



PERCEIVED EASE OF ACCESS AND USE OF OPEN ACCESS RESOURCES BY LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS IN SOUTH-WEST NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study examined Perceived Ease of Access (PEOA) and Use of Open Access Resources (OAR) by Library and Information Science (LIS) postgraduate students in universities in Southwest, Nigeria. The study adopted a quantitative research method and correlational research design to answer two research questions and one hypothesis. The population consisted of 227 postgraduate students from five universities: Adeleke University (AU) - 22, Babcock University (BU)-35, Lead City University (LCU)-30, Tai Solarin University (TASUED)-30 and University of Ibadan (UI)-110. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire administered through the total enumeration technique. The collected data were analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistical methods. The findings revealed that the largest respondents were: UI (49%), females (50.7%), age group 26-30 (39.4%), and single (55.9%). OARs were used mostly for research work ($\bar{x} = 3.60$); group/individual practical purposes ($\bar{x} = 3.34$) personal tutorials ($\bar{x} = 3.26$) and examination preparation ($\bar{x} = 3.24$). Respondents perceive OARs as easily accessible ($\bar{x} > 2.50$). There was a significant influence between PEOA and the use of OARs at TASUED ($r = .458$, $P < 0.05$) and UI ($r = .409$, $P < 0.05$). The study concludes that enhancing ease of access is important for supporting sustained utilization of open access resources among LIS postgraduate students. The study recommended conduction periodic user-satisfaction assessments, strengthening of students' OAR competencies and enhancement of access facilities.

Keywords: *Perceived ease of access, Open access resources, Perceived usefulness, Postgraduate students, South-West Nigeria*

1.1 Introduction

The perceived value placed of a university is shaped by the availability of relevant information and the accessibility of its resources and services to students and faculty. Hence, it is crucial for any student, be

it postgraduate students or undergraduates, to have access to and use their information literacy skills in searching for scholarly materials that will improve the quality of their research. (Ray-Ogbonna, Wiche & Okwu, 2022). The development of ICT-enabled Open

Access (OA) publishing has transformed the way libraries, especially university libraries, provide scholarly information to their users (Atanda & Adetimirin, 2025). Rather than rely on subscription-based collections, university libraries can now incorporate freely accessible resources into their vast collection. This allows both library and users to retrieve and consult research output without paying access charges although the cost of publishing these resources may be borne through authors, institutions, or research grants (Oladele & Aragbaye, 2022).

Despite the critical role of OARs in promoting education, research, and learning around the world pattern of use vary across region and user group. For instance, Acharya & Rout (2022) reported that among LIS postgraduate students in Odisha, India, open access journal articles emerged as the predominant resource, constituting the primary choice for more than half of the respondents. Karitu & Kimani's (2022) study conducted among postgraduate students in three prominent Kenyan universities—Nairobi University, Kenyatta University, and Moi University—revealed that most of the respondents used Open Educational Resources frequently. In Nigeria, Ofua (2023) reported that electronic journals constituted most frequently used electronic information resources used among postgraduate research scholars at Delta State University, Abraka, followed by electronic databases, subject gateways, electronic newspapers, and electronic books. These studies show that although open and electronic resources are widely used by postgraduates across different contexts, the types of resources preferred and the patterns of engagement vary across institutional and geographical settings.

Nonetheless, differences in the use of OARs by regions and user groups suggest that the use of OARs may depend not only on availability of resources but also on users' perceptions, digital skills, and experiences in navigating and engaging with digital

information systems. Ease of access, system usability, digital literacy, infrastructure, and technical support are some of the factors previously established to influence users to engage with electronic and OARs (Park, 2009; Venkatesh et al., 2003; Mtebe & Raisamo, 2014). Users tend to be less likely to use something that they view as difficult, slow, or unstable to access (Davis, 1989; Tarhini, Hone, and Liu, 2014). In turn, these perceptual and technological determinants are crucial to explaining the difference in adoption and for implementing an intervention that would improve successful use. In this context, perceived ease of access can be considered as an important explanatory variable for user engagement with OARs.

