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# Characteristics and Nature of Academic Staff's User Experiences in Electronic Library Database Utilisation

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## Abstract

**Introduction.** The use of electronic library databases (e-library databases) by academic staff is accepted globally as contributing immensely to academic staff research work. However, based on one of the researchers' experiences as a Subject Librarian as well as context-specific issues that arose from the existing literature, e-library databases are underutilised by academic staff at the University of Jos and similar institutions in North-Central Nigeria. Many previous studies on the use of e-library databases by academic staff in Nigerian universities were centred on the quantitative survey methodology, which lack in-depth perspectives of academics' experiences. Thus, additional qualitative insights are necessary. Hence, this study aimed to improve our understanding of the personal/individual experiences affecting academic staff e-library database utilisation in universities in North-Central Nigeria, through ethnographic research.

**Method.** The stratified sampling method was used in selecting participants. The researcher employed observation and semi-structured interviews to collect data from 44 academic staff selected from 22 faculties of the Universities and one system librarian from each of the university libraries. A constant comparative approach was used in the analysis of data.

**Results.** The results revealed negative/unsatisfying experiences and a lack of interest in using e-library databases affected academics' use of the e-library databases. The researcher discovered that online library database use and technology are generally less common to older academics but appear to be more familiar amongst the younger ones.

**Conclusion.** Therefore, the study recommended that Academic Subject Librarians have to consider online library database design strategies to shore up the use rates. The university should also prioritise behavioural change.

**Keywords:** electronic library databases; academic staff; Academic Subject Librarians; university libraries; user experiences; ethnographic study; Symbolic Interactionist Ethnography

## **1 Introduction**

Due to the fast development of information and communication technology, electronic resources, specifically electronic library databases (e-library databases), have become an established part of many library collections, thereby complimenting printed resources. These e-library databases are most likely to contain current information, convenient, provide quick and accessible services to the users (Ali et al 2016). For that reason, university libraries spend huge amounts of money on these resources to meet the academic community's needs of teaching, learning and research (Kyvik & Aksnes 2015; Anyim 2018). It is therefore important that e-library databases are maximised to contribute to academic excellence and achievement. Otherwise, it will diminish academic potentials and benefits.

Scholars have conducted researches that focus on the factors influencing the optimal usage of e-library databases for research. Sritharan (2018) investigated the level of user satisfaction of e-resources and services available at the Library of Postgraduate Institute of Medicine, University of Colombo, Sri Lanka. The study revealed that the majority of the respondents own computers and Internet connections for accessing online resources. As a result, they were satisfied with the available e-library databases and services. The study found tight schedules, insufficient training, and lack of remote access to electronic information resources as significant barriers to their use. The author recommended that the library should organise more sensitisation programs, ensuring library users can access e-resources remotely. Also, the library should publicise/ advertise newly subscribed e-resources, primarily through text messages.

Okumu's (2018) study examined the value (accessibility/ ease-of-use, expediency, familiarity) of e-library databases in fulfilling undergraduate students' academic needs at Moi University, Kenya. The finding revealed that online library database utilisation was affected by the complexity of the library e-databases. Consequently, the study purposely sought academics' previous experiences on e-library databases' utilisation, to proffer ways the e-resources can be enhanced.

## **2 Literature review**

### **2.1 Previous experiences of academics' electronic library database use**

User experiences (UX) of technologies are fundamental to user studies, design, affordance, sustainability, efficiency and the evolution of best practices (Pineda, 2014). Kummer, Recker, and Bick (2017) confirmed that UX and technology acceptance related viewpoints can complement each other to get a more holistic understanding of the factors affecting the success or failure of technology adoptions, in this case, e-library databases. Partala and Sarri (2015) in an

investigation of the main UX in successful and unsuccessful technology acceptance observed that UX can be affected by usefulness, output quality, need fulfillment, and negative emotions in unsuccessful adoptions.

