

Adekunle Emmanuel Oyadeyi

Ajayi Crowther University. University Library
e-mail: oyadeyi.adekunle@gmail.com
ORCID: 0000-0002-7932-4934

Taofeek Abiodun Oladokun

Lead City University
e-mail: taofeekoladokun1@gmail.com
ORCID: 0000-0001-7015-9496

Oludare Adebajji Shorunke

University of Lagos. Medical Library
e-mail: darebanji@gmail.com
ORCID: 0000-0002-2993-4881

Omobolanle Seri Fasola

Ajayi Crowther University. University Library
e-mail: os.fasola@acu.edu.ng
ORCID: 0000-0002-7446-4137

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Return on investment (ROI) in subscription databases by Nigerian academic libraries: a survey

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Adekunle Emmanuel Oyadeyi is in charge of electronic information resources services at the T. Y. Danjuma Library, Ajayi Crowther University, Oyo. He has over nine years of experience in the management of electronic information resources. He has journal publications to his credit. His research interests include: user information behavior; electronic information resources use; digitization; digital repository, library management software; Librarians Job motivation and satisfaction. He is a member of the Nigerian Library Association (further: NLA).

Taofeek Abiodun Oladokun is in charge of electronic information resources services at the Lead City University library, Ibadan. He has over five years of experience in the management of electronic information resources. He has journal publications to his credit. His research interests include: electronic information systems; digital library user experience; electronic information management and library software. He is a member of NLA.

Oludare Adebajji Shorunke is the electronic resources Librarian at the medical library, University of Lagos, Idi-Araba, Lagos. He is a Certified Librarian of Nigeria (CLN) with several local and international journal publications to his credit. Oludare is presently on his PhD programme at the department of library and information science, University of Ilorin. His research interests include: electronic resources use; accessibility; users satisfaction, and library service quality. He is a member of NLA.

Omobolanle Seri Fasola is the technical services librarian at the T. Y. Danjuma Library, Ajayi Crowther University, Oyo. She is a Certified Librarian of Nigeria (CLN) with several local and international journal publications and conference papers to her credit. Omobolanle is presently on her PhD programme at the department of library and information science, University of Ibadan. Her research interests include: knowledge management, organisational behaviour, social media for library services, and library management. She is a member of NLA.

Keywords: Return on Investment; Subscription Database; Cost; Use; Librarian; Universities; Nigeria

Abstract. **Aim:** There seems to be a dearth of literature on how much Nigerian university libraries are spending on the acquisition of Online Electronic Database (OED). This study sets out to investigate the annual cost of acquiring this important and evolving aspect of library collection with the view of determining whether the returns in terms of utilization is commensurate with the invested fund.

Methodology: The study adopts a quantitative research method. A self-developed questionnaire was used to collect data from 55 librarians in 41 academic libraries across Nigeria. The data collected were processed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.

Findings: Academic libraries in Nigeria spend an average of ₦12,500,000 or \$32,637 on OED subscriptions annually. The study has shown that Nigerian academic libraries usually subscribe to the EBSCOhost and Research4Life databases with few adding specialized databases such as Law Pavilion, HeinOnline, Legalpedia, and ScienceDirect. To ensure adequate returns on investment, the libraries are massively providing support infrastructures, user education, and other information services. However, challenges limiting the widespread use of online databases include irregular power supply and slow internet connectivity among others.

Conclusions: The study, therefore, concludes that there is a middling to low return on subscribed OED in Nigerian academic libraries. However, there are still various huddles that must be scaled for Nigerian academic libraries to reap adequate returns on their investments in online electronic databases.

Introduction

Electronic resources are assuming more important roles in providing information to academic institutions. This is not surprising because the merits of using electronic resources speak compellingly for their adoption by a vast majority of information users around the world. Providing access to electronic resources,

therefore, is a way for academic libraries to satisfy the modern information user who prefers seamless access to current and relevant information resources¹.

Having access to electronic databases is mutually beneficial to academic libraries and their users. Some of the benefits include but are not limited to seamless access to a wide range of research from all over the world, ability to serve users beyond the library hours as well as stimulating research activities among scholars in tertiary institutions. One way through which libraries support teaching, learning, and research is subscribing to electronic databases². Cotter et al. also pointed out that Web resources, such as e-journals and e-databases, increasingly pass the quality and stability tests³.

Just like print resources, access to electronic resources must be acquired at a cost, which to African libraries, and others in the developing world, is steep⁴. A year's subscription to the Research4Life database for instance costs one thousand five hundred American dollars (\$1,500) for Group B (low-cost access); HeinOnline – a legal database costs five thousand, nine hundred and ninety-five USD (\$5,995), while EBSCOhost, the most popular academic database among Nigerian institutions, costs eleven thousand and twenty dollars (\$11,020) through a consortium and the prize may be higher for individual subscriptions in Nigeria.

Apart from the subscription fees, provision of e-databases to the academic community also comes with other implementation costs. According to Kowalsky⁵, some of the costs associated with the investment in e-databases include the significant financial cost of procuring computer hardware and other peripherals needed to access the resources in the library, skilled staff who can manage the technologies as well as training for library staff and information users. Therefore, whether an academic library joins a consortium or relies mostly on open access databases, it still has to spend a considerable sum on providing electronic information resources for its users.

In the light of dwindling financial resources and the demand for academic libraries to provide statistical evidence of the impact of the funds they receive from their parent institutions, it is imperative to evaluate the cost of subscribing to electronic resources with the aim of ensuring that both the institution and members of the academic community have the real value for the money spent on electronic resources.

¹ F. A. Yebowaah, F. D. D. Plockey, *Awareness and Use of Electronic Resources in University Libraries: A Case Study of University for Development Studies Library*, Library Philosophy & Practice, 2017, <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/1562/>.