The utilization of OARs can be significantly influenced by users' perceived ease of access. This idea is modeled after the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), which is widely acclaimed as one of the most influential models for explaining individuals' acceptance and use of technology (Davis, 1989). According to the model, perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use are two main factors that affect an individual's intention to adopt a technological system. Perceived usefulness defines "the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would enhance his or her job performance," whereas perceived ease of use can be defined as "the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would be free of effort" (Davis, 1989).

Based on this concept, this study modifies the concept of perceived ease of use to conceptualize perceived ease of access, which we described as "an individual's subjective assessment of how effortlessly a system can be accessed and navigated". When applied to OARs, perceived ease of access refers to "the extent to which users believe that locating and retrieving these resources would require minimal effort". This means that access, which logically comes before actual use, will

determine users' perceptions of how easy or difficult access is, which in turn are likely to determine how they will interact with and continue to benefit open access platforms.

1.2 Objectives

The broad objective of this study was to investigate how perceived ease of access affects the use of OARs by LIS postgraduate students in universities in South-west, Nigeria. The specific objectives are as follows:

1. ascertain the purpose of use of OARs by LIS postgraduate students;
2. examine the perceived ease of access to OARs by LIS postgraduate students; and
3. find out the relationship between perceived ease of access and use of OARs by LIS Postgraduate students;

1.3 Research questions

This study answered the following questions;
What is the purpose of the use of OARs by LIS postgraduate students?
What is the perceived ease of access to OAR use by LIS postgraduate students?

1.4 Hypothesis

The null hypotheses were tested in the study at a 0.05 level of significance:

Ho: There is no significant relationship between perceived ease of access and the use of OARs by LIS postgraduate students across selected universities.

2.1 Literature Review

2.2 Open Access

The term Open Access is described as digital, online, free of charge, and largely devoid of copyright and licensing restrictions (Suber, 2012). Suber emphasizes that open access encompasses various content formats, extending beyond peer-reviewed research articles to include texts, data, software, audio,

video, and multimedia. Open access has transformed scholarly communication by providing wider and rapid dissemination of research through journals, repositories, pre-prints and other digital platforms. According to Mullen (2023) this shift was accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic, highlighting the importance of unrestricted access to scholarly information while exposing persistent inequalities within scholarly communication. In this context, Limbert & Bell (2022) outline the importance of access to current research by postgraduate students across various disciplines. This access becomes crucial for postgraduate students as it supports comprehensive education and help students with up-to-date knowledge critical for academic and professional pursuits. Open access can therefore provide postgraduate students with broader access to scholarly information beyond the resources provided in their institutions.

Various studies have identified several factors that influence postgraduate students' use of OARs. Mbghuni's (2022) findings indicated that 54.5% of postgraduate students in Tanzania used Open Access to Institutional Repositories for the collection, preservation, and dissemination of scholarly publications, while an equal percentage accessed these repositories to provide information resources for teaching, learning, and research. Chowdappa (2021) reported that 67.01% of research scholars in India used open access scholarly resources for research work, and 62.88% used them for article publication. Atanda and Adetimirin (2025) found that LIS postgraduate students in Southwest Nigeria, regularly used OARs used open access journals, repositories, search engines and databases, with daily usage ranging from 16.1% to 56%. These findings demonstrate that postgraduate students engage with OARs for a range of research and academic related activities. However, the extent to which students can effectively use these resources is

also influenced by the availability of appropriate skills, infrastructure, and support.

Studies examining students' experiences with OARs have therefore identified several barriers that may constrain their effective use. Bulugu & Ponera's (2024) study on academics and Students among Tertiary Institutions in Tanzania's use of Open Educational resources found that students and academics encounter various challenges in their use of OER, including unreliable internet connectivity, a lack of searching skills, information overload, and a lack of awareness. Furthermore, Taurus, Namande, & Maake's (2022) findings revealed that postgraduate students at Karatina University in Kenya faced challenges such as low internet speed or network issues (33.8%), limited awareness of available OARs (15.4%), inadequate search skills (14.6%), and a lack of training on open access library resources (14.6%). Other comparatively lesser challenges included the absence of available and reliable infrastructure (7.7%), inconsistency in the availability of OARs (6.2%), and difficulty in locating the uniform resource locator (7.7%).

