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Influence of Demographic Characteristics on Utilisation of EIRs by Postgraduate Students in three selected universities in south-west Nigeria

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Abstract

Electronic information resources (EIRs) referred to information that are available in electronic format. These resources are very useful in postgraduate education, but it was observed that some factors determined the use of these resources among the postgraduate students who are expected to use EIRs that are provided in libraries. In line with this, this study investigated influence of demographic characteristics on utilisation of EIRs by postgraduate students in three selected universities in south-west Nigeria. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. 362 respondents represented the sample size for the study. Statistical Package for Social sciences (SPSS) was used to compute the data, while frequency distribution, mean, percentage, standard deviation and chi-square were used for data analyses. The findings revealed that a significant ($P < 0.05$) association exist among highest qualification ($\chi^2 = 40.3$), Age ($\chi^2 = 20.4$) and utilisation of EIRs by the postgraduate students. It was recommended that the library management should provide adequate awareness programmes that will promote the use of EIRs among postgraduate students irrespective of age and qualification. Academic staff should advocate the use of EIRs among postgraduate students. This is achievable in a situation where lecturers introduce the use of EIRs to their course-work/ assignments. It was concluded that Age and highest qualification were found to be major determinant of the use of EIRs by the postgraduate students in the selected universities. This is an issue that needed a serious attention because the older postgraduate students are expected to deliver academically as the younger postgraduate students.

Keywords: Electronic Information Resources (EIRs), Postgraduate Students, Demographic Characteristics, Selected Universities, South-west, Nigeria.

Introduction

Electronic information resources are the e-resources acquired by the library to supplement the printed resources that are available in the libraries. These resources are product of ICT which is gradually eroding the traditional method of operating the library services. The emergence of ICT in library

operation had transformed the way information is packaged, organised and made available for use by the library patrons. In line with these, it becomes pertinent for the postgraduate student to use the EIRs available in their various universities. This is important because the postgraduate study is more of research activities and the EIRs have ample of information and unique characteristics that is expected to promote its use among the postgraduate students.

Salaam (2008) established that the flexibility of electronic information resources make it more useful in searching for relevant information compared to the printed resources. Electronic information resources can be accessed remotely at any time from different geographical locations. This implies that, EIRs provide users the advantage of accessing, using, and sharing information resources with little or no difficulties. The flexibility of EIRs is capable of promoting its usage among the postgraduate students. But some factors still hindered its usage among the postgraduate students. To this end this study investigated the influence of demographic characteristics on postgraduate students' use of EIRs in selected universities in south-west Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to examine the influence of demographic characteristics on the respondent use of electronic information resources in the selected universities. Specific objectives are to:

1. find out the demographic characteristics of the respondents;
2. determine the respondents' level of utilisation of electronic information resources;
3. determine the influence of demographic characteristics of the respondents on their utilisation of EIRs;

Research Questions

The following research questions were answered in the study:

1. What are the demographic characteristics of the respondents?
2. What are respondents' levels of use of electronic information resources?
3. How do demographic characteristics of respondents influence their utilisation of EIRs in the study area?

Research Hypotheses

The following hypothesis was tested in the study:

H₀₁: Demographic characteristics of the respondents' do not have significant influence on their utilization of electronic information resources.

Literature review

Demographic characteristics such as age, gender, income, educational level as well as marital status had been found as some of the variables that influence the use of electronic information resources by postgraduate students. Diyaolu, Okunlaya and Ibrahim (2012) studied influence of demographic factors on the use of digital library by the Postgraduate Students in private universities, using Babcock and Covenant University in Ogun State as a case study. The findings revealed that there is a significant influence of age, gender, level of income on the use of internet. Furthermore, it was established in the finding that program of study also influence the use and non-use of digital resources by the postgraduate students. Recommendation was made based on the finding that both the young and old students should be encouraged and sensitized on the benefits available in the use of EIRs resources in order to further encourage their use.