UX is a valuable method in supplying profound insights into users' desires about the library and their dislike (Appleton, 2016). Priestner and Borg (2016) opined that libraries' standard quantitative measures employed (such as statistics on holdings, loans, renewals, e-database use, downloads.) cannot unveil the quality of the interaction experienced by the library user and the value the engagement has on the user. In light of that, the previous authors maintained that the focus in UK higher education (HE) on UX led to heads of libraries investigating how and why users use libraries to understand their information needs. It is critical to understand the experiences of technology users, for the provision of adequate information services, which will promote the utilisation of the technological artefacts/ tools (Sivathaasan & Chandrasekar, 2013).

Accordingly, studies on the experiences of academics in universities on utilising e-library databases have been carried out by several authors. For instance, the experiences of lecturers and students on the usefulness of electronic resources and services were explored by Sohail and Ahmad (2017) at Fiji National University (FNU) Library, Saudi Arabia. The results indicated many academics and students were quite satisfied with the e-resources in carrying out their research, despite several limitations, such as sluggish downloading speed and obstruction of the website. In like manner, while studying user satisfaction with electronic resources in two universities of Pakistan, Ahmed and Amjad (2014) found that researchers were satisfied with the library e-databases despite some barriers they faced in using the resources. The study respondents were academics from the Faculty of Arts, at the Islamia University of Bahawalpur, and Bahaudd in Zakariya University of Multan, Punjab, Pakistan. Sohail and Ahmad's and Ahmed and Amjad's studies will help change the direction of online library database services in university libraries and match them with the shifting demands of the use. The current study from the respondents' perspectives will have a deeper understanding of the users' information needs and provide some strategies for effective use of the subscribed library online databases.

Ncwane (2016) examined the level of academics and other staff's satisfaction with the Mangosuthu University of Technology's Natural Sciences Library, Umlazi, Durban (MUT-

NSL), South Africa. The study aimed to assess the quality of the collections, library facilities – online databases, and staff services. The study’s findings pointed out users’ expectations of service quality delivered at the MUT-NS Library were inadequate. As a result, the users were not satisfied with the library services. However, the study’s findings also revealed that the inadequacies in the services depend on individual services. The results were used for service improvements and to make informed decisions concerning the quality of service offered at the MUT-NSL. Likewise, this study focused on discovering the insufficiency of library services and made suggestions for improvement to ensure library users have a highly positive experience.

Yebowaah and Plockey’s (2017) findings concurred with Ncwane (2016), who found out that academics in the University for Development Studies, Wa Campus Ghana, were not satisfied with the e-library databases. The study found barriers causing experiences such as displeasure with the e-library databases: low internet connectivity, inadequate skills, and library staff assistance. The finding is related to the adopted theory-SIE construct, Roles, and Definition of Situations, which states that the use of the e-library databases is positioned along with expectations and understanding. Moreover, user experiences suggest that the use of resources depends on how proactive and competent the subject librarians are. It also illuminates interesting questions for greater exploration along with some recommendations. The current study is looking beyond finance, technological, technical support factors and structures often reported in the literature. The study prioritises individual e-library database use experiences of academic staff not currently under the eye of scholarly analysis. This decision can provide better understanding of the reasons for low use of e-library databases and to forecast a new approach leading to higher uptake of the tools.

A study by Lwoga and Sukums (2018) corroborated previous findings cited above. The study explored the experiences of lecturers of the Faculty of Health Sciences, Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences (MUHAS) Tanzania on their use of e-resources. The study specifically examined academic staff’s experiences with information literacy (IL) tools/proficiencies and whether the skills allowed them to use electronic information resources in their libraries. The survey used a questionnaire to gather data from 135 faculty members. About 50% of academics were not satisfied with the e-library databases and opted for Google search engine and Wikipedia instead. Most of the faculty members’ information literacy competencies

(such as information search techniques, reference management, critical appraisal, and Web 2.0 technologies) were inadequate. The lack of use of online library databases by the academic staff may result from previous negative experiences. Yebowaah and Plockey's (2017) and Lwoga and Sukums's (2018) studies gave a broad picture of users' experiences of e-resources utilisation in a university environment. The results of these studies can help university libraries appraise and update their policies and practices associated with utilising e-library databases.

