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ASSESSMENT OF ELECTRONIC LIBRARY RESOURCES USAGE AMONG LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CALABAR, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study assessed the utilization of electronic library resources among Library and Information Science students at the University of Calabar, Nigeria. Specifically, it examined the extent to which students used e-books, e-journals, online databases, and digital repositories for academic and research purposes. A descriptive survey design was adopted. The study population comprised 201 undergraduate Library and Information Science students from 100 to 400 levels. Data were collected using a researcher-developed questionnaire titled Assessment of Electronic Library Resources Usage among Library and Information Science Students Questionnaire (AELRULISSQ). The instrument contained 20 items measured on a four-point Likert scale and recorded an overall Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.843. Data were analyzed using frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, and one-sample tests. The findings showed that e-book utilization was relatively low, with a grand mean of 2.43, which was below the 2.50 decision benchmark. In contrast, e-journal usage was relatively high, with a grand mean of 2.93. Online databases and digital repositories also recorded high levels of utilization, with grand means of 2.99 and 3.06,

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respectively. The study concludes that students utilized e-journals, online databases, and digital repositories more extensively than e-books. It recommends improved promotion of e-book collections, regular information-literacy training, enhanced internet connectivity, improved ICT infrastructure, and continuous development and updating of institutional digital repositories.

Keywords: electronic library resources; e-books; e-journals; online databases; digital repositories

Introduction

The rapid advancement of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is transforming higher education and academic library services, particularly through the increasing provision of electronic library resources such as e-books, e-journals, online databases, digital repositories and other internet-based scholarly resources. Academic libraries are gradually shifting from traditional repositories of printed books, journals, newspapers and other physical materials to dynamic digital information centres that provide users with faster, flexible and remote access to scholarly information. Electronic library resources have become increasingly important to undergraduate students because they facilitate information retrieval, support independent learning, promote critical thinking and provide access to current and credible academic literature. Since teaching, learning and research are central functions of the university system, the availability and effective utilization of relevant information resources are essential to the achievement of these functions. The transformation of academic libraries through ICT has consequently expanded the range of information resources available to students and created new opportunities for improving academic and research activities (Otto, 2024).

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The importance of electronic library resources is particularly evident in the changing information environment of university education. E-books, e-journals, online databases and digital repositories provide students with access to scholarly materials without the physical and time limitations associated with traditional library collections. Students can search, retrieve, download, store and, where permitted, share electronic materials using computers, laptops, tablets and smartphones. Access to scholarly platforms such as JSTOR, ScienceDirect, EBSCOhost, ProQuest, Emerald Insight, SpringerLink, Wiley Online Library and institutional repositories has also expanded students' opportunities to obtain current research literature for assignments, seminar papers, literature reviews and research projects (Tenopir et al., 2012). However, the availability of electronic resources does not necessarily guarantee their effective utilization. Students may be unable to take full advantage of available resources because of inadequate awareness, insufficient information-literacy and ICT skills, poor internet connectivity, irregular electricity supply, inadequate digital devices, authentication difficulties and limited technical support. Empirical studies have similarly shown that convenience and accessibility encourage the use of electronic resources, while technological, infrastructural and user-related challenges can restrict their effective utilization (Alajmi & Alotaibi, 2020; Noh et al. 2020).

Ideally, undergraduate students should have access to functional electronic library systems through which they can easily discover, retrieve, evaluate and utilize current scholarly information. For Library and Information Science (LIS) students in particular,

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effective utilization of electronic resources is especially important because their academic programme is closely connected with information searching, retrieval, organization, evaluation and dissemination. E-books can provide flexible access to academic texts; e-journals can expose students to current scholarly research; online databases can facilitate systematic retrieval of specialized academic literature; and digital repositories can provide access to theses, dissertations, institutional publications and other scholarly outputs. In practice, however, the extent to which students utilize these resources may differ according to their awareness, digital competence, perceived usefulness, ease of use, information-searching skills and access to enabling infrastructure. The Information Seeking Behaviour Theory of Wilson (1996) shows that users' information-seeking and utilization are influenced by personal, social and environmental factors, while the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) of Venkatesh et al. (2003) emphasizes performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence and facilitating conditions as important determinants of technology use. These perspectives suggest that electronic resource utilization depends not only on the availability of resources but also on students' ability and willingness to access and use them effectively.

The University of Calabar has responded to the changing information environment by providing electronic library facilities and access to various digital scholarly resources for students and staff. Through its electronic library services, internet facilities, institutional repository and access to online databases, the university library provides

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opportunities for students to obtain e-books, e-journals, research articles, dissertations, conference papers and other electronic academic materials. These resources are expected to support teaching, learning, research and innovation within the university community. However, the effectiveness of these services ultimately depends on the extent to which students actually utilize the resources made available to them. Although electronic resources can improve access to scholarly information, inadequate awareness, poor internet connectivity, limited digital devices, insufficient information-literacy skills and other infrastructural or user-related constraints may limit their utilization. This issue is particularly important among LIS students because they are expected to develop competencies in the use and management of electronic information systems as part of their academic and professional preparation. Existing empirical studies have examined electronic information resource utilization among university students in different contexts, but much of the evidence has focused on electronic resources generally rather than examining the specific patterns of e-book, e-journal, online database and digital repository usage among LIS students in the University of Calabar.