Islam (2011) conducted a study on effect of demographic factors on e-learning effectiveness in a higher learning institution in Malaysia. Level of education, program of study, gender and age were found to have significant influence on effectiveness of e-learning. The implication of this was that the aforementioned demographic variables contributed immensely to the use and non-use of electronic information resources among the students on e-learning. Similarly, Okiki (2011) found that the younger generation grew and develops alongside computers as they tends to be vast and conversant in using computer applications and electronic information resources compared to the older adult that spent longer time in understanding how to use the computer, which later frustrated them in losing interest of using the computer system that can enhance their access and use of electronic information resources.

Okiki (2011) further established that the male postgraduate students enjoy using the internet more than the female students. While the female uses internet for work related task, the male extended their use of internet to browsing for enjoyment.

Sivathaasan, N., and Velnampy, T. (2013) investigated demographic variables and usage of electronic information resources. It was revealed that there are significant mean differences among teaching language, age group, and experiences of teachers on the usage of electronic information resources.

Quadri (2013) found that high significant level of correlation exist between age and use of online library resources among undergraduate students in two private Nigerian universities libraries.

Waldman (2003) submitted that age is a variable that determine the use of electronic information resources among postgraduate students. As the younger generation cannot do away with computer because they were brought up with the system, while older generation had little exposure to computer system which resulted in computer anxiety of the older generation.

Methodology

Descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. Convenient sampling technique was used to select three universities in south-west Nigeria. These universities are Olabisi Onabanjo University (OOU), University of Ibadan (UI) and University of Lagos (UNILAG), while purposive sampling was used to select five similar faculties from the three universities. Krejcie and Morgan (1970) tabulated arrangement of determining sample size in research activities in social sciences was used to calculate and get the 377 respondents who represented the sample size of the study. The Statistical Package for Social sciences (SPSS) was used to compute the data, while frequency distribution, mean, percentage, standard deviation and chi-square were used for data analyses.

Result and findings

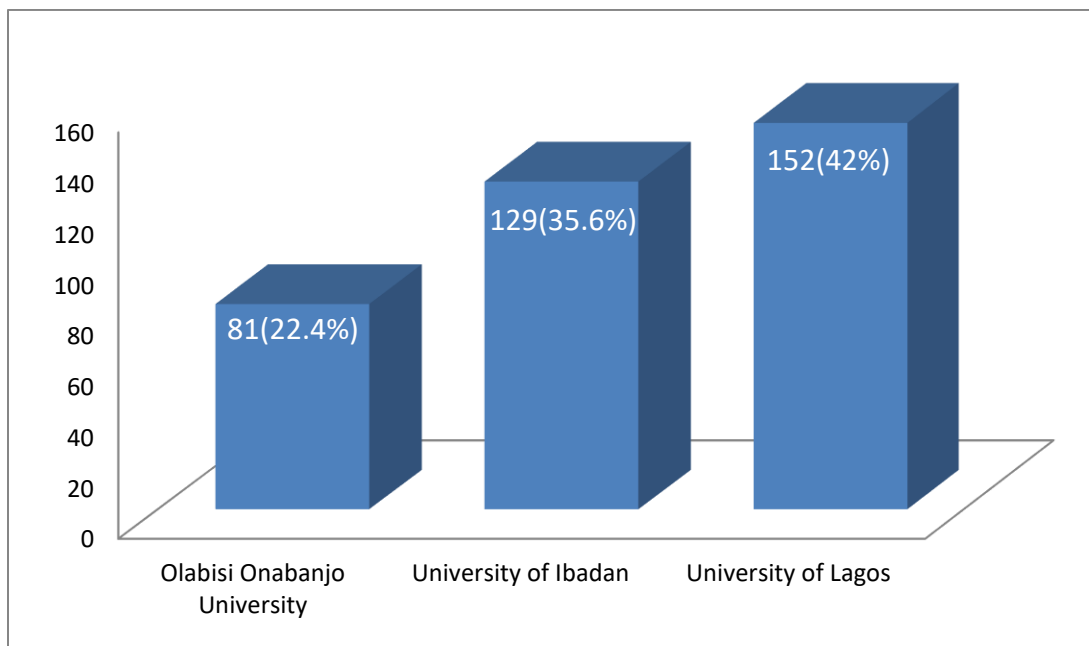
The respondents are postgraduate students of five faculties in three universities in South-west Nigeria. These universities are Olabisi Onabanjo University (OOU), University of Ibadan (UI) and University of Lagos (UNILAG), Nigeria. The five faculties include Faculty of Art, Education, Law, Sciences and Social Sciences. A total of three hundred and seventy seven (377) copies of questionnaires were administered among the respondents, three hundred and sixty two (362) copies which is (96%) were duly completed and returned. All the copies returned were found usable for analysis.