² O. E. Ani, P. Ngulube, B. Onyanacha, *Perceived effect of accessibility and utilization of electronic resources on productivity of academic staff in selected Nigerian universities*, SAGE Open, vol. 5: 2015, no. 4.

³ G. Cotter, *Electronic collection management and electronic information services*, Information Services & Use, vol. 25: 2005, no. 1, pp. 23-34.

⁴ N. A. Ansari, M. M. Raza, *Awareness and usage of Emerald Insight database as determinant of research output for researcher scholar of Aligarh Muslim University, India*, Collection Management, vol. 45: 2020, no. 1, pp. 71-86.

⁵ M. Kowalsky, *Opportunity costs of electronic resources*, Procedia Economics and Finance, vol. 23: 2015, pp. 948-952.

Statement of the Problem

In view of the decrease in the funds available to institutions and their libraries, there have been calls for academic libraries to provide justification for the amounts spent on e-databases. However, for libraries to measure return on investment, they must know exactly how much they are spending on these e-databases. Hence, this study seeks to investigate the average amount spent on acquiring online academic databases by universities in Nigeria, and examine the role of libraries in enhancing the effective use of the resources as a way of ensuring that academic libraries enjoy adequate return on their investments in electronic resources.

Objective of the Study

The major objective of the study is to examine the return on investment (ROI) in subscription databases by Nigerian academic libraries. Other specific objectives are:

1. To establish the average amount of money academic and research libraries in Nigeria spend on the acquisition of online electronic databases.
2. To determine the electronic databases most subscribed to by the studied libraries.
3. To determine the mode of subscription to online electronic database among Nigerian academic libraries.
4. To determine the role of Nigerian academic libraries in ensuring the effective use of the online electronic database.
5. To ascertain the challenges faced in the provision of online electronic databases to Nigerian academic library users.

Research Questions

1. What is the average amount spent on acquiring an online database by Nigerian academic libraries annually?
2. What are the online electronic databases most subscribed to by Nigerian academic libraries?
3. What is the popular mode of subscription to online electronic databases among Nigerian academic libraries?
4. What is the role of Nigerian academic libraries in ensuring the effective use of the online electronic database?
5. What are the challenges faced by the library in provision of online databases?

Significance of the Study

There seems to be no study that has documented the amount of money Nigerian libraries spend on acquiring online databases. This study is significant as its findings will enhance proper planning and budgeting by Nigerian libraries

in respect to acquiring online databases. It will also help libraries to engage in a more aggressive creation of information products to justify the amount currently being spent on online databases. It will also improve their liaising and collaborative effort with the university authority and other relevant funding bodies or agencies for improved funding. Aside from that, the study will provide valuable data for a more in-depth study of the return on investment in online databases in Nigerian academic libraries. More significantly, this study will be a useful reference source for strategic planning and budgeting in libraries.

Scope of the study

This study is limited to examining the return on investment in online electronic databases only. As a result, it does not cover the cost of hardware and the subscription to software used in managing Online Electronic Database (OED). It also does not include other library resources like offline electronic resources and print materials. Also, the study is limited to university and research libraries. Colleges of education, technical universities, and monotechnic libraries are not included.

Literature Review

Academic libraries are not immune to the global economic downturn which has dictated that organisations of all type become prudent with their lean resources. Today, academic libraries have to jostle with other units in their parent institutions for a piece of the lean budget and the size of the cut received by any unit is determined by its perceived importance to the achievement of the overall objectives of the institution⁶.

Current realities dictate that organisations allocate resources to areas that yield the best return on investment. Elsayed and Saleh reported that the term 'return on investment' (ROI) was first used by Donaldson Brown in 1912 to indicate the ratio of money gained or lost on an investment relative to the amount of money invested⁷. Wahab, Shamsuddin, Abdullah, and Hamid explained that ROI is the gain or loss (usually financial) that accrues to an organization as a result of spending on a particular project. In the context of librarianship, White in Wahab, Shamsuddin, Abdullah, and Hamid defined ROI as one of the assessment tools libraries can deploy to measure the use of library resources compared to the money invested in acquiring the resources. In the face of financial constraints, libraries are learning, more than ever before, to quantify services and resources they provide for users because of the opportunity costs involved in setting up each service or providing a particular collection⁸. One of the areas where libraries usually invested heavily, is subscription to Online Electronic Database (OED).

⁶ A. M. Elsayed, E. I. Saleh, *Measuring the return on investment of academic libraries in Arab countries: a proposed model*, Information Development, vol. 31: 2015, no. 3, pp. 219-228.

⁷ A. M. Elsayed, E. I. Saleh, *op. cit.*

⁸ N. H. Abdullah, N. A. A. Hamid, M. S. A. Shaif, A. Shamsuddin, E. Wahab, *Structural model for the effects of perceived indoor work environment on sick building syndrome and stress*, MATEC Web of Conferences, vol. 68: 2016, 13012.

For an academic library, measuring ROI in OEDs is a multipurpose tool. Academic libraries have multiple motivations to examine the wisdom of their huge investments in an electronic database which often necessitates the abandonment of other projects or even the recruitment and training of staff⁹. Apart from the fact it provides empirical data for the usual evaluation of resources and services, Elsayed and Saleh pointed out that measuring the return on investment in library services and collection is also a way to show the relevance of the library and demand for improved funding either from donors or parent institutions¹⁰.