Electronic library resources therefore provide important opportunities for improving the academic information environment of Library and Information Science students. E-books can extend access to textbooks and other scholarly materials beyond the physical library; e-journals can provide current research findings and support evidence-based academic writing; online databases can improve systematic information retrieval

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and literature searching; while digital repositories can provide access to institutional research outputs and other open scholarly materials. The effective utilization of these resources can strengthen students' information-searching skills, research competence, independent learning and academic work. The study is consequently designed to determine the extent of e-book usage among Library and Information Science students in the University of Calabar, examine the usage of e-journals, investigate the usage of online databases, and evaluate the usage of digital repositories. In addressing these areas, the study seeks to provide empirical evidence on the utilization of electronic library resources among LIS students and contribute to the improvement of electronic library services, user education, information-literacy programmes, technological infrastructure and access to scholarly electronic resources within the University of Calabar.

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

i. To what extent are e-books used by Library and Information Science students in the University of Calabar?
ii. To what extent are e-journals used by Library and Information Science students in the University of Calabar?
iii. To what extent are online databases used by Library and Information Science students in the University of Calabar?

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iv. To what extent are digital repositories used by Library and Information Science students in the University of Calabar?

Literature Review

Theoretical Literature Review

This study was anchored on two relevant theories that provide a theoretical basis for understanding the factors influencing the usage of electronic library resources among Library and Information Science students. The theories are the Information Seeking Behaviour Theory and the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT).

Information Seeking Behaviour Theory

The information seeking behaviour theory, originally developed by Wilson (1981) and subsequently revised in 1997, provides a framework for understanding how individuals recognize information needs and engage in processes of searching for, accessing, evaluating, selecting, and using information. The theory posits that information-seeking behaviour occurs when individuals recognize a gap between the information they possess and the information required to perform a task, solve a problem, or make a decision. In the context of Library and Information Science, the theory is particularly relevant because students routinely seek information from both traditional and electronic sources to satisfy their academic and research needs.

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The theory further explains that information-seeking behaviour may be affected by barriers such as inadequate awareness, limited information retrieval skills, poor internet connectivity, insufficient ICT infrastructure, irregular electricity supply, restricted access to subscription databases, and lack of technical support. These barriers can discourage students from seeking and utilizing available electronic information resources. Conversely, adequate information literacy training, effective user education, reliable technological infrastructure, and appropriate library support can facilitate students' ability to locate, retrieve, evaluate, and use electronic resources effectively.

In relation to this study, the information seeking behaviour theory provides a suitable framework for understanding how Library and Information Science students at the University of Calabar identify their academic information needs and select electronic resources to satisfy those needs. E-books, e-journals, online databases, and digital repositories constitute important sources through which students can obtain information for assignments, seminar presentations, literature reviews, projects, and other academic activities. The theory therefore helps explain variations in the level of utilization of these resources by emphasizing the roles of information needs, user characteristics, accessibility, information literacy, technological conditions, and library support.

Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT)

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The unified theory of acceptance and use of technology (UTAUT), developed by Venkatesh et al. (2003), provides a comprehensive framework for explaining individuals' acceptance and actual use of technology. The theory incorporates four major constructs: performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, and facilitating conditions. Performance expectancy refers to the extent to which an individual believes that using a technology will enhance task performance, while effort expectancy concerns the perceived ease of learning and using the technology. Social influence refers to the extent to which individuals perceive that important people believe they should use a particular technology, whereas facilitating conditions refer to the availability of organizational and technical resources required to support technology use.

In the context of electronic library resources, UTAUT shows that students are more likely to use e-books, e-journals, online databases, and digital repositories when they perceive these resources as useful for improving their academic and research activities. Performance expectancy may therefore be reflected in students' perceptions that electronic resources provide quick access to current, relevant, and reliable scholarly information, thereby assisting them in completing assignments, preparing seminar papers, conducting literature reviews, and writing research projects. Effort expectancy is reflected in the ease with which students can navigate library platforms, search databases, retrieve full-text materials, and use electronic resources without encountering excessive technical difficulties.

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The Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology is relevant to this study because electronic library resources are technology-based information systems whose effective utilization depends not only on their availability but also on students' perceptions, social environment, and supporting technological conditions. UTAUT consequently provides a framework for examining how perceived academic benefits, ease of use, influence from lecturers and peers, and facilitating conditions affect the utilization of electronic library resources among Library and Information Science students at the University of Calabar.

Review of Empirical Studies

Studies on e-book usage among university students generally indicate that accessibility, convenience, portability and searchability are important factors encouraging their utilization. Mizrachi (2015) further found that students combined electronic and printed resources, with electronic materials being valued for convenience and accessibility while print materials remained important for prolonged academic reading. These findings suggest that students' use of e-books is determined not simply by availability but also by the purpose for which the resource is required and individual preferences concerning reading formats.

The literature further indicates that awareness, digital literacy and technological infrastructure are important determinants of effective e-book utilization. Noh et al. (2020)

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emphasized the importance of digital literacy competencies in enabling students to discover, evaluate and use electronic information resources effectively, while Alajmi and Alotaibi (2020) found that accessibility, awareness and technological facilities influenced students' utilization of electronic information resources. These findings indicate that providing e-books without ensuring that students know about their availability or possess the skills and facilities required to access them may limit their utilization. The availability of smartphones, computers and reliable internet connectivity can facilitate access, whereas poor connectivity, inadequate devices and technical difficulties may constitute barriers.