A study on academics' experiences using e-library databases in the Federal University of Technology, Owerri South-East Nigeria, conducted by Chima-James, Opara and Ogaraku (2018) likewise revealed academics' partial satisfaction with the e-library databases. The survey found few academic staff have adopted the e-library databases for research and informed current trends in their fields. As a result, the use of the library online databases by academics was low. Reflecting on the findings, suggestions for improved e-library database use were the training of the academics, constant power supply, fast Internet speed, and subscription of additional databases by the University Library. Chima-James, Opara, and Ogaraku's (2018) ideas are similar to the present research by giving suggestions for enhancing the use of the e-library databases. By contrast, their suggestions have been reported at length by previous studies. This study, through the full understanding from the voices of academics, will proffer recommendations.

### **3 Theoretical lens for the study**

The study adopted the Symbolic Interactionist Ethnography-SIE theory. The choice of the SIE was adopted based on its suitability to explore the questions in the current research. Furthermore, because the chosen theoretical perspective is unusual in IS empirical research, applying it offered new insights. SI is a sociological perspective that gives an explanation to acts and interactions as the results of the meaning people attach to things and social acts (Blumer, 1969). Fidishun (2002) affirmed that SIE is a theory that can help librarians to understand how the library staff and users view services, training, policy, and other issues. Since the hub of the theory is on the symbolic definitions of objects and events as they are construed through human interaction, it can be beneficial to librarians in their investigation to understand individual and group behaviour.

Several studies (Tan, Zhu and Wang, 2003; Robinson, 2007; Smith and Bugni, 2006; Smit and Fritz, 2008) have employed the SIT and SIE. These studies found the use of SIT to be economical and fruitful in analysing the acceptance or resistance to information technologies' implementation with ease and insight. SIE assists the researcher in determining symbolic meanings, the clarification of these meanings, and how such meanings can lead to enactment of action in the university context. Hewitt (2002) categorised the constructs of SIE into seven basic concepts: Symbols; Objects; Acts and Social Acts; Self and the Control of Behaviour; Roles and the Definition of Situations; Role making and Role taking; and The Place of Emotions. All the constructs were employed in the thesis. However, two constructs- Roles and Definition of Situations and Role Making and Role Taking help in answering the research questions of this paper.

**Roles and Definition of Situations:** This implies that human beings respond to a particular situation through how they define that situation rather than how the situation is objectively presented to them (Denzin 2009). SI helps in studying academics' online library database utilisation because it allows the researcher to understand why respondents reject the e-library databases for other information resources. If academic staff do not make sense of the intended ASLs' actions, uncertainty can arise. The construct explains at what point in time that interaction between the ASLs and academics was misconstrued and why. Was it due to previous negative experiences? Was it a result of inadequate ASLs skills? Was lack of interest involved? The study applied this construct of the SIE in answering research question number one of the paper.

**Role Making and Role Taking:** One has to get the opinion of others to render services to them (Mead 1939; Blumer 1969). The focus should be on many principles based on expectations, norms, and ideas held in common by a particular social group (Hewitt 2002). This action can improve academics' e-library database utilisation. Hence, the construct framed the instrumentation that addresses the research question two of the paper.

#### **4 Research Methods**

The study adopted the interpretive paradigm. As earlier mentioned, ethnography was the adopted research design for the study. The ethnographic approach was purposely bounded within two cases, design with explanatory and descriptive features. Related studies that have used the ethnographic approach include those of Twiss-Brooks et al. (2017), Tewell et al. (2017), and

Wray and Foster (2018). It should be noted that although these studies utilised ethnographic methods, none was based on a developing country environment. As a result, this ethnographic study provided a unique opportunity into academic staff's perspectives on e-library database utilisation.

