



Undergraduate Student's Perception on the use of E-Books in Supporting their Learning

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Abstract

The study examined the undergraduate students' perception on the use of e-books in supporting learning. Survey design was used and the study was guided by three research objectives. The target population of the study was final year undergraduate students of ATBU, Bauchi. Stratified random sampling method was used to sample 120 respondents from the target population of the study. The research instrument was a structured questionnaire validated by two experts. A pilot study was conducted and the reliability of 0.85 was found using Cronbach's alpha. Among the findings of this study is that: undergraduate students are using e-books to support learning; they prefer using e-books than printed books; and they encountered some challenges such as lack of accessibility while using e-books for learning. The study therefore recommends among others that the university management should subscribe to different database so as to facilitate the accessibility of some relevant e-books for the students.

Introduction

Many researchers have marked Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to have significantly impacted the educational system in every aspect across the globe. With the influx of internet facilities, students now have the opportunity to access a lot of information for various assignments in a more contemporary way. ICT has disentangled the problem of a severe shortage of academic facilities in tertiary institutions. In particular, e-books has gained rapid acceptance among scholars and students around the world as the favored format for text resources (Sadaf and Astrid 2018). Many researchers like Courage (2019); Alsadoon (2020); Spjeldnaes and Karlsen (2022) look at e-book as a text or book that can be read in a digital format using technology devices such as computers, smart phones, tablets or any portable reading machine. While others view it as text designed to be read over technology devices, making it different from printed books by offering some extra features that allow users to interact with the text through the use of sound, visuals and links (Manalu B. H, 2019). Still others describe it as a digital format created with an abundance of new features such as search and cross reference functions, multimedia features and hypertext links (López-Escribano et al., 2021).

All these different views and definitions of e-books seem to agree that an e-book involves the use of

technology tools to view and read books. However, since e-books tend to be cheaper than printed books, they offer academic access to knowledge regardless of the shortage of spaces and time (Okojie et al., 2020). Furthermore, e-books offer educators and students opportunities to view the desired content of their preferred books in a novel format which is more engaging, and interesting when utilizing some of its interactive and attractive features. E-books have rapidly gained acceptance among higher education institutions worldwide, and is a favored format for text resources. E-books in the academic environment made plain textbooks freely available in the electronic format (Dhani et al., 2022). After much advancement in the e-book's environs, e-books evolved into users that have eased the accessibility and feasibility for both academic and non-academic uses (Nazari et al., 2022).

Students' perception on the use of e-books in learning and research could be a direct function of the technology acceptance. Since e-books proliferate especially in the university campuses, it is crucial that we understand their role in students' lives. Many empirical studies have been carried out on the perceived use of e-books in supporting teaching and learning. However, the results of these studies were inconclusive. While many studies indicate the usefulness of e-book over printed books in teaching and learning (Adeyinka and Abiola, 2019; Said and Khalid, 2019; Mphoentle,

2021;). Other studies did not find the use of e-books as advantageous to students learning (Sirajudeen, 2017; Sadaf, 2018; Khalid, 2019;). On this note, the present study investigates the perceptions of undergraduate students of Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University (ATBU), Bauchi on the use of e-books in supporting their learning.

Objectives

This study investigates the students' perception on the use of e-books in supporting their learning in Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University (ATBU), Bauchi. Specifically, the study sought to determine the:

- Undergraduate students' perception on the use of e-books in supporting their learning in ATBU, Bauchi.
- Extent which e-books has replaced the printed book-reading experience among ATBU undergraduate students.
- Challenges in the use of e-books among ATBU undergraduate students.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study:

- What is the undergraduate students' perception on the use of e-books in ATBU, Bauchi?
- To what extent is the e-books replaced the printed book-reading experience among ATBU undergraduate students?

Results

Table 1 presents the undergraduate students perception on the use of e-books to support their learning.

Items	N	Mean (M)	SD	Decision
I use e-books because it is fast and easy access	120	4.24	.065	Agree
I use e-books because of its 24/7 accessibility	120	3.80	.094	Agree
I use e-books because of up-to-date information	120	3.55	.098	Agree
I use e-books because I can switch to browse dictionary while reading	120	3.43	.105	Agree
I use e-books because it save time	120	3.50	.105	Agree
I use e-books because of its user-friendly	120	3.35	.108	Agree
I use e-books because of the cut and paste feature	120	3.34	.111	Agree
I use e-books because of bookmark and highlight important text feature	120	3.25	.106	Agree
I use e-books to maintain personal collection	120	3.50	.106	Agree
I use e-books because of its portability	120	3.31	.106	Agree

Grand Mean

3.53

Key: N = Number of Respondent = 120; M = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation.

The result from Table 1 presents the mean response and standard deviation of the level perceived use of e-books among the final year undergraduate

- What are the challenges undergraduate students of ATBU, Bauchi face in the use of e-books?

Methodology

The research design adopted in this study was a survey research design of cross-sectional type. The participants of this study were final year undergraduate students of ATBU, Bauchi with total population of 1,908. Stratified random sampling method was used to select the sample size of 280 final year undergraduate students. Out of this, 120 respondents returned the instruments filled. The instrument was a questionnaire structured on 5-point Likert scale with three subscale, each consist of 10 items: Subscale 'A' seek the perceived use of e-books; 'B' seek the extent which e-books has replaced the printed books; and 'C' seek the challenges of using e-books among students of ATBU Bauchi. The instrument was validated by two experts; one expert from computer science education department and the other experts from measurement and evaluation, Educational Foundation Department of Abubakar Tafawa University, Bauchi. A pilot study was conducted to test the reliability of the instrument and the reliability index of 0.85 was generated using Cronbach's alpha. The data collected was analyzed and reported below.

students of ATBU Bauchi. Table 1 shows that all the 10 items had their mean value ranges from 3.25 – 4.24 which fall within the mean range of Agree. The items

had a grand mean of 3.53 which also fall within the mean range of Agree. This means that final year undergraduate students in ATBU, Bauchi have good

perception on the use of e-books in the University by agreeing with all the 10 statements.

