DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS, LIBRARY SERVICE QUALITY AND USE OF ELECTRONIC INFORMATION RESOURCES BY LAW STUDENTS IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study examined demographic factors, library service quality and use of Electronic Information Resources (EIRs) by final-year law students in selected federal universities in South-West Nigeria. A survey research design was adopted, employing total enumeration of 552 final-year law students from the Federal University of Oye-Ekiti, the University of Ibadan, and the University of Lagos. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire comprising four sub-sections and using the Cronbach Alpha method: demographic characteristics ($\alpha = 0.83$), EIR use ($\alpha = 0.88$), and library service quality ($\alpha = 0.71$). Out of 552 copies administered, 92.2% response rate were retrieved and found usable. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics, including frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation. Findings revealed that respondents were largely young adults, particularly those aged 26–35 years (30.1%).. Regarding EIR utilisation, Nigeria Weekly Law Report (80.7%), Law Pavilion (63.3%), and the library website (60.7%) were the most used resources, whereas CD-ROM (18.9%) was the least used. Despite the high usage of select resources, the overall frequency of EIR use was low ($\bar{x} = 1.94$), falling below the criterion mean of 2.50. Similarly, perceived library service quality ($\bar{x} = 1.24$) was slightly below the benchmark average ($\bar{x} = 2.46$). The study concluded that although final-year law students in selected federal universities in South-West Nigeria, demonstrate awareness and selective use of key EIRs, the overall level of EIR utilisation and perceived library service quality remain below expected standards. Therefore, the study recommended strengthening awareness and training on EIRs, and high-quality library services should be prioritised.

Keywords*: Library service quality, Electronic information resources (EIRs), User-centred library services, Legal electronic databases utilization, Library service quality.*

Introduction

Library, as a service institution, is tasked with the goal of adding value to its users their services. Prior to the development of Information and Communications Technology (ICT), libraries solely kept and preserved physical collections such as books (Norch and Adzakpa 2022). However, the advancements and improvements of ICT have upgraded university libraries from housing physical collections to digital collections such as electronic information resources, which can be accessed electronically and remotely (Mashaba and Pretorius, 2023).

Abdullah (2022) defined Electronic Information Resources (EIRs) as online library resources that libraries provide through the use of the Internet. They are the electronic versions of print formats, which form a key part of library collections in the digital era (Osinulu, 2020). According to Odili et al. (2020), EIRs are online resources such as online public access catalogues (OPACs), e-journals, e-magazines, e-theses, e-dissertations and e-lecture notes, among others. Due to the capacity of EIRs to deliver current and accurate information, these resources are gradually displacing print resources (Otobo and Sahabi, 2021). EIRs are an integral part of library collections, as they are essential information requirements for learning, teaching and research activities in the digital era. Due to the usefulness and advantages of Electronic Information Resources (EIR), most Nigerian libraries have incorporated them into their collections and made provisions for up-to-date EIRs to ensure easy access to and retrieval of information by students. Amusa and Atinmo (2016) reiterated that law is a profession that thrives on books and derives its sustenance from the power of the written word. Law operates in an information-intensive environment which requires the use of relevant, timely, and current legal information resources in both electronic and print formats. Undergraduates at all levels and in all disciplines, including law, which is the focus of this study, patronise and make use of EIRs (Oladokun and Adeoye, 2022). The use of EIRs is dependent on institutional factors such as infrastructure availability, funding constraints, institutional policies, library services quality, and human factors such as awareness, attitude, perception, digital competencies, technological skills and demographic factors (Adekunjo et al., 2020; Soni et al., 2020; Oyadeyi et al., 2021). These studies (Oladokun and Adeoye, 2022 and Adeoye, and Aderibigbe, 2017) stated that a large number of undergraduates are not making optimal use of available EIRs as most of them prefer to seek information elsewhere. Thus, it is against this backdrop that this study sought to investigate how demographic factors and library service quality and electronic information resources are used by final-year law students.

Osedumme and Okuonghae (2019) averred that demographic factors such as age, gender, marital status, level of income, and residence have in one way or the other influenced how undergraduates use EIRs. In this study, gender, age, and marital status were employed to serve as indices of demographic factors. Ani (2013) succinctly noted that gender differences towards computer/ electronic resources affect an individual's interest, attitude towards computers, and by extension, EIRs use. From the foregoing, it is evident that gender could be a determinant factor in the use of EIRs. Another indicator that was used to measure demographic factors is age. Daniel and Agba (2021) noted that age has its implication on the use of EIRs, as young users tend to patronise the use of EIRs in the library than older patrons.

