

Assessment of Digital Literacy Skills of Academic Staff of Akwa Ibom State University

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Abstract

This study set out to assess the digital literacy level of academic staff of Akwa Ibom State University using 222 subjects selected by an accidental sampling technique from 493 academic staff of the institution. A 4-point researchers' structured questionnaire with closed-ended questions was used as instrument for data collection. The aim of the researchers was to investigate the extent to which digital literacy is used in research, teaching, learning and connecting with colleagues in other universities by academic staff of Akwa Ibom State University. Information was collected in the following areas: Online searching, downloading and uploading, social media, computer appreciation, file management, and e-learning skills. Of the 222 questionnaires sent out, 203 were returned. The analysis of the questionnaires was coded using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and analysed using the descriptive statistics of percentage counts, mean scores and standard deviations, with relevant interpretations based on the research questions. The analysis revealed that the academic staff of Akwa Ibom State University are generally digitally literate with a high proficiency rate in most of the areas investigated. The areas of weakness include low e-learning skills; low level of file management skills; low level of skills to upload documents and files and low level of social media skills in using social media platforms. Factors responsible for the insufficient level of performances include inadequate power supply, poor internet services and non-availability of adequate digital devices. It is suggested that the university improve on the power situation in the university, make internet facility available in departments and provide soft loans to help academic staff acquire their personal devices. E- Learning apps should also be made available in lecture halls.

Key Words: Digital Literacy, Social Media, Uploading, Downloading, E- Learning

1.0 Introduction

The world has gone digital in the last few decades. Not only communication but also learning, commerce, even political campaigns have become digitalized. One has to have a reasonable level of digital literacy to function nowadays in the civilized world. Digital literacy refers to the ability to understand and use Information and Communication Technology which has taken over and reshaped the way we interact, communicate, learn, teach read and write. It involves effective and efficient use of digital devices like smartphones, tablets, iphones, laptops, ipads and desktops for the purposes of collaboration, communication, advocacy and research. Offili (2017) asserts that one is considered to be a digitally literate person if one has the knowledge and skills to use traditional computers such as desktop PCs and laptops- computer literacy, is able to objectively analyse facts to form accurate judgements, can engage in online

community meetings and social networks. In addition, one should be able to find, capture, disseminate and evaluate information.' Such a person should have the ability to understand the emerging societal issues caused by the evolution of digital technologies and possess critical thinking skill. They should also possess a range of digital skills, know the basic principles of computing devices, and possess adequate skills in handling computer networks and the internet (Okeji et al., 2020).

Universities play an important role as leaders in teaching and learning, in education, research and technology. In teaching activities, universities provide the professional training for high-level jobs, as well as the education necessary for the development of the personality. The role of the universities is very important to all sectors from social as well as legal point of view. Graduates of all disciplines need knowledge about sustainability also. Universities can help in providing the new knowledge and skills needed to meet the challenges of sustainable development in a community, in raising public awareness and providing preconditions for informed decision-making, responsible behavior and consumer choice. Universities are considered to have been regarded as key institutions in processes of, E-Learning, social change and development. The most important role they have been assigned is 'the production of highly skilled manpower and research output to meet perceived targets. Another role that universities may play is in the building of new institutions of civil society, in developing new cultural values, and in training and socializing people of new social era (Sharma, 2015).

The University remains the chief agent of progress in the society and progressive nations are those with flourishing universities. The University helps in the development of nations by providing the high as well as the middle level manpower needed for social, economic and political advancement (Adeoye & Adeoye, 2017, Utin, 2023). This is done through teaching, learning, research and community services (Okiy, 2003). This places university education at the apex in the ranking of the educational system, as it is designed to accommodate knowledge acquisition and production (Anunobi & Nwogwugwu, 2013, Utin, 2016). This study therefore, hypothesizes that digital literacy skills are a necessary set of skills that academic staff in tertiary institutions must possess in order to navigate the Internet; find online information, manage, edit and store digital information; join in communications; in other words, engage with any desired online information and communication network. Digital literacy simply put is the ability to evaluate and use digital information resources, digital tools and online services and apply them effectively to the lifelong learning process. The most important aspect of digital literacy is the ability to make informed judgments about information found online, for just like conventional media, much digital information found online is unfiltered by editors and left open to the contribution of all and sundry.