Table 1: Questionnaire distribution and response rate

Name of University	Acronyms	No. of copies Administered	No. of copies Returned	%

Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye, Ogun State	OOU	81	81	100
University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Oyo State.	UI	132	129	97.7
University of Lagos, Lagos, State.	UNILAG	164	152	92.7
Total		377	362	96

Figure 1: Number of respondents from each university



A profound look at Figure 1 revealed that OOU has 81 respondents which is (22.4%) of the sample size of respondents that represented the population of the study; UI has 129 respondents (35.6%) and UNILAG has 152 respondents (42%).

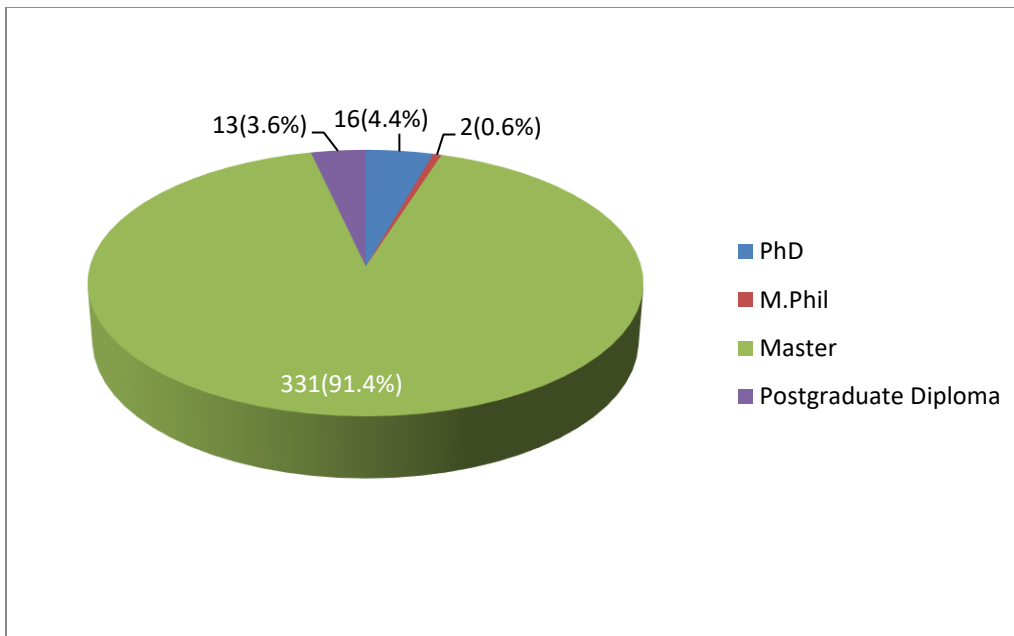
Table 2: Distribution of respondents by faculties

Names of Faculties	OOU	UI	UNILAG	Numbers of Response	%
Faculty of Arts	16	26	32	74	20.4