Apart from demographic factors, library service quality has also been found as a determinant of EIRs use by undergraduates. Library service quality (LSQ) refers to the overall effectiveness and efficiency of a library in meeting the needs and expectations of its users (Chaudhry et al., 2021). In the context of libraries, service quality has been evaluated in a variety of ways, which can be broadly categorised into four areas. These areas are resources (online and physical collections, databases and e-book packages that are frequently used, finding resources and awareness of different types of resources), facilities (space utilisation and activities completed in the library), library services (customer service, research assistance, and access to resources), and staff training and marketing (website usage, satisfaction with and importance of website content) and library information (Becker et al., 2017).

Furthermore, the constant demand for feedback led to the development of a variety of tools that can assist libraries in determining service quality. Parasurama's service quality test using the SERVQual Scale gave birth to the library service quality model (known as LibQUAL+). LibQUAL+ as a survey is intended to help librarians understand user perceptions and thus improve service quality and better meet users' information needs (Khaola and Mabilikoane, 2015). Akinyemi and Mary (2025) have carried out a study on the construct of library service quality, but this study adopted the line of Kumar and Mahajan (2019). They suggested that library service quality (LibQual) consists of three dimensions, namely "affect of service", "information control" and "library as a place" with varying relevance for each one. These three dimensions of LibQual were used as indicators to measure LSQ in this study.

Affect of service' refers to the emotions or feelings invoked in library users as they seek to make use of the electronic information resources system in the library. Service-providing institutions such as a library have their clientele or customers to whom services are rendered, and the main goal of these institutions is to deliver quality services that satisfy the needs of their customers (Gyau et al., 2021).

Information control is an assessment of the adequacy of the collections and the ability to access needed information on a timely basis regardless of the location of the user or medium of communication (Jayasundara et al., 2009). As mentioned by Suthiprapa and Tuamsuk (2022), information control is about the users' perception of the accessibility, reliability, and understanding of library information resources in particular.

Library as a place is another measurement of library service quality that can affect the use of electronic information resources. It is the physical resources provided by the library, for example, seating and reading space. The resources must be provided in an environment that is attractive, conducive and user-friendly, meeting the law undergraduates' study, research and collaboration needs. Library services (printing, photocopying and internet access), inadequate and out-dated book collections and a quiet library environment were identified as problematic areas by Naidu (2009).

Despite the importance of the library to law undergraduates, research by Okeji and Agbanu (2020) revealed that students underutilise EIRs. This was due to reasons such as outdated law materials, inadequate accommodation, and a preference for studying at home, among others. It can, therefore, be assumed that the use of EIRs is determined by many factors. This study focused its investigations on the aspects of demographic factors and library service quality.

It is on this premise that this study investigated the influence of demographic characteristics and library service quality on the use of electronic information resources by final-year law students in federal universities in South-West, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions were answered in the study:

1. What is the demography of final-year law students in federal universities in South-West, Nigeria?
2. What are the types of electronic information resources used by final-year law students in federal universities in South-West, Nigeria?
3. What is the frequency of use of electronic information resources by final-year law students in Federal universities in South-West, Nigeria?
4. What is the quality of library services provided to final-year law students in federal universities in South-West, Nigeria?

Review of related Literature

A number of studies have attempted to discuss the importance of demographic factors in the use of electronic information resources. Prominent among which includes those of Ovwasa (2023) who investigated the influence of social demographic factors on the use of electronic information resources (EIR) among Nigerian university students. A survey design, rooted in a positivist paradigm, was employed, involving 2700 undergraduates from five purposively selected universities that possessed the necessary facilities, infrastructure, and manpower to support EIR usage. Data were collected using a questionnaire. Results indicated that male students used the EIR more than female students. Similarly, the discovery found that young adult students used the library. Results also showed that EIR significantly aided students in accessing academic materials, with academic information being the primary motivation for its use. It was discovered that the primary motive for utilising the materials is for academic purposes. It is explicitly stated that the students used the EIR frequently and that the biggest problem to using the EIR was a lack of power supply. The study recommends that university libraries enhance awareness of the benefits of EIR and integrate EIR into the university curriculum. Additionally, library management should establish alternative power solutions to mitigate power outages.