Academic staff have a pivotal role in teaching and research in universities. In view of the fact that digitalized revolution has brought about the increase in information due to the advancement in technology in learning activities in universities, academic staff need to develop skills, especially digital skills and to have the ability to identify, search, retrieve, evaluate, organize and communicate electronically so as to enhance their administrative and learning coordination and be able to synergize with their colleagues and students to carry out research and other administrative principles and procedures which are most times found out to be majorly lacking in most of the staff in Nigeria universities. Oyedapo and Ojo (2013) reason that what could be responsible for this include poor basic knowledge of digital skills as most universities in the country today lack both the personal and the basic facilities or devices. Some of those exposed to basic computer knowledge do not possess the requisite skill that could

qualify them as being digitally literate. Proficiency in digital literacy requires the constant use of digital information resources (DIRs) to which many staff lack access. A large proportion of access to digital information resources (DIRs) is still through public information centres which are located mainly in the business areas of major towns only. Staff located in semi-urban and local areas may not even have access at all. According to Ojeniyi and Adetimirin (2013), the speed of the internet servers in most public information centres is so slow that it can discourage a staff in developing digital skills as the low speed increases the time spent. Even for the few cyber cafes with digital learning facilities or devices, inconsistent power supply is a major challenge. All these linked together could be said to contribute to the observed inadequate digital literacy skills among the university academic staff. This major lacuna is the gap that this study intends to fill. The study is particularly important since university academic staff are required to use e- learning devices rather than depend on the outmoded lecture method.

The aim of the researchers was to investigate the extent to which digital literacy is used in research, teaching, learning and connecting with other groups and colleagues in the other universities nationally and internationally by academic staff of Akwa Ibom State University. Information was collected in the following areas: online searching skills, downloading and uploading skills, social media skills, computer appreciation skills, file management skills, and e-learning skills. It is expected that if there are problems that militate against the acquisition and use of digital literacy skills in Akwa Ibom State University the attention of the university management will be drawn to these so that steps will be taken to ameliorate the situation. The basic assumption of this study is that the academic staff of Akwa Ibom State university are not digitally literate enough and there are many factors that militate against the acquisition and use of digital literacy in research and teaching. The following research questions were used to aid the study:

- What is the level of online searching skills of lecturers of Akwa Ibom State University?
- What is the level of Uploading and downloading skills of AKSU lecturers?
- What is the level of social media Skills of Akwa Ibom State University Lecturers?
- What is the level of Computer Appreciation skills of AKSU lecturers?
- What is the level of File Management skills of AKSU lecturers?
- What is the level of E- Learning Skills of AKSU lecturers?
- What are the Problems that militate against the acquisition and use of Digital Literacy Skills of AKSU lecturers?

2.0 Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive research design to examine the proficiency with ICT and their use, by the academic staff of Akwa Ibom State University and the extent to which digital literacy affects teaching, learning, research and connecting with colleagues and others in the other universities nationally and internationally. The population of the study was four hundred and ninety-three (493) academic staff, comprising 387 male and 106 female lecturers from the two (2) campuses and eight (8) faculties of the university (Statistical Digest of Akwa Ibom State University, 2022). Out of the study population of 493 academic staff, a sample of 222 respondents, representing 45% were proportionately selected by gender in accordance with the recommendation of (Nworgu, 2015), which suggests that when a population of the study is in a few hundreds, 20% - 50% of the population can be selected to reflect a fair representation. Consequently, the accidental sampling technique, otherwise known as convenience sampling

technique was used in selecting the respondents from the two (2) campuses and eight (8) faculties of the university. This was on the ground of convenience for the researchers. A 4-point researchers' structured questionnaire with closed-ended questions entitled: "*Assessment of Digital Literacy Skills of Lecturers Questionnaire (ADLSLQ)*", with a reliability coefficient of 0.79, using Cronbach Alpha index was used as instrument for data collection. Copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the 222 respondents by the researchers and two (2) research assistants from which, 203 copies representing 91.43% response rate were completed and returned with valid information. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistical tools of percentage counts, mean scores and standard deviations in tables.