The contemporary academic library collection is no longer limited to printed resources as it was in the past. The opportunities offered by access to a global body of knowledge is just too great for academic libraries to pass up. Uzoigwe and Eze reported that electronic resources have increasingly become an important part of the library collection and are now firmly rooted in Nigerian academic libraries' collection development. As their importance becomes apparent, the percentage of budget allocated to them is also increasing¹¹. Moreover, Kowalsky noted that many research universities are turning to electronic-only collections for research materials such as journals, monographs, and reports¹². These electronic resources are offered through online databases that are as varied as there are academic disciplines and institutions. Popular databases among Nigerian tertiary institutions include ScienceDirect, Nigerian Virtual Library, HINARI, OARE, AJOL, SAGEOPEN, TEEAL, EBSCOhost, among others¹³.

Online Electronic Database (OED) is not acquired in the same manner as printed resources. Academic libraries often have to subscribe to multiple databases in order to cater to all the programmes run by their parent institutions. This is often challenging, especially to libraries in developing countries. Even with the information explosion, the increasing cost of e-databases in the light of a global budget cut in libraries has been the subject of some research articles seeking solutions to the dwindling purchasing power of academic libraries in developing countries. As a result, apart from direct, individual subscriptions, academic libraries are also reported to be forming consortia, exploring bundled subscription options, negotiating discounts based on the number of users and so on, depending on the particular OED they are interested in. For academic libraries, the consortium model is highly recommended and widely adopted¹⁴.

Despite all these subscription options, many academic libraries are still spending a significant chunk of their annual budgets on OEDs. Idhalama and Krubu observed that the fund available to all types of libraries in Nigeria is dwindling even

⁹ G. C. Irunegbo, J. C. Nworie, N. A. Igbokwe, E. E. Omorodion, *Marketing library and information services: A case for library managers*, Information Impact: Journal of Information and Knowledge Management, vol. 9: 2018, no. 4, pp. 91-106.

¹⁰ Ibidem.

¹¹ C. U. Uzoigwe, J. U. Eze, *The perceived benefits of electronic/digital reference services in Nigerian university libraries: A survey*, International Journal of Knowledge Content Development & Technology, vol. 8: 2018, no. 2, pp. 49-65.

¹² M. Kowalsky, op. cit.

¹³ C. U. Uzoigwe, J. U. Eze, op. cit., pp. 49-65.

¹⁴ W. M. Ndungu, J. W. Gikandi. *Strategic marketing of electronic resources in academic libraries in Kenya*. Journal of Scholarly Publishing 49, 2018, no. 4, p. 435-452.

as the cost of providing library and information services to the modern information user is on the increase¹⁵. Nnadozie noted that the global economic downturn has exacerbated the already precarious financial situation of Nigerian libraries. Today, the meagre funds allocated to the libraries has even lowered the purchasing power due to rising exchange rates. Subscription to electronic databases and the acquisition of the relevant Information and Communication Technology (ICT) facilities are usually transacted in United States of America Dollars. Thus, as the Naira becomes weaker against the dollar, the cost of acquiring the electronic resources continues to increase at an exponential rate¹⁶.

The Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) of OEDs is, however, not limited to the subscription fees. Kowalsky investigated the costs of marketing electronic resources for greater use in American universities. The research highlighted the resources invested in offering e-databases services in libraries to include the significant financial cost of procuring new materials, new employees who can manage the technologies of the online database resources over the Web, trainers and IT administrators, as well as their learning costs to remain up-to-date¹⁷. In developing nations like Nigeria, e-databases acquisition also comes with an associated investment in IT infrastructure, manpower, and financial resources for subscription and maintenance. Uzuegbu, Chukwu, and Ibegwam argued that for an effective utilisation of electronic databases in tertiary institutions, not only are computers and internet connection necessary, creating an easy-to-use interface is indispensable¹⁸. The best way to justify these investments is to make sure that information users make the maximum use of the acquired resources.

For academic libraries to measure the return on investment, the criteria for measurement must be clear cut. According to Tenopir, there are three distinct values of electronic resources that can be measured. These are implicit values, explicit values, and derived values¹⁹. This is taken to mean the ability of the resources to meet the information needs of the users as well as their usefulness in creating further knowledge. Researchers such as Elsayed and Saleh²⁰ as well as Kingman and McClure among others, have also focused on the level of satisfaction users derive from using electronic resources. However, the basic step before information resources can add any value or satisfy the users is for them to be used. As a result, librarians are understandably concerned about the level of use of these databases.

Studies have suggested that information users may not be using subscribed databases to the expected level. For instance, Mehrandasht and Hariri calculated the amount spent by an Iranian University on e-databases such as Scopus,

¹⁵ O. U. Idhalama, E. D. Krubu, *Fee-based library services: a sine-qua-non in the effective management of libraries*, Open Journal of Social Science and Humanities, vol. 1: 2018, no. 1, pp. 01-08.

¹⁶ C. O. Nnadozie, *Alternative funding models for Nigerian academic libraries*, Library Philosophy and Practice, Paper, 2013, 904.

¹⁷ M. Kowalsky, op. cit.

¹⁸ C. P. Uzuegbu, O. C. Chukwu, A. Ibegwam, *Creating universal resource locator links on library computers desktop: A panacea for students' underutilization of subscribed electronic databases in academic institutions in Nigeria*, Annals of Library and Information Studies, vol. 59: 2012, June, pp. 97-105

¹⁹ C. R. V. Tenopir, D.W. King, *Scholarly Reading and the Value of Academic Library Collections: results of a study in six UK universities*, Insights, vol. 25: 2012, no. 2, pp. 130-149.

²⁰ A. M. Elsayed, E. I. Saleh, op. cit.