Studies have shown that accessibility influences how students engage with and use online resources. For instance, Azonobi & Uwaifo's (2023) examined the dynamics of periodical acquisition, visibility, accessibility, and usage patterns among postgraduate students in Library and Information Science across seven Federal University libraries in Nigeria. The findings underscored significant relationships between the visibility and accessibility of periodicals, indicating their substantial impact on usage patterns among the Library and Information Science postgraduate students. Hashim et al., (2022) findings underscored a significant correlation between these technology indicators and postgraduate students' utilization of Web-Based Library and Information Services in Malaysia.

Specifically, ease of use, usefulness, and ease of access were identified as crucial factors influencing the adoption of web-based library and information services by postgraduate students in Malaysian academic libraries. Salman et al., (2020) explored the availability, accessibility, and utilization of electronic information resources among undergraduate students at Fountain University Library, Osogbo, Nigeria. The findings revealed that despite the accessibility of these resources they were insufficient for optimal use by the respondents.

Although past studies have discussed in detail the patterns, intentions, and issues surrounding the use of OARs, it is still necessary to have a sound theoretical framework that explains the transformation of students' perceptions into adoption behaviour. To address this gap, this study is anchored in the Technology Acceptance Framework (TAM), which provides theoretical grounding for examining the relationship between users' perceptions and their technology adoption behaviour.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) originally proposed by Davis (1989), which is one of the most popular and empirically confirmed models of how individuals can accept and use information systems. TAM posits that behavioural intention to use a technology is mainly dependent on the two fundamental cognitive beliefs, which include perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use. These beliefs have an impact on attitudes about the use of the system, which will, in turn, affect real adoption behaviour. The fact that TAM has a high predictive capacity and conceptual simplicity has led to its wide use in research investigating user acceptance of digital technologies in educational and information settings (Venkatesh et al., 2003; Park, 2009; Tarhini et al., 2014).

In the academic setting, perceived usefulness (PU) and perceived ease of use (PEOU) are great predictors of how students use electronic databases, digital libraries, learning management systems, and web-based information services (Park, 2009; Hashim et al., 2022). Within these environments, students will embrace digital platforms more when they feel that it is an academic and user-friendly platform.

Within the framework of OARs (OAR), perceived usefulness demonstrates the beliefs of students concerning the degree of utilization of such resources in their academic work, such as research, coursework, examination preparation, and knowledge improvement. Similarly, the current research modifies the perceived ease of use construct to that of perceived ease of access (PEA), defined as the individual's subjective perception of how effortlessly OARs can be located, accessed, navigated, and utilized. Such adaptation is theoretically rational because, as access constitutes a prerequisite for use, any beliefs of people on whether accessing digital systems is easy or not is likely to have a direct impact on their adoption behaviour. Past research has also applied TAM constructs to fit contextual characteristics of digital environments, specifically the academic and library-based systems (Tarhini et al., 2014; Mtebe & Raisamo, 2014; Adeoye, A., & Olanrewaju, A., 2019; Sharma et al., 2023).

Moreover, the studies have repeatedly demonstrated that accessibility-related factors, including system availability, internet reliability, interface design, and ease of navigation, significantly influence the student's interest towards electronic information resources (Azonobi&Uwaifo, 2023; Hashim et al., 2022). By operationalizing perceived ease of access, the study embraces these contextual aspects of technology interaction, hence giving the explanatory relevance of TAM to open access

settings greater pertinence.

This study draws on TAM as its theoretical foundation, providing a robust framework for analysing LIS postgraduate students' intentions to use OARs and their perceptions of the accessibility of such resources. This theoretical synthesis may facilitate the deeper interpretation of adoption patterns, strengthens the explanatory power of the findings, and contribute to the growing body of knowledge on technology acceptance in the library and information science education.

3.1 Methodology

The survey design of the correlational type was considered for this study because it described the relationship that exists among the identified variables in the study. The population of the study consists of 227 LIS master's students identified across five universities in South-West Nigeria during the 2023/2024 academic session, when the data for the study were collected. According to the data collected, University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Oyo State – UI (110); Tai Solarin University of Education, Ijagun, Ogun State -TASUED (30); Lead City University, Ibadan, Oyo State – LCU (30); Babcock University, Ilishan Remo, Ogun State – BU (35); and Adeleke University, Ede, Osun State – AU (22). This population figure reflects the total enrolment information available during the time of data collection and should not be interpreted as current enrolment figures of these institutions, which might have changed considerably.