Makinde et al. (2022) examined the use of electronic information resources by undergraduates at Adeleke University focusing on the role of demographic variables on electronic information resources adoption. The study utilised a field survey methodology and researched 352 undergraduates from six different academic departments. The results showed that undergraduates mostly used ERS for academic objectives, although they did so to variable degrees across ten different categories. They found that there was no statistically significant relationship between the gender of the student or their status as a finalist or non-finalist and the frequency with which they used ERS to access academic information according to findings of the non-parametric tests.

However, there was a statistically significant variation in the frequency levels of academic information use of electronic information resources by age group and faculty member. This means that age and status in the institution are the potent demographic factors in this case.

Bamidele and Adekanmbi (2019) investigated the influence of gender differences on usage patterns of electronic information sources among undergraduates in Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population was made up of randomly selected undergraduates of Ekiti State University (EKSU) and University of Ibadan (UI). Data were generated through the use of a questionnaire designed to elicit responses from respondents and analysed using descriptive statistics method of frequency counts and percentages. Findings revealed that there was no basis for gender differentiation in the use of electronic information sources, as a gender gap in electronic resources usage appeared negligible. However, it was recommended that university libraries in Nigeria should continue to give equal opportunities to both sexes in terms of training and orientation on the use of e-resources, among other recommendations.

A study by Olatoye et al. (2019) focused on demographic factors as determinants of utilisation of e-information resources among undergraduates at the University of Fort Hare and Rhodes University. The study utilised the Likert scale, which allowed respondents to select a choice that best demonstrates their level of agreement with a given statement. The results revealed that more males, who were within the age bracket of 21 to 30 years old, accessed and utilised electronic resources through the residences than their female counterparts. Additionally, a hi-square test of independence was also performed to survey the level of correlation between age and access to e-resources. The result further revealed that age had no influence on access of respondents to electronic resources through cybercafés.

Diyaolu and Diyaolu (2018) explored the influence of demographic characteristics on utilisation of EIRs by postgraduate students in three selected universities in South-West Nigeria. The findings revealed that a significant ($P< 0.05$) association existed among highest qualification ($\chi 2 =40.3$), Age ($\chi 2 =20.4$) and utilisation of EIRs by the postgraduate students. It was concluded that age and highest qualification were found to be major determinants of the use of EIRs by the postgraduate students in the selected universities. 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 students.

Okeji and Agbanu (2020) investigated the utilisation of law library resources by undergraduate law students in three universities in South-east Nigeria. A descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. The result of the study showed that the attitude of the law students in utilisation of law library resources was not encouraging due to certain challenges such as outdated law materials, lack of adequate accommodation and lack of internet access. The study affirmed that attitude had a positive and negative relationship with the utilisation of law library resources. Recommendations were made advising law librarians to organise seminars for law students on the usefulness of law libraries to them. Additionally, the university management should equip the law library with adequate and current law materials.

Simba (2020) explored the quality of library services at the University of Iringa, Tanzania, Library from the users' perspective.

The users' expectations and perceptions of service quality were investigated to determine the extent to which the library met users' expectations. The adapted LibQUAL+TM questionnaire was self-administered to respondents. The insights gained from the study indicated that there was a gap between users' expectations and perceptions of service quality. The magnitude of the gap varied depending on individual services. The finding showed that female respondents, postgraduate respondents, and Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences respondents had the highest percentage of weekly usage of the library and its resources.

Despite the growing body of literature on the utilisation of electronic information resources (EIRs), important research gaps remain. Existing studies have produced inconsistent findings regarding the influence of demographic variables such as gender, age, academic status, and faculty affiliation on EIR usage. While some studies reported significant relationships between demographic factors and EIR utilisation, others found negligible or no influence, indicating a lack of consensus in the literature. Furthermore, most studies focused primarily on undergraduate students, with limited attention given to postgraduate students or comparative institutional contexts. There is also inadequate emphasis on how demographic factors interact with other variables such as digital literacy, attitude, infrastructure, and service quality in influencing EIR usage. Additionally, many studies were conducted in selected universities outside the specific institutional and geographical context of the present study. Therefore, there is a need for further empirical investigation to provide clearer and context-specific understanding of demographic influences on EIR utilisation.