The study population comprised academic staff from two selected universities in the North Central zone of Nigeria: University of Jos (UniJos), Plateau State, and Federal University of Agriculture (FUAM), Makurdi, Benue State. The academic staff population in Unijos is 1,331 (NUC, 2017), while FUAM is 543 (FUAM Students Prospectus 2017). In short, the population of academic staff of the two universities is 1,874. Accordingly, the researcher adopted the stratified sampling methods for a qualitative- ethnographic study as approved by Onwuegbuzie and Collins (2007). The stratified random sampling produces samples that are representative of all subgroups or strata. The stratified sampling strands involved the academic faculties forming the strata in which they were randomly selected across the faculties.

Accordingly, two academics (lecturers) were conveniently (convenience sampling) selected from 22 faculties (12 faculties in UniJos and 10 in FUAM) of the selected universities for the study, forming a total of 44 academics/ lecturers. The study selected two academics across faculties based on accessibility and their readiness to participate (Etikan, Musa and Alkassim 2015). For validation purposes, the study included 1 system librarian from each of the university libraries. This selection met the study's needs. The sample sizes are given in Table 1 below:

**Table 1: Sample sizes for each institution**

S/N	Universities	Academics (Lecturers)
1.	UniJos	24
2.	FUAM	20
<b>Total</b>		44

The sample size of 44 academics is premised on the framework for determining sample sizes for ethnography by Morse (1994) and Creswell and Creswell (2017). The researchers approve 30-60 participants for ethnographic research. The study's total population is considered suitable due to

an ethnographic study's in-depth nature, which requires intensive observation and more extended interview periods (Asher and Miller 2011; Reeves et al. 2013).

Ultimately, the recruitment procedure of participants was driven by the University Deans and Heads of Departments (HODs) with whom the researcher held meetings, for the academics to buy into the project. Finally, the researcher met over several months with academics during faculty boards, departmental meetings/conferences, seminars, university-wide training sessions for academics facilitated by ASLs, university-wide meetings with academics, congregation, academic staff union meetings, and other events which maximised participation.

Hence, the research employed observation and semi-structured interviews on generating data from academics. The confluence of proof increases the credibility of the findings. Afterward, the researcher was immersed in participatory observation of the academics' use of the e-library databases in UniJos and FUAM for one year-July 2018 to June 2019. Specifically, the researcher spent 90 days in UniJos, and 80 days in FUAM. The researcher took field notes of academics' daily activities. Such 'immersion allowed the researcher to personally experience the academic staff's research activities (Emerson, Fretz and Shawet al. 1995: 2). For example, the researcher observed academics' user experiences during the regular library online database training and their interaction with ASLs. Jensen et al. (2019) pointed out, long-term researcher immersion in organisational settings, and cultures using various qualitative methods to gather rich and detailed explanation of organisational communication.

The study used a constant comparative method to analyse findings. The study presented findings from all the data collection tools simultaneously in the narrative and incorporated thematically with some tables. The researcher adhered to good research ethics protocols. The results of the study are presented next.

## **5 Results**

### **5.1 Results from observation**

The researchers observed academics' use of the e-library databases in U1 and U2 for one year. The researcher observed the interaction between the ASLs and academics, user experiences of academics at seminars, and orientations held in the libraries on online library databases.

The routine is similar in the two case studies. The researcher discovered that most activities involved an academic staff visiting the library to see the ASL. A brief description of the relationship showed the following: The staff requested to use the online databases. The ASL gave the staff the password if needed and then assisted him/her in using the e-library databases. Some academics came to the library, asking for information sources in their Subject areas to enhance their teaching. The ASLs were able to guide them on accessing e-library databases and other relevant resources to meet their information needs. The ASLs referred academic staff that came with technical issues to the Systems Unit of the libraries.

The researcher observed academics' user experiences during the U1 regular library seminars and orientations on online library databases. Case study 2 (U2) rarely organises seminars for sensitisation on e-library database use. Throughout the year-long stay in U2, the library never conducted any seminar on online library database use. The study discovered that most academic staff, especially the elderly in U1, do not have the ICT (search) skills, so it was difficult for them to use the computers. For example, in some of the seminars, the presenters, including the researcher, had to hold some elderly senior academics (Professors) to operate the computer. The researcher discovered that online library database use and technology are generally less common to older academics but appear to be more familiar amongst the younger ones.

