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# Application of Internet Resources to Research by Final Year Undergraduate Students in Adeyemi Federal University of Education, Ondo, Nigeria

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**Abstract**
*The study investigated Application of Internet Resources for Research by Final Year Undergraduate Students in Adeyemi Federal University of Education, Ondo. The population comprises 3000 final year undergraduate students in Adeyemi Federal University of Education, Ondo. Simple Random sampling technique was used for the study. Therefore, the sample size of the study was one hundred (100) degree students. The research design for the study is descriptive survey research design. Findings revealed that most of the undergraduate final year students accessed and used the internet for research to a large extent. Final Year Undergraduates highly utilized internet resources such as search engines, online databases, e-books, and e-journals for their final year research activities. The results showed that private laptops with modems and smartphones were the most frequently used mediums for accessing the internet for research purposes. Among various search engines, Google, Google Scholar, and Yahoo were the most commonly used by students for conducting research. Undergraduates derived several benefits from using the internet for research, including easy information retrieval, improved research quality, and time efficiency. The findings identified poor internet connectivity, information overload, and difficulty in evaluating online information as major challenges encountered by students. The study found that improving internet services, providing ICT facilities, and reducing import duties on ICT equipment were the key suggested solutions to enhance effective internet-based research. The study recommended that serious information evaluation be carried out by various authors before uploading information on the various websites. Also, Nigerian government should ensure that ICT materials are well subsidized and Standard Control are put in place for the importation of the quality ones to enhance good use of internet resources and satisfaction among undergraduate researchers.*

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## Introduction

According to Shitta, (2002) in Apuke and Iyendo (2018), the internet can be defined as the communication superhighway that links, hooks, and transforms the entire world into a global village where a different individual can easily get in touch, see, or speak to one another, as well as exchange information instantaneously from one point of the globe to another. Sahin, Balta and Ercan (2010) expressed that the use of the internet in research has enabled easy access to many resources, and information sharing has, therefore, significantly increased. More so, the prevalence of this sharing has brought additional benefits in that these resources can be used in any location and any time.

Sahin, Balta and Ercan (2010) sought to identify the impacts of internet resources used by university students in their final year project, and which effects of the internet are observed during project elicitation phase. Internet use, especially in education and research, has been investigated for sometimes, and many different studies exist in literature about that subject. In the study of D'Esposito and Gardner (1999) in Sahin, Balta and Ercan (2010), internet usage trends of the university students, and college student perceptions of the internet and a traditional library were presented. This study showed that when university students have the opportunity to use internet resources, almost all of them prefer to use these resources rather than classical libraries for their studies, but when the information source satisfaction in research needs is considered, the students' trends are in the direction of using both.

Cheung and Huang (2005) in Sahin, Balta and Ercan (2010) emphasized the effects of internet as an effective research tool in university education, and proposed that many university teachers publish their course materials via the internet. They suggested that it is insufficient for university lecturers and administrators to use the Internet as a good research tool, and that students' internet use should also be investigated. As a result, the findings of most studies showed that use of the internet is good for research, in that it can supply many beneficial opportunities to find different resources. However, a basic rule should be considered while using the internet for successful research, that is, how the resources should be properly accessed by the students. Furthermore, the students must be disciplined in keeping themselves away from trap sites and entertainment in order to obtain the best achievements in their studies (Sahin, Balta and Ercan, 2010).

## Statement of the Problem

Research deals with identification of a gap of problem which need to be covered with a definite solution. Of course, this require information for solution to be discovered. Internet has brought it to bare light. Internet in the world of information is indispensable in the 21st century. Students, faculty, consultants, professors, academics make use of internet for

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information sourcing and applications. However, it is observed that students copy past project work without replicating in a world loaded with information. As such, students in the final year who ought to source for information in-depth for researching and other activities related to final year project writing only patronize the library to screenshot pages of past project for doubling. Hence, the researchers want to look into how students go about using internet to solve research related problems discovered that made them embark on writing their final year project without plagiarizing.

**Purpose of the Study**

The general objective of the paper is to explore the Use of Internet Resources for Research by Undergraduate Final Year Students in Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo, while the specific objectives are:

(i.) to find out the extent of students' accessibility and use of internet for final year research.
(ii.) to find out the rate of students' accessibility and use of internet resources for final year research.
(iii.) to find the medium through which students access and use internet final year research.
(iv.) to examine the rate of the use of search engines for research among the students.
(v.) to establish the students' perceived benefits of retrieving and employing electronic resources in their research.
(vi.) to examine the challenges confronting the students as regards the access and application of internet resources for research.
(vii.) to find out the suggested solutions to the challenges confronting the students as regards the access and use of internet resources for research

**Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study:

(i.) What is the extent of students' accessibility and use of internet for final year research?
(ii.) What is the rate of students' accessibility and use of internet resources for final year research?
(iii.) What is the medium through which students access and use internet final year research?
(iv.) What is the rate of the use of search engines for research among the students?
(v.) What is the students' perceived benefits of retrieving and employing internet resources in their research?
(vi.) What are the challenges confronting the students as regards the access and application of internet resources for research?

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(vii.) What are the suggested solutions to the challenges confronting the students as regards the access and use of internet resources for research?

**Review of Related Literature**

In a study examined by Ukwetang, Eja, Itu and James, (2021), undergraduates' preference between web search engines and reference sources for research activities were shown. Descriptive survey design was adopted for the study and the study population consisted of all 12,173 regular undergraduates in University of Ibadan (UI) and 2,388 in Redeemer's University Ede Osun State, Nigeria (RUN). Multistage random sampling technique was used to select the sample size of 386 and the questionnaire was research instrument. Findings showed that most of the undergraduates in UI 195 (97.0%) and RUN 130 (92.9%) indicated that Google was their most used search engine. While, 179 (89.1%) and 124 (81.4%) of undergraduates in UI and RUN pointed out that dictionaries were the most used reference sources. Results also showed that majority of undergraduates in UI 161 (83.1%) and 111 (79.3%) in RUN indicated their preference for web search engines for research activities as against reference sources.

Klemperer, (1999) in Ukwetang, Eja, Itu and James, (2021) asserted that electronic journals are serial publications that are available in digital formats. E-journals may be distributed in a number of ways, such as on hard-drives and the internet for research. The ones that come through the internet are made available through the World Wide Web and email. Others come in formats such as Portable Document Format (PDF). Some of the electronic journals can be accessed by users for free while others have to be subscribed. The efficiency of academic journal database is related to the number of period covered and the evaluation techniques of them in order to form a universal index. They provided a rich source of specialized information and are widely used by many academics and students for research purpose. Electronic journals relatively provide private efficient access to information and, thus they are easy to distribute to library patrons through internet access than traditional printed journals.

Brain (2003) in Ukwetang, Eja, Itu and James (2021) expressed that internet resources are regarded as the mines of information/electronic resources that are preserved through modern ICT devices, refined and redesigned and more often stored in the cyber space in the most concrete and compact form and can be accessed simultaneously from infinite points by a great number of audience. Electronic resources refer to that kind of documents in digital formats which are made available to library users through a computer based information retrieval system. There are various types of internet resources; e-journals, e-books, e-blogs/forum and search engine.

Okori, Nwokocha and Ibenne (2018) in Ukwetang, Eja, Itu and James (2021) in their findings noted that Electronic books (e-books) were found to be the resources mostly available for the

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students' academic consumption. Asherofta and Watts (2004), Falak (2013) as cited in Ukwetang, Eja, Itu and James (2021) reported the rapid growth and use of e-books in colleges and universities in developing countries. It was also mentioned the potential advantages of e-books including easier access, speedy publications, space-saving and lower costs. Readers of electronic books are able to search for their favourable topics more easily and rapidly compared to those of printed ones.

Cebeci & Bek, (1999) in Sahin, Balta and Ercan (2010) observed that internet network has eliminated the physical limits and the number of existing research resources has increased so that it is possible to prepare assignments and projects in any place where the internet is accessible.

Sahin, Balta and Ercan (2010) asserted that an evaluation can be made on five basic issues related with the trustworthiness and accessibility of internet sites:

- Accessibility: Whether the site is available and the required information is reachable
- Trustworthiness: Whether the contents in the site are current and correct
- Authorship: Whether the articles and text are well written by a suitable and qualified authors
- External Links: Whether links to/from the site are reachable
- Legitimacy: Whether everything is in accordance with the law.

