

Availability and accessibility as correlates of electronic information resources utilisation among law undergraduates in South-West, Nigeria

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Abstract

Electronic information resources utilisation cannot be undervalued because of their immense contribution to scholastic work in the area of research, teaching and learning in educational institutions. Investigations and observations have established low utilisation of electronic information resources among undergraduates in Nigeria. It is on this premise that this study was to investigate the availability, and accessibility as correlates of electronic information resources utilisation by law undergraduates in South-West, Nigeria. The study employed survey research design of correlational type and adopted multi stage sampling technique. The population of the study comprised of 4,432 law undergraduates in South-West, Nigeria. Sample size of 870 was selected using proportionate to size sampling technique at 3% sample fraction. 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 such as frequency counts and central tendency while the hypotheses were tested using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation and multiple regression analysis at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study showed that law Pavilion was the most available type of electronic information resources with mean score of ($\bar{x} = 3.32$) followed by Nigeria Weekly Law Reports Online and e-books with a mean score of ($\bar{x} = 3.20$) and ($\bar{x} = 3.17$) respectively. The most accessible electronic information resource was e-books with a mean score of ($\bar{x} = 3.45$) followed by Law Pavilion with a mean score of ($\bar{x} = 3.28$) and Nigerian Weekly Law Reports Online with a mean score of ($\bar{x} = 3.19$). Nigerian Weekly Law Reports Online ($\bar{x} = 3.17$) was the most utilised electronic information resource e-books. The study concluded that availability and accessibility are crucial elements determining the utilisation of electronic information resources among undergraduates' law students in South-West, Nigeria and recommended that stakeholders in the education sector should prioritise financing subscriptions to relevant and affordable electronic information resources through collaborations with legal databases publishers and supports from government agencies.

Keywords: Availability, accessibility, electronic information resources, utilisation, law undergraduates, South-West, Nigeria

Introduction

In the contemporary world, modern libraries are automated and computerized to provide electronic information resources such as online databases, institutional repositories and internet services to their clientele. There is a growing demand for the use of different kinds of electronic information resources in many libraries due to the ensuing attributes such as dynamic nature, time saving, multiple users, no geographic boundary and flexibility, this is exceptional compared to

print resources and this explains why there is an increase in the subscription to numerous electronic information resources complementing the print library resources allowing users with more choices which invariably provides access to global electronic information resources. (Merande, 2021).

There are varieties of available electronic information resources in libraries which are rapidly growing on daily basis and equally meeting the needs of numerous

users and contributing to teaching pedagogies, the technological age root for automation and computerisation of prints books into electronic formats. (Lo et al., 2017; Kass 2014). 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. 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

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.

Consequently, utilisation of electronic information resources is essential for staying current and accessing diverse range of information to enhance teaching and research activities, hence, utilisation is the process of using something in a useful and effective way (Oxford Dictionary, 2022). Utilisation is the ability to use resources and services independently and efficiently. The Dictionary of Library and information science (2014) defined utilisation as the tenacious consultation of bibliographic items by library users during a given period of time.

According to Onobrakpor (2022) utilisation of EIRs depends on the enabled-devices available in the library such as internet connectivity, subscription to relevant EIRs, user's accessibility, easy retrieval tools, user-friendly interface, electricity and skilled staff.

Accessibility of electronic information resources includes the display, storage, transmission, dissemination and access points provided for interaction with electronic resources without restriction. Availability leads to accessibility and utilisation creating value to electronic information resources making it essential for research, teaching and learning. According to Onobrakpor et al., (2023) accessibility has been a known concept in the field of librarianship and scholars in many other fields as the opportunity to use electronic resources physically, intellectually and socially without barrier. Dahuya (2023) stated that the following can enhance electronic resources accessibility, conducive environment in terms of technological facilities such as well-designed and user-friendly websites, digital resources that have these features, completeness, evenness, exactness, currency, significance and appropriateness in terms of contents.