## **5.2 Results from Interview**

Apart from observation, the researcher also interviewed academics to get their views on the phenomenon. The researcher requested participants to state their experiences in the use of the library online databases. The questions ranged from how e-library databases' use influence their academic activities, whether the search outputs were relevant to their queries, and if they were confident in their searching skills. The study sought other questions to understand the challenges academics experienced using the e-library databases. These were whether they received sufficient training from the library and how the library training has changed how they look for the e-library databases. The researcher interviewed the Systems Librarians on complaints, troubleshooting requests, and Help desk issues of participants.

Results revealed both positive and negative experiences of academic staff in the use of library online databases. The researcher extracted some significant responses and positive experiences and are presented below in Table 1:

**Table 1: Academics' positive experiences**

<b>Significant statements</b>
<p>“I am satisfied with the library online databases because I always got what I wanted; only that there is sometimes no full access. I access the e-databases easily because I have the searching skills.” (Participant 1, U1).</p>
<p>“I am excited using the e-resources because they are current and relevant. This experience encourages me to always use the resources for research.” (Participant 2, U1).</p>
<p>“I am interested in using the online library databases because when I had difficulties accessing the e-databases, the ASL assisted me. The interaction with the ASL aided me in using the e-resources.” (Participant 3, U1)</p>
<p>“My search results are relevant and useful to my query.” “I got much information on my query that I did not expect. That experience makes me to have interest in using the e-resources.” (Participant 1, U2).</p>
<p>“E-library databases are a fast means of getting information. It was a beautiful experience to get most of the resources I needed. I enjoy using them, as it makes my teaching and research easy.” (Participant 2, U2).</p>

The study presents some negative experiences in table 5.10 below:

**Table 2: Academics' negative experiences**

<b>Significant statements</b>
<p>“I got stuck when using the online library databases and the ASL was not able to assist, so I was frustrated.” As a result, I lost interest in using the e-library databases.” (Participant 1, U1).</p>
<p>“The first time I attempted using the e-library databases, the information gotten was inadequate. That experience makes me discouraged, so I use them very rarely.” (Participant 2, U1)</p>
<p>“If you are not conversant with the e-library databases, you cannot use them. Since I am not ICT literate, the inadequate skill makes me not to use them.” (Participant 3, U1)</p>
<p>“It was not easy the first time I used the e-library databases; it was difficult to select the information that matches my needs from the ones that do not.” (Participant 1, U2)</p>
<p>“Poor internet connectivity affects e-resource usage. Anytime I try using the e-library</p>

databases and experience that challenge, I get discouraged.” Consequently, I use other sources of information for research.” (Participant 2, U2)

“The negative experience that I encountered was search results were not relevant to the inquiry, and internet connectivity was very slow. Since I can get needed information from printed books and journals, why do I border using the online databases?” (Participant 3, U2)

The interview data collection method also explored if academics received enough training from the library and how the library training has changed the way they look for the e-library databases. Few academic staff, especially in U1, indicated a lack of search skills due to the library’s inadequate training. The responses in Table 3 below confirm this finding:

**Table 3: Academics’ responses on online library database training**

<b>Significant statements</b>
“Training is insufficient. The library should frequently organise training to inform us on new changes and accommodate new staff.” (Participant 1, U1)
“Training is not sufficient. I have not received any training at Naraguta Campus since 2015.” (Participant 2, U1)
“I have not received enough training from the library. That affects my use of e-library databases. I still lack the search skills so find it difficult to use the e-resources.” (Participant 3, U1)
“I have received sufficient training on online database use, and the training has made me understand how to use the e-databases better.” (Participant 1, U2)
“The training I received from the library is not sufficient. Library training has not influenced the way I access the e-databases.” (Participant 2, U2)
“I have the searching skills but did not acquire from library training. I learned how to use e-resources personally.” (Participant 3, U2)

Findings from table 3 above indicated that most academics did not receive sufficient training from the library. Most of them with search skills capable of using the e-library databases indicated they did not acquire through library training. All academics in U1 indicated inadequate training on e-library database use from the library, which affects their use of the e-resources. On

the other hand, few academics from U2 indicated it was due to the library training that they use e-databases.