ScienceDirect, and Ovid. This was compared with the rate of use and permeability in order to select beneficial collections, and also determine the position of these resources among the users. Data was collected using two methods of frequency of use and cost-benefit analysis. Among these three databases, ScienceDirect and Scopus had the highest rate of use. The study concluded that the average time spent on each database daily is about 20 minutes which is considered as very low²¹.

Similarly, Oyewole and Adetimirin investigated the perception of lecturers and postgraduates of libraries as promoters of teaching, learning, and research at the University of Ibadan. The survey method was adopted for the study and simple random sampling method was used to select sample size of 38 lecturers and 233 postgraduates. Results revealed that the overall perception was not favourable as 62% of lecturers and 77.7% of postgraduates indicated that they were not satisfied with the resources and facilities in the library²².

There is a consensus among experts that librarians have important roles to perform in enhancing the effective use of the available resources. AlAwadhi and Daihani (2018) suggested that librarians are often enthusiastic about marketing electronic databases through word of mouth, use of social media, and during traditional and digital reference interactions with library users²³. To effectively market the subscribed OEDs, librarians are also building the Information Technology skills to be able to interact better with the database and be more effective in guiding users through the use of OEDs. Indeed, librarians are central to every measure put in place by academic libraries to boost the use of OEDs among all categories of users, as they are the ones to implement the programmes.

One of the programmes usually instituted by academic libraries to boost OEDs use is user education. Libraries all over the world have designed basic instruction programmes delivered through several models which include formal classes, webcasts, library visits, and others²⁴. Studies have also shown that libraries are now adopting marketing strategies to create awareness about the available OEDs to stimulate the interest of the academic community in these databases. Libraries are using print and electronic media as well as special events to promote the use of OEDs. Some of the printed tools that have been developed include; flyers, banners/posters, and Newsletters among others²⁵. Others include social media posts, seminars, workshops, and orientation programmes²⁶.

²¹ A. Mehrandasht, N. Hariri, *Cost-Benefit Analysis of Databases Science Direct, Scopus, and Ovid in Qom University of Medical Sciences Based on SAMAA index (Evaluation of Electronic Resources)*, Iran, Qom University of Medical Sciences Journal, vol. 9: 2016: 2016, no. 12, pp. 58-64.

²² O. Oyewole, A. Adetimirin, *Lecturers and Postgraduates Perception of Libraries as Promoters of Teaching, Learning, and Research at the University of Ibadan, Nigeria*, New Review of Academic Librarianship, vol. 21: 2015, no. 1, pp. 83-93.

²³ S. AlAwadhi, S. M. Al-Daihani, *Marketing academic library information services using social media*, Library Management, 20180. <https://doi.org/10.1108/LM-12-2017-0132>

²⁴ H. Julien, M. Gross, D. Latham. *Survey of information literacy instructional practices in US academic libraries*. College & research libraries 79, no. 2, 2018, P. 179.

²⁵ R. R. Kumar, *Marketing electronic information resources (EIRS) in academic libraries: a conceptual study*. International Journal of Library and Information Studies. Vol. 7, no. 4, 2017, p. 217-26.

²⁶ S. AlAwadhi, S. M. Al-Daihani, op cit.

Methodology

The quantitative research method was adopted in the conduct of this study. The population of the study includes all academic libraries in one hundred and seventy-one (171) universities in Nigeria. However, a purposive sampling technique was adopted to select University Librarians, Electronic Resource personnel, and Acquisition Librarians as the study's respondents. The instrument used for data collection was a self-developed questionnaire. The questionnaire was prepared electronically using Google Forms and distributed through channels such as WhatsApp groups, email groups, and discussion forums. This is because the respondents were spread across the thirty-six states in the six geopolitical zones of Nigeria. Sixty-four (64) responses were received; nine (9) of the responses were excluded because they were not properly filled. Fifty-five (55) responses from forty-one institutions (41) were used for data analysis. The number of responding institutions (41) makes up twenty-four percent (24%) of the number of universities in Nigeria. The responding institutions include Federal, State, and private-owned universities and research institutes across Nigeria as presented in Table I. The data collected for the study were statistically presented and analysed using descriptive statistics such as percentage counts, mean analysis. The decision rule is to accept any item with a mean score of 2.50 and above. This means that any items with a mean score lower than 2.50 is rejected.

Findings

Table I: Responses from Universities and Research Institutes across the Six Geopolitical Zones in Nigeria

S/N	Name of Institution	Owner	Geopolitical Zone	Frequency	Percentage %
1	ABU Zaria	Federal Government	North West	2	1.8
2	Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi	Federal Government	North East	1	1.8
3	Afe Babalola University, Ado-Ekiti	Private	South West	1	1.8
4	Ajayi Crowther University, Oyo	Private	South West	4	7.3
5	Al-Hikman University, Ilorin	Private	North Central	1	1.8
6	Al-Qalam University, Katsina	Private	North West	1	1.8
8	American University of Nigeria, Yola	Private	North East	1	1.8
9	Atiba University, Oyo.	Private	South West	3	5.5
10	Bingham University, Karu, Nasarawa State	Private	North Central	1	1.8
11	Caritas University, Enugu	Private	South East	1	1.8
12	COOU Anambra State	State Government	South East	1	1.8
13	Elizade University, Ilara-mokin, Ondo State.	Private	South West	1	1.8