The five universities were selected based on the availability of postgraduate Library and Information Science programmes in the South-West of Nigeria for the 2023/2024 academic year. Federal, state and private universities were therefore included based on the availability of LIS programmes with qualified postgraduate programmes at the time of the study, not by any

predetermined criteria for the classification of institutions. The universities that were to start postgraduate LIS programmes were not included, as they did not offer the programme at the time of data collection. A total enumeration technique was selected because of the relatively small and well-defined target study population, and questionnaires were administered to all 227 identified students in the LIS master's programme. A total of 213 questionnaires were returned, 93.8% of which were usable for analysis.

Descriptive statistics such as frequency counts, simple percentages and standard deviation were used to analyze research questions 1 and 2. The test of hypotheses was answered using the Pearson

Product Movement Correlation analysis. The data collected were coded and analyzed using the Statistical Product for Service Solution (SPSS) version 21. Reliability testing produced Cronbach's alpha coefficients of $\alpha=.89$ for 30-item Use of OARs scale and $\alpha=.90$ for 12-item Perceived Ease of Access scale, indicating the reliability of the instrument.

4.1 Results and Analysis

Demographic Profile of the Respondents

The demographic characteristics of the respondents are presented by university, with subsequent analyses also conducted and reported separately for each university.

Table 1: Demographic profile of the respondents

Demographic Information	AU N	AU %	BU N	BU %	LCU N	LCU %	TAS UED N	TAS UED %	UI N	UI %	Total N	Total %
Gender												
Female	9	50.0	17	51.5	14	56.0	14	45.2	54	50.9	108	50.7
Male	9	50.0	16	48.5	11	44.0	17	54.8	52	49.1	105	49.3
Marital Status												
Single	6	33.3	14	42.4	11	44.0	16	51.6	72	67.9	119	55.9
Married	11	61.1	18	54.5	12	48.0	13	41.9	31	29.2	85	39.9
Divorced	1	5.6	1	3.0	2	8.0	1	3.2	2	1.9	7	3.3
Separated	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	3.2	0	0.0	1	0.5
Widowed	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.9	1	0.5
Age Range (years)												
21–25	5	27.8	11	33.3	4	16.0	10	32.3	35	33.0	65	30.5
26–30	6	33.3	14	42.4	10	40.0	14	45.2	40	37.7	84	39.4
>30	7	38.9	8	24.2	11	44.0	7	22.6	31	29.2	64	30.0

The data in Table 1 reveals that the University of Ibadan had the largest number of respondents 106 (49.8%) in the study, while Adeleke University had the smallest 18 (8.5%). Regarding gender, more than half of the respondents from Babcock University

(51.5%), Lead City University (56%), and University of Ibadan (50.9%) were female, while Tai Solarin University of Education had a higher proportion of male respondents (54.8%). Adeleke University had an equal distribution of both genders (50% each). As

for marital status, most respondents across all universities were single, especially in the University of Ibadan (67.9%). However, Adeleke University had the highest percentage of married respondents (61.1%). Overall, most respondents (55.9%) were single, followed by married (39.9%). In terms of age range, the University of Ibadan had the

most respondents in the 21-25 category (33%), while Babcock University had the most in the 26-30 category (42.4%). Lead City University had the highest percentage of respondents in the 31 and above category (44%). The dominant age group in the study was 26-30, representing 39.4% of the respondents.

Research question 1: What is the purpose of the use of OARs by LIS postgraduate students?