The researcher also sought Systems Librarians' opinions about complaints, Help Desk issues, and troubleshooting requests presented by academics. Most complaints brought to the Help desk on e-library databases include limited access due to poor network/ internet connection or dysfunctional passwords. Her response:

“Help desk issues include academics visiting the library with their systems looking for assistance on how to access the e-library databases. The ASLs were able to connect them.”

Troubleshooting requests by academics were not frequent. The Systems Librarian explained:

“Sometimes, academics come with troubleshooting requests, and we solve the problems. Mostly, academics come with complaints about their systems and the inability to connect to the internet. Since they are technical issues, the System Librarians rectify the problems. There are times that the academic staff meet the ASLs and they solved the problems. If they cannot, they usually refer them to the library's Systems Unit.”

## **6 Discussion of findings**

Findings on academics' e-library user experiences (UX) demonstrated that academic staff had both positive and negative experiences. The approval and use of technology (e-library databases) are affected by technology experience (Hornberk & Hertzum, 2017; Sagnier et al., 2020). In an investigation of the UX in successful and unsuccessful technology acceptance, Partala and Sarri (2015) observed that UX can be affected by value, output quality, satisfaction, and negative emotions in unsuccessful adoptions.

The study's data showed few academics had satisfying experiences using e-library databases. The negative experiences surpassed the positive (see Table 2). Findings revealed that most academics were not satisfied with the e-library databases due to several limitations: irrelevant search results, inadequate assistance from the ASLs, inadequate search skills, and low internet connectivity. This finding is similar to the results of previous studies. Chima-James, Opara and Ogaraku (2018) reported academics' partial satisfaction with the e-library databases. Likewise, Mwantimwa, Mwabungulu and Kassim (2021) found that academics in the University for Development Studies, Wa Campus Ghana, were not satisfied with the e-library databases due

to barriers such as internet connectivity, inadequate search skills, and lack of full access to information. Leonard, Hamutumwa, and Mnubi-Mchombu's (2020) research documented irregular training, bandwidth problems, and limited searching skills hindered academics' use of e-resources at the University of Namibia.

The present research's finding is similar to the prior studies' findings by giving suggestions for enhancing the use of the e-library databases. By contrast, the studies employed quantitative survey methodology, and previous studies reported their suggestions at length. Also, based on one of the researcher's experiences as an ASL, e-library databases are underutilised by academic staff at the University of Jos, Jos and similar institutions in North-Central Nigeria due to similar barriers.

Scanty research exists about these experiences' characteristics (Izuagbe, 2021). As earlier stated, concerning the preceding, the researcher needs to put such anecdotes and experiences of academics' e-library database use underlying patterns and relationships under the eye of scholarly analysis (Massaro et al., 2021). This study explores an alternative approach to understand e-library databases utilisation and proffers recommendations.

The study discovered that most activities involved an academic staff visiting the library to see the ASL with queries. The ASLs were able to meet their information needs. The researcher discovered that most academic staff, especially the elderly, lacked the search skills to independently navigate the computers and use e-library databases. The researcher found that online database use and technology are generally less common and comfortable to older academics but appear to be more familiar amongst the younger ones.

Machimbidza and Mutula (2020) investigated university academics' use of peer-reviewed electronic journals in Zimbabwe. The authors reported that younger academics possess higher skills in technology use than the older academics, and as a result, use e-journals for research far more than the latter. Neves and Mead (2020) concurred that older people's rate of technology adoption is still below younger age groups. The scholars added that new technology's design, learning environment, and peer groups shape its acceptance. Vaportzis, Clausen and Gow (2017) found lack of instructions and guidance, lack of knowledge and confidence, the complexity of

technology, feelings of inadequacy, and skepticism about technology in general as factors affecting older people's technology use.