S/N	Name of Institution	Owner	Geopolitical Zone	Frequency	Percentage %
14	Federal University, Gashua, Yobe State	Federal Government	North East	1	1.8
15	Federal University, Otueke	Federal Government	South South	1	1.8
16	Federal University of Technology, Minna	Federal Government	North Central	1	1.8
17	Greenfield University, Kaduna	Private	North West	1	1.8
18	Ignatius Ajuru University of Education. Port Harcourt	State Government	South South	1	1.8
19	Kings University, Ode Omu	Private	South West	1	1.8
20	Kwara State University, Malete	State Government	North Central	1	1.8
21	Ladoke Akintola University of Technology, Ogbomosho.	State Government	South West	1	1.8
22	Lagos State University	State Government	South West	2	3.6
23	Landmark University, Omu-Aran	Private	North Central	1	1.8
24	Lead City University, Ibadan.	Private	South West	3	5.5
25	Nigeria Police Academy, Kano	Federal Government	North West	3	5.5
26	Nigerian Institute of Medical Research, Lagos.	Federal Government	South West	1	1.8
27	OAU Ile-Ife	Federal Government	South West	1	1.8
28	OAUSTECH	State Government	South West	1	1.8
29	Obong University, Obong Ntak	Private	South South	1	1.8
30	Precious Cornerstone University, Ibadan	Private	South West	1	1.8
31	Redeemer's University, Ede	Private	South West	1	1.8
32	St Albert the Great Major Seminary, Abeokuta	Private	Private	1	1.8
33	St Augustine University, Epe	Private	South West	1	1.8
34	Sule Lamido University, Jigawa	State Government	North West	1	1.8
35	Tansian University, Umunya.	Private		1	1.8
36	University of Abuja	Federal Government	North Central	1	1.8
37	University of Ibadan	Federal Government	South West	3	5.5
38	University of Ilorin	Federal Government	North Central	1	1.8
39	University of Lagos	Federal Government	South West	3	5.5
40	University of Maiduguri	Federal Government	North East	1	1.8

S/N	Name of Institution	Owner	Geopolitical Zone	Frequency	Percentage %
41	University of Medical Sciences Ondo	State Government	South West	1	1.8
			Total	55	100.0

Table II: Demographic characteristics

Academic Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
BLIS	11	20.0
HND(LIS)	5	9.1
MLIS	31	56.3
PhD	7	12.7
Total	55	100.0
Work Experience		
1 - 5 years	15	27.3
6 - 10 years	23	41.8
11 - 15 years	8	14.5
16 - 20 years	5	9.1
above 20years	4	7.3
Total	55	100.0
Gender		
Female	14	25.5
Male	41	74.5
Total	55	100.0

Table II provides a representation of the demographic characteristics of the respondents. Out of the fifty-five (55) respondents, 12.7% (7) have a Doctorate degree, 56.3% (31) have a Masters Degree, 20% (11) hold Bachelor degrees, while 9.1% (5) hold Higher National Diploma (HND). The table further reveals the working experience of the respondents. 7.3% (4) have over 20 years of working experience; 9.1% (5) have between 16 to 20 years; 14.5% (8) have 11 to 15 years; while 41.8% (23) and 27.3% (15) have 6 to 10 and 1 to 5 years of working experience, respectively. Analysis of the gender revealed more male 74.5% (41) than female 25.5% (14) respondents.

Table III: Access to Online Electronic Database

Online Database	Accessibility				Subscription Type			
	Yes	%	No	%	Paid	%	Free	%
African Journals Online	26	47.3	29	52.7	1	1.8	25	45.5
African Law Library	9	16.4	46	83.6	-	-	9	16.4
ASCE Library	1	1.8	54	98.2	1	1.8	-	-
BioOne	8	14.5	47	85.5	3	5.5	5	9.1
EBSCOhost	41	74.5	14	25.5	41	74.5	-	-
EMBASE	1	1.8	54	98.2	1	1.8	-	-
Emerald	16	29.1	39	70.9	16	29.1	-	-

Online Database	Accessibility				Subscription Type			
	Yes	%	No	%	Paid	%	Free	%
HeinOnline	21	38.2	34	61.8	21	38.2	-	-
IEEE	6	10.9	49	89.1	6	10.9	-	-
JSTOR	27	49.1	28	50.9	11	20.0	16	29.1
Law Archives	5	9.1	50	90.9	-	-	5	9.1
Law Pavilion	23	41.8	32	58.2	23	41.8	-	-
Legalpedia	16	29.1	39	70.9	16	29.1	-	-
MedlinePlus	5	9.1	50	90.9	1	1.8	4	7.3
Reasearch4Life (AGORA, ARDI, GOALI, HINARI, OARE)	32	58.2	23	41.8	11	20.0	21	38.2
ProQuest	15	27.3	40	72.7	15	27.3	-	-
PubChem	3	5.5	52	94.5	-	-	3	5.5
ScienceDirect	14	25.5	41	74.5	14	25.5	-	-
SpringerLink	9	16.4	46	83.6	-	-	9	16.4
Westlaw	3	5.5	52	94.5	3	5.5	-	-
Clinicalkey	5	9.1	50	90.9	4	7.3	1	1.8

To identify the most popular Online Electronic Database (OED) among Nigerian institutions, respondents were asked to indicate the OEDs they have access to and whether they are paid for or free. Table III indicates that EBSCOhost and Research4Life are most accessed with 74.5% (41) and 58.2% (32) of respondents, respectively. The least accessed are EMBASE, PubChem, Westlaw, and Clinicalkey with 1 (1.8%), 3 (5.5%), 3 (5.5%), and 5 (9.1%) respondents, respectively.

Table IV: Mode of Paid Subscription

Mode of Subscription	Frequency	Percentage
Individual institution subscription	35	63.6
Through a consortium	18	32.7
Donor	-	-
Trial access	2	3.6

There are different subscription modes and plans attached to proprietary OEDs. In order to know the weight of cost implication on each mode, respondents were asked to indicate their mode of subscription. Table IV indicates that 63.6% (35) of institutions subscribed to OED individually; 32.7% (18) subscribed through a consortium, while 3.6% (2) were using trial access at the time of data collection. This shows that consortium building has not really taken root among Nigerian academic libraries.