Table 2b: Purpose of use of open access resources by LIS postgraduate students

Statement: I use OAR...	Adeleke University $\bar{x}$(SD)	Babcock University $\bar{x}$(SD)	Lead City University $\bar{x}$(SD)	Tai Solarin University $\bar{x}$(SD)	University of Ibadan $\bar{x}$(SD)
Group/individual practicals	3.11 (.756)	3.00 (.866)	3.24 (.723)	2.65 (.839)	3.17 (.669)
Personal tutorial	3.00 (1.029)	3.00 (.866)	3.20 (.500)	2.90 (.597)	3.12 (.700)
Examination preparation	3.11 (.758)	3.06 (.609)	3.04 (.735)	2.77 (.762)	3.24 (.711)
Difficult/challenging subjects	3.11 (.676)	3.15 (.755)	3.16 (.800)	2.97 (.752)	3.26 (.640)
To update my knowledge and supplement reading	3.22 (0.647)	3.15 (0.834)	3.16 (0.850)	2.68 (0.791)	3.27 (0.640)
As they are free	3.11 (0.758)	2.85 (0.712)	3.24 (0.723)	2.68 (0.909)	3.15 (0.728)
To compare topics taught in class	2.67 (0.907)	3.06 (0.704)	3.00 (0.866)	2.52 (0.724)	3.01 (0.762)
To compare class notes of different institutions	2.67 (0.970)	2.76 (0.867)	2.92 (0.640)	2.77 (0.669)	3.03 (0.810)
For classwork/assignment	3.17 (0.618)	3.15 (0.795)	3.12 (0.833)	2.84 (0.735)	3.34 (0.646)
Weighted Mean	3.06	2.72	2.81	2.48	2.86
Criterion Mean	2.50	2.50	2.50	2.50	2.50

Data from Table 2 reveals the purpose of use of OARs by LIS postgraduate students in universities in Southwest, Nigeria. The findings suggest that OAR is mostly used by the postgraduate students in research work, group and individual practical activities, personal tutorials, exam preparation, learning difficult subjects, updating knowledge and class assignments. The mean scores obtained were highest in research-related activities, with the highest scores being obtained in Lead City University ($\bar{x}$ =3.60) and the University of

Ibadan ($\bar{x}$ =3.45). Similarly, the mean scores were high in group/individual practical work, personal tutorials and examination preparation, which shows that students incorporate OAR in studying activities both individually and in small groups.

These findings denote the instrumental and performance-enhancing role of OAR in postgraduate students' academic activities aligning closely with the perceived usefulness (PU) construct of the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM). The perceived

usefulness, according to Davis (1989), is the extent to which individuals feel that the use of a system can improve their academic or job performance. The predominant usage of OAR for research, learning support, examination preparation, classwork, and other academic activities suggests that LIS postgraduate students perceive these resources as not

merely as sources of information but as valuable tools that facilitate learning, support academic tasks, and enhance their overall academic performance. Research Question 2: What is the perceived ease of access to OAR use by LIS postgraduate students? The findings are presented across three indicators spread on three tables 3a, 3b and 3c.

Table 3a: Perceived ease of access (Location of Access) to OAR use by LIS postgraduate students

Location of Access: I can access OAR...	Adeleke University (SD)	Babcock University (SD)	Lead City University (SD)	Tai SolarinUniversity (SD)	University of Ibadan (SD)
From office	3.39 (0.502)	2.97 (0.770)	3.44 (0.583)	2.87 (0.806)	3.20 (0.636)
From home	3.28 (0.826)	3.00 (0.829)	2.96 (0.790)	2.77 (0.805)	3.10 (0.675)
From my university environment	3.33 (0.594)	3.06 (0.899)	3.08 (0.759)	2.74 (0.729)	3.16 (0.649)
Through various computer devices	2.78 (0.808)	3.15 (0.834)	3.04 (0.735)	2.81 (0.792)	3.19 (0.678)
From various other locations	3.28 (0.669)	2.88 (0.740)	3.04 (0.539)	2.81 (0.601)	3.06 (0.715)
Weighted Mean	3.19	3.01	3.11	2.80	3.14
Criterion Mean	2.50	2.50	2.50	2.50	2.50

Table 3b: Perceived ease of access (flexibility) to OAR use by LIS postgraduate students

Flexibility	Adeleke University (SD)	Babcock University (SD)	Lead City University (SD)	Tai SolarinUniversity (SD)	University of Ibadan (SD)
I can access open access resources 24/7 and at any time that fits my schedule	3.33 (0.485)	3.21 (0.740)	2.92 (0.812)	2.77 (0.920)	3.13 (0.648)
I can pause, resume and access information in open access resources	3.22 (0.647)	3.09 (0.723)	3.08 (0.572)	2.71 (0.783)	3.09 (0.655)
I find it easy to access open access resources at a time that fits my schedule	3.33 (0.686)	2.79 (0.781)	3.00 (0.645)	2.77 (0.762)	3.07 (0.651)
I am comfortable with accessing open access resources from anywhere	3.06 (0.873)	2.91 (0.678)	2.92 (0.640)	2.87 (0.763)	3.05 (0.653)
Weighted Mean	3.24	3.00	2.98	2.78	3.09
Criterion Mean	2.50	2.50	2.50	2.50	2.50