Zha, Zhang, and Yan's (2014) findings contrast with previous findings. The scholars earlier reported that older Chinese university users preferred electronic resources for research to younger users due to ease of use and usefulness. Likewise, Nwone (2017) reported that older academics (professors) showed more electronic resource preference because it makes research fast and straightforward.

Alabi and Mutula (2020) noted the effect of age on the optimal success of ICT use in teaching. Machimbidza and Mutula (2020) observed that despite the younger academics' high ICT adoption rates and e-resources use, the older academics accessed more printed sources. This finding shows there are age differences in academics' technological skills that ASLs have to consider in providing library resources and services. Furthermore, ASLs have to increase training and retraining of academic staff on e-library database use. Although training may overcome resistance to e-library database use, some users may not have the time to learn about the system or believe it will be helpful in their teaching and other academic activities.

Findings in the current research found a low network as the main factor that hinders academics' e-library database use. However, from the researchers' experiences, a lack of interest in the use of online library databases by academics is the main reason for low use. This is because although low internet connectivity hinders e-library database use, academic staff still do not use the resources when the network is good. While many academics' use skills are inadequate regarding searching skills, they do not attend the library's training.

Academics' responses in table 3 above indicated that most academics did not receive sufficient library training. Most of them with search skills capable of using the e-library databases indicated they did not acquire them through library training. All academics in U1 indicated inadequate (irregular) training from the library, which affected their use of the e-resources. On the other hand, few academics from U2 indicated it was due to the library training that they use e-library databases.

The result of the insufficient training on e-library database use from U2 is alarming. Generally, the implication of this finding indicates the need for more training. Faculty training influences academics to maximise the online library databases for teaching and research. Trained academic staff are more likely to use the technology than those who are not (Hornberk and Hertzum 2017). Abdel-Gaber and Ali (2020) noted that training promotes confidence in technology usage. Al-dheleai et al. (2019) concurred that lecturers with ICT skills have a positive attitude towards using ICT in teaching.

The study's findings also revealed negative online library database usage experiences as obstacles to academics' e-library database usage. The study provided academics' responses on negative experiences that discouraged them from using the e-databases in Table 2 above. These responses are in agreement with the belief of SIE theory's construct, Roles and Definition of Situations. The construct implies that acts do not occur in an abstract, but they are situated along with expectations and interpretations (Hewitt, 2002). That means that despite e-library database benefits in research, academics decide to use them based on simplicity. The SIE construct also explains the point in academics' interpretive process when interaction was misinterpreted and why. It shows whether academics' refusal to use the e-library databases was due to previous negative experiences or inadequate ASLs' skills. Regarding academics' preference for particular information sources due to past experiences, Margolis and Liebowitz (1995) observed, history matters since the present and future are connected to the past. SI views interaction as part of understanding the present and formulating the future.

As earlier mentioned, user experiences (UX) of technologies are fundamental to user studies, design, sustainability, efficiency, and the evolution of best practices. Academics' UX of online library databases is vital for university libraries to review and update their policies and practices associated with utilising e-library databases. The university library should establish the best interventions that tackle inappropriate e-library database use. For example, instead of going through the university website, the library can bring all the resources together (in one search box) to access from the same point. The libraries should include real-time use to ask questions, such as 'Ask your Librarian.'

## Conclusion

The study investigated the nature and characteristics of academics' experiences in e-library database utilisation. Findings revealed that most academics are dissatisfied with the e-library databases due to several limitations such as irrelevant search results, inadequate assistance from the ASLs, inadequate search skills, and low internet connectivity. The study discovered that although technical difficulties are well-reported hindrances, academic staff still do not use the resources when the technical infrastructure is solid such as when the network is good. The study further established that most academic staff, especially the elderly ones, lacked the experience to navigate the computers and use the e-library databases independently. The exploration concluded that academics' unsatisfying experiences in using e-library databases affected their use of the e-resources. Therefore, ASLs have to consider online library database design strategies to shore up the use rates. Future studies should include other academics from other disciplinary backgrounds and from universities other than those used in this study.

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