Methodology

This study adopted the survey research design using a quantitative approach. This design was appropriate because the study was about specific groups, while also describing the characteristics of individuals, situations and the state of affairs as they were. The design enabled the researcher to examine the influence between measures of different variables obtained at the same time. The design is equally relevant because of its ability to give a better understanding of the extent of influence of independent variables on the dependent variable of the study regarding final-year law students in federal universities in South-West Nigeria. The population of the study comprised final year law students in the selected federal universities in South-West, Nigeria. The research instrument was a questionnaire. Table 1 reveals the total enumeration technique was adopted to cover all the 552 final-year law students in the federal universities in South-West, Nigeria. The use of total enumeration technique is in line with the position of Ilo et al. (2020) who opined that this method is used when a study's respondents are not too numerous. Therefore, the entire population of final-year law students was used in the study. The instrument used for collecting data for this study was a questionnaire tagged "Demographic Factors, Library Service Quality and Use of Electronic Information Resources (DFLSQUEIR)" with sub-scales to measure the study constructs. Items included in the questionnaire were adapted from the works of Adeoye and Olarewaju (2019) and Kumar and Mahajan (2022). The choice of a questionnaire as the research instrument for this study was prompted by the fact that it could reach a large number of respondents and elicit data easily and economically.

Table 1: Population of Law Undergraduates in the Selected Federal universities

S/N	Name of Public Universities	500L
1	Federal University of Oye-Ekiti, Oye-Ekiti	52
2	University of Ibadan, Ibadan	150
3	University of Lagos, Akoka	350
	Total	**552**

Source: Faculties of Law in the studied Universities, 2025

Table 2: Questionnaire Administration and Response Rate

Names of Universities	No of Copies Administered	No of Copies Returned	%
Federal University of Oye-Ekiti, Oye-Ekiti	52	47	90.4
University of Ibadan, Ibadan	150	143	95.3
University of Lagos, Akoka	350	319	91.1
Total	**552**	**509**	**92.2**

Source: **Field Survey, 2025**

Table 2 reveal the response rate and usable copies of the questionnaires for the study.

Table 3: Response Rate

Variables	Category	Frequency	Percent (%)
Name of institution	FUOYE	47	9.2
	UI	143	28.1
	UNILAG	319	62.7
Total		**509**	**100**

Source: **Field Survey, 2025**

Table 3 reveal that the response rate: predominantly from UNILAG (62.7%), followed by UI (28.1%) and FUOYE (9.2%).

Table 4: Demography of Final Year Law Students in Federal Universities in South-West, Nigeria

Demographic factors	Category	Frequency	%
Age	16 – 25	131	25.7
	26 – 35	153	30.1
	36 – 45	129	25.3
	46 and above	96	18.9
Gender	Male	231	45.4
	Female	278	54.6
Marital Status	Single	348	68.4
	Married	161	31.6
Total		509	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 4 reveals the largest proportion of respondents' falls within the 26–35 years' age group (30.1%), followed by 16–25 years (25.7%) and 36–45 years (25.3%), while 18.9% are 46 years and above. This indicates that the sample is largely composed of young and early middle-aged adults. There is a slight female majority, with 54.6% female respondents compared to 45.4% male, suggesting a fairly balanced gender representation with moderate female dominance. The majority of respondents are single (68.4%), while 31.6% are married, indicating that most participants are unmarried. The respondents are predominantly young adults (especially 26–35 years), slightly more female than male, and largely single. This demographic profile suggests a youthful and relatively unmarried study population.

Research Question Two: What are the types of electronic information resources used by final-year law students in federal universities in South-west, Nigeria?

To determine the types of electronic information resources used by final-year law students in federal universities in South-west, Nigeria, the results are presented in Table 4.3.

Table 5: Types of Electronic Information Resources being used by Final-year Law Students in Federal universities in South-west, Nigeria

Types of EIRs	Used (U)		Not Used (NU)	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
JSTOR	181	35.6	328	64.4
LexisNexis	230	45.2	279	54.8
West law	188	36.9	321	63.1
HEINONLINE	241	47.3	268	52.7
Law pavilion	322	63.3	187	36.7
PROQUEST	253	49.7	256	50.3
E-journal	182	35.8	327	64.2
OPAC	191	37.5	318	62.5
E-manuscript	131	25.7	378	74.3
Library website	309	60.7	200	39.3
E-books	243	47.7	266	52.3
Nigeria weekly law report	411	80.7	98	19.3
Institutional repository	165	32.4	344	67.6
Law trove	233	45.8	276	54.2
CD-ROM	96	18.9	413	81.1