The reviewed literature also shows that e-books can contribute to independent learning, information sharing and academic engagement. Rowley (2021) indicated that e-books enable students to access academic resources beyond conventional library operating hours, while Nicholas et al. (2017) associated regular use of electronic books with greater engagement with academic content and opportunities to compare and synthesize information from multiple sources. These benefits demonstrate that e-books can extend the functions of the academic library beyond the physical environment and support both individual and collaborative learning. Nevertheless, the literature indicates that the benefits are dependent on the availability of functional platforms and students' familiarity with electronic reading and information-management features such as searching, bookmarking, highlighting and annotation.

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Similarly, empirical studies on e-journal usage among university students demonstrate that electronic journals are important sources of current scholarly information. Their principal advantage lies in providing students with access to research articles and other scholarly materials without the physical limitations associated with print journals. Manca (2021) observed that digital technologies have increasingly shaped students' interaction with academic information, while Tenopir et al. (2012) also emphasized the role of electronic scholarly resources in supporting independent learning and access to research literature.

The empirical evidence further indicates that e-journals can contribute to the quality of students' academic work by exposing them to current research, diverse perspectives and empirical evidence. Adeniran (2020) reported that students demonstrated a preference for e-journals as credible sources of information and perceived them as contributing to the quality of research arguments. Tenopir et al. (2012) similarly reported substantial reliance on e-journals among students and perceived improvements in literature-review quality associated with their use. These findings suggest that awareness of the academic value of e-journals does not necessarily translate into frequent utilization. Students must also possess the skills required to locate relevant articles, navigate databases and evaluate scholarly information.

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Accessibility, internet connectivity and information-searching skills also emerge as important factors in e-journal utilization. Electronic journals provide search functions that allow students to retrieve materials using keywords, authors, titles and subject terms, thereby making literature searching more efficient. However, Manca (2021). Association of College and Research Libraries, ACRL (2023) further emphasizes that students need to be able to discover, evaluate and use digital scholarly information effectively. Poor internet connectivity, limited access to appropriate devices, restricted authentication and inadequate knowledge of electronic databases may therefore reduce e-journal utilization. The evidence consequently shows that effective e-journal use requires a combination of resource availability, technological infrastructure, information literacy and library support.

The reviewed studies on online database usage Mwantimwa and Elia (2017) found that online databases improved students' information-seeking behaviour and research productivity by providing access to peer-reviewed articles and other scholarly publications. However, the literature indicates that effective database utilization depends substantially on students' information-searching skills and familiarity with digital search environments. Head et al. (2020) found that students increasingly depend on digital information sources but may experience difficulties identifying and evaluating appropriate information. This is particularly important for LIS students because searching, retrieval, organization and evaluation of information constitute central components of their academic and professional preparation. ACRL (2023) emphasized the need for learners to

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develop strategic searching and information-evaluation skills, suggesting that database utilization should not be assessed solely in terms of access or frequency of use but also in terms of students' ability to retrieve relevant and credible information. Students who are unfamiliar with advanced search techniques may retrieve excessive irrelevant results or fail to identify appropriate materials.

The studies also identify technological and institutional conditions as important influences on online database usage. Internet connectivity, availability of computers and other digital devices, electricity supply, database accessibility and user training can either facilitate or constrain students' utilization. Head et al. (2020) noted that students' information practices are influenced by convenience and familiarity, which may explain why some students continue to rely on general search engines even when academic databases are available. The evidence therefore shows that academic libraries need to provide database orientation, information-literacy training and user support while ensuring that access mechanisms are sufficiently convenient. For LIS students, such interventions may have an additional benefit because they strengthen the practical information-retrieval competencies expected of future library and information professionals.

Empirical evidence further shows that digital repositories can support students' research activities by increasing access to local and institution-specific scholarship. Pinfield

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(2015) observed that repositories enhance the visibility and accessibility of scholarly works. Access to previous theses, dissertations and research projects may be particularly useful to LIS students because these materials can provide examples of research design, theoretical frameworks, data analysis and academic writing. Digital repositories therefore complement commercial databases and e-journals by providing a different category of scholarly information, particularly research outputs produced within universities and other institutions.

Research Gap

The empirical studies provided substantial evidence that e-books, e-journals, online databases, and digital repositories can enhance students' access to academic and scholarly information. The studies converge on the importance of electronic information resources in improving accessibility, convenience, currency of information, information retrieval, independent learning, research activities and academic performance. The studies also indicate that effective utilization of these resources is influenced by factors such as students' awareness, digital and information-literacy skills, internet connectivity, availability of appropriate devices, ease of access, technological infrastructure, library orientation and librarian support. However, the empirical studies also demonstrate that the availability of electronic information resources does not necessarily translate into effective utilization, as students may experience challenges relating to inadequate awareness,

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limited searching skills, poor internet connectivity, technological difficulties and unfamiliarity with electronic library platforms.

Importantly, much of the existing empirical evidence examines electronic information resources generally or focuses on broad populations of university students, researchers and academic staff, while relatively limited empirical attention has been given to the separate utilization of e-books, e-journals, online databases and digital repositories among Library and Information Science students within a specific Nigerian university environment. In addition, limited empirical evidence exists on the extent to which Library and Information Science students at the University of Calabar utilize these four categories of electronic information resources and the factors that may facilitate or constrain their utilization. This constitutes an important population, contextual and empirical gap that the present study seeks to address by examining the utilization of e-books, e-journals, online databases and digital repositories among Library and Information Science students at the University of Calabar.

Research Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design to assess the usage of electronic library resources among Library and Information Science students at the University of Calabar. The study was conducted in the Department of Library and Information Science, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Calabar, Calabar, Cross River

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State, Nigeria. The population of the study comprised 201 undergraduate Library and Information Science students from 100 to 400 level. The students were considered appropriate for the study because they are expected to utilize electronic library resources, including e-books, e-journals, online databases, and digital repositories, for their academic and research activities. A sample of 201 students was selected using a simple random sampling technique to provide respondents with an equal opportunity of participating in the study.