As mentioned by Aliyu and Kareto (2019), availability of electronic information resources is the ease of use and robust access in terms of reliability and comprehensiveness to arrays of electronic information resources comprising of e-textbooks, e-periodicals, e-articles, e-news, e-thesis, e-dissertations, databases, e-law reports, e-maps, e-mails, e-encyclopaedia and e-statutes they are good substitute to print resources. Digital information assets are dominating the researchers' information sources through provision of timely and accurate information to students to develop

research and relationship with other researchers around the globe and to reduce pressure on physical libraries, capable of providing unlimited access for patrons of library. Kass (2014) posited that students today have more choices than they did before with varieties of information resources that can be explored to ease learning in the university. EIR is available to user when they are accessed and utilised for the purpose required for. Alison et al., (2012) pointed out that the existing digital information resources in academic library made provision for massive formats and contents of online and offline databases.

In the opinion of Ukachi (2013), availability of EIRs is the openness, convenience, ease of locating and proximity of EIR. The availability of EIRs in libraries ensures not necessarily its usage because resources may be available but access to it is rejected for reasons such as power failure, lack of internet, lack of functional computers and lack of skills among users. With the increased availability of EIRs, students can access a vast amount of information from various sources contributing to a more comprehensive learning experience (Salman et al., 2020). According to Ternenge and Kashimana (2019) availability and accessibility are entwined and indivisible entities like a pair of conjoined twins, the existence of one caused the survival of the other, both are indispensable to the effective utilisation of electronic information resources, electronic information resources unavailability automatically caused inaccessibility, this can be a major hindrance to productivity and efficiency of users. Both concepts play a major role in teaching, learning and research processes.

Statement of the problem

Today users' preferences and choices have changed from paper-based resources to digital contents, teachers, students, publishers and writers are creating more digitized contents rather than print formats. The study underpinned that electronic information resources utilisation is relevant to positive academic output of law students, notwithstanding, there are challenges to availability, accessibility and utilisation of EIRs among library patrons. Predominantly, 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, the usage does not commensurate with the huge cost of subscription which is a source of concern for staff of law libraries particularly heads of law libraries.

It is on this premise that the study investigates and identifies barriers to active utilisation of electronic information resources among law students and how the situation of underutilization can be ameliorated. Furthermore, this study aims to fill the research gap based on the initial observation, existing literature and available data at the disposal of the researcher that there is dearth of studies on the availability and accessibility as correlates of electronic information resources utilisation by undergraduate law students in South-West, Nigeria.

Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study are to:

1. Identify the types of electronic information resources available for law undergraduates in universities in South-West, Nigeria.
2. Determine the extent of accessibility of electronic information resources to law

undergraduates in universities in South-West, Nigeria.

Research questions

The following research questions are raised for the study:

1. What are the electronic information resources available to law undergraduates in universities in South-West Nigeria?
2. What is the extent of accessibility of electronic information resources by law undergraduates in universities in South-West, Nigeria?
3. What is the level of utilisation of electronic information resources among law undergraduates in universities in South-West, Nigeria?

Hypothesis

The following hypotheses was tested at 0.05 level of significance.

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between availability and electronic information resources utilisation among law undergraduates in universities in South-West, Nigeria.

Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between accessibility and electronic information resources utilisation among law undergraduates in universities in South-West, Nigeria.

Literature review

According Ogwo and Nwachukwu(2019), availability of comprehensive and relevant electronic information resources in the library will enhance students productivity and efficiency in learning and research, these resources are sine quo non in modern libraries with features such as flexibility

and currency. Furthermore, availability of electronic information resources signifies seamless contact digital information without any difficulty or pressure from the computer, the internet and the librarian, mere presence of electronic information resources in the library without optimal satisfaction will amount to unavailability because users cannot get required utility. There is also the need for users to be capable of using electronic resources by possessing the requisite skills that will enable them to exploit these resources and services (Mwantimwa & Alphonse, 2019). Mommoh and Gomina (2023) in their study affirmed universities strong advocacy for electronic information resources availability in Nigeria with particular instance to University of Abuja where different EIRs are made available for students such as Law Pavilion, LexisNexis, AGORA, DOAF, e-books, e- journals, HINARI, PROQUEST, EBSCOHOST and free online databases.

Moreover, technology has transformed the availability and accessibility of information through the integrated free internet sources into the library collections in helping researchers to navigate the library and beyond and as the popularity of the smartphones and tablets, database providers are developing mobile optimized interfaces to users (Collins & Silver, 2015) (Egberongbe, 2011) (Fyneman et al., 2014). In her own view, Padma et al. (2018) affirmed that internet has opened up a world of information characterised by access to legal databases offering indepth access to primary and secondary sources of law such as looseleaf, legal encyclopedia, treaties, law journals and reviews and editorial commentaries on law.

There are several electronic legal information resources available for the use of law students such as LexisNexis, Heinonline, Westlaw, ProQuest all these are

subscription based legal databases. Brooks and Steenken, (2015) identified the free databases on the internet to be Justis One, Findlaw, Washlaw, Legal information institutes such as World Legal Institute. Cornell University developed the Legal Information institutes (ILL) to provide legal resources free of charge for law students, Legal resources include statutes, legislations, constitutions of all the countries of the World, Judicial decisions of different Courts including Supreme Court of United States of America and so on. (Brooks & Steenken, 2015). Sejana (2018) described the most available EIRs in the library to be e-law reports, e-statute e-law journals, e-law books, e-mails, e-images, e-legal databases, images, numeric and statistical databases and online open access catalogue.

According to Fadugba and Udoudoh (2022), availability of electronic information resources is the presence of resources at any time of the day, reliable information search selections, easy citations, ease of uploading and downloading, ease of storing and huge information reservoirs, flexibility in dissemination, cost affordability and ease of achieving and revealed the available EIRs to students as e-journals, e-books, e-thesis/dissertations, e-newspapers, web public access catalogue and online databases. Ezema and Chinwendu (2018) investigated the electronic information library support services for law students in Nigerian University Libraries and reiterated that CD-ROM, Law Pavillion. Open Access Journals, E-magazines JSTOR, LexisNexis and e-journals are common legal resources available for legal research and the most accessible of these resources are Law pavillion and e-books.

Empirically, many researchers have studied the online information resources availability in libraries. Abubakar et al.,

(2023) examined availability of digital information resources in tertiary institution libraries in Kano using qualitative research methodology with narrative – based research design, participants were eight electronic information resources managers purposively selected in eight tertiary institutions in Kano metropolis, data was analysed thematically assigning themes and codes, the results of the study revealed that institutions libraries in Kano city have numerous kinds of electronic resources such as the internet, e-lawbooks, e-law journals, e-law dictionaries and e-periodicals.

Electronic information resources constitute research materials for consultation in learning, teaching and research and have become indispensable resources in modern libraries. According to Abba and Linnen (2019), accessibility is the usability of a product service, environment or facility by people with the widest range of capabilities. Accessibility to EIRs is a key factor to effective teaching, learning and research tasks and its importance cannot be underrated. The idea of access to EIRs has been a major concern among users of library and librarians because making resources available requires lots of efforts and skills which when lacking renders resources inaccessible. Accessibility is a condition precedent to resources utilisation and electronic information has to be made available for it to be accessible and finally utilized optimally for research and training purposes depends on the platform, users and the publishers. Similarly, Mustapha (2021) noted that access to e-resources raises awareness on the current research gaps, helps in the preparation of examinations and keeps the researcher and faculty up-to-date in their respective disciplines. Electronic information resources access and use of helps faculty members and researchers to collect current teaching and research

materials to a very high degree, electronic information resources have become a supplement for print materials. Indeed, e-resources have fetched scholars dramatic change in learning, teaching, and research in institutions of higher learning. Accessibility of e-resources is the provision of fast, reliable, up-to-date literature, less expensive, time saving and remotely offered.

Empirically, Adedokun et al. (2023) examined the usage of subscribed electronic resources by undergraduate students of Kashim Ibrahim Library, Amadu Bello University Zaria, Nigeria, there was a CD-ROM search services unit created to cater for the undergraduate students access to EIRS and to compel them to learn and use a wide variety of EIRs, students were monitored through a period of six months from January and June 2014, a total of 350 undergraduate students patronized the unit during the period, data collected were analysed quantitatively, the findings of the study showed that the following EIRs were available and accessible CD-ROM, JSTOR, Science Direct, AGORA, TEEAL and barrier affecting access to EIRs were low bandwidth, poor connection to the internet, lack of skills to surf the subscribed databases, constant power failure and insufficient knowledge of the available EIRS.

According to Norch and Adzakpa (2022), assessment and use of library electronic resources by postgraduate students, respondents were research commons of the Balme Library. The results revealed that respondents mostly use electronic resources especially institutional repository (UGspace) for searching online journals and the challenges encountered were inability to identify resources and too much time spent on electronic information resources. Oyeboade (2021) assessed information needs, access to and use of

electronic resources by undergraduate students in Oyo State, Nigeria. Questionnaire was adopted to gather data from 214 undergraduates. The authors later employed frequency counts, percentages, correlation and regression to analyses data gathered for the study. Their results showed that most respondents need information on current affairs, culture and education. Other results showed that students had moderate access to, and frequently use the internet. They concluded that there is an empirical link between information needs, access to, and usage of digital resources by students. The researcher, however, suggested the need for strong internet with increased bandwidth to improve usage and supply of electronic information resource.

The development of the internet and the World Wide Web has enhanced the utilisation of electronic information resources by undergraduates' students around the globe. Utilisation is relatively important concept to enhanced information consumption when they are available and accessible, they should as well satisfy the quest for knowledge as demanded by users of the resources. Electronic resources are necessary tools that are capable of being retrieved from anywhere, be it school, home, on the road, from individual computers or from a designated digital library. Thus, the emerging electronic information environments in Nigerian universities provide platforms for utilisation of electronic information for scholastics processes, as these resources are perceived to hold a helpful effect on user's productivity.

Many studies have emerged across the continents on the effective utilisation of electronic information resources, the patterns and perception of utilisation in developed countries is different from the developing countries most especially

African countries, issue of low or underutilisation is peculiar to Africa countries due to lots of challenges associated with the use and utilisation of EIRs ranging from poor internet connectivity, poor funding, inadequate computers, lack of skill, epileptic power supply, cost of subscription are all barriers to effective deployment of these resources to users of libraries most especially in Nigeria. Buba and Lawal (2023) studied electronic information resources utilisation and influence on reading culture of undergraduate students in Federal University Dutse using cross sectional survey method with 119 respondents, the results of the study showed effective utilisation of social media and databases with positive statistical correlation of utilisation and reading culture of undergraduate students, the author concluded that benefits of electronic information resources are many, adequate deployment for the use of undergraduate students will support them in earning better grades and recommended strong internet connectivity with enough bandwidth can solve half of the challenges encountered by users in utilising electronic information resources.

Ogbuagu et. al. (2023) investigated students utilisation patterns of electronic resources among Rhema university, survey research design was adopted for the research with all registered users of library as respondents using library their registration data statistics as checklist and questionnaire employed for data collection, the results of the study showed that students are familiar with electronic information resources such as e- books, e-journals, OPAC, e-reference resources and CD-ROM, low utilisation was due to difficult in loading webpages, system breakdown and lack of skills among librarians and recommended incorporation

of EIRs skills in the school curriculum and organising training for staff on how to utilise electronic information resources. Mashaba and Pretorius (2023) examined postgraduate students' usage of digital library of the University of Technology in South Africa, research design used was survey research and data collected using quantitative method of data collection with the aid of questionnaire, the research was underpinned by UTAUT theory using facilitating condition as constructs to deduced the influenced of the construct on the usage of digital library by postgraduate students.

In a different opinion, Memusi (2022) examined the effect of electronic information resources by undergraduates students in public universities in Kenya with focus on Maasai Mara University Library, the report of the study showed low utilisation of electronic resources due to lack of appropriate library user education and inadequate computers, there is good internet connectivity unlike other places where there were poor internet connectivity and the study recommended awareness should be created to sensitize students about the importance of electronic information resources. Abbas and Song (2020) investigated the utilisation of e-resources by staff of the Institute of Agricultural and research, the findings of the study showed that staff of the institute were not aware of the available electronic resources not to mention effectively utilisation of the resources because the awareness level is very poor regarding available electronic information resources in the institute.

Methods

This study has adopted a survey research design of correlational type to investigate relationships between two or more variables without control or manipulation of any of

the variables with the aim of getting comprehensive and realistic information. This study population were 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 was selected for the study. The total population was 4,432 from which sample size of 870 were drawn. The study employed both questionnaire as instruments for data collection. 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 by multiple

regression analysis and Pearson's Product Moment Correlation at 0.05 level of significance.

Results and discussion

The results are presented in line with the raised research questions and formulated hypotheses.

Research question one: What are the electronic information resources available to law undergraduates in universities in South-West Nigeria?

The findings of reserch question on the availalable electronic information resources for law undergraduates in universities in South- west Nigeria as shown in Table 1.

Table 1 : Electronic information resources available to law undergraduates in universities in South-West, Nigeria (n =769)

E-resources	RA		A		SA		NA		\bar{x}	σ
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
Law pavilion	233	30.3	290	37.7	135	17.6	111	14.4	3.32	0.78
Nigerian weekly law Reports online	245	31.9	288	37.5	169	22.0	67	8.7	3.20	0.67
E- books	265	34.5	238	30.9	245	31.9	21	2.7	3.17	0.81
E- dictionary	226	29.4	244	31.7	172	22.4	127	16.5	3.14	0.91
LegalPedia	199	25.9	372	48.4	108	14.0	90	11.7	3.11	0.90
E-citation and abbreviation	248	32.2	336	43.7	141	18.3	44	5.7	2.97	0.88
Westlaw	154	20.0	280	36.4	268	34.9	67	8.7	2.91	0.86
LexisNexis	156	20.3	256	33.3	291	37.8	66	8.6	2.89	0.91
Electronic catalogues (OPAC)	154	20.0	263	34.2	185	24.1	167	21.7	2.87	0.93
E-journals	171	22.2	292	38.0	185	24.1	121	15.7	2.79	0.86
Institutional Repository	106	13.8	324	42.1	134	17.4	205	26.7	2.64	0.89
Lawscope	154	20.0	176	22.9	393	51.1	46	6.0	2.62	0.89
ProQuest	113	14.7	224	29.1	288	37.5	144	18.7	2.55	0.95
Heinonline	108	14.0	201	26.1	347	45.1	113	14.7	2.51	0.77
Open Access Legal information resources	101	13.1	167	21.7	224	29.1	167	21.7	2.48	0.88
CompuLaw	85	11.1	192	25.0	225	29.3	267	34.7	2.47	1.01
E- abstracts	108	14.0	113	14.7	335	43.6	213	27.7	2.43	0.85
E- bibliographies	67	8.7	167	21.7	381	49.5	154	20.0	2.39	0.76
Weighted mean									2.80	0.862

Key: Readily Available = RA, Available = A, Sometimes Available = SA and Not Available =NA

Table 1 showed the findings of the available electronic information resources for undergraduate law in universities in South-West, Nigeria. The findings of the study showed that Laws Pavilion with mean score (\bar{x} =3.32) was the most prominent available electronic information resources for the usage of undergraduates' law students in universities in South-West, Nigeria. This may be due to the fact that Law pavilion is locally available database produced in Nigeria and cheaper to acquire than LexisNexis and Heinonline with a mean score of (\bar{x} =2.51), (\bar{x} =2.89), West law with a mean score of (\bar{x} = 2.91) they are subscription based foreign databases cost of acquisition is high for law libraries in Nigeria. Nigerian Weekly Law Reports Online is local electronic case law with a mean score of (\bar{x} =3.20) while e-books both in offline and online had the third position with a mean score of (\bar{x} =3.17). The result also showed Institutional repository with a mean score of (\bar{x} =2.64), e-dictionaries (\bar{x} = 3.14), Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) with a mean score of (\bar{x} =2.89), LegalPedia (\bar{x} = 3.11) and e- citation and abbreviation (\bar{x} = 2.97) On the other hand, e-bibliographies (\bar{x} = 2.39), e-abstracts (\bar{x} = 2.43), CompuLAW (\bar{x} = 2.47) and Legal information institutes open resources (\bar{x} = 2.48) were found not to be known by undergraduates students in South-West, Nigeria.

More analysis indicated that the weighted mean was 2.80 with a standard deviation of 0.86, which falls within the moderate range. It is hereby presumed that the availability of electronic information resources for law undergraduates in universities in South-West, Nigeria was moderate. Precisely, available electronic resources were law pavilion, Nigerian Weekly Law Reports online, e-books, e-dictionaries, Heinonline among others. Though, the following types of electronic information resources were

negligibly available, they are Institutional Repository, LexisNexis, Heinonline, Westlaw, Online Public Access catalogue, e-bibliographies, e-abstracts, CompuLAW and institutional open Access Legal information resources due to the high cost of purchase.

Research question two: What is the extent of accessibility of electronic information resources by law undergraduates in universities in South-West, Nigeria?

The analysis hereby shown in Table 2.

The result in Table 4.3 revealed that electronic information resources that is most accessible to undergraduates law students was e-books (\bar{x} = 3.45), The next accessible resources was Primsol Law Pavilion (\bar{x} = 3.28), followed by Nigerian Weekly Law Reports Online (\bar{x} = 3.19) and next were e-legal citation and Abbreviation (\bar{x} = 3.11). From this analysis it is reveals that accessibility to there was high access to e-books, Law Pavilion, Nigerian Weekly law Reports Online and e-legal citation and Abbreviation by law undergraduates South-West, Nigeria, as opposed to e-bibliographies (\bar{x} = 2.09, e-abstract (\bar{x} = 2.22) and CompuLAW (\bar{x} = 2.24) suggest with low accessibility among undergraduate's law students.

Consequently, the decision rule revealed weighted mean of 2.70 which falls in the high extent range. Thus, this revealed that high extent of accessibility of electronic information resources by undergraduates' law students in universities in South-West, Nigeria.

Research question three: What is the level of utilisation of electronic information resources among law undergraduates in universities in South-West, Nigeria?

The data in Table 3 are used to answer this question.

Alabi Raliat, Ibrahim Olarewaju Yahaya and Abdulssalam Titilayo Aminat Bayero: Availability and accessibility as correlates of electronic information resources utilisation among law undergraduates in South-West, Nigeria

Table 2 : Extent of accessibility of electronic information resources by law undergraduates in universities in South-West, Nigeria (n =769)

Electronic information resources	VHE		HE		ME		LE		\bar{x}	σ
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
E- books	270	35.1	205	26.7	109	14.2	185	24.1	3.45	0.66
Law Pavilion	207	26.9	221	28.7	133	17.3	208	27.0	3.28	0.47
Nigerian Weekly Law Reports Online	161	20.9	245	31.9	178	23.1	185	24.1	3.19	0.73
e-legal citation and Abbreviation	138	17.9	159	20.7	138	17.9	159	20.7	3.11	0.75
LegalPedia	225	29.3	203	26.4	111	14.4	230	29.9	3.09	1.10
e-dictionary	161	20.9	272	35.4	129	16.8	207	26.9	2.93	1.18
Open Access Legal Information resources	161	20.9	175	22.8	203	26.4	230	29.9	2.75	1.01
Heinonline	184	23.9	108	14.0	247	32.1	230	29.9	2.69	1.18
Online Public Access Electronic Catalogues (OPAC)	138	17.9	198	25.7	225	29.3	208	27.0	2.63	1.08
Westlaw	111	14.4	179	23.3	226	29.4	253	32.9	2.53	0.91
CompuLaw	64	8.3	134	17.4	249	32.4	322	41.9	2.52	1.14
ProQuest	133	17.3	157	20.4	203	26.4	276	35.9	2.45	1.12
LexisNexis	115	15.0	113	14.7	265	34.5	276	35.9	2.40	1.07
Institutional Repository	92	12.0	221	28.7	266	34.6	190	24.7	2.36	1.12
E- journals	88	11.4	244	31.7	184	23.9	253	32.9	2.24	1.10
E- Abstract	69	9.0	198	25.7	203	26.4	299	38.9	2.22	1.16
E- bibliographies	46	6.0	152	19.8	272	35.4	299	38.9	2.09	1.05
Weighted mean									2.70	0.99

Key: VHE = Very High Extent, HE = High Extent, ME = Moderate Extent, LE = Low Extent **Decision Rule:** 1.00 – 1.49 = Low Extent, 1.50 – 2.49 = Moderate Extent, 2.5 – 3.49 = High Extent, while 3.5 – 4.00 = Very High Extent.