Faculty of Education	17	26	34	77	21.3
Faculty of Law	16	26	30	72	19.9
Faculty of Sciences	16	26	26	68	18.8
Faculty of Social Sciences	16	25	30	71	19.6
Total	81	129	152	362	100

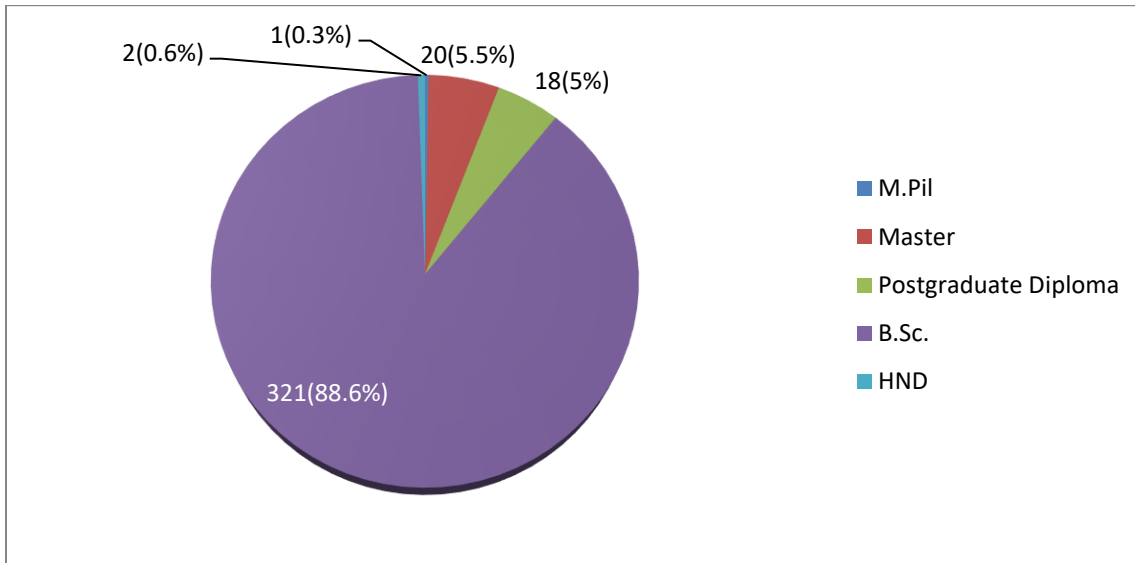
The distribution of respondents by faculties as presented in Table 2 indicated that Faculty of Education has the highest number of respondents of 77 (21.3%) follow by faculty of Arts 74 (20.4%), Faculty of Law 72 (19.9%), Faculty of Social Sciences 71 (19.6%) and Faculty of Sciences 68 (18.8%).

Figure 2: Programme of study of the respondents



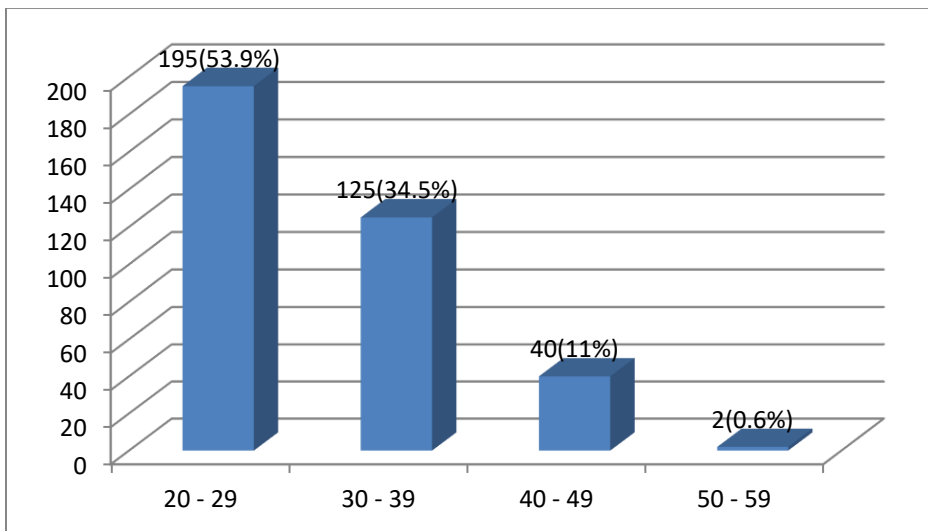
The programme of study of the respondent as shown in Figure 2 revealed that majority of the respondents are masters students with highest number of 331 (91.4%) followed by PhD 16 (4.4%), postgraduate diploma 13 (3.6%) and M.Phil 2 (0.6%).