Data were collected using a structured 24-item questionnaire titled "Assessment of Electronic Library Resources Usage Among Library and Information Science Students Questionnaire (AELRULISSQ)". The instrument was developed in line with the objectives and research questions of the study and was divided into sections covering respondents' demographic characteristics and the usage of e-books, e-journals, online databases, and digital repositories. Responses to the major study variables were measured using a four-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Agree (4) to Strongly Disagree (1).

The questionnaire was subjected to face and content validation by experts in Library and Information Science and Measurement and Evaluation. Their corrections, suggestions, and recommendations were incorporated into the final instrument. Reliability was established through a pilot test involving undergraduate students from the Department of Sociology, University of Calabar, who had characteristics similar to those of

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the target population but were excluded from the main study. Cronbach's Alpha was used to determine the internal consistency of the instrument, producing an overall reliability coefficient of 0.843, while the coefficients for the individual variables ranged from 0.812 to 0.847, indicating satisfactory reliability.

The completed questionnaires were checked for completeness, coded, and entered into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), version 25.0, for analysis. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques, including frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation. Mean and standard deviation were specifically used to answer the four research questions and determine the extent of usage of e-books, e-journals, online databases, and digital repositories among Library and Information Science students at the University of Calabar. A criterion mean of 2.50 was adopted, such that items with a mean score of 2.50 and above were considered accepted, while items with a mean score below 2.50 were considered rejected.

Research Questions

Research Question One: To what extent are e-books used by Library and Information Science students in the University of Calabar?

Research Question Two: To what extent are e-journals used by Library and Information Science students in the University of Calabar?

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Research Question Three: To what extent are online databases used by Library and Information Science students in the University of Calabar?

Research Question Four: To what extent are digital repositories used by Library and Information Science students in the University of Calabar?

Research Hypotheses

Null Hypothesis One (H_{01}): The mean level of e-book usage among Library and Information Science students in the University of Calabar is not significantly different from the criterion mean of 2.50.

Null Hypothesis Two (H_{02}): The mean level of e-journal usage among Library and Information Science students in the University of Calabar is not significantly different from the criterion mean of 2.50.

Null Hypothesis Three (H_{03}): The mean level of online database usage among Library and Information Science students in the University of Calabar is not significantly different from the criterion mean of 2.50.

Null Hypothesis Four (H_{04}): The mean level of digital repository usage among Library and Information Science students in the University of Calabar is not significantly different from the criterion mean of 2.50.

Results and Discussion

Data Presentation

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A total of 201 questionnaires were administered to undergraduate Library and Information Science students at the University of Calabar, and all 201 questionnaires were retrieved and found usable, representing a 100% response rate.

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

This section presents the demographic characteristics of the respondents in terms of gender, academic level, and marital status. The results are presented using frequency and percentage distributions.

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of respondents

Variable	*Category*	*Frequency*	*Percentage (%)*
Gender	Female	101	50.2
	Male	100	49.8
	Total	201	100.0
Academic Level	100 Level	31	15.4
	200 Level	61	30.3
	300 Level	55	27.4
	400 Level	54	26.9
	Total	201	100.0
Marital Status	Single	199	99.0
	Married	2	1.0
	Total	201	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2026.

Table 1 shows the demographic distribution of the respondents. The percentage distribution revealed that females constituted the higher proportion of respondents, with

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50.2%, while males accounted for 49.8%. In terms of academic level, 200-level students had the highest percentage of 30.3%, followed by 300-level students with 27.4%, 400-level students with 26.9%, and 100-level students with 15.4%. Regarding marital status, the overwhelming majority of the respondents were single, accounting for 99.0%, while only 1.0% were married.

Results by Research Question

This section presents the results of the study according to the research questions. Mean and standard deviation were used to determine the extent of utilization of the different electronic library resources, while one-sample t-tests were used to determine whether the observed mean usage differed significantly from the criterion mean of 2.50.

Research Question One

Research Question One: To what extent are e-books used by Library and Information Science students in the University of Calabar?

Table 2: Distribution of respondents' use of e-books

S/N	*Statement*	*Strongly Disagree n (%)*	*Disagree n (%)*	*Agree n (%)*	*Strongly Agree n (%)*	*Total*
1	I use e-books available through the university library to support my	44 (21.9)	112 (55.7)	23 (11.4)	22 (10.9)	201 (100.0)

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	studies.					
2	I use e-books to obtain information for my coursework and assignments.	44 (21.9)	112 (55.7)	23 (11.4)	22 (10.9)	201 (100.0)
3	I access e-books when searching for information related to my courses.	84 (41.8)	77 (38.3)	40 (19.9)	0 (0.0)	201 (100.0)
4	I regularly read or download e-books available through electronic library platforms.	0 (0.0)	79 (39.3)	34 (16.9)	88 (43.8)	201 (100.0)
5	I use e-books as an alternative source of academic information to printed books.	0 (0.0)	67 (33.3)	45 (22.4)	89 (44.3)	201 (100.0)

Source: Field Survey, 2026.

Table 2 shows that respondents generally reported low use of e-books for supporting their studies, coursework, assignments, and course-related information searching. For the first statement, 77.6% of respondents either strongly disagreed or disagreed that they use e-books available through the university library to support their studies, while only 22.3% agreed or strongly agreed. Similarly, 77.6% disagreed or strongly disagreed that they use e-books for coursework and assignments.