Results and Analysis of Findings

The data collected for this study were coded using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and analysed using the descriptive statistics of percentage counts, mean scores and standard deviations, with relevant interpretations based on the research questions. This was in line with the total number of questionnaires validly completed and retrieved with useful information as shown in Table 4.1 below:

Table 3.1: Questionnaire Distribution and Retrieval Rate by Faculties and Gender

Faculties	Questionnaire Distributed			Questionnaire Retrieved				Retrieval Rate (%)	
	Male	Female	Total	Male	%	Female	%	Total	
Agriculture	18	10	28	16	7.21	10	4.50	26	11.71
Arts	17	10	27	15	6.76	9	4.05	24	10.81
Biological Sciences	18	11	29	17	7.66	10	4.50	27	12.16
Education	18	10	28	18	8.11	10	4.50	28	12.61
Engineering	17	9	26	16	7.21	8	3.60	24	10.81
Management Sciences	18	11	29	17	7.66	10	4.50	27	12.16
Physical Sciences	17	9	26	14	6.31	8	3.60	22	9.91
Social Sciences	18	11	29	16	7.21	9	4.05	25	11.26
Total	141	81	222	129	58.13	74	33.30	203	91.43%

Source: Researchers' Field Survey, 2023

Data in Table 3.1 showed the questionnaire distribution and response rate. It revealed that out of the 222 copies of the questionnaire distributed to the respondents across the two (2) campuses and eight (8) faculties of the Akwa Ibom State University, 203 copies representing 91.43% were completed and retrieved. The Table further revealed that out of the 222 copies of the questionnaire distributed, 141 copies were distributed to the male lecturers, from which 129 copies making up 58.13% were retrieved, while 81 copies were distributed to the female lecturers, which yielded 33.30% response rate from 74 respondents. On faculty basis, the Table revealed that the faculties of Education returned 28 copies with 12.61% from the 28 distributed; Biological Sciences and Management Sciences returned 27 copies with 12.16% from the 29 distributed, respectively. It also showed that the faculties of Agriculture returned 27 copies with 11.71%; Social Sciences returned 25 copies with 11.26%; while Arts and Engineering returned 24 copies with 10.81%, from the 27 and 26 copies, respectively. It also showed that the faculty of Physical Sciences returned 22 copies with 9.91% from the 26 copies distributed. Thus, this analysis is conducted on the basis of 203 copies of questionnaire with 91.43% response rate.

Research Question 1: What is the Level of Online Searching Skills of Lecturers?

Table 3.2: Mean Responses on the Level of Online Searching Skills of Lecturers (n = 203)

S/N	Item Statements	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	Mean	Std. Dev.	Remarks
1	I can access online resources such as e-books, e-journals, etc.	52	98	52	1	2.99	0.731	Agreed
2	I use keywords to search for information online	45	94	46	18	2.83	0.880	Agreed
3	I use advanced search operators to limit my online search	56	102	44	1	3.05	0.716	Agreed
4	I make use of the right search links/websites to retrieve information for my search	66	110	19	8	3.15	0.746	Agreed
5	I evaluate online information in my discipline before use	71	96	30	6	3.14	0.774	Agreed
Grand Mean						3.01		Agreed

Source: Researchers' Field Survey, 2023

Criterion Mean = 2.50

Data in Table 3.2 indicates that the extent of online searching skills of lecturers in Akwa Ibom State University, is high. The result shows an overall affirmation with the items of investigation. It specifically reveals that the lecturers have a high level of skills to use the right search links/websites to retrieve information with a mean score of 3.15 and standard deviation of 0.746; seconded by high level of skills to evaluate online information before use with a mean

score of 3.14 and standard deviation of 0.774. It also shows that the lecturers possess a high level of skills to use advanced search operators to limit online search with a mean score of 3.05 and standard deviation of 0.716; access online resources such as e-books, e-journals, etc. with a mean score of 2.99 and standard deviation of 0.731, as well as use keywords to search for information online with a mean score of 2.83 and standard deviation of 0.880. This result was confirmed with a higher grand mean of 3.01 against the 2.50 criterion mean to prove the high level of online searching skills of the lecturers.

Research Question 2: What is the Level of Downloading/Uploading Skills of Lecturers

Table .3.3: Mean Responses on the Level of Downloading/Uploading Skills of Lecturers (n = 203)

S/N	Item Statements	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	Mean	Std. Dev.	Remarks
1	I can download documents/pictures from internet	93	90	17	3	3.34	0.696	Agreed
2	I can upload my documents/pictures on the internet	86	100	14	3	3.33	0.669	Agreed
3	I can edit my documents/pictures before uploading on the internet	99	72	24	8	3.29	0.826	Agreed
4	I can save any downloaded material for future use	84	86	30	3	3.24	0.753	Agreed
5	I upload documents and files seamlessly across various online sites	29	40	103	31	2.33	0.903	Disagreed
Grand Mean						3.11		Agreed