Cloud, (1989) in Sahin, Balta and Ercan (2010) expressed that the most effective communication resources, computers and the Internet, are part of our daily life and have become one of the important tools in research education. The internet helps transfer information between different points therefore this satiation makes the Internet a very powerful information system. People of different age groups and jobs, students and academicians who do scientific research and prepare projects prefer using the Internet because it is the easiest, fastest, and cheapest ways of accessing necessary information. Even though the Internet is a very important and indispensable source for students, the issue of whether the referenced source is trustworthy and/or credible, has been raised. This is because there is no control on any particular piece of information published through the Web, in opposition to the scientific and professional journals published by the scientific institutions, business world and the organizations known to the public. Additionally, other journals and books issued by commercial organizations do not have a control unit including editors and referees. Many of the sites on the Internet enable anybody to submit any kind of information without being controlled, and many of the sites known as reliable are restricted to open access for commercial purposes or security requirements. This limits the accessibility for students and deprives them of these sites.

According to Apuke and Tunca, (2020) in a study carried out among students of Taraba state university, Nigeria which examined the utilization of internet resources for learning and

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research and anchored on the uses and gratification derived from internet resources adopted a survey among 350 students. The students perceived that the lack of digital readiness among their staff and institution, the absence of electronic library for easy accessibility to journals from the scientific database, and inefficient cybercafe and internet facility within their university settings were the main issues discouraging the utilization of the internet within their institutions. Yet, they still strive to find ways through self-organization, resilience and resourcefulness to make use of the internet to facilitate their studies and carry out research. Most of them stated that they use their smartphone/handsets to access the internet through subscription from other internet providers. Google and Google Scholar was found to be the most preferred search engine.

The students affirmed that the use of internet enable them to perform research ahead of time, tackle multiple homework, widens the scope of reading and learning, promotes self-learning, encourages and enhances peer learning as well as ameliorates student's examination preparation. It was proposed that tertiary institutions in Nigeria like Taraba State University should provide an electronic library where the students can easily access scientific journals from databases such as Elsevier, Springer, Taylor and Francis, Wiley, and Emerald. This will lessen the reliance on Google and Google Scholar as well as provide the means to explore other related scientific papers which will improve their academic research and learning (Apuke and Tunca, 2020). Hence, Babu, Sarada and Ramaiah, (2010) the introduction of digital information resources on Internet has revolutionised the academic world. The Internet is paving way for a great leap in the field of higher education and research.

## METHODS

### Population of the Study

The population comprises 3000 final year undergraduate students in Adeyemi Federal University of Education, Ondo.

### Sampling Technique and Sample Size

Simple Random sampling technique was used for the study. Therefore the sample size of the study was one hundred (100) degree students.

### Procedure for Data Collection

The researchers and research assistants collected the data through face-to-face administration of questionnaire. This involves going to the various sections of the college library to administer the questionnaire and collecting them back at the same time because library is a venue where virtually all students are present to study.

### Research Design

The research design for the study is descriptive survey research design. It is a design that allows a population to be studied by collecting and analyzing data from only a sample

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considered to be representing the entire population. This is suitable for this research because none of the variables was manipulated but explained the way they occurred in the field of study.

**Research Instrument**

The research instrument used for the study was adapted by the researcher. Section A comprises information on Biodata; Section B was on Likert type scaling which asked questions on Use of Internet Resources for Research by Undergraduate Final Year Students in Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo

**Procedure for Data Analysis**

The responses of the respondents were collected, aggregated, and presented in a tabular form. Based on this, frequencies of occurrence were established and used for the analysis using percentages, mean and standard deviation.

**Research Question 1:** To what extent do undergraduate final year students access and use internet for research?

Table 1: Extent of Access and Use of Internet for Research by Final Year Students

| **Frequency of Use** | **Response** | |
|---|---|---|
| | **Freq.** | **%** |
| To some extent | 28 | 28.0 |
| To a large extent | 60 | 60.0 |
| Just a little extent | 12 | 12.0 |
| No extent | 0 | 0 |

Table 1 shows the extent to which undergraduate final year students access and use the internet for research. The findings reveal that the majority of the respondents (60%) indicated that they use the internet for research to a large extent, while 28% reported using it to some extent. Only 12% of the students use it to a little extent, and none indicated no extent of use. This result suggests that most final year students actively access and utilize internet resources to support their research activities.

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**Research Question 2:** What is your rate of access and use of internet resources for final year research?

Table 2: Access and Use of Internet Resources for Research among Final Year Students

| Item | SA | A | D | SD | Mean | Std.D. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| I access and make use of search engines for my final year research. | 39 | 34 | 15 | 12 | 3.00 | 1.01 |
| I access and make use of on-line databases for final year research. | 37 | 43 | 10 | 10 | 3.07 | .93 |
| I access and make use of e-books for my final year research. | 27 | 61 | 0 | 12 | 3.03 | .86 |
| I access and make use of web-sites for final year project | 55 | 22 | 6 | 17 | 3.15 | 1.13 |
| I access and make use of e-journals for final year research. | 19 | 54 | 18 | 9 | 2.83 | .84 |
| I access and make use of on-line libraries for final year research work. | 42 | 39 | 4 | 15 | 3.08 | 1.03 |
| I collaborate with other internet users through the discussion forums on the internet for my final year project. | 40 | 48 | 4 | 8 | 3.20 | .85 |
| I access and make use of on-line encyclopedias for final year research. | 39 | 41 | 4 | 16 | 3.03 | 1.03 |
| I access and make use of e-newspapers for my final year research. | 48 | 34 | 16 | 2 | 3.28 | .81 |
| I access and make use of e-mails received from others for my project research | 34 | 37 | 10 | 19 | 2.86 | 1.09 |
| **Weighted Average** | | | | | **3.05** | |

**Key; *SA*** = Strongly Agree, **A** = Agree, **D** = Disagree, **SD** = strongly Disagree
**Decision Value:** ***Low*** = 0.00-2.44, ***High*** = 2.45-4.00

Table 2 reveals that the weighted mean score of 3.05 indicates a high rate of access and use of internet resources among final-year undergraduates for research purposes. The most frequently accessed resources include e-newspapers (Mean = 3.28), discussion forums (Mean = 3.20), and websites (Mean = 3.15), suggesting students actively utilize diverse online platforms for research engagement. Conversely, e-journals (Mean = 2.83) and emails (Mean = 2.86) recorded relatively lower usage, implying that some academically oriented or formal digital resources are less frequently accessed. Overall, the findings imply that final-year students exhibit a high level of digital resource utilization, reflecting their increasing reliance on internet-based materials for academic research.

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**Research Question 3:** What medium do you use to access and use the Internet for research in your final year?

Table 3: Medium of Access to Internet for Research

| | Freq. | % |
|---|---|---|
| Private Handset/Smartphones | 39 | 22.7 |
| School café | 21 | 12.2 |
| College Electronic Library | 19 | 11.0 |
| Café Outside school | 26 | 15.1 |
| Private Modem and Laptop | 55 | 32.0 |
| Private Desktop | 12 | 7.0 |

Table 3 shows the various media through which final year students access and use the internet for research. The data reveal that the most commonly used medium is private modem and laptop (32%), followed by private handset/smartphones (22.7%) and café outside school (15.1%). Fewer students indicated the school café (12.2%) and college electronic library (11.0%), while the least used medium is the private desktop (7%). This implies that students largely rely on personal and portable devices such as laptops and smartphones for internet access during research, while institutional facilities such as the school café and electronic library are less frequently utilized.

**Research Question 4:** What is the rate of use of these search engines for your final year research?

Table 4: Search Engines Use by students for Research

| Item | HU | U | FU | NU | Mean | Std.D. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ask.com | 7 | 22 | 48 | 23 | 2.13 | .85 |
| Google | 38 | 44 | 14 | 4 | 3.16 | .81 |
| Google Scholar | 45 | 29 | 14 | 12 | 3.07 | 1.04 |
| Yahoo search | 40 | 35 | 16 | 9 | 3.06 | .96 |
| Bing search | 4 | 25 | 43 | 28 | 2.05 | .83 |
| Live search | 7 | 33 | 31 | 29 | 2.18 | .94 |
| Base-Search.net | 14 | 21 | 51 | 14 | 2.35 | .89 |