Table 3c: Perceived ease of access (time of access) to OAR use by LIS postgraduate students

Statement	Adeleke University (SD)	Babcock University x(SD)	Lead City University x (SD)	Tai Solarin University x(SD)	University of Ibadan x (SD)
I can access open access resources promptly	3.22 (0.428)	3.09 (0.723)	3.32 (0.627)	2.90 (0.700)	3.24 (0.610)
Open access resources are available within a time frame at my university	2.94 (0.802)	2.91 (0.678)	3.00 (0.645)	2.39 (0.882)	2.89 (0.809)
Open access resources meet my needs quickly	3.00 (0.840)	2.76 (0.902)	3.28 (0.737)	2.55 (0.850)	3.08 (0.643)
There is no delay or waiting period for accessing open access resources at my university	3.28 (0.575)	3.24 (0.663)	3.16 (0.746)	2.97 (0.706)	2.99 (0.683)
Weighted Mean	3.11	3.00	3.30	2.70	3.05
Criterion Mean	2.50	2.50	2.50	2.50	2.50

The data presented in Table 3a, Table 3b and Table 3c shows scores on perceived ease of access across three indicators: the location of access, flexibility and time efficiency. Across the surveyed institutions, weighted mean scores were higher than the criterion mean of 2.50, meaning that the perception of accessibility is generally positive.

The results suggest the students had access to OAR in various locations, such as the office, home, and university and used a range of computer devices. This indicates that use of OAR was not limited to a specific physical site. The flexibility results similarly indicate that students perceived OAR as adaptable to their individual schedules, with respondents reporting the ability to access resources at convenient times, pause and resume their searches, and access resources from different locations. Regarding time efficiency, the findings showed that students rated OAR as readily available, accessible within sensible

time limits and with minimal delays and waiting times.

Theoretically, these findings provide provincial empirical support for the study's adaptation of the Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU) construct in TAM to Perceived Ease of Access (PEA). Unlike the ease of use of a technological system, PEA in this study captures the level of accessibility of OAR, in terms of location, schedule and time conditions, as perceived by postgraduate students. Thus, the relatively high mean scores for the three indicators indicate that students had relatively few spatial, temporal or procedural difficulties in accessing OAR. The importance of PEA as a contextualized extension of TAM for studying students' access to OARs is reiterated.

Answer to Hypothesis: There is no significant relationship between perceived ease of access and use of OARs by LIS postgraduate students.

Table 4 shows the relationship between perceived ease of access and use of OARs by LIS postgraduate students in universities in Southwest, Nigeria.

Table 4: Relationship between facilitating conditions and use of OARs

Name of University			OAR use	Remark
Adeleke University	PEA	Pearson Correlation	.294	Not sig.
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.237	
		N	18	
Babcock University	PEA	Pearson Correlation	-.004	Not sig.
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.984	
		N	33	
Lead City University	PEA	Pearson Correlation	.326	Not sig.
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.111	
		N	25	
Tai Solarin University of Education	PEA	Pearson Correlation	.458**	Sig.
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.010	
		N	31	
University of Ibadan	PEA	Pearson Correlation	.409**	Sig.
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
		N	106	

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).**

*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).***

The relationship between perceived ease of access and use of OARs by LIS postgraduate students in universities in Southwest, Nigeria, was analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC). The results revealed that perceived ease of access significantly influenced the use of OARs by LIS postgraduate students at Tai Solarin University of Education ($r=.458$, $P<0.05$) and the University of Ibadan ($r=.409$, $P<0.05$), but not at the other three universities. From a TAM perspective, these results indicate partial empirical support of the model, since perceived ease of access affected usage behaviour in two institution and not the other three. This difference reflects the contingency of the use of technology, in which the quality of infrastructures, digital literacy, institutional policy, and the system of technological support could moderate user behaviour (Venkatesh et al., 2003; Tarhini et al., 2014).