Table 3: Mean and standard deviation of e-book usage

S/N	*Statement*	*Mean*	*Std. Deviation*	*Decision*
1	I use e-books available through the university library	2.11	0.87	Disagree

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	to support my studies.			
2	I use e-books to obtain information for my coursework and assignments.	2.11	0.87	Disagree
3	I access e-books when searching for information related to my courses.	1.78	0.76	Disagree
4	I regularly read or download e-books available through electronic library platforms.	3.04	0.91	Agree
5	I use e-books as an alternative source of academic information to printed books.	3.11	0.88	Agree
	Grand Mean	2.43	—	Disagree

Source: Author's computation from Field Survey, 2026.

For the third statement, 80.1% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that they access e-books when searching for information related to their courses, while only 19.9% agreed. However, the pattern was different for reading or downloading e-books and using them as alternatives to printed books. About 60.7% agreed or strongly agreed that they regularly read or download e-books through electronic library platforms, while 66.7% agreed or strongly agreed that they use e-books as an alternative source of academic information to printed books.

The frequency distribution therefore indicates that although respondents use e-books for reading, downloading, and as alternatives to printed books, their use of university-library e-books for coursework, assignments, and course-related information searching was relatively limited.

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Table 3 shows that the mean scores varied across the five indicators of e-book usage. The first and second statements recorded mean scores of 2.11 respectively, indicating disagreement with the use of e-books for supporting studies and obtaining information for coursework and assignments. The third statement recorded the lowest mean of 1.78, indicating disagreement with accessing e-books for course-related information searching.

In contrast, respondents agreed that they regularly read or download e-books through electronic library platforms, with a mean of 3.04. They also agreed that they use e-books as an alternative source of academic information to printed books, with the highest mean of 3.11. The grand mean of 2.43, which is below the criterion mean of 2.50, indicates that the overall level of e-book usage was relatively low.

Research Hypothesis One

Null Hypothesis One (H_{01}): The mean level of e-book usage among Library and Information Science students in the University of Calabar is not significantly different from the criterion mean of 2.50.

Table 4: One-sample test of e-book usage

Variable	*Test Value*	*Mean*	*Mean Difference*	*t-value*	*Sig. (2-tailed)*	*Decision*
E-book	2.50	2.43	-0.07	≈ -	≈ 0.16	Do not reject

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Usage	1.42	H_0

Source: Author's computation from Field Survey, 2026.

The result in Table 4 shows that the overall mean score for e-book usage was 2.43, which was slightly below the criterion mean of 2.50. The one-sample test produced an estimated t-value of approximately -1.42 with a significance value of approximately 0.16. This indicates that the observed level of e-book usage did not differ significantly from the criterion mean at the 0.05 level of significance.

The study found that e-books were used to a relatively low extent by Library and Information Science students in the University of Calabar. The overall mean score of 2.43 was below the benchmark mean of 2.50, indicating that the students did not consistently utilize e-books for most academic activities. Specifically, respondents disagreed that they used e-books available through the university library to support their studies and coursework and assignments, with each item recording a mean of 2.11. Similarly, accessing e-books when searching for course-related information recorded the lowest mean of 1.78. However, respondents agreed that they regularly read or downloaded e-books through electronic library platforms (M = 3.04) and used e-books as an alternative source of academic information to printed books (M = 3.11).

This finding shows that although students recognize the usefulness and convenience of e-books, they may not consistently integrate them into their major academic

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information-seeking activities. The finding is consistent with Mizrachi (2015), who found that university students continued to use both print and electronic resources, with their preference depending on the nature of the academic task.

Research Question Two

Research Question Two: To what extent are e-journals used by Library and Information Science students in the University of Calabar?

Table 5 shows a generally positive level of e-journal usage among the respondents. For the first statement, 55.2% agreed or strongly agreed that they use e-journals provided through the university library for their studies, while 44.8% disagreed. Similarly, 65.6% agreed or strongly agreed that they use e-journals to obtain current information on topics related to their courses.

Table 5: Distribution of respondents' use of e-journals

S/N	*Statement*	*Strongly Disagree n (%)*	*Disagree n (%)*	*Agree n (%)*	*Strongly Agree n (%)*	*Total*
1	I use e-journals provided through the university library for my studies.	0 (0.0)	90 (44.8)	45 (22.4)	66 (32.8)	201 (100.0)
2	I use e-journals to obtain current information on topics related to my courses.	0 (0.0)	69 (34.3)	69 (34.3)	63 (31.3)	201 (100.0)
3	I access e-journals when working on assignments	0 (0.0)	67 (33.3)	61 (30.3)	73 (36.3)	201 (100.0)

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	and academic projects.					
4	I regularly search e-journals for scholarly articles.	35 (17.4)	57 (28.4)	11 (5.5)	98 (48.8)	201 (100.0)
5	I use e-journals to locate relevant references for my academic work.	34 (16.9)	35 (17.4)	42 (20.9)	90 (44.8)	201 (100.0)

Source: Field Survey, 2026.

For accessing e-journals when working on assignments and academic projects, 66.6% agreed or strongly agreed. Also, 54.3% agreed or strongly agreed that they regularly search e-journals for scholarly articles. Finally, 65.7% agreed or strongly agreed that they use e-journals to locate relevant references for their academic work. The results therefore indicate that e-journals are relatively well utilized, particularly for obtaining current information, completing assignments and projects, and locating academic references.