**Key; HU** = Highly Used, **U** = Used, **FU** = Fairly Used, **NU** = Not Used
**Decision Value:** ***Low*** = 0.00-2.44, ***High*** = 2.45-4.00

Table 4 shows that Google (Mean = 3.16), Google Scholar (Mean = 3.07), and Yahoo Search (Mean = 3.06) were the most frequently used search engines by final-year students for

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research purposes, indicating a high level of reliance on these platforms for accessing relevant academic materials. In contrast, Ask.com (Mean = 2.13), Bing Search (Mean = 2.05), and Live Search (Mean = 2.18) were rarely used, suggesting limited awareness or perceived usefulness among students. The results imply that final-year undergraduates prefer more popular and academically oriented search engines, particularly Google and Google Scholar, when conducting their research.

**Research Question 5:** What are the benefits of your Use of Internet for your final year research?

Table 5: Benefits of Use of Internet in Research

| Item | SA | A | D | SD | Mean | Std.D. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Information is easily retrieved from the internet and this has been so beneficial to my final year research work | 45 | 41 | 14 | 0 | 3.31 | .71 |
| The internet has facilitated my research process, that is, a task that would be completed over a long period of time now takes a short period of time to execute. | 53 | 23 | 14 | 10 | 3.19 | 1.02 |
| The availability of numerous sources on the internet has brought a tremendous improvement in my project research and learning | 70 | 20 | 8 | 2 | 3.58 | .73 |
| Increased access to current and valuable research found on the internet has been so beneficial and has improved my research skill in addition to other academic learning. | 41 | 41 | 12 | 6 | 3.17 | .87 |
| Increased access to current and valuable research found on the internet has been so beneficial and has improved my research work in addition to other academic learning. | 55 | 27 | 16 | 2 | 3.35 | .82 |
| Internet has helped to grant the early submission of my final year project research to my supervisor | 45 | 39 | 12 | 4 | 3.25 | .82 |
| Availability of prior and recent valuable literature on the internet Improves quality of my final year research | 57 | 27 | 16 | 0 | 3.41 | .75 |
| Easy retrieval of credible information saves the time of going to the conventional library for information | 52 | 42 | 6 | 0 | 3.46 | .61 |

**Key;** ***SD*** = Strongly Disagree, **D** = Disagree, **A** = Agree, **SA** = Strongly Agree
**Decision Value:** ***Not Accepted*** = 0.00-2.44, ***Accepted*** = 2.45-4.00

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Table 5 reveals that all items had mean scores above the decision value of 2.45, indicating that respondents strongly agreed that the use of the internet offers significant benefits for their final year research. The highest-rated benefits were the availability of numerous sources that improve research and learning (Mean = 3.58), and easy retrieval of credible information that saves time compared to conventional libraries (Mean = 3.46). Other key benefits identified include improvement in research quality through access to current literature (Mean = 3.41) and early project submission facilitated by online resources (Mean = 3.25). Overall, these findings suggest that internet use has greatly enhanced the efficiency, quality, and timeliness of students' final year research, making it an indispensable academic tool.

**Research Question 6:** What are the challenges you encounter in using internet for your final year research?

Table 6: Challenges Encountered in Using the Internet for Final Year Research

| Item | SA | A | D | SD | Mean | Std.D. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Poor internet connectivity | 43 | 51 | 6 | 0 | 3.37 | .59 |
| Information gathered is either too bulky or not applicable to my need | 58 | 36 | 6 | 0 | 3.52 | .61 |
| Lack of access to ICT facilities | 20 | 24 | 14 | 42 | 2.22 | 1.19 |
| Inadequate technological facilities to use | 28 | 23 | 13 | 36 | 2.43 | 1.24 |
| Electronic information seeking is time consuming | 61 | 32 | 2 | 5 | 3.49 | .77 |
| Inability to evaluate the usefulness of information gathered from web | 59 | 28 | 13 | 0 | 3.46 | .72 |
| Low level of ICT skills | 23 | 26 | 13 | 38 | 2.34 | 1.21 |