Source: **Field Survey, 2025**

Table 5 shows that final-year law students in federal universities in South-West Nigeria exhibit distinct preferences in their use of electronic information resources (EIRs). The most frequently used resource is the Nigeria Weekly Law Report, with 80.7% of students reporting its use. This indicates that students prioritise up-to-date case reports, statutes, and summaries that are directly relevant to their coursework and legal research. Following closely is Law Pavilion, used by 63.3% of students, reflecting its importance as a specialised database for Nigerian legal materials and case law. The library website also features prominently, with 60.7% of students accessing it, suggesting that students rely on institutional portals for curated resources, guidance, and links to subscribed databases. In contrast, the least utilised resource is the CD-ROM, with only 18.9% of students reporting its use. This low usage likely stems from its outdated format and limited accessibility compared to online databases that offer real-time updates and remote access. Therefore, the pattern demonstrates that students favour current, easily accessible, and locally relevant digital resources, while older or less convenient formats such as CD-ROMs have largely fallen out of use. This reflects a broader shift among law students towards online, digital-first research practices.

Research Question three: What is the frequency of use of electronic information resources by final-year law students in federal universities in South-West, Nigeria?

Table 6 presents the frequency of use of electronic information resources (EIRs) by final-year law students in federal universities in South-west Nigeria, shows a clear preference for certain digital resources, as reflected in both the mean scores and usage patterns. The Nigeria Weekly Law Report emerges as the most frequently used EIR, with the highest mean score of 2.99 and 41.7% of students reporting frequent use (F). This reinforces its role as a vital resource for current case law, statutes, and legal updates.

Law Pavilion (mean = 2.51) and the Library Website (mean = 2.38) follow, indicating that students also value specialised legal databases and institutional portals for curated resources. Other moderately used resources include HEINONLINE (mean = 2.04) and LexisNexis (mean = 2.01), reflecting their importance for comprehensive legal research, though they are accessed slightly less frequently. At the lower end of the usage spectrum are CD-ROMs (mean = 1.31), E-manuscripts (mean = 1.49), and Institutional Repositories (mean = 1.66). The minimal engagement with CD-ROMs, in particular, underscores the declining relevance of older, less accessible formats in favour of online, real-time resources. Therefore, the weighted mean of 1.94 indicates that, while some students occasionally use certain EIRs, there is a strong reliance on a few key resources, particularly those that are current, accessible, and contextually relevant to Nigerian legal practice. The standard deviations suggest some variability in usage, with the most frequently used resources showing relatively low variability (e.g., Nigeria Weekly Law Report, STD = 0.68), whereas older or less convenient formats like CD-ROMs exhibit higher variability (STD = 2.14), reflecting inconsistent or minimal use across the student population. So, the data highlight a clear preference for online, practical, and locally relevant EIRs, while outdated or less user-friendly formats are largely neglected.

Table 6: Frequency of Electronic Information Resources Used by Final-year Law Students in Federal Universities in South-West, Nigeria

Frequency of Use of EIRs	Frequently		Often		Rarely (2)		Never		Mean	STD
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%		
JSTOR	100	19.6	52	10.2	29	5.7	328	64.4	1.85	1.99
LexisNexis	87	17.1	111	21.8	32	6.3	279	54.8	2.01	1.62
West law	63	12.4	71	13.9	47	9.2	328	64.4	1.74	2.01
HEINONLINE	81	15.9	126	24.8	34	6.7	268	52.7	2.04	1.15
Law pavilion	162	31.8	123	24.2	37	7.3	187	36.7	2.51	0.93
PROQUEST	58	11.4	95	18.7	100	19.6	256	50.3	1.91	1.33
E-journal	72	14.1	61	12.0	49	9.6	327	64.2	1.76	1.37
OPAC	33	6.5	77	15.1	81	15.9	318	62.5	1.66	2.01
E-manuscript	36	7.1	45	8.8	50	9.8	378	74.3	1.49	1.87
Library website	131	25.7	131	25.7	47	9.2	200	39.3	2.38	1.15
E-books	42	8.3	103	20.2	98	19.3	266	52.3	1.84	1.93
Nigeria weekly law report	212	41.7	178	35.0	21	4.1	98	19.3	2.99	0.68
Institutional repository	56	11.0	59	11.6	50	9.8	344	67.6	1.66	1.53
Law trove	63	12.4	99	19.4	71	13.9	276	54.2	1.90	1.81
CD-ROM	16	3.1	29	5.7	51	10.0	413	81.1	1.31	2.14
		Weighted Mean							**1.94**	**1.57**

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Research Question Four (A): What is the quality of library services (Information Control) provided to final-year law students in federal universities in South-West, Nigeria?

The results of the quality of library services provided to final-year law students in federal universities in South-west, Nigeria are presented in Tables 7, 8 and 9.