Table V: Average amount Nigerian libraries spend on subscription to online databases annually

Amount	Frequency	Percentage
₦500,000 – 5million	15	27.3
₦6million – 10million	12	21.8
₦11million - 15million	5	9.1
₦16million - 20million	14	25.5
above ₦20million	7	12.7

The major objective of this study was to know how much Nigerian libraries are spending on Online Electronic Database (OED) annually. In view of this, respondents were asked to indicate how much they spend on acquiring OEDs. Table V shows that 27.3% (15) and 25.5% (14) of the respondents indicate that their institutions spend between ₦500,000 to 5 million (average = ₦2,583,333); and ₦16million - 20million (average = ₦18,000,000), respectively.

21.8% (12) of the institutions spend between ₦6million – 10million (average = 8,000,000), 9.1% (5) spend ₦11million - 15million (average = ₦13,000,000), and 12.7% (7) institutions spend above ₦20million to acquire Online Electronic Database (OED).

The calculated average of all the values indicated by the responding institutions, results in ₦12,500,000 or \$32,637 annually. This means that institutions covered by this study spend an average of twelve million, five hundred thousand naira to acquire online electronic databases annually.

Table VI: Perception of Cost of Online Databases in Nigeria

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
Very Expensive	43	78.2
Expensive	11	20.0
Not too expensive	1	1.8

Respondents were asked to express their thoughts on the cost of OEDs. Table VI indicates that a majority of the respondents constituting 78.2% (43) stated that the OEDs are 'very expensive', while 20.0% (11) indicated that they are 'expensive'. Only one respondent indicated that they are 'not too expensive'.

Table VII: Factors responsible for the high cost of e-resources

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
Exchange rate	37	67.3
Individual institution subscription	15	27.3
Taxation	-	-
The number of academic programmes in my university	3	5.5

Table VII shows an analysis of the factors responsible for the high cost of OED. The exchange rate was majorly cited by 67.3% (37) of the respondents while 27.3% (15) blamed the high cost on institutions that pursue OED subscription

individually. 5.5% (3) attributed the high cost of OED to the number of academic programmes undertaken by the institutions. The latter gives rise to a situation where the library has to subscribe to additional specialized databases (for faculties and departments) in addition to general databases.

Table VIII: Services to drive use and increase return on investment (ROI) on OED

Statement	Always	Often	Rarely	Never	Mean	Decision
Current Awareness Services	17 (30.9%)	27 (49.1%)	11 (20.0%)	-	3.13	Accept
Selective Dissemination of Information	14 (25.5%)	18 (32.7%)	19 (34.5%)	4 (7.3%)	2.80	Accept
Document delivery	7 (12.7%)	19 (34.5%)	22 (40.0%)	7 (12.7%)	2.50	Accept
Conducting searches for users	20 (36.4%)	20 (36.4%)	9 (16.4%)	6 (11.0%)	3.10	Accept
E-reference services	15 (27.3%)	14 (25.5%)	17 (30.9%)	8 (16.3%)	2.70	Accept
Electronic mail services	12 (21.8%)	17 (30.9%)	13 (23.6%)	13 (23.6%)	2.57	Accept
A single search box on the library website	6 (10.9%)	15 (27.3%)	17 (30.9%)	17 (30.9%)	2.27	Reject
Integration of Chat plugin on the library websites	8 (14.5%)	9 (16.4%)	14 (25.5%)	24 (43.7%)	2.10	Reject
Mobile services	9 (16.4%)	9 (16.4%)	19 (34.5%)	17 (32.5%)	2.25	Reject
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on the library websites	10 (18.2%)	13 (23.6%)	9 (16.4%)	23 (41.8%)	2.30	Reject

Table VIII shows an analysis of the services rendered by Nigerian libraries to drive use and increase return on investment in electronic database. Current Awareness Services (Mean score=3.13); Conducting searches for users (Mean score=3.10); Selective Dissemination of Information (Mean score=2.80); E-reference services (Mean score=2.70) and document delivery (Mean score=2.50) are ranked highest in the respondents' selection of services rendered by Nigerian libraries.

Table IX: Challenges of Providing Electronic Information Services

Statement	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Decision
Some users are not aware of the availability of the databases	24 (43.6%)	24 (43.6%)	5 (9.1%)	2 (3.6%)	3.31	Accept
Irregular power supply	36 (65.5%)	5 (9.1%)	6 (10.9%)	8 (14.5%)	3.30	Accept
Lack of information literacy and retrieval skills of users	17 (30.9%)	29 (52.7%)	7 (12.7%)	2 (3.6%)	3.15	Accept

Statement	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Decision
Lack of Internet connectivity	23 (41.8%)	16 (29.1%)	12 (21.8%)	4 (7.3%)	3.05	Accept
Some important contents are not made available by the vendors	12 (21.8%)	27 (49.1%)	12 (21.8%)	4 (7.3%)	2.92	Accept
Lack of skilled personnel to manage the database	11 (20.0%)	26 (47.3%)	12 (21.8%)	6 (10.9%)	2.80	Accept
The full-text of most relevant materials are not available for download	19 (34.5%)	18 (32.7%)	13 (23.6%)	5 (9.1%)	2.74	Accept
Lack of remote access	12 (21.8%)	14 (25.5%)	21 (38.2%)	8 (14.5%)	2.60	Accept
Inadequate computers in the library	15 (27.3%)	9 (16.4%)	20 (36.4%)	11 (20.0%)	2.54	Accept

Table IX reveals the challenges in providing electronic information services. The rate of agreement to the challenges were as follows: 'some users are not aware of the availability of the databases' (Mean score=3.31); 'irregular power supply' (Mean score=3.30); 'lack of Internet connectivity' (Mean score=3.51); 'lack of information literacy and retrieval skills of users' (Mean score=3.05). In addition to these, 'some important contents are not made available by the vendors' (Mean score=2.92) and there is a 'lack of skilled personnel to manage the database' (Mean score=2.80).

