

APPLICATION OF WEB-BASED RESOURCES AND ACADEMIC STAFF JOB EFFECTIVENESS IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES

BY

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Abstract

In today's tertiary education landscape, academic staff juggle multiple roles, including teaching, research, mentoring, publishing, and administrative duties, often under intense pressure. This study explored how the use of web-based resources impacts the job effectiveness of academic staff in public universities in Cross River State, Nigeria. An ex post facto design was adopted, targeting 200 Assistant Lecturers purposively selected from the Faculty of Education at the University of Calabar (UNICAL) and the University of Cross River State (UNICROSS), with 100 from each institution. The census method was used to involve the entire group. Two validated and reliable instruments titled "Application of Web-Based Resources Questionnaire (AWBRQ) and Academic Staff Job Effectiveness Questionnaire (ASJEQ)" were used for data collection. Cronbach's Alpha coefficients ranged from .89 to .91, indicating strong reliability. Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was used to test the hypothesis at a .05 significance level. Findings revealed a significant positive relationship between the use of web-based resources and academic staff effectiveness. Tools such as Google Scholar, ResearchGate, Moodle, institutional repositories, virtual libraries, Zoom, and Microsoft Teams were found to enhance lecturers' performance in teaching, research, and collaboration. The study recommends that university management invest in digital infrastructure and provide continuous training to improve staff digital literacy.

Additionally, policies should support the integration of web-based tools into academic processes to improve overall staff performance and institutional academic quality.

Keyword: Web-Base Resources, Application, Academic Staff, Job Effectiveness, Public Universities.

Introduction

Academic staff in public universities are professionals engaged in teaching, research, and community service within government-funded tertiary institutions. These individuals include lecturers, professors, researchers, and other scholarly personnel whose primary role is to facilitate knowledge creation and dissemination. Public universities, on the other hand, are institutions of higher learning established, financed, and regulated by the government to provide affordable and accessible tertiary education to the populace. In the Nigerian educational structure, public universities represent the highest level of formal education, following basic and post-basic education levels, and play a critical role in national development through advanced teaching, innovation, and manpower training. It functions as a hub for intellectual growth, critical thinking, innovation, and societal progress (Olofinkua et al., 2025).

Public universities aim to develop knowledgeable, skilled individuals who can think critically, support sustainable communities, and contribute to economic growth for both individuals and society (Obona et al., 2020; 2024; Iyaji et al., 2024). Etor et al. (2019) highlight that graduates are expected to possess employable skills, especially in light of growing global unemployment (Ngene et al., 2025). Universities stand out for their responsibility in producing high-quality graduates and researchers (Ayomide et al., in Obona et al., 2023). To fulfill this role, competent

academic staff are essential, as they are regarded as the backbone of Nigeria's educational system (Obona & Etete, 2019). Their effectiveness directly affects student outcomes, research achievements, and the university's overall performance.

In this context, academic staff job effectiveness refers to how well university lecturers carry out their core duties of teaching, research, and community service (Olofinkua et al., 2025). It reflects their ability to produce meaningful results, engage with students, contribute scholarly work, and impact society. Scholars define effectiveness in various ways, including emotional commitment to the institution (Adeolu et al., 2022), dedication to duties (Usoro et al., 2020), and alignment with institutional goals (Levy, 2019). Academic staff effectiveness is often assessed through three dimensions: teaching, research, and community service. Teaching involves clear communication, student engagement, and fostering critical thinking. According to Ekpoh (2018) cited in Madukwe et al. (2024), the frontline activities of tertiary institution lecturers remain teaching and learning in order to produce high level manpower necessary for national development. Research focuses on generating new knowledge and contributing to academic discussions. Community service includes using academic skills to address real-world issues and promote societal development. These elements together determine how effectively academic staff support the university's mission (Bassey & Bassey, 2024; Pare & Tremblay, 2017).

Responsiveness to student inquiries and availability for consultation (Madukwe et al., 2024).

There is increasing concern about the declining effectiveness of academic staff in Nigeria's public universities, which is seen as a major contributor to widespread graduate unemployment. Many graduates lack practical skills necessary for self-reliance and societal contribution (Obona et al., 2023; Madukwe et al., 2024). Stakeholders have expressed worry over lecturers' performance (Adeolu et al., 2022), citing issues like poor teaching, frequent lateness, absenteeism, and inadequate classroom discipline (Ekundayo & Oluyeye, 2020; Bassey & Bassey, 2024). Academics often prioritize superficial publications for promotion over meaningful research contributions. Oyaziwo (2019) criticized universities for failing to significantly influence national development. Additionally, some lecturers show low job commitment, neglect vital course content, and avoid work without valid reasons (Madukwe et al., 2024). These shortcomings point to a broader issue of poor service delivery in universities, characterized by ineffective teaching, lack of research interest, and minimal community involvement. Addressing these issues, according to Ngene et al. (2025), requires focusing on enhancing lecturers' job commitment. Omorobi and Obona (2018) advocate for a re-engineering of the university management process involving all staff to improve service effectiveness.