Figure 3: Highest qualification of respondents



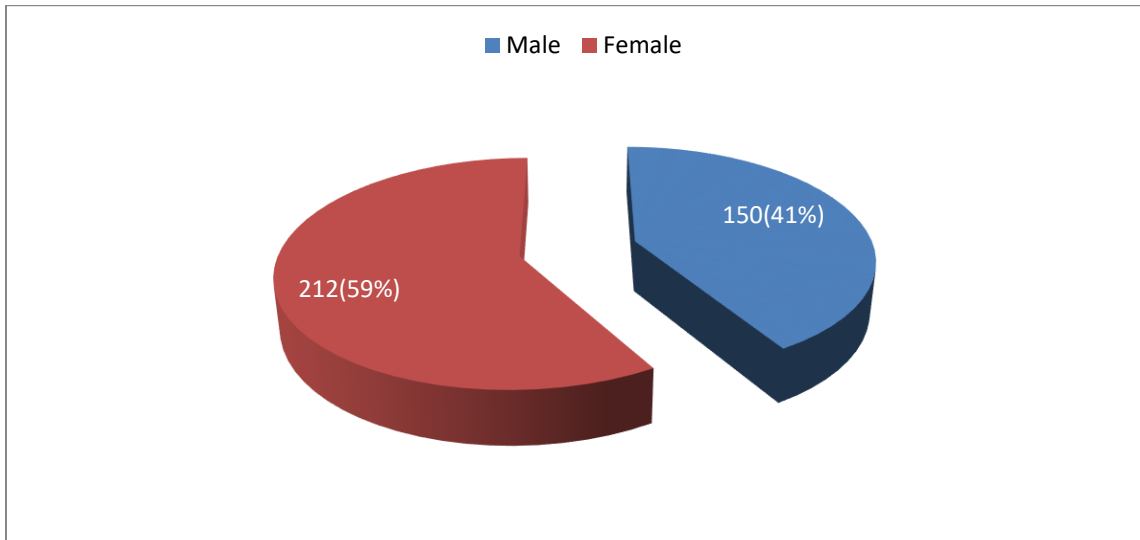
The finding as presented in Figure 3 revealed that majority of the respondents also had B.Sc. has highest number of 321 (88.6%) followed by Masters 20 (5.5%) that was used to proceed on their postgraduate studies. This may be due to the fact that the B.Sc. or first degree is necessary for postgraduate studies.