**Key; *SD*** = Strongly Disagree, **D** = Disagree, **A** = Agree, **SA** = Strongly Agree
**Decision Value:** ***Not Accepted*** = 0.00-2.44, ***Accepted*** = 2.45-4.00

Table 6 shows that most respondents identified several notable challenges associated with internet use in their final year research. The most prevalent challenges were information overload or irrelevance of online materials (Mean = 3.52), electronic information seeking being time-consuming (Mean = 3.49), and inability to evaluate the usefulness of information retrieved from the web (Mean = 3.46). Other significant issues include poor internet connectivity (Mean = 3.37), which also hindered effective research work. However, items such as lack of access to ICT facilities (Mean = 2.22), inadequate technological facilities (Mean = 2.43), and low level of ICT skills (Mean = 2.34) had mean values below the decision benchmark of 2.45. Overall, the findings imply that while students are generally proficient in using the internet, they are constrained by poor connectivity, excessive or irrelevant information, and difficulty evaluating online resources, which may affect research efficiency and accuracy.

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**Research Question 7:** What are your suggested solutions to the challenges you encounter in using internet for your final year research?

Table 7: Suggested Solutions to the Challenges to Use of Internet for Research

| Item | SA | A | D | SD | Mean | Std.D. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Internet Service Providers should improve on their services | 51 | 34 | 10 | 5 | 3.31 | .85 |
| Students should learn ICT in their private time | 49 | 41 | 10 | 0 | 3.39 | .67 |
| Import duties on ICT facilities should be reduced by the government | 71 | 17 | 8 | 4 | 3.55 | .81 |
| ICT facilities should be bought and placed in the libraries and laboratories by government for students' use | 39 | 47 | 8 | 6 | 3.19 | .83 |
| Students should learn time management on internet surfing for digital information seeking | 48 | 36 | 10 | 6 | 3.26 | .87 |

**Key; *SD*** = Strongly Disagree, **D** = Disagree, **A** = Agree, **SA** = Strongly Agree
**Decision Value:** ***Not Accepted*** = 0.00-2.44, ***Accepted*** = 2.45-4.00

Table 7 presents respondents' suggested solutions to the challenges they experience in using the internet for their final year research. All listed items had mean values above the decision benchmark of 2.45, indicating that respondents generally agreed with all the proposed solutions. The most highly rated solution was that import duties on ICT facilities should be reduced by the government (Mean = 3.55). Also strongly endorsed were the suggestions that students should learn ICT in their private time (Mean = 3.39) and that internet service providers should improve their services (Mean = 3.31). Other accepted solutions include the government providing ICT facilities in libraries and laboratories (Mean = 3.19) and students learning better time management in internet surfing (Mean = 3.26). Overall, the findings imply that students recognize that both institutional support and individual responsibility are essential for overcoming the barriers to effective use of internet resources in academic research.

**Summary of the Finding**

1. Findings revealed that most undergraduate final year students accessed and used the internet for research to a large extent.
2. Undergraduates highly utilized internet resources such as search engines, online databases, e-books, and e-journals for their final year research activities.
3. The results showed that private laptops with modems and smartphones were the most frequently used mediums for accessing the internet for research purposes.
4. Among various search engines, Google, Google Scholar, and Yahoo were the most commonly used by students for conducting research.
5. Undergraduates derived several benefits from using the internet for research, including easy information retrieval, improved research quality, and time efficiency.

6. The findings identified poor internet connectivity, information overload, and difficulty in evaluating online information as major challenges encountered by students.
7. The study found that improving internet services, providing ICT facilities, and reducing import duties on ICT equipment were the key suggested solutions to enhance effective internet-based research.

**Conclusion and Recommendations**

Overall, the findings imply that while students are generally proficient in using the internet for research work, however, they are constrained by poor connectivity, excessive or irrelevant information, and difficulty evaluating online resources, which may affect research efficiency and accuracy. Thus, it can be recommended that serious information evaluation be carried out by various authors before uploading information to their various websites and other common websites. Also, Nigerian government should ensure that ICT materials are well subsidized and Standard Control are put in place for the importation of the quality ones to enhance quality utilization and satisfaction among undergraduate researchers especially when it is being carried out on the internet.

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