Table 3 : Level of utilisation of electronic information resources among law undergraduates in universities in South-West, Nigeria (n=769)

E-resources	H		M		S		N		\bar{x}	σ		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%				
Nigerian Weekly Law Reports Online	90	11.7	246	32.0	206	26.8	122	15.9	105	13.7	3.17	1.26
Law Pavilion	99	12.9	206	26.8	165	21.5	214	27.8	85	11.1	2.95	1.24
E- books	183	23.8	182	23.7	111	14.4	272	35.4	21	2.7	2.89	1.41
LegalPedia	23	3.0	161	20.9	167	21.7	224	29.1	194	25.2	2.78	1.09
e- dictionary	69	9.0	174	22.6	169	22.0	267	34.7	90	11.7	2.76	1.38
e-Legal citations and abbreviations	69	9.0	182	23.7	115	15.0	189	24.6	214	27.8	2.68	1.08
LexisNexis	66	8.6	122	15.9	144	18.7	208	27.0	229	29.8	2.66	1.34
Heinonline	69	9.0	161	20.9	100	13.0	170	22.1	269	35.0	2.58	1.30
Westlaw	58	7.5	123	16.0	188	24.4	133	17.3	267	34.7	2.54	1.10
ProQuest	63	8.2	85	11.1	124	16.1	210	27.3	287	37.3	2.37	1.37
CompuLaw	54	7.0	89	11.6	147	19.1	156	20.3	323	42.0	2.34	1.21
E-journals	115	15.0	188	24.4	188	24.4	234	30.4	44	5.7	2.29	1.42
E- bibliographies	46	6.0	69	9.0	182	23.7	303	39.4	169	22.0	2.25	1.20
Open Access Legal information resources	67	8.7	127	16.5	168	21.8	212	27.6	195	25.4	2.21	1.24
E- abstracts	51	6.6	56	7.3	178	23.1	299	38.9	195	25.4	2.11	1.25
Institutional Repository	65	8.5	69	9.0	71	9.2	285	37.1	279	36.3	1.82	1.70
Online Public Access Electronic Catalogues (OPAC)	23	3.0	92	12.0	159	20.7	258	33.6	237	30.8	1.71	1.94
Weighted mean											2.48	1.32

Key: H= Highly Utilised, M= Moderately Utilised, S= Slightly Utilised , N= Not Utilised

Table 3 showed that Nigerian weekly law reports Online was the mostly utilised electronic information resources by vast majority of the respondents ($\bar{x} = 3.17$). This was followed by Law pavilion ($\bar{x} = 2.95$), e-books ($\bar{x} = 2.89$), LegalPedia ($\bar{x} = 2.78$), e-dictionaries ($\bar{x} = 2.76$) and e-Legal Citations and Abbreviations ($\bar{x} = 2.68$) respectively. On the other hand, Online Public Access Electronic Catalogues (OPAC) ($\bar{x} = 1.71$), institutional repository ($\bar{x} = 1.82$) and e-abstracts ($\bar{x} = 2.11$) were minimally utilised not by the majority of the law undergraduates in universities in South-West, Nigeria. Furthermore, decision rule was used to determine the overall level of utilisation of electronic information

resources by undergraduates' law students. The weighted mean was 2.48 which was found to be moderately utilised used. It is therefore suggested that electronic information resources were moderately utilised by undergraduate's law students in South-West, Nigeria.

Hypothesis one: There is no significant relationship between availability and electronic information resources utilisation among undergraduates law students in universities in South-West, Nigeria. This hypothesis was tested using Pearson's product moment correlation and the result is presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Relationship between availability and electronic information resources utilisation among law undergraduates (n=769)

Variables	Mean	STD	N	R	Sig p	Remark
Availability of EIR	50.46	15.51	769	.346	.000	Significant
EIR utilisation	42.11	22.53				

The analysis of the result in showed that the Correlation Coefficient I indicating a positive correlation between availability and Utilisation of electronic information resources by undergraduates' law students in universities in South-West, Nigeria was 0.346 ($P=0.000$; < 0.05). This reveals that there is a significant relationship between availability and electronic resources utilisation, at moderate level, by undergraduates law students in universities in South – west Nigeria. Therefore, hypothesis one is hereby not accepted which means that the alternative is accepted. However, adequate provision of electronic information resources will necessitate maximum utilisation of electronic resources by undergraduate law students. Therefore, there would be a matching improvement in electronic information resources utilisation

by undergraduates' law students in universities in South-West, Nigeria.