Figure 4: Age bracket of respondents



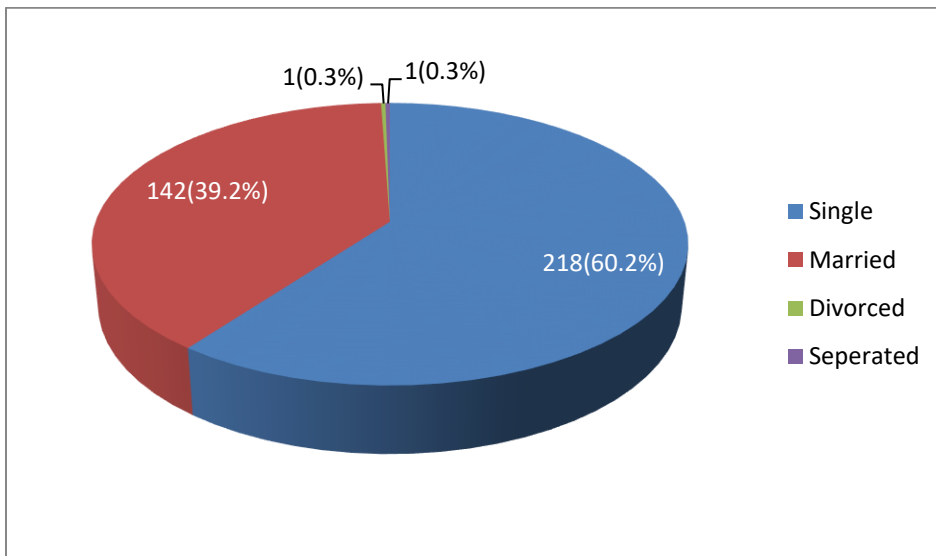
Age bracket of the respondents as presented in Figure 4 revealed that majority of the respondent (195) were between 20 to 29 years of age (53.9%); 125 respondents (34.5%) were between 30 to 39 years of age and respondents within the age bracket of 40 to 49 were 40 in number (11%).

Figure 5: Gender distribution of respondents



The distribution of respondents by gender as presented in Figure 5 indicated that female constituted the majority of respondents with 212 frequencies (59%). The male respondents were 150 (41%). This finding revealed that population of female postgraduate students is more than the male postgraduate students in the study area.

Figure 6: Marital status of respondents



The result of the findings as shown in Figure 6 revealed that there are more single postgraduate students in the study area. The single postgraduate students has the highest number of 218 (60.2%) follow by married with 142 number (39.2%), divorced 1 (0.3%) and seperated 1 (0.3%).

Table 3: Utilisation of electronic information resources**N=362**

S/N	EIRs	AL (%)	OC (%)	SE (%)	NV(%)	X	SD
1	Sourcing for educational materials	263(72.7)	90(24.9)	3(0.8)	6(1.7)	1.31	0.577
2	Engage in collaborative research with other postgraduate in other institutions	92(25.4)	162(44.8)	63(17.4)	45(12.4)	2.17	0.948
3	Use in the compilation of assignment	234(64.6)	94(26.0)	25(6.9)	9(2.5)	1.47	0.733
4	Use for online reference database	220(60.8)	113(31.2)	17(4.7)	12(3.3)	1.51	0.738
5	Use in the completion of assignment, term-paper and presentation	236(65.2)	99(27.3)	23(6.4)	4(1.1)	1.43	0.663
6	Use for storing academic files and documents	225(62.2)	92(25.4)	33(9.1)	12(3.3)	1.54	0.795
7	Use for sourcing secondary data	182(50.2)	133(36.7)	38(10.5)	9(2.5)	1.65	0.767
8	Use for tracking longitude and latitude of a research location	114(31.5)	137(37.8)	70(19.3)	41(11.3)	2.10	0.976
9	Its serves as a template for writing research proposal	164(45.3)	143(39.5)	38(10.5)	17(4.7)	1.75	0.827
10.	It is use for sourcing citation and references	199(55.0)	115(31.8)	35(9.7)	13(3.6)	1.62	0.804
11	Use for sourcing related news	211(58.3)	121(33.4)	21(5.8)	9(2.5)	1.52	0.718
12	Use in sourcing for research grants	170(47.0)	129(35.6)	43(11.9)	20(5.5)	1.76	0.88
13	Use for sourcing recent contribution to knowledge	242(66.9)	96(26.6)	18(5.0)	(1.7)	1.41	0.665

Note: Always (AL), Occasionally (OC), Seldom (SE), Never (NV)

The question intended to find out the level of use of electronic information resources (EIRs) by postgraduate students. Almost 263 (72.7%) claimed that they always use the electronic information resources to source for educational materials. On the other hand, 242 (66.9%) admitted that they use the EIRs to seek for latest research that contributed to knowledge.