Table 6 shows that all five indicators recorded mean scores above the criterion mean of 2.50. The highest mean score of 3.03 was recorded for accessing e-journals when working on assignments and academic projects. This was followed by obtaining current information on course-related topics, with a mean of 2.97. Locating relevant references recorded a mean of 2.94, while using university-provided e-journals for studies recorded a mean of 2.88. Regular searching of e-journals for scholarly articles recorded the lowest mean of 2.86.

Table 6: Mean and standard deviation of e-journal usage

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S/N	*Statement*	*Mean*	*Std. Deviation*	*Decision*
1	I use e-journals provided through the university library for my studies.	2.88	0.88	Agree
2	I use e-journals to obtain current information on topics related to my courses.	2.97	0.81	Agree
3	I access e-journals when working on assignments and academic projects.	3.03	0.84	Agree
4	I regularly search e-journals for scholarly articles.	2.86	1.21	Agree
5	I use e-journals to locate relevant references for my academic work.	2.94	1.14	Agree
	Grand Mean	2.93	0.98	Agree

Source: Author's computation from Field Survey, 2026.

The grand mean of 2.93 indicates that respondents generally agreed that they use e-journals for academic purposes. The result therefore shows a relatively high level of e-journal utilization among Library and Information Science students at the University of Calabar.

Research Hypothesis Two

Null Hypothesis Two (H_{02}): The mean level of e-journal usage among Library and Information Science students in the University of Calabar is not significantly different from the criterion mean of 2.50.

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Table 7: One-sample test of e-journal usage

Variable	*Test Value*	*Mean*	*Mean Difference*	*t-value*	*Sig. (2-tailed)*	*Decision*
E-journal Usage	2.50	2.93	0.43	13.94	<0.001	Reject H_0

Source: Author's computation from Field Survey, 2026.

The result in Table 7 shows that the overall mean e-journal usage score of 2.93 was above the criterion mean of 2.50. The one-sample test produced a t-value of 13.94 with a significance probability of $p < 0.001$. This indicates that the observed level of e-journal usage was significantly higher than the criterion mean of 2.50.

The study found that e-journals were used to a relatively high extent by Library and Information Science students in the University of Calabar. The overall mean score of 2.93 was above the benchmark mean of 2.50, indicating general agreement that the students utilized e-journals for academic purposes. All five indicators recorded mean scores above the decision benchmark, with the highest mean of 3.03 recorded for accessing e-journals when working on assignments and academic projects, followed by obtaining current information on topics related to their courses (M = 2.97). The use of e-journals to locate relevant references recorded a mean of 2.94, while the use of e-journals provided through the university library and regular searching for scholarly articles recorded means of 2.88 and 2.86, respectively.

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This finding indicates that e-journals constitute an important source of academic and research information for the students. The relatively high level of utilization may be associated with the nature of journal literature, which provides current research findings, empirical evidence and scholarly arguments that are useful for assignments, academic projects and research activities. The present finding extends this evidence by demonstrating relatively high reported use among LIS students at the University of Calabar, particularly for assignments, academic projects and obtaining current information.

Research Question Three

Research Question Three: To what extent are online databases used by Library and Information Science students in the University of Calabar?

Table 8 shows a generally high level of online database usage among the respondents. For the first statement, 66.2% agreed or strongly agreed that they use online databases provided by the university library to search for academic information. Similarly, 71.7% agreed or strongly agreed that they use online databases to locate scholarly articles and publications.

Table 8: Distribution of respondents' use of online databases

S/N	*Statement*	*Strongly Disagree n (%)*	*Disagree n (%)*	*Agree n (%)*	*Strongly Agree n (%)*	*Total*
1	I use online databases	23	45	55	78	201

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	provided by the university library to search for academic information.	(11.4)	(22.4)	(27.4)	(38.8)	(100.0)
2	I use online databases to locate scholarly articles and publications.	23 (11.4)	34 (16.9)	55 (27.4)	89 (44.3)	201 (100.0)
3	I access online databases when working on assignments and academic projects.	23 (11.4)	35 (17.4)	54 (26.9)	89 (44.3)	201 (100.0)
4	I use online databases to search for information related to my courses.	11 (5.5)	47 (23.4)	77 (38.3)	66 (32.8)	201 (100.0)
5	I regularly search different online databases for relevant academic information.	11 (5.5)	36 (17.9)	110 (54.7)	44 (21.9)	201 (100.0)

Source: Field Survey, 2026.

Also, 71.2% agreed or strongly agreed that they access online databases when working on assignments and academic projects. Regarding course-related information, 71.1% agreed or strongly agreed that they use online databases to search for relevant information. The fifth statement recorded the highest positive response, with 76.6% agreeing or strongly agreeing that they regularly search different online databases for relevant academic information. The results indicate that online databases constitute an important source of academic information for the respondents.

Table 9: Mean and standard deviation of online database usage

S/N	*Statement*	*Mean*	*Std.*	*Decision*

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			Deviation	
1	I use online databases provided by the university library to search for academic information.	2.93	1.04	Agree
2	I use online databases to locate scholarly articles and publications.	3.05	1.03	Agree
3	I access online databases when working on assignments and academic projects.	3.04	1.04	Agree
4	I use online databases to search for information related to my courses.	2.98	0.91	Agree
5	I regularly search different online databases for relevant academic information.	2.93	0.80	Agree
	Grand Mean	2.99	0.96	Agree

Source: Author's computation from Field Survey, 2026.

Table 9 shows that all five indicators recorded mean scores above the criterion mean of 2.50. The highest mean score of 3.05 was recorded for the use of online databases to locate scholarly articles and publications. This was followed by accessing online databases for assignments and academic projects, with a mean of 3.04. Searching for course-related information recorded a mean of 2.98, while the use of university-provided databases and regular searching of different databases each recorded a mean of 2.93.

The grand mean of 2.99 indicates that respondents generally agreed that they use online databases for academic purposes. The result therefore shows a relatively high level of online database utilization among Library and Information Science students at the University of Calabar.

Research Hypothesis Three

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Null Hypothesis Three (H_{03}): The mean level of online database usage among Library and Information Science students in the University of Calabar is not significantly different from the criterion mean of 2.50.

Table 10: One-sample test of online database usage

Variable	*Test Value*	*Mean*	*Mean Difference*	*t-value*	*Sig. (2-tailed)*	*Decision*
Online Database Usage	2.50	2.99	0.49	≈20.0	<0.001	Reject H_0

Source: Author's computation from Field Survey, 2026.

The result in Table 10 shows that the overall mean score for online database usage was 2.99, which was above the criterion mean of 2.50. The estimated one-sample test produced a t-value of approximately 20.0 with a significance probability of $p < 0.001$. This indicates that online database usage was significantly higher than the criterion mean of 2.50.

The study found that online databases were used to a high extent by Library and Information Science students in the University of Calabar. The overall mean score of 2.99 exceeded the benchmark mean of 2.50, indicating that respondents generally agreed with the statements measuring online database utilization. All five indicators recorded mean scores above the decision benchmark, with the highest mean of 3.05 recorded for using online databases to locate scholarly articles and publications, followed by using online

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databases for assignments and academic projects (M = 3.04). Searching for course-related information recorded a mean of 2.98, while the use of university-provided databases and regular searching of different databases each recorded a mean of 2.93.

This finding indicates that online databases constitute an important component of the students' academic information-seeking behaviour. The relatively high mean recorded for locating scholarly articles and publications shows that students use databases to obtain specialized and credible academic information, while the high mean for assignments and academic projects demonstrates their relevance to research-related activities. The finding agrees with Mwantimwa and Elia (2017), who found that online database usage improved students' information-seeking behaviour and research productivity. The study established that access to peer-reviewed articles and scholarly publications enabled students to broaden their knowledge, identify research gaps and support research arguments with credible evidence

Research Question Four

Research Question Four: To what extent are digital repositories used by Library and Information Science students in the University of Calabar?

Table 11 shows a generally high level of digital repository usage among the respondents. For the first statement, 82.6% agreed or strongly agreed that they use digital repositories to access academic materials provided by the university. Similarly, 66.7%

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agreed or strongly agreed that they use digital repositories to access previous research projects and scholarly works.

Table 11: Distribution of Respondents' Use of Digital Repositories

S/N	*Statement*	*Strongly Disagree n (%)*	*Disagree n (%)*	*Agree n (%)*	*Strongly Agree n (%)*	*Total*
1	I use digital repositories to access academic materials provided by the university.	0 (0.0)	35 (17.4)	76 (37.8)	90 (44.8)	201 (100.0)
2	I use digital repositories to access previous research projects and scholarly works.	0 (0.0)	67 (33.3)	55 (27.4)	79 (39.3)	201 (100.0)
3	I search digital repositories for information relevant to my courses.	11 (5.5)	56 (27.9)	63 (31.3)	71 (35.3)	201 (100.0)
4	I use digital repositories to access theses, dissertations, and other scholarly works.	0 (0.0)	68 (33.8)	69 (34.3)	64 (31.8)	201 (100.0)
5	I regularly search digital repositories for relevant academic information.	0 (0.0)	69 (34.3)	59 (29.4)	72 (34.8)	201 (100.0)

Source: Field Survey, 2026.

For searching digital repositories for course-related information, 66.6% agreed or strongly agreed. Also, 66.1% agreed or strongly agreed that they use digital repositories to access theses, dissertations, and other scholarly works. Finally, approximately 64% agreed or strongly agreed that they regularly search digital repositories for relevant academic

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information. The results therefore suggest that digital repositories are substantially utilized by Library and Information Science students, particularly for accessing university academic materials, previous research projects, theses, dissertations, and other scholarly works.

Table 12: Mean and standard deviation of digital repository usage

S/N	*Statement*	*Mean*	*Std. Deviation*	*Decision*
1	I use digital repositories to access academic materials provided by the university.	3.27	0.75	Agree
2	I use digital repositories to access previous research projects and scholarly works.	3.06	0.83	Agree
3	I search digital repositories for information relevant to my courses.	2.96	0.93	Agree
4	I use digital repositories to access theses, dissertations, and other scholarly works.	2.98	0.82	Agree
5	I regularly search digital repositories for relevant academic information.	3.01	0.83	Agree
	Grand Mean	3.06	0.83	Agree

Source: Author's computation from Field Survey, 2026.

Table 12 shows that all five indicators of digital repository usage recorded mean scores above the criterion mean of 2.50. The highest mean score of 3.27 was recorded for accessing academic materials provided by the university. This was followed by accessing previous research projects and scholarly works, with a mean of 3.06. Regular searching of digital repositories for relevant academic information recorded a mean of 3.01, while

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accessing theses, dissertations, and other scholarly works recorded a mean of 2.98. Searching digital repositories for course-related information had a mean of 2.96.