Hypothesis two: There is no significant relationship between accessibility and electronic information resources utilisation among law undergraduates in universities in South-West, Nigeria. This hypothesis was tested using Pearson's product moment correlation and the result is presented in Table 5.

As shown in Table 5, the result revealed that there is a significant linear relationship existing between the two variables ($r = 0.496$, $p<0.05$). Therefore, accessibility and electronic information resources utilisation have a significant relationship, accessibility of electronic information resources will improve undergraduates law students utilisation. Therefore, hypothesis two is hereby not

accepted. In other words, an enhancement in the level of accessibility of electronic information resources would interpret to active utilisation of the electronic

information resources by law undergraduates in universities in South-West, Nigeria.

Table 5: Relationship between accessibility and electronic information resources utilisation among law undergraduates (n =769)

Variables	Mean	STD	N	R	Sig p	Remark
Accessibility of EIR	45.93	16.83	769	.496	.000	Significant
EIR utilisation	42.11	22.53				

Discussion

The databases that law students' access and utilised all over the world are Westlaw, LexisNexis, CompuLaw, LegalPedia, Law Pavilion, e- books. The results of this study showed that the most accessible electronic information resources for law undergraduates was e- books, these have become one of the most popular and important electronic resources among law undergraduates due to its easy accessibility as well as its affordability and lower cost compare to prints resources and this corroborated the studies of (Abubakar & Adetimirin, 2015; Ukachi, 2013; Odede, 2017; Olorunfemi, 2015,). These findings confirm the assertion made by the (Bendall 2021) that e- books have become an increasing part of university library collections since 1990s in various formats include Portable Document Format (PDF), Electronic Publication (EPUB) and Mobipocket (MOBI) which can be read using specific device such as computers, tablets and smartphones or e-readers and library websites, on the contrary opinion by Hobbs and Klare (2016) students found e-books less tactile in nature, lacked the ability to flip between sections of a book, relevant sections of a print books easily identified than e- books, so they prefer mix of both prints and electronic resources.

The findings of this study on the level of utilisation revealed that Nigerian

Weekly Law Report Online was the most utilised of all the digital information resources because of its affordability and popularity among legal practitioners and the most user-friendly platform for legal research activities. The findings of this study agreed with the findings of Igbinovia and Odelami (2022) who reported that availability significantly influence electronic information resources utilisation. Also, the findings of this study agreed with the findings of Obande and Abdulsalami (2020) who reported that availability significantly influence electronic information resources utilisation among Library. In addition, the findings of this study agreed with the findings of Ani et al. (2015) who reported that accessibility significantly influence electronic information resources utilisation by academic staff in selected Nigerian universities, also agreed with the findings of Oyelade et al. (2022) who reported that accessibility significantly influence electronic information resources utilisation by undergraduates' students.

Conclusion

The study concluded that availability and accessibility are dynamic concepts that influences the utilisation of electronic information resources by law undergraduates law students in South-West, Nigeria. The research explains the significance of availability and accessibility

and in determining the utilization of electronic information resources among law undergraduates in universities in South-West, Nigeria. Law Pavilion and e-books were the most available and accessible resources, while Nigerian Weekly Law Reports Online was the most utilized resource.

The study made the following recommendations based on the findings of the study:

1. Investment in internet infrastructure and Wi-Fi access across campuses and including in law libraries, classrooms and hostels will improve effective access to electronic information resources among law students.
2. Furthermore, remote access options should be explored to cater to students studying off-campus or during periods of lockdowns or restrictions.
3. ICT skills training in form of workshops, seminars, and courses on use of library resources should be integrated into the curriculum.
4. To ensure that electronic information resources meet the needs of law undergraduates, universities should collaborate with legal practitioners, researchers, and industry experts. Engaging stakeholders can help identify specific resource requirements and enhance the relevance of the available resources.

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