Table 7 on quality of library service (information control) reveals the analysis of the quality of library services, as perceived by final-year law students, with a weighted mean of 2.36. Students report that printed and digital resources are generally available (mean = 2.52), but access to electronic resources and ease of independent use show some limitations (means = 2.32–2.33). Remote accessibility and user-friendly tools are also moderate (means 2.25–2.31), with mixed satisfaction across students. Overall, while the library provides essential resources, improvements in accessibility, usability, and electronic collections are needed to better support student research.

Table 7: Quality of Library Service provided to Final-year Law Students in Federal

Quality of library service Variables	**SA**		**A**		**D**		**SD**		$\bar{x}$	**δ**
Information Control	**Freq.**	**%**	**Freq.**	**%**	**Freq.**	**%**	**Freq.**	**%**		
The electronic information resources of the library are accessible from my hostel or lecture room.	82	16.1	153	30.1	110	21.6	164	32.2	2.30	1.29
My library's website enables me to locate information on my own.	102	20.0	141	27.7	131	25.7	135	26.5	2.41	1.19
The library possesses the printed library material and digital resources I need for my work.	116	22.8	159	31.2	110	21.6	124	24.4	2.52	1.23
The library possesses the electronic information resources I need for my work.	99	19.4	103	20.2	171	33.6	136	26.7	2.32	1.15
The library has modern equipment that let me have easy access to the needed information.	76	14.9	129	25.3	151	29.7	153	30.1	2.25	1.18
The library has easy-to-use access tools that allow me to find information on my own.	91	17.9	132	25.9	129	25.3	157	30.8	2.31	1.25
The library makes the information easily accessible for independent use.	111	21.8	147	28.9	32	6.3	279	54.8	2.41	1.27
The library has electronic journal collections, I require for my work.	83	16.3	141	27.7	147	28.9	138	27.1	2.33	1.36
Weighted mean									**2.36**	**1.24**

University in South-west, Nigeria

Research Question Four (B): What is the quality of library services (Affect of Service) provided to final-year law students in federal universities in South-west, Nigeria?

The quality of library service in terms of personnel effectiveness is rated moderately high, with a weighted mean of 2.58. Students generally perceive library staff as knowledgeable, dependable, and willing to help, with mean scores ranging from 2.32 to 2.72. Areas of strength include staff willingness to assist (mean = 2.72) and understanding user needs (mean = 2.67), while individual attention to users (mean = 2.32) is somewhat lower. Overall, library personnel positively influence user experience, though some variability exists in the level of attention and responsiveness, presented in Table 8.

Table 8: Quality of library services (Affect of Service) provided to final-year law students in federal universities in South-west, Nigeria

Quality of library service Variables	**SA**		**A**		**D**		**SD**		$\bar{x}$	**δ**
Affect of Service	**Freq.**	**%**	**Freq.**	**%**	**Freq.**	**%**	**Freq.**	**%**		
The library personnel instil confidence in users.	121	23.8	152	29.9	129	25.3	107	21.0	2.56	1.29
The library personnel give individual attention.	97	19.1	121	23.8	137	26.9	154	30.3	2.32	1.27
Library personnel are consistently courteous to all patrons.	123	24.2	151	29.7	117	23.0	118	23.2	2.55	1.23
Library personnel are always ready to respond to users' questions.	131	25.7	136	26.7	134	26.3	108	21.2	2.57	1.18
The library personnel possess the knowledge to answer users' questions.	122	24.0	163	32.0	137	26.9	87	17.1	2.63	1.09
Library personnel deal with the users in a caring manner.	120	23.6	155	30.5	138	27.1	96	18.9	2.59	1.17
Library personnel understand the needs of their users.	127	25.0	161	31.6	149	29.3	72	14.1	2.67	1.28
Library personnel show willingness to help users.	133	26.1	177	34.8	121	23.8	78	15.3	2.72	1.22
Library personnel show dependability in handling users' service problems.	125	24.6	145	28.5	159	31.2	80	15.7	2.62	1.18
Weighted mean									**2.58**	**1.21**

Research Question Four (C): What is the quality of library services (Library as a Place) provided to final-year law students in federal universities in South-west, Nigeria?

The quality of the library as a place is rated moderately high, with a weighted mean of 2.70. Students generally view the library as conducive to study, with good ventilation (mean = 2.73), inspiring space (mean = 2.69), and adequate lighting (mean = 2.65). Operational hours are also considered sufficient for learning and group study (mean = 2.61). Overall, the library provides a supportive physical environment, contributing positively to students' academic experience, with the overall weighted mean across all service dimensions at 2.55, indicating moderate satisfaction with library services, presented in Table 9.