Table 2 presents the extents at which e-books has replaced the printed book-reading experience among ATBU undergraduate students.

Items	N	Mean(M)	SD	Decision
I prefer reading e-books than printed books	120	3.62	.096	Agree
I prefer printed books than e-books	120	3.46	.105	Agree
I prefer reading e-books as support for the printed books	120	3.46	.112	Agree
Printed books are mostly outdated, that is why I prefer reading e-books	120	3.35	.112	Agree
Most of our lecture note are printed books, that is why I prefer reading printed books than e-books	120	3.31	.105	Agree
I prefer using e-books for all the courses that have no lecture note	120	3.16	.113	Agree
I just prefer to be reading e-books once a week than reading printed books	120	3.50	.109	Agree
I only prefer to use e-book when having an assignment than using the printed books	120	3.38	.113	Agree
I prefer reading e-books than printed books during the examination	120	3.10	.117	Agree
I prefer reading e-books over the printed books during the semester break	120	3.23	.113	Agree

Grand Mean

3.36

Key: N = Number of Respondent = 120; M = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation.

The result from Table 2 presents the mean response and standard deviation of the level of preference of e-books over printed books among the final year undergraduate students of ATBU Bauchi. It shows that all the 10 items had their mean value ranges from 3.10 – 3.65 minimum and maximum respectively. The items had a grand mean of 3.36 which fall within the mean range of Agree. This means that final year undergraduate students in ATBU, Bauchi have high level preference of e-books over printed books.

The result from Table 3 presents the mean response and standard deviation of the challenges of using e-books among the final year undergraduate students of ATBU Bauchi. From table 3, items 1 to 10 had mean ratings within the range of 3.10 – 3.85 and had a grand mean of 3.46 which fall within the mean range of Agree. This means that final year undergraduate students in ATBU, Bauchi had faces challenges while using e-books in the University by agreeing with all the 10 statements.

Table 3 presents the challenges in the use of e-books among ATBU undergraduate students.

Items	N	Mean (M)	SD	Decision
I often get distracted because of different links on the e-books	120	3.38	.116	Agree
I often do not like reading from the screen	120	3.20	.112	Agree
I often lose the access of e-books	120	3.63	.099	Agree
I feel difficulty to browse e-books	120	3.34	.109	Agree
I often do not find the relevant e-book when needed	120	3.35	.117	Agree
I often have challenge to access some e-books	120	3.45	.102	Agree
I am not familiar with e-books	120	3.22	.120	Agree
I often get distracted to be moving the screen	120	3.24	.115	Agree
I often get distracted because of the font size of some e-books	120	3.57	.105	Agree
I often fill distracted with social media pop up messages while reading e-books	120	3.86	.103	Agree

Grand Mean

3.46

Discussion of Results

This study examined the perceived use of e-books among the final year undergraduate students of ATBU Bauchi. The study also examined the extent at which the students prefer using e-book over the printed books and the challenges encountered while using e-books to support their learning in the university.

Table 1 shows the responses of the respondents on the research question 1. From the table, items with the highest mean ($M=4.24$) was "I use e-books because it is fast and easy access" while item with the lowest mean ($M=3.25$) was "I use e-books because of bookmark and highlight important text feature". This indicates that the students are very familiar with e-books and it is interesting that majority of the students use e-books for their assignments, projects etc. It is also not surprising that some of the lecturers do give the students e-books as reference for further studies. However, the grand mean for analysis of research question one ($M=3.53$) indicated that generally, final year students in ATBU, Bauchi have good perception of use of e-books to support learning. This result corroborates with the findings of Al-Saadi and Harris (2017) who reported that majority of students of Sultan Qaboos University had experience using e-books.

Similarly, Table 2 presented the response on the extent at which the use of e-books has replaced the printed books among final year undergraduate students of ATBU Bauchi. The result further indicated that all the ten items had their mean value ranged from 3.10 - 3.62. As shown in table 2, the item with the highest mean ($M=3.62$) was "I prefer reading e-books than printed books" while the item with the lowest mean ($M=3.10$) was "I prefer reading e-books than printed books during the examination". This indicates that the students are very familiar and prefer using e-books over printed books. The result of this study was not in support with the findings of Courage and Edward (2019) who reported that students prefer using printed books than e-books.

However, Table 3 represents the responses on the challenges encountered by the students while using e-books. The students agreed that they are encountered different challenges while using the e-books. These include often being distracted by the social media pop up notification while using the e-books. Navigating through the screen at time look boring, and links within the contents of e-books not friendly. Furthermore, the students often have challenges of accessing some e-books. Some e-books are not accessible for free, it either required students to pay or subscribe, purchase or

access through the university library. These findings are consistent with the results of other similar studies (Khalid, 2019; Adeyinka & Abiola, 2019; Mphoentle, 2021).

Conclusions and Recommendations

Since the undergraduate student's perception on the uses of e-books in ATBU, Bauchi is positive, and among the challenges the students face while using e-books is the issue of accessibility, then the university management should subscribe to different database so as to facilitate the accessibility of some relevant e-books for the students.

The results of this study positive impact on effective and efficient teaching and learning in terms of practical significance, this study will be of great importance to higher institutions and future researchers. Specifically, the lecturers, students and the educational administrators will find this study useful in terms of motivating the students and lecturers on the utilization of e-books for teaching and learning in Nigeria tertiary institutions.

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