In today's educational administrative environment, technology plays a crucial role in enhancing efficiency, transparency, and data-driven decision-making (Iwogbe et al., 2025). Among these advancements, the strategic utilization of web-based resources stands out as a key innovation with the

potential to address the persistent issue of job ineffectiveness among university lecturers. Web-based resources refer to electronic materials such as e-books, e-journals, online databases, digital libraries, educational software, and multimedia content like videos and podcasts, all accessible through information and communication technologies (ICTs) (Olofinkua et al., 2025). They also include websites, blogs, and social media platforms that support learning, communication, and professional development (Heine, 2023). These resources play a vital role in education by enriching teaching practices, providing up-to-date information, and accommodating diverse learning styles.

Academic staff are often under considerable pressure to manage a wide range of responsibilities, such as conducting research, publishing scholarly articles, teaching, mentoring students, and participating in institutional committees. To handle these tasks effectively, it is vital for them to make optimal use of digital, web-based, and media tools, which can enhance teaching delivery, simplify communication, support collaborative research, and streamline academic operations. According to Tella et al. (2018), lecturers at the University of Ilorin regularly utilized electronic resources, which significantly improved their research performance and instructional quality. Similarly, Aliyu and Dawha (2019) observed that academic researchers in federal universities in North Eastern Nigeria heavily depended on e-resources for research purposes, which led to greater output.

Studies have established the relationship between digital resources and job effectiveness. Adaku, Odoh, and Okafor (2024) investigated digital literacy and principals' administrative effectiveness in

public secondary schools in Cross River State, Nigeria: Implications for student welfare management. Two null hypotheses were tested. The study adopted a correlation design. The population was principals in all 297 public secondary school Cross River State. The sample size of 149 principals which is (50%) of the entire population was selected through the stratified and simple random sampling techniques. The degree of reliability of the instrument was established using Cronbach Alpha Reliability Estimate with a coefficient of .79 and .85 respectively. The hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance with Pearson Product Moment Correlation using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) respectively. The study concluded that digital communication literacy and social media literacy significantly enhance principals' administrative effectiveness.

Krubu and Osawaru (2011) emphasized the crucial role of digital tools in managing and distributing academic information, while Ani et al. (2015) found that the availability and use of such resources positively influenced research productivity in selected Nigerian universities. These tools—ranging from software applications to digital platforms—enhance efficiency and productivity by automating academic tasks (Obona et al., 2024), and also improve communication and collaboration in educational environments. Haliso and Laja-Ademola (2013) argued that the effectiveness of academic staff in teaching, research, publishing, and service delivery is highly dependent on the availability and quality of information resources. Krubu and Osawaru (2011) also examined the use of digital tools at Benson Idahosa University, including search engines, online databases, and CD-ROMs, and acknowledged their importance in information management. However, they

identified funding inadequacies—reported in 33.3% of cases—as a major limitation in both secondary and tertiary institutions. They also noted that many public libraries in South-South Nigeria lacked computerization due to insufficient funding, equipment, and trained personnel. Existing digital tools like microfilms and projectors were mainly limited to instructional and exhibition purposes.

Patrikakou (2016) noted that the integration of media technologies into teaching practices leads to improved instructional quality. In support, Akuegwu et al. (2011) investigated digital tool usage among university staff in Cross River and Akwa Ibom States. Their findings from 400 respondents showed low access to digital tools, which adversely impacted the quality of teaching, despite the presence of ICT infrastructure. Likewise, Al-Ansari (2006, as cited in Ejiroghene, 2021) found that long-term internet use helped faculty members access timely academic content. Nonetheless, Ojedokun et al. (2015) revealed that although many educators possess basic digital skills, they often lack advanced digital competencies needed for using complex search tools, designing websites, or navigating scientific databases—thus limiting their professional effectiveness. Ayankola and Busari (2024), using survey data from 711 respondents in Southwestern Nigerian polytechnics, concluded that media resources—especially in print and electronic formats—were widely used for academic purposes such as lectures, research, and presentations. Their study confirmed a strong link between the use of media resources and improved academic productivity.

In a study, Obona et al. (2024) investigated the Utilization of Digital Tools and Knowledge Sharing Practices among Teachers in Secondary Schools in Ogoja

Education, Cross River State. A survey research design was used in the investigation. The population was 1,074 teachers. Stratified and simple random sampling technique was used to sample 249 respondents. An instrument titled "Utilization of Digital Tools and Knowledge Sharing Practices among Teachers Questionnaire (UDTKSPTQ)" validated by three experts was used for data collection. Its reliability coefficient of .83 to .85 was established through the Cronbach alpha formula. Data analysis was conducted using Simple and Multiple Linear Regression Analysis at .05 level of significance. The findings revealed that electronic libraries and Zoom technology play a significant role in enhancing knowledge-sharing practices among teachers. The study concluded that digital tools have a statistically significant impact on knowledge-sharing practices among teachers in public secondary schools in the Ogoja Education Zone, Cross River State, Nigeria.

In another study, Nwokonko (2025) investigated the relationship between the availability of digital resources and lecturers' job effectiveness in universities. The study adopted a descriptive survey design and involved 110 lecturers purposively selected from the University of Calabar (UNICAL) and the University of Cross River State (UNICROSS). Two structured and validated questionnaires—Availability of Digital Resources (ADR) and Lecturers' Job Effectiveness (LJE)—were used to collect data. The reliability of the instruments was confirmed using Cronbach's Alpha, yielding coefficients of 0.79 for ADR and 0.82 for LJE, indicating good reliability. All 109 distributed questionnaires were retrieved with the help of trained research assistants. Data analysis involved Pearson Product Moment Correlation, tested at the 0.05 significance level. The findings revealed a

statistically significant relationship between the availability of digital resources and lecturers' job effectiveness. The study concluded that enhancing digital resource availability could positively impact the performance of academic staff in universities within Cross River State.

Olofinkua et al. (2025) conducted a study to examine the relationship between digital resource utilization and academic staff job effectiveness at the University of Calabar, Cross River State, Nigeria. Using a correlational research design, the study focused on 295 purposively selected senior lecturers from the Faculty of Educational Foundation Studies. Data were gathered using two validated and reliable instruments: the *Utilization of Digital Resources Questionnaire (UDRQ)* and the *Academic Staff Job Effectiveness Questionnaire (ASJEQ)*, with Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficients of .81 and .84, respectively. Pearson Product Moment Correlation was employed to test the hypothesis at the 0.05 significance level. The findings indicated a significant positive relationship between the use of digital resources and job effectiveness among academic staff. The study concluded that lecturers who actively engage with digital tools tend to perform better in teaching, research, and institutional contributions.

Collectively, these studies highlight the critical role Web-Based resources play in enhancing academic staff job effectiveness. However, there remains a lack of localized research that specifically investigates how Web-Based tools impact academic staff effectiveness in the study area. This research, therefore, aims to bridge that gap.

Problem of the study

Academic staff in universities are assessed based on their ability to deliver high-quality instruction, engage and motivate students, conduct relevant and impactful research, contribute to curriculum development, and participate in institutional and community advancement. Effective academic personnel not only disseminate knowledge and skills but also foster a supportive learning environment, promote student development, and align their efforts with the university's mission and academic goals.

However, despite the critical role they play, concerns have emerged regarding the declining job performance of lecturers at the Universities. This decline is particularly evident across various faculties, departments and units public universities in Cross River State, where notable challenges have arisen in key areas such as teaching effectiveness, research productivity, and community engagement. Stakeholders—including parents, employers, and international observers—have voiced dissatisfaction with the diminishing quality of graduates, raising questions about the instructional competency and professional commitment of academic staff. Reports of ineffective teaching practices, habitual lateness and absenteeism, limited student interaction, delays in grading and submitting examination results, as well as inconsistencies in compiling final results for graduation, highlight a perceived lack of commitment among some lecturers.

Furthermore, the level of scholarly output remains low, with many academic staff failing to engage in rigorous or impactful research activities. If not addressed, these issues may contribute to a further decline in student performance, institutional reputation, and overall academic standards. Given these persistent challenges, attention is being directed toward the potential role of web-

based resources in enhancing academic staff effectiveness. Therefore, this study seeks to examine the relationship between the application of web-based resources and academic staff job effectiveness in public universities in Cross River State, Nigeria.

Purpose of the study

This study investigated application of web-based resources and academic staff job effectiveness in public universities in Cross River State, Nigeria.

Specifically, the study aimed at investigating the relationship between application of web-based resources and academic staff job effectiveness in public universities in Cross River State, Nigeria.

Research hypotheses

Application of web-based resources do not significantly relate to academic staff job effectiveness in public universities in Cross River State, Nigeria.