Table 9: Quality of library services (Library as a Place) provided to final-year law students in federal universities in South-west, Nigeria

Quality of library service Variables	**SA**		**A**		**D**		**SD**		$\bar{x}$	**δ**
Library as a Place	**Freq.**	**%**	**Freq.**	**%**	**Freq.**	**%**	**Freq.**	**%**		
The library space inspires study and learning.	142	27.9	163	32.0	107	21.0	97	19.1	2.69	1.29
The library has proper ventilation.	146	28.7	170	33.4	105	20.6	88	17.3	2.73	1.65
The library is very conducive.	167	32.8	149	29.3	121	23.8	72	14.1	2.81	1.68
The library's lighting is good.	111	21.8	188	36.9	133	26.1	77	15.1	2.65	1.63
The library operational hour is adequate for learning and group study.	136	26.7	157	30.8	98	19.3	118	23.2	2.61	1.62
Weighted mean									**2.70**	**1.57**
Overall weighted mean									**2.55**	**1.34**

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Discussion of Findings

The findings of the study revealed that final-year law students in federal universities in South-west Nigeria exhibit considerable demographic diversity, reflecting evolving patterns in higher education participation. The dominance of respondents within the 26–35 age bracket, alongside significant representation from younger and older age groups, suggests that legal education increasingly attracts both traditional and non-traditional learners. This finding corroborates Diyaolu and Diyaolu (2018), who identified age as a significant determinant in the utilisation of electronic information resources among postgraduate students in South-west Nigeria. Similarly, Makinde et al. (2022) reported that age significantly influenced the use of electronic information resources among undergraduates. The implication is that demographic characteristics, particularly age, continue to shape students' academic engagement and information-seeking behaviour. The findings also align with broader educational trends emphasising lifelong learning and career mobility among adult learners within Nigerian tertiary institutions and beyond.

The gender distribution in this study, which shows a slight female majority, reflects the growing participation of women in legal education and other professional disciplines in Nigeria. This finding supports Simba (2020), who reported higher weekly usage of library resources among female respondents, suggesting increasing academic engagement and active participation of women in higher education. However, the finding contrasts with Ovwasa (2023) and Olatoye et al. (2019), who found that male students utilised electronic information resources more frequently than their female counterparts. Similarly, Bamidele and Adekanmbi (2019) observed that gender differences in the utilisation of electronic information sources were negligible, indicating an increasingly balanced academic environment. The marital status distribution further suggests that academic participation is no longer limited to unmarried students, as a considerable proportion of married students successfully engage in rigorous academic programmes. This demonstrates increasing inclusiveness, flexibility, and socio-demographic diversity within Nigerian higher education institutions.

The findings reveal a clear preference pattern in the use of electronic information resources (EIRs) among final-year law students in federal universities in South-west Nigeria. Students predominantly rely on Nigerian Weekly Law Reports and LawPavilion, indicating a strong preference for authoritative, current, and jurisdiction-specific legal databases essential for case analysis and legal research. This aligns with literature emphasising academic motivation as primary driver of EIR use (Ovwasa, 2023; Makinde et al., 2022). The notable use of institutional library websites further underscores the relevance of curated academic gateways in facilitating access to subscribed resources. Conversely, the minimal use of CD-ROMs reflects the obsolescence of legacy formats and confirms a shift towards cloud-based digital environments. Consistent with broader studies, demographic and infrastructural factors continue to shape usage patterns, though findings remain mixed across contexts. Overall, the results indicate a digital-first, needs-driven orientation among law students, clearly evident.

The findings of the study indicated a patterned and needs-driven frequency of electronic information resource (EIR) usage among final-year law students in federal universities in South-west Nigeria. The Nigerian Weekly Law Reports recorded the highest mean score (2.99), confirming its routine consultation and centrality to Nigerian legal education, particularly in case law analysis, judicial precedents, and statutory interpretation. This reinforces its indispensability in undergraduate legal training and preparation for the Nigerian Law School. Similarly, Law Pavilion (mean = 2.51) ranked highly, reflecting strong preference for specialised, locally contextualised legal databases that directly support coursework, moot court exercises, and long essay writing. Moderate use of HeinOnline and LexisNexis indicates selective engagement with international databases, suggesting that students prioritise curriculum-aligned Nigerian resources while still recognising the value of global legal scholarship. These findings resonate with Ovwasa (2023) and Makinde et al. (2022), who reported that EIR usage is largely academically driven, with demographic and institutional factors shaping patterns of adoption. In contrast, low usage of CD-ROMs (1.31), e-manuscripts, and institutional repositories reflects declining relevance of static resources, consistent with Okeji and Agbanu (2020), who identified infrastructural and attitudinal barriers to effective resource use. The overall weighted mean (1.94) suggests partial utilisation of available EIRs, indicating a gap between resource availability and optimal engagement. This aligns with Simba (2020), who observed mismatches between user expectations and service delivery in academic libraries. Overall, the results highlight a digital but selective orientation, underscoring the need for strengthened digital literacy, improved infrastructure, and sustained library advocacy.