Source: Researchers' Field Survey, 2023

Criterion Mean = 2.50

Data in Table 4.3 shows that the extent of downloading and uploading skills of lecturers in Akwa Ibom State University is high. It reveals that the lecturers have a high extent of skills in downloading documents and pictures from the internet with a mean score of 3.34 and standard deviation of 0.696; and uploading documents and pictures on the internet with a mean score of 3.33 and standard deviation of 0.669. It also shows that the lecturers have high level of skills to edit documents/pictures before uploading on the internet with a mean score of 3.29 and a standard deviation of 0.826; and save any downloaded material for future use with a mean score of 3.24 and a standard deviation of 0.753. On the other hand, the result indicated that the lecturers do not possess high extent of skills to upload documents and files seamlessly across various online sites with a mean score of 2.33 and standard deviation of 0.903. The result was

confirmed with a higher grand mean of 3.11 against the 2.50 criterion mean to prove the high extent of downloading and uploading skills of the lecturers.

Research Question 3: What is the Level of Social Media Skills of Lecturers?

Table 3.4: Mean Responses on the Extent of Social Media Skills of Lecturers (n = 203)

S/N	Item Statements	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	Mean	Std. Dev.	Remarks
1	I discuss with my colleagues using WhatsApp, LinkedIn, Facebook, etc.	77	62	55	9	3.02	0.912	Agreed
2	I share my research results through social media handles	85	90	16	12	3.22	0.830	Agreed
3	I participate in online webinar, conferences and meeting through zoom, etc.	80	92	28	3	3.23	0.737	Agreed
4	I use social media platforms for research collaboration with colleagues	101	73	26	3	3.34	0.756	Agreed
5	I use social media platforms to follow trends in my academic field	54	72	36	41	2.68	1.076	Agreed
Grand Mean						3.10		Agreed

Source: Researchers' Field Survey, 2023

Criterion Mean = 2.50

Data in Table 3.4 shows that the extent of social media skills of lecturers in Akwa Ibom State University is high, with a high grand mean of 3.10 against the 2.50 criterion mean. It specifically reveals that the lecturers have a high level of skills to use social media platforms for research collaboration with a mean score of 3.34 and standard deviation of 0.756; and to participate in online webinars, conferences and meetings through zoom, etc., with a mean score of 3.23 and standard deviation of 0.737. It also shows that the lecturers possess a high level of skills to share research results through social media handles with a mean score of 3.22 and standard deviation of 0.830; as well as discuss with colleagues using WhatsApp, LinkedIn, Facebook, etc. with a mean score of 3.02 and standard deviation of 0.912. It also indicates that the lecturers' extent of social media skills in using social media platforms to follow trends in their academic fields is not as high compared to other parameters of social media use as reflected in a mean score of 2.68 and a corresponding standard deviation of 1.076.

Research Question 4: What is the Level of Computer Appreciation Skills of Lecturers?

Table 3.5: Mean Responses on the Level of Computer Appreciation Skills of Lecturers (n = 203)

S/N	Item Statements	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	Mean	Std. Dev.	Remarks
1	I use Microsoft word for simple computing operations to execute academic activities	90	92	15	6	3.31	0.736	Agreed
2	I use Microsoft excel to design academic programmes and activities	98	67	30	8	3.26	0.852	Agreed
3	I use Power point for my paper presentations	84	75	28	16	3.12	0.926	Agreed
4	I use scanning devices to scan my documents	88	73	42	0	3.23	0.769	Agreed
5	I personally print documents for research	56	100	39	4	3.00	0.793	Agreed
Grand Mean						3.18		Agreed

Source: Researchers' Field Survey, 2023

Criterion Mean = 2.50

Data in Table 4.5 shows an overall affirmation that the level of computer appreciation skills of lecturers in Akwa Ibom State University is high. It specifically indicates that the lecturers have high level of computer appreciation skills to use Microsoft word for simple computing operations in executing academic activities with a mean score of 3.31 and standard deviation of 0.736; use Microsoft excel to design academic programmes and activities with a mean score of 3.26 and standard deviation of 0.852; as well as use scanning devices to scan documents with a mean score of 3.23 and standard deviation of 0.769. It also shows that the lecturers possess high level of computer appreciation skills to use Power point for paper presentations and personally print documents for researches with mean scores of 3.12 and 3.00 and corresponding standard deviations of 0.926 and 0.793, respectively. The result was confirmed with a higher grand mean of 3.18 against the 2.50 criterion mean to prove that the level of computer appreciation skills of the lecturers is high.

Research Question 5: What is the Level of File Management Skills of Lecturers?