5.1 Discussion of Findings

The study expands the use of the

Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) in understanding usage within the context of OARs use by postgraduate students in the field of LIS and provides a theoretical approach to understanding the usage behaviour. With the constructs of perceived usefulness and ease of access, this study provides explanatory insights for the determinants of the level of participation of students in OARs.

The dominance of research-related activities as the key usage objective highlights the importance of the perceived usefulness in technology adoption. The more postgraduate students feel that OARs would be useful in terms of improving the quality of research, supporting coursework, easing literature search, and advancing academic productivity, the more motivation they will have to use the resources. This result aligns with the premise of TAM that the perceived usefulness is the ultimate predictor of behaviour intention and actual usage (Davis, 1989; Venkatesh et al., 2003). Consistent with this, previous researchers have observed that most postgraduate students use

electronic and OARs to conduct academic research, literature review and write scholarly texts (Chowdappa, 2021; Onobrakpor, 2022; Atanda and Adetimirin, 2025).

Moreover, the pronounced influence of perceived ease of access observed among students at Tai Solarin University of Education and the University of Ibadan underscores the importance of accessibility in shaping the student's engagement with OARs. Access convenience, reflected in high accessibility, reliable internet connectivity, easy-to-use digital platform, inclusive database subscriptions and efficient ICT support can facilitate more positive usage behaviour among students. This reinforces the previous results by Hashim et al. (2022) and Azonobi and Uwaifo (2023), who proposed the factor of accessibility of digital resources as a key factor determining its acceptance among postgraduate students.

Conversely, the non-significance of the perceived ease of access and utilization of OARs in Adeleke University, Babcock University, and Lead City University indicates that institutional contexts mediate the results of technology acceptance. Variations in infrastructural capacity, administrative policy, subscription coverage, and technical support systems can limit successful access, thus reducing the effects of accessibility perceptions on usage behaviour. These results show that the students' academic motivation may not be sufficient to ensure the long-term engagement when the facilitating conditions in institutions are absent. However, the relatively small number of participants from these institutions should be considered when interpreting the non-significant findings, as the limited sample sizes may have reduced the statistical power to detect existing relationships.

Altogether, by situating the analysis within TAM, the study provides strong theoretical explanation of how perceived usefulness and perceived ease of access jointly influence the adoption of OARs by LIS postgraduate students in these universities. The theoretical synthesis strengthens the study contribution to the academic literature while offering practical for institutional stakeholders

seeking to improve postgraduate students' experiences with digital research resources.

Conclusion

The ongoing and extensive use of OARs by LIS postgraduate students hinges on the resources' ability to meet their information needs effectively. The positive impact of OARs on educational activities within these universities is notable, as these resources eliminate financial barriers, facilitating easier access to learning and research materials. An LIS postgraduate student who neglects the integration of OARs into their academic pursuits may risk falling behind in the global learning landscape, which may impede their ability to stay abreast of advancements in their field of study. Thus, ensuring ease of access is crucial for the effective use of OARs by LIS postgraduate students. These findings suggest that institutional plans to promote the use of OARs should extend beyond availability and include enabling environment that makes these resources easy and convenient to use. Enhancing ease of access is therefore important for supporting sustained utilization of OARs among LIS postgraduate students.

Recommendations

Enhance access facilities: Universities where perceived ease of access has minimal impact on OAR usage particularly, Lead City University, Adeleke University and Babcock University should strengthen their access infrastructure. This may include increasing the number of access points, availability of reliable internet connection and ensuring that OARs are available throughout on and off campus.

1) Strengthen students' OAR competencies:

Universities should develop specialized courses training sessions, or information-literacy programmes to increase students' awareness, confidence and competence in locating and using OARs effectively.

2) Promote flexibility at TASUED and UI:

Tai Solarin University of Education and the University of Ibadan should build on the established access convenience by improving the flexibility of OAR access and

investing in user support services.

- 3) **Conduct periodic user-satisfaction assessments:** these universities should periodically establish user satisfaction impact measurements to identify emerging barriers and addressing the promptly ensuring sustained and equitable access to OARs across all institutions.

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