Discussion of findings

The study reveals that most of the respondents accessed EBSCOhost and Research4Life, while the least accessed are electronic databases EMBASE, PubChem, Westlaw, and ClinicalKey. The latter are least accessed probably due to the special nature of the databases. The popularity of EBSCOhost and Research4Life databases among Nigerian tertiary institutions was also referenced by Uzuegbu and Ibegwam who linked the popularity of EBSCOhost to the effort of the Nigerian University Commission (NUC), the regulatory agency of Nigerian universities in leading consortium subscription to the database. In fact, in the early stages of forming the consortium, Federal universities received support from NUC in the form of a subscription to the EBSCOhost and ScienceDirect. Access to Research4Life was initially free of charge to Nigerian libraries. When Nigeria was moved to Group B (low-cost access), access to Research4Life programs required individual institutions to pay one thousand five hundred United States dollars (\$1,500) an equivalent of five hundred seventy-four thousand five hundred naira (₦574,500) at the official exchange rate of ₦383 to 1 USD, the cost was still moderate compared to similar OEDs. As a result, many libraries continued with the database. Institutions that do not pay this amount only have access to open access resources. The findings of this research indicate that more than half of the institutions subscribed to OEDs individually and about one-third subscribed through consortia. The implication for low participation in consortia is that many of the libraries are unable to maintain a regular

subscription to OEDs. Given the frequent budget cuts and irregular allocation to Nigerian academic libraries, consortium building would have guaranteed access to more of the OEDs with resources for teaching, learning, and research. This shows that consortium building is still in its infancy; as such the potential benefit is not being explored and has not really taken root among Nigerian academic libraries.

To ascertain the average amount expended on OEDs annually in Nigerian university libraries, respondents were asked to indicate how much they spend on acquiring OEDs. The results show that the average of all the values indicated by the respondents' results is ₦12,500,000 annually. This means that institutions covered by this study spend an average of twelve million five hundred thousand naira to acquire online electronic databases annually. This is a significant amount which demands that academic libraries ensure a wide usage of these resources in order to justify the investments made in them.

When the respondents were asked to express their thoughts on the cost of OEDs, almost all the respondents indicated that the OEDs were expensive. Respondents may have compared the cost to their "take-home" to arrive at this. Similarly, Ansari and Raza (2020) also reported that academic libraries consider subscription databases expensive and are concerned about the level of use.

The outcome of this study identifies perceived factors responsible for the high cost of OEDs. The majority (more than two-thirds) of the respondents indicated the exchange rate while about one-third blamed the high cost on institutions that pursue OED subscription individually. The exchange rate problem is exacerbated by the frequent devaluation of the currency as a result of the economic recession. Close to this is the absence of a known national consortium for subscribing to OEDs. As a consequence, individual subscription has placed pressure on the lean budget of the library and also limited the resources available for the use of the patrons.

Regarding the services rendered by Nigerian libraries to drive use and increase the return on investment in OED, results show that current awareness services, conducting searches for users, selective dissemination of information, e-reference services, and document delivery top the list. These efforts are also undertaken by libraries in India as reported by Kumar (2017) as well as Kuwait as found by AlAwadhi, and Al-Daihani, (2018).

Results further revealed the challenges faced in providing OEDs. The respondents indicated that some of their users not being aware of the availability of the databases, irregular power supply and lack of Internet connectivity as well as a lack of information literacy and retrieval skills of users are the major challenges. In addition to these challenges, respondents further noted that some important contents are not made available by the vendors and there is a lack of skilled personnel to manage the database. Those findings are similar to that of Ndungu and Gikandi (2018) which suggests that the infrastructural deficit is endemic in African academic libraries.

Conclusion

The study has shown that Nigerian academic libraries usually subscribe to the EBSCOhost and Research4Life databases with few adding specialized databases such as Law Pavilion, HeinOnline, Legalpedia, and ScienceDirect. Average amount spent annually is in the region of 12,500,000 (twelve million five hundred thousand Naira) or \$32,637. This amount is low by international standards but considering the level of funding available to Nigerian academic institutions and their libraries, it is a considerable amount. However, this amount could have been further mitigated if the country has a stronger currency or if the institutions come together to form a consortium.

The librarians consider the amount spent on acquiring access to online electronic databases high but they are also aware of the role of adequate and relevant information sources in national development, therefore, they are putting in place various programmes and support services to facilitate maximum utilization which would positively impact the ROI in the acquired online electronic databases. The study, therefore, concludes that there is a middling to low return on subscribed OED in Nigerian academic libraries.

However, there are still various huddles that must be scaled for Nigerian academic libraries to reap adequate returns on their investments in online electronic databases. Such challenges include irregular power supply, low Internet bandwidth, and lack of information literacy and retrieval skills of users as well as a lack of enough skilled personnel to manage the database.

Recommendations

From the findings of this study, it is obvious that Nigerian academic libraries are investing heavily in online electronic databases. They are also exploring various options on how to ensure a commensurate return on the funds invested in these databases. Going forward, the following recommendations are considered applicable:

- Nigerian academic libraries should pay urgent attention to the issue of forming strong consortia for the purpose of collective bargaining in acquiring online electronic databases. This will surely result in lower fee per head and ensure that more academic libraries are able to subscribe to relevant databases.
- Tertiary institution administrators and library stakeholders should advocate for special recognition for academic libraries when it comes to sourcing foreign currencies so that they do not have to pay above the official rate when subscribing to online databases.
- It is imperative for librarians to see online databases as key parts of library collections and not supplement resources that can only be handled by a selected few. This way, all library staff will be involved in the promotion of electronic resources in the library which will encourage more users to patronize them instead of relying on search engines such as Google.