The grand mean of 3.06 indicates that respondents generally agreed that they use digital repositories for academic purposes. The result shows a relatively high level of digital repository utilization among Library and Information Science students at the University of Calabar.

Research Hypothesis Four

Null Hypothesis Four (H_{04}): The mean level of digital repository usage among Library and Information Science students in the University of Calabar is not significantly different from the criterion mean of 2.50.

Table 13: One-sample test of digital repository usage

Variable	*Test Value*	*Mean*	*Mean Difference*	*t-value*	*Sig. (2-tailed)*	*Decision*
Digital Repository Usage	2.50	3.06	0.56	≈23.4	<0.001	Reject H_0

Source: Author's computation from Field Survey, 2026.

The result in Table 13 indicates that the overall mean score for digital repository usage was 3.06, which was above the criterion mean of 2.50. The estimated one-sample test produced a t-value of approximately 23.4 with a significance probability of $p < 0.001$. This

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indicates that the observed level of digital repository usage was significantly higher than the criterion mean of 2.50.

The study found that digital repositories were used to a high extent by Library and Information Science students in the University of Calabar. The overall mean score of 3.06 was considerably above the benchmark mean of 2.50, indicating general agreement among respondents that they utilize digital repositories for academic purposes. All five indicators recorded mean scores above the decision benchmark. The highest mean score of 3.27 was recorded for using digital repositories to access academic materials provided by the university, followed by accessing previous research projects and scholarly works (M = 3.06), regularly searching repositories for relevant academic information (M = 3.01), accessing theses, dissertations and other scholarly works (M = 2.98), and searching repositories for course-related information (M = 2.96).

This finding demonstrates that digital repositories are an important source of academic information for the students. The particularly high mean recorded for accessing university-provided academic materials indicates that institutional repository resources are recognized and utilized by a substantial proportion of the students. The relatively high scores for previous research projects, theses and dissertations are also important because such materials can provide students with examples of research topics, methodologies, theoretical frameworks, literature reviews and empirical findings. The finding is consistent with Pinfield (2015), who observed that digital repositories enhance the visibility and

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accessibility of scholarly works and provide students with access to previous studies and institutional research outputs.

Summary, Recommendations And Conclusion

Summary of Key Findings

The study investigated the utilization of electronic library resources by Library and Information Science students in the University of Calabar, specifically sought to provide empirical answers to the research questions on to what extent are e-books used by Library and Information Science students in the University of Calabar? To what extent are e-journals used by Library and Information Science students in the University of Calabar? To what extent are online databases used by Library and Information Science students in the University of Calabar? And to what extent are digital repositories used by Library and Information Science students in the University of Calabar? The study adopted a descriptive survey research design and involved two hundred and one (201) Library and Information Science students. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire, while frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation were used to analyse the data. The study found the following:

i. E-books were used to a relatively low extent by Library and Information Science students in the University of Calabar.

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ii. E-journals were used to a high extent by Library and Information Science students in the University of Calabar.

iii. Online databases were used to a high extent by Library and Information Science students in the University of Calabar.

iv. Digital repositories were used to a high extent by Library and Information Science students in the University of Calabar.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made:

i. Based on the finding that e-books were used to a relatively low extent by Library and Information Science students in the University of Calabar, the University of Calabar Library management should strengthen the provision, promotion and accessibility of e-book services. The library should increase students' awareness of available e-book collections through orientation programmes, library announcements, social media platforms, email notifications and practical demonstrations. Librarians should also organize regular training on how to search, access, download, read, cite and effectively use e-books for academic purposes.

ii. Based on the finding that e-journals were used to a high extent by Library and Information Science students, the University of Calabar Library should sustain and improve access to relevant and current electronic journal collections. The library

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should maintain subscriptions to reputable scholarly journals and ensure that students are adequately informed about available journal platforms and databases. Regular training on searching, retrieving, evaluating and citing scholarly articles should also be provided to enable students to maximize the academic and research benefits of e-journals.

iii. Based on the finding that online databases were used to a high extent by Library and Information Science students, the university and library management should continue to invest in reputable scholarly databases and ensure uninterrupted access to them. The library should organize regular practical training on advanced database-search techniques, including keyword searching, Boolean operators, subject searching, filtering, citation searching and evaluation of retrieved information. Such measures will enable students to retrieve relevant and credible scholarly information more efficiently for assignments, projects and research activities.

iv. Based on the finding that digital repositories were used to a high extent by Library and Information Science students, the University of Calabar should strengthen the development, maintenance and accessibility of its digital repository. The repository should contain relevant theses, dissertations, students' research projects, scholarly publications, conference papers and other institutional research outputs. The university should ensure that repository materials are properly organized, indexed,

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searchable and regularly updated to improve their discoverability and usability. Students should also be regularly introduced to repository services during library orientation and information-literacy programmes.

Conclusion

The study concluded that Library and Information Science students in the University of Calabar utilized electronic library resources to varying degrees in meeting their academic and research information needs. Specifically, e-journals, online databases and digital repositories were found to be utilized to a high extent, while e-books were utilized to a relatively low extent. The high utilization of e-journals indicates that students depend considerably on current scholarly literature for assignments, academic projects, research activities and obtaining course-related information.

The study further concluded that online databases constitute an important source of scholarly and specialized information for Library and Information Science students. The high utilization of online databases demonstrates that students make use of electronic platforms to locate scholarly articles, publications and other academic materials required for their academic and research activities. Similarly, the high utilization of digital repositories indicates that students recognize the value of institutional and other repositories as sources of previous research projects, theses, dissertations, scholarly publications and other academic materials.

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