Methodology

The study employed an ex post facto research design to investigate the relationship between the application of web-based resources and academic staff job effectiveness. The target population comprised 200 academic staff members, specifically those holding the rank of Assistant Lecturer, who were purposively selected from the Faculty of Education at the University of Calabar (UNICAL) and the University of Cross River State (UNICROSS). A total of 100 lecturers were drawn from each institution. Census method was employed to involve the entire population in the study.

Two structured research instruments were used for data collection: the Application of Web-Based Resources Questionnaire

(AWBRQ) and the Academic Staff Job Effectiveness Questionnaire (ASJEQ). The instruments were subjected to face and content validation by three experts—two in Educational Management and one in Measurement and Evaluation—all from the University of Calabar, Cross River State. The reliability of the instruments was established

using Cronbach's Alpha, yielding coefficients ranging from .89 to .91, indicating a high level of internal consistency. The research hypothesis was tested using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) at the .05 level of significance.

Result

Test of Hypotheses

Application of web-based resources do not significantly relate to academic staff job effectiveness in public universities in Cross River State, Nigeria. The two variables in this hypothesis are application of web-based resources and academic staff job effectiveness. The result of the data analysis is presented in table 1. Table 1 showed the correlation coefficients between application of web-based resources and academic staff job effectiveness in public universities in Cross River State, Nigeria. The correlation coefficient is statistically significant for academic staff job effectiveness ($r = .69$, $p < .05$). Since $p(.000)$ is less than $p(.05)$, hypothesis one is rejected. The result of the analysis showed that application of web-based resources significantly relates to academic staff job effectiveness in public universities in Cross River State, Nigeria.

Table 1: Summary of correlation between application of web-based resources and academic staff job effectiveness in public universities in Cross River State, Nigeria (n=200)

Variables	\bar{X}	S.D	R	Sig.
Application of web-based resources	19.41	3.38		
Academic staff job effectiveness	19.38	3.09	.69*	.000

*Significant at $p < .05$ $df=198$

Discussion of findings

The findings revealed that the application of web-based resources has a significant relationship with academic staff job effectiveness in public universities in Cross River State, Nigeria. This outcome may be attributed to the active engagement of academic staff with various digital tools and platforms available within their institutions. Application of resources such as Google

Scholar, ResearchGate, online learning management systems (e.g., Moodle), institutional repositories, virtual libraries, and video conferencing tools like Zoom and Microsoft Teams have likely contributed to enhanced efficiency and effectiveness in teaching, research, and academic collaboration. The implication of this finding is that increased application of web-based resources by academic staff can substantially improve their job performance by facilitating

access to up-to-date information, promoting collaborative research, streamlining teaching tasks, and enhancing the quality of instructional delivery.

The present finding is consistent with that of Ani et al. (2015), who reported that access to and effective utilization of electronic resources significantly enhanced the research productivity of academic staff in selected Nigerian universities. Similarly, the result aligns with the findings of Al-Ansari (2006), as cited in Ejiroghene (2021), which revealed that faculty members had been using internet and computer technologies for over five years and regarded the internet as a vital tool for time management and accessing current information.

Moreover, the finding corroborates the study by Ayankola and Busari (2024), which demonstrated that academic staff frequently employed media resources for a variety of professional tasks, including preparing lecture materials, conducting research, publishing scholarly work, acquiring general knowledge, and presenting academic papers. Their study also established a high level of productivity among academic staff and confirmed a significant positive correlation between the use of media resources and job performance. It also supports the assertion of Patrikakou (2016), who observed that academic staff who integrate media technologies into their instructional practices tend to improve the overall quality of teaching delivery.

Conclusion

This study investigated the relationship between the application of web-based resources and the job effectiveness of academic staff in public universities in Cross River State, Nigeria. From the findings, it concluded that there is a significant positive

relationship between the use of web-based resources and academic staff job effectiveness in public universities in Cross River State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study demonstrated that the application of digital tools such as Google Scholar, ResearchGate, learning management systems (e.g., Moodle), institutional repositories, virtual libraries, and video conferencing platforms like Zoom and Microsoft Teams has enhanced the efficiency and effectiveness of academic staff in areas such as teaching, research, and scholarly collaboration.

Recommendations

The study recommends that:

University management should prioritize the provision and continuous improvement of web-based resources, while also offering regular training to enhance lecturers' digital skills. Policies should support the effective integration of these tools into teaching, research, and academic activities to boost staff job effectiveness and overall academic quality.

Limitation of the Study

One major limitation of this study is its focus on only two public universities within Cross River State—namely, the University of Calabar (UNICAL) and the University of Cross River State (UNICROSS). As a result, the findings may not be generalizable to other universities in Nigeria, particularly private institutions.

Suggestion for Further Research

Future studies should consider expanding the scope to include a larger and more diverse sample of universities across various states

and institutional types (public and private) to enhance generalizability.

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