Table 3.6: Mean Responses on the Extent of File Management Skills of Lecturers (n = 203)

S/N	Item Statements	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	Mean	Std. Dev.	Remarks
1	I can convert my files to PDF formats	99	72	28	4	3.31	0.782	Agreed

2	I can convert PDF documents to editable formats like Word	38	32	91	42	2.33	1.006	Disagreed
3	I can record audio information (Podcast)	90	78	31	4	3.25	0.784	Agreed
4	I can produce video presentation (Vodcast)	22	70	75	36	2.38	0.901	Disagreed
5	I can create file names for my documents for easy retrieval	68	103	32	0	3.18	0.681	Agreed

Grand Mean						2.89	Agreed	
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Source: Researchers' Field Survey, 2023

Criterion Mean = 2.50

The data in Table 3.6 reveals that the extent of file management skills of lecturers in Akwa Ibom State University is high, with a grand mean of 2.89 against the 2.50 criterion mean. The result shows that the lecturers have high extent of file management skills to convert files to PDF formats with a mean score of 3.31 and corresponding standard deviation of 0.782; record audio information (Podcast) with a mean score of 3.25 and standard deviation of 0.784; as well as create file names for documents for easy retrieval with a mean score of 3.18 and standard deviation of 0.681. On the contrary, the result shows that the lecturers' extent of file management skills to convert PDF documents to editable formats like Word and produce video presentation (Vodcast) were low with mean scores of 2.33 and 2.38 and corresponding standard deviations of 1.006 and 0.901, respectively.

Research Question 6: What is the Level of E-Learning Skills of Lecturers?

Table 3.7: Mean Responses on the Level of E-Learning Skills of Lecturers (n = 203)

S/N	Item Statements	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	Mean	Std. Dev.	Remarks
1	I can develop my e-learning course contents	72	71	57	3	3.04	0.834	Agreed
2	I can review my e-learning course contents regularly	73	67	53	10	3.00	0.907	Agreed
3	I can make use of smart classroom to teach my students	38	39	73	53	2.31	1.056	Disagreed
4	I can track my students' learning progress online	51	102	37	13	2.94	0.830	Agreed
5	I can monitor my students' interactive sessions online	62	97	29	15	3.01	0.864	Agreed

Grand Mean	2.86	Agreed
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Source: Researchers' Field Survey, 2023

Criterion Mean = 2.50

Data in Table 3.7 shows that the level of e-learning skills of lecturers in Akwa Ibom State University is high, with a grand mean of 2.86 against the 2.50 criterion mean. It specifically reveals that the lecturers have a high level of e-learning skills to develop e-learning course contents with 3.04 and standard deviation of 0.834; and monitor students' interactive sessions online with a mean score of 3.01 and standard deviations of 0.864. It also indicates that the lecturers have a high level of e-learning skills to review e-learning course contents regularly and track students' learning progress online with mean scores of 3.00 and 2.94 and the corresponding standard deviations of 0.907 and 0.830, respectively. On the contrary, the result of the analysis reveals that the lecturers' extent of e-learning skills to make use of smart classroom to teach students is low with a mean score of 2.31 and standard deviation of 1.056.

Research Question 7: What are the problems that militate against the acquisition and use of digital literacy skills by lecturers in Akwa Ibom State University?

Table 3,8: Mean Responses on the problems that militate against the acquisition and use of digital literacy skills by lecturers in Akwa Ibom State University (n = 203)

S/N	Item Statements	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Std. Dev.	Remarks
1	Poor digital literacy skills among lecturers	32	46	85	40	2.34	0.969	Disagreed
2	Non-availability of adequate digital devices	66	70	67	0	3.00	0.811	Agreed
3	Inadequate power supply	63	110	23	7	3.13	0.740	Agreed
4	Poor internet services	56	112	33	2	3.09	0.687	Agreed
5	Technophobia	25	31	92	55	2.31	0.951	Disagreed
Grand Mean						2.78		Agreed

Source: Researchers' Field Survey, 2023

Criterion Mean = 2.50

Data in Table 3.8 shows the problems militating against the acquisition and use of digital literacy skills of lecturers in Akwa Ibom State University. It specifically reveals that out of the 5 items investigating the problems associated with the acquisition and use of digital literacy skills by the lecturers, inadequate power supply with a mean score of 3.13 and standard deviation of 0.740 was the major barrier, seconded by poor internet services with a mean score of 3.09 and standard deviation of 0.687. Another problem militating against the acquisition and use of digital literacy skills by the lecturers is non-availability of adequate digital devices which has a mean score of 3.00 and standard deviation of 0.811. On the contrary, the data analysis indicated

that poor digital literacy skills among lecturers and technophobia with mean scores of 2.34 and 2.31 and standard deviations of 0.969 and 0.951, respectively, are not problems militating against the acquisition and use of digital literacy skills of the lecturers. The data analysis also indicated a higher grand mean of 2.78 against the criterion mean of 2.50 to confirm that the items investigated constitute serious impediments to the acquisition and use of digital literacy skills of lecturers in the Akwa Ibom State University.