- Provision of constant electricity is key since these databases cannot be accessed without electricity. University management should leverage on use of solar powered energy sources or internal generation of electricity instead of depending on the national power grid which is epileptic.
- Increased bandwidth in internet connectivity should also be done by university management as this will prompt usage.

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Adekunle Emmanuel Oyadeyi

Uniwersytet Ajayi Crowther w Oyo. Biblioteka Uniwersytecka

e-mail: oyadeyi.adekunle@gmail.com

ORCID: 0000-0002-7932-4934

Taofeek Abiodun Oladokun

Uniwersytet Lead City w Ibadanie

e-mail: taofeekoladokun1@gmail.com

ORCID: 0000-0001-7015-9496

Oludare Adebajji Shorunke

Uniwersytet w Lagos. Biblioteka Medyczna

e-mail: darebanji@gmail.com

ORCID: 0000-0002-2993-4881

Omobolanle Seri Fasola

Uniwersytet Ajayi Crowther w Oyo. Biblioteka Uniwersytecka

e-mail: os.fasola@acu.edu.ng

ORCID: 0000-0002-7446-4137

Zwrot z inwestycji (ZZI) w subskrypcyjnych bazach nigeryjskich bibliotek akademickich: badanie

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Przysłany: 22 IV 2021

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Adekunle Emmanuel Oyadeyi jest odpowiedzialny za usługi elektronicznych zasobów informacyjnych w Bibliotece T. Y. Danjuma, Uniwersytetu Ajayi Crowther w Oyo. Posiada ponad dziesięcioletnie doświadczenie w zarządzaniu elektronicznymi zasobami informacji. Ma na swoim koncie publikacje w czasopiśmie. Jego zainteresowania badawcze obejmują: zachowanie informacyjne użytkowników; korzystanie z elektronicznych zasobów informacyjnych; digitalizacja; repozytorium cyfrowe, oprogramowanie do zarządzania bibliotekami; motywowanie bibliotekarzy w pracy i satysfakcja. Jest członkiem Stowarzyszenia Bibliotek Nigeryjskich (dalej: SBN).

Taofeek Abiodun Oladokun jest odpowiedzialny za usługi elektronicznych zasobów informacyjnych w bibliotece Uniwersytetu Lead City w Ibadanie. Posiada ponad pięcioletnie doświadczenie w zarządzaniu elektronicznymi zasobami informacji. Ma na swoim koncie

publikacje w czasopismach. Jego zainteresowania badawcze obejmują: elektroniczne systemy informatyczne; doświadczenie użytkownika biblioteki cyfrowej; oprogramowanie do zarządzania informacjami elektronicznymi i biblioteką. Jest członkiem SBN.

Oludare Adebajji Shorunke jest bibliotekarzem zasobów elektronicznych w bibliotece medycznej Uniwersytetu w Lagos (Idi-Araba). Jest certyfikowanym bibliotekarzem w Nigerii, mającym na swoim koncie kilka publikacji w krajowych i międzynarodowych czasopismach. Oludare jest obecnie w trakcie studiów doktoranckich w Instytucie Bibliotekoznawstwa i Informacji Naukowej na Uniwersytecie w Ilorin. Jego zainteresowania badawcze obejmują wykorzystanie zasobów elektronicznych; dostępność; zadowolenie użytkowników i jakość usług bibliotecznych. Jest członkiem SBN.

Omobolanle Seri Fasola jest bibliotekarzem usług technicznych w Bibliotece T. Y. Danjuma Uniwersytetu Ajayi Crowther w Oyo. Jest dyplomowaną bibliotekarką w Nigerii (CLN), mającą na swoim koncie kilka publikacji w lokalnych i międzynarodowych czasopismach oraz materiałów konferencyjnych. Omobolanle jest obecnie w trakcie studiów doktoranckich w Instytucie Bibliotekoznawstwa i Informacji Naukowej na Uniwersytecie Ibadan. Jej zainteresowania badawcze obejmują zarządzanie wiedzą, zachowania organizacyjne, media społecznościowe dla usług bibliotecznych oraz zarządzanie biblioteką. Jest członkiem SBN.

Słowa kluczowe: zwrot z inwestycji; baza subskrypcyjna; koszt; użycie; bibliotekarz; uniwersytety; Nigeria

Streszczenie. **Cel:** Wydaje się, że brakuje literatury na temat tego, ile nigeryjskie biblioteki uniwersyteckie wydają na zakup elektronicznych baz danych (dalej: EBD). Niniejsze opracowanie ma na celu zbadanie rocznych kosztów nabycia tego ważnego i ewoluującego aspektu zbiorów bibliotecznych w celu ustalenia, czy wskaźniki pod względem wykorzystania są współmierne do zainwestowanych pieniędzy.

Metody: W opracowaniu przyjęto ilościową metodę badawczą. W celu zebrania danych od 55 bibliotekarzy z 41 bibliotek akademickich w Nigerii wykorzystano opracowany samodzielnie kwestionariusz. Zebrane dane zostały przetworzone przy użyciu Pakietu Statystycznego dla Nauk Społecznych (PSNS) w wersji 20.

Wnioski: Biblioteki akademickie w Nigerii wydają średnio 12 500 000 nairii nigeryjskich lub 32 637 dolarów amerykańskich rocznie na subskrