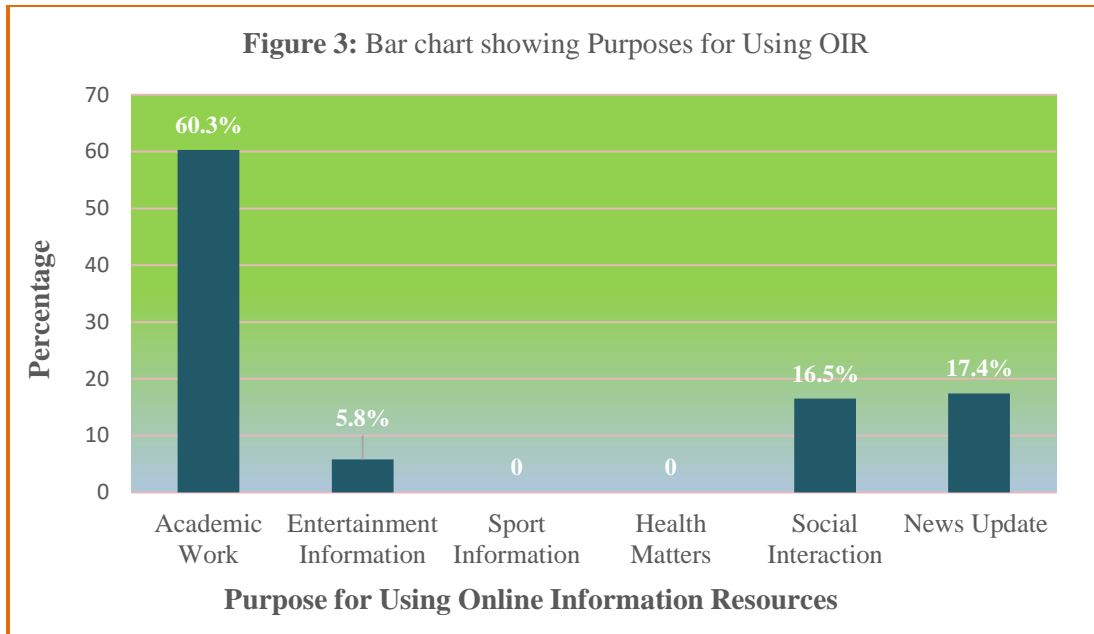
within the decision value for *low*, it can be inferred on a general note that the level of use of online information resources by students in Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo is low.

**Research Question3:** What is the purpose of the use of online information resources among the students of Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo?

**Table 5: Purpose of the Use of Online Information Resources by Students (N=363)**

Purposes	Multiple Responses	
	Frequency (N)	Percent (%)
For academic work	219	60.3
For entertainment information	21	5.8
For sport information	0	0
For health matters	0	0
For social interaction	60	16.5
For news update	63	17.4

Table 5 above shows the purpose students use online information resources in Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo. Overall, majority of the respondents indicated that they used online information resources for academic work (60.3%), (17.4%) for news update, (16.5%) for social interaction, just (5.8%) for entertainment while (0% each) for sport information and for health matters. Therefore, the main purpose of the use of online information resources among the students of Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo is for academic work. This is in tandem with Dilevko and Gottlieb (2002) in Tenopir (2003) reported that about 47% of undergraduates reported that they began their assignments with online sources 90% most of the time.. Figure 4 below further presents the result from the table in a bar chart.



**Research Question4:** What are the challenges encountered in the use of online information resources among the students of Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo?

**Table 6: Challenges Facing Students’ Use of Online Information Resources (N=360)**

Items	Multiple Responses	
	Frequency (N)	Percent (%)
Unstable power supply	81	22.5
High cost of internet subscription	144	40.0
Slow internet speed	72	20.0
Technophobia (Fear of using the system)	0	0
Information overload (too much of information)	0	0
Log-in problem	9	2.5
Slow information download	36	10.0
Inadequate search skills	18	5.0
Not able to find relevant information	0	0
Not sure of the quality/accuracy of content	0	0

Table 6 above shows the challenges facing students’ use of online information resources in Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo. Majority of the respondents indicated high cost of internet subscription (40%) as challenges facing their use of online information resources,

followed by unstable power supply (22.5%), slow internet speed (20%), slow information download (10%), inadequate search skills (5%) and log-in problem with just (2.5%). No respondents identified technophobia (fear of using system), information overload (too much of information), not able to find relevant information and not sure of the quality/accuracy of content with (0% each) as challenges facing their use of the online information resources. Therefore, the challenges encountered in the use of online information resources among the students of Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo are high cost of internet subscription, unstable power supply, slow internet speed, slow information download, inadequate search skills and log-in problem. These corroborate with Ajuwon (2015) who noted the constraints to use of internet health information resources among doctors in tertiary health institutions in Southwestern Nigeria as slow speed of Internet connection, login problems, low bandwidth, time constraint, high cost of access and slow information download.

**Research Question5:** What are the strategies to enhance effective utilization of the online information resources in Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo?

**Table 7: Strategies for Enhancing Effective Students’ Use of Online Information Resources (N=363)**

Items	Multiple Responses	
	Frequency (N)	Percent (%)
Provision of stable power supply	121	30.6
Imposition of low tax duty on ICT companies	55	13.9
Improvement of internet services by internet service providers	154	38.9
Frequent use of online resources	11	2.8
Information should be well filtered before uploaded	33	8.3
Need of training on information literacy skill	11	2.8
Consulting relevant authority for content approval	11	2.8

Table 7 above shows the strategies for enhancing effective students' use of online information resources in Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo. From the table, improvement of internet services by internet service providers has the highest responses (38.9%), provision of stable power supply followed closely (30.6%), imposition of low tax duty on ICT companies (13.9) and information should be well filtered before uploaded (8.3%). Others strategies like frequent use of online resources, need of training on information literacy skill and consulting relevant authority for content approval had (11% each). Therefore, the strategies to enhance effective utilization of the online information resources in Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo are improvement of internet services by internet service providers, provision of stable power supply, imposition of low tax duty on ICT companies and information should be well filtered before uploaded.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

It can be concluded that the level of awareness and use of online information resources is generally low among students of Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo. However, email remained the most used online information resources for academic purposes. Therefore, it can be recommended that lecturers should always give assignments to students asking them to use online sources. And government need to lower tax duty on ICT facilities in Nigeria to enable students have access to these resources for online information.

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