4.0 Discussion of Findings

The analysis of data shows that Contrary to our basic assumption of the study, the academic staff of Akwa Ibom State University are generally digitally literate. The staff assessed themselves. This limitation of the study is acknowledged. However, their levels in some aspects are not good enough. For example, with regard to E-learning skills the result of the analysis reveals that the lecturers' extent of e-learning skills with regards to making use of devices such as smart classroom to teach students is low with a mean score of 2.31 and standard deviation of 1.056 which means that the lecturers are not using e-learning for teaching in Akwa Ibom State university enough if at all. Also, the lecturers' level of file management skills to convert PDF documents to editable formats like Word and produce video presentation (Vodcast) are low with mean scores of 2.33 and 2.38 and corresponding standard deviations of 1.006 and 0.901, respectively. With regards to uploading documents and files the result indicated that the lecturers did not possess a high level of skills to upload documents and files across various online sites. Notwithstanding the fact that social media appears the most widespread and commonly used digital device, the results indicate that the lecturers' level of social media skills in using social media platforms to follow trends in their academic fields is not as high compared to other parameters of social media use as reflected in a mean score of 2.68 and a corresponding standard deviation of 1.076. This calls to question the level of proficiency of the lecturers who may be using social media more for social and other purposes.

There are factors militating against the acquisition and use of Digital literacy by academic staff of Akwa Ibom State University. The data reveals that out of the 5 items investigating the problems associated with the acquisition and use of digital literacy skills by the lecturers, inadequate power supply with a mean score of 3.13 and standard deviation of 0.740 was the major barrier, seconded by poor internet services with a mean score of 3.09 and standard deviation of 0.687. Another problem militating against the acquisition and use of digital literacy skills by the lecturers is non-availability of adequate digital devices which has a mean score of 3.00 and standard deviation of 0.811, The factors affecting the proficiency of lecturers of Akwa Ibom State university; namely inadequate power supply and poor internet services have also been identified by Okeji et al (2020) as some of the problems facing academics and researchers in Nigerian Universities. The issue of non-availability of adequate digital devices identified seems to be peculiar to Akwa Ibom State University.

5.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

This study set out to assess the digital literacy level of academic staff of Akwa Ibom State University using 222 subjects selected by an accidental sampling technique from 493 academic staff of the institution. A 4-point researchers' structured questionnaire with closed-ended questions entitled: "*Assessment of Digital Literacy Skills of Lecturers Questionnaire (ADLSLQ)*", with a reliability coefficient of 0.79, using Cronbach Alpha index was used as instrument for data collection. The aim of the researchers was to investigate the extent to which digital literacy is used in research, teaching, learning and connecting with other groups and

colleagues in the other universities nationally and internationally by academic staff of Akwa Ibom State University. Information was collected in the following areas: online searching skills, downloading and uploading skills, social media skills, computer appreciation skills, file management skills, and e-learning skills. Of the 222 questionnaires sent out 203 were returned.

The analysis of the questionnaires was coded using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and analysed using the descriptive statistics of percentage counts, mean scores and standard deviations, with relevant interpretations based on the research questions, the analysis revealed that the academic staff of Akwa Ibom State University are generally digital literate with proficiency rate in most of the areas investigated. The areas of weakness include the following: the lecturers' extent of e-learning skills with regards to making use of devices such as smart classroom to teach students; the lecturers' level of file management skills to convert PDF documents to editable formats like Word and produce video presentation (Vodcast) ; the lecturers did not possess a high level of skills to upload documents and files across various online sites; that the lecturers' level of social media skills in using social media platforms to follow trends in their academic fields is not high compared to other parameters of social media. The most important factors responsible for the insufficient level of performances include inadequate power supply seconded by poor internet services and non-availability of adequate digital devices. It is suggested that the university should improve on the power situation in the university, make internet facility available in departments and provide soft loans to help academic staff to acquire their personal devices such as laptops, ipads and tablets. E-learning apps should also be made available in lecture halls.

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