The findings reveal that library service quality for final-year law students in federal universities in South-west Nigeria is only moderately satisfactory, with important implications for academic support in legal education. Although students acknowledged the availability of print and electronic resources, the relatively lower perception of information control suggests that access is not effectively translating into usability. This implies that the central challenge is no longer resource availability but the efficiency of discovery systems, remote access, and the ease with which students can independently navigate legal databases. In practical terms, weak optimisation of digital platforms and inconsistent remote connectivity may be limiting students' ability to fully engage with legal information, thereby constraining the depth and quality of their research output. This aligns with Okeji and Agbanu (2020), who noted that infrastructural limitations and inadequate access systems significantly reduce effective utilisation of law library resources. The positive perception of library personnel indicates that librarians remain a vital support system in bridging gaps in user access and understanding. Their responsiveness and willingness to assist suggest that human intervention is currently compensating for technological and system-related shortcomings. However, the comparatively weaker experience of personalised attention points to increasing user demands that may be stretching staff capacity and reducing the effectiveness of tailored academic support. This is consistent with Simba (2020), who emphasised that service quality gaps often emerge when user expectations exceed available staffing capacity.

The strong rating of the physical library environment shows that traditional infrastructure is no longer the primary concern. Instead, the key implication is a shift in expectations towards hybrid service delivery, where physical comfort must be matched with seamless digital access. Overall, the findings suggest that improving service quality now depends more on strengthening digital infrastructure, enhancing user-centred systems, and expanding personalised research support than on physical expansion of library spaces (National Universities Commission, 2024).

Conclusion

The study examined demographic characteristics and the quality of library services in relation to the use of electronic information resources among final-year law students in federal universities in South-west Nigeria. The analysis was descriptive in nature and provides a structured account of usage patterns, perceived service quality, and resource engagement. Findings indicate variation in students' engagement with electronic information resources alongside differing perceptions of library service quality dimensions such as information control, personnel support, and the library as a physical space. These observations suggest that both user characteristics and service conditions may be relevant contextual factors shaping how students interact with electronic resources, although no inferential testing was conducted to confirm directional relationships or levels of influence. The study further shows that overall library service quality is moderately satisfactory, with clearer strengths in physical library environment and staff support, while digital access and information navigation present noticeable limitations. This point to the importance of improving system usability, remote access functionality, and user support mechanisms to enhance the overall research experience of law students. In whole, the study provides descriptive evidence that inform library administrators and policymakers on areas requiring improvement in service delivery and digital resource support. It also establishes a baseline for future research that may employ inferential statistics to examine relationships and test hypotheses on demographic factors, service quality, and electronic resource usage in higher education contexts.

Recommendations

The recommendations arising from this study are directed at improving the utilisation of electronic information resources among final-year law students in federal universities in South-west Nigeria. Federal university libraries should develop and implement demographic-responsive outreach programmes that deliberately address the needs of different categories of students through structured awareness campaigns, segmented communication strategies, and continuous sensitisation activities that emphasise the availability, relevance, and academic value of electronic information resources. In addition, university libraries should work in close collaboration with law faculties to integrate electronic information resources into teaching and learning by ensuring that lecturers include relevant databases in course outlines and reading lists, while librarians curate discipline-specific resources and provide practical demonstrations during lectures, seminars, and research supervision to promote consistent exposure and effective use.

Furthermore, libraries should institutionalise structured user education programmes aimed at strengthening students' digital literacy and independent research competence through regular workshops, hands-on training sessions, and compulsory orientation programmes that guide students on search strategies, database navigation, and critical evaluation of electronic information sources for legal research. Finally, university library management should prioritise continuous professional development for library staff through training in communication skills, user engagement, and personalised reference services, thereby enabling librarians to provide more responsive, student-centred support that meets the advanced research needs of final-year law students.

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