H₀₁: Demographic characteristics of the respondents do not have significance influence on their utilisation of electronic information resources (Chi- square).

Table 2: Influence of demographic characteristics on utilisation of EIRs

	Always	Occasionally	Seldom	Never	Total			
	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	X ²	Df	P-value
Name of University						6.9	6	0.330
OOU	33(9.1%)	44(12.2%)	4(1.1%)	0(0.0%)	81(22.4%)			
UI	63(17.4%)	61(16.9%)	4(1.1%)	1(0.3%)	129(35.6%)			
UNILAG	57(15.7%)	91(25.1%)	4(1.1%)	0(0.0%)	152(42.0%)			
Total	153(42.3%)	196(54.1%)	12(3.3%)	1(0.3%)	362(100%)			
Name of Faculty						11.6	12	0.481
Arts	29(8.0%)	42(11.6%)	3(0.8%)	0(0.0%)	74(20.4%)			
Education	34(9.4)	41(11.3)	2(0.6)	0(0.0)	77(21.3)			
Law	27(7.5)	41(11.3)	4(1.1)	0(0.0)	72(19.9)			
Sciences	27(7.5)	40(11.0)	0(0.0)	1(0.3)	68(18.8)			
Social Sciences	36(9.9)	32(8.8)	3(0.8)	0(0.0)	71(19.6)			
Total	153(42.3)	196(54.1)	12(3.3)	1(0.3)	362(100)			
Highest Qualification						40.3	12	0.000
M.Phil	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	1(0.3)	0(0.0)	1(0.3)			
MSc.	15(4.1)	4(1.1)	1(0.3)	0(0.0)	20(5.5)			
PGD	8(2.2)	9(2.5)	1(0.3)	0(0.0)	18(5.0)			
B.Sc.	129(35.6)	182(50.3)	9(2.5)	1(0.3)	321(88.7)			

HND	1(0.3)	1(0.3)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	2(0.6)			
Total	153(42.3)	196(54.1)	12(3.3)	1(0.3)	362(100)			
Age						20.4	9	0.016
20-29	82(22.7)	109(30.1)	3(0.8)	1(0.3)	195(53.9)			
30-39	45(12.4)	75(20.7)	5(1.4)	0(0.0)	125(34.5)			
40-49	24(6.6)	12(3.3)	4(1.1)	0(0.0)	40(11.0)			
50-59	2(0.6)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	2(0.6)			
Total	153(42.3)	196(54.1)	12(3.3)	1(0.3)				
Sex						2.30	3	0.512
Male	67(18.5)	78(21.5)	4(1.1)	1(0.3)	150(41.4)			
Female	86(23.8)	118(32.6)	8(2.2)	0(0.0)	212(58.6)			
Total	153(42.3)	196(54.1)	12(3.3)	1(0.3)	362(100.0)			
Marital Status						10.9	9	0.283
Single	88(24.3)	126(34.8)	3(0.8)	1(0.3)	218(60.2)			
Married	65(18.0)	68(18.8)	9(2.5)	0(0.0)	142(39.2)			
Divorced	0(0.0)	1(0.3)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	1(0.3)			
Separated	0(0.0)	1(0.3)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	1(0.3)			
Total	153(42.3)	196(54.1)	12(3.3)	1(0.3)	362(100.0)			

An investigation into the relationship between the demographic characteristics of the respondents and their utilisation of EIRs revealed that there was a significant association between highest qualification ($X^2=40.3$, $P< 0.05$), Age ($X^2=20.4$, $P< 0.05$) and their utilisation of EIRs. However, university, faculty, sex and marital status were not significantly related to the utilisation of EIRs ($P>0.05$).

Discussion of Findings

The respondents consist of postgraduate students in five faculties each, from Olabisi Onabanjo University (OOU), University of Ibadan (UI) and University of Lagos (UNILAG). Distribution of respondents by faculties indicates that Faculty of Education has the highest number of respondents. This may be due to the fact that teaching is one of the most important professions in the world. Those in education are responsible for preparing future generation to become productive and outstanding citizen. This finding is in contrary to the finding of Egwu (2015) that students have negative attitude towards teaching profession in a study conducted to ascertain attitude of students towards teaching profession in Faculty of Education, Ebonyi State University.

Programme of study of the respondent reveals that majority of the respondents are masters students. Appreciable percentage of the respondents' had B.Sc. as highest qualification that was used to proceed on their postgraduate studies. The age bracket of the respondents reveals that majority of the respondent were between the ages of 20 to 29 years. This signifies that younger adults dominate the postgraduate programmes in the study area.

The distribution of respondents by gender reveals that female constituted the majority of respondents. This finding is supported by the report of Fatunde (2010) that numbers of female enrollment into the universities had significantly closed up with the male students. This was evidenced in University of Ibadan where the gender gap in 2007 to 2009 was 7,456 female and 11,387 male. In a related trend in University of Lagos the student's enrollment in year 2008 to 2009 was 17,920 female and 20,909 male. This is an indication that female students are fast closing the gap of gender disparity in the universities, as the population of female postgraduate students is more than the male postgraduate students in the universities studied. The finding also reveals that there are more single postgraduate students in the universities studied.

Relationship between demographic characteristics of the postgraduate students' and utilisation of electronic information resources.

An investigation into the relationship between the demographic characteristics of the respondents and their utilisation of EIRs reveals that there was a significant relationship between highest qualification and their utilisation of EIRs. The implication of this is that the postgraduate students with higher level of education are more exposed to research materials which may be in form of electronic sources. This is

also attesting to the fact that the higher you go in educational level the more the usage of EIRs. The finding is similar with Islam (2011) who conducted a study on effect of demographic factors on e-learning effectiveness in a higher learning institution in Malaysia, where level of education was found to have influence on e-learning. Age was also found to have significant association with the postgraduate students' utilisation of EIRs. This is in agreement with Waldman (2003) who submitted that age is a variable that determines the use of electronic information resources among postgraduate students, as the younger generation cannot do away with computer because they were brought up with the system. Furthermore, Quadri (2013) conducted a study among undergraduate students in two private Nigerian universities libraries it was found that high significant level of correlation exist between age and use of online library resources among the respondents. However, university, faculty, sex and marital status were not significantly related to the utilisations of EIRs. This contradicted Diyaolu, *et al* (2012) who established that there is a significant influence of gender, level of income and programme of study on the use of digital resources by the postgraduate students in private universities, using Babcock and Covenant University in Ogun State as a case study.

Conclusion

Age and highest qualification were found to be major determinant of the use of EIRs by the postgraduate students in the selected universities. This is an issue that needed a serious attention because the older postgraduate students are expected to deliver academically as the younger postgraduate students. Furthermore, highest qualification is not expected to be a barrier in postgraduate students' use of EIRs. As the students are expected to have mastered the use of these resources from their final years in undergraduate studies.

Recommendation

- Seminar and workshops should be organized by the library staff to educate the postgraduate students on how to access and use the EIRs that are more resourceful to their postgraduate programmes to eradicate gender bias on the use of EIRs.
- Academic staff should advocate the use of EIRs among the postgraduate students. This is achievable in a situation where the lecturers introduce the use of EIRs to their course-work/ assignments.

- The library management should provide adequate awareness programmes that will promote the use of EIRs among the postgraduate students irrespective of the age and qualification.
- The postgraduate students irrespective of age should strive to benefit from the various advantages that the EIRs could provide them in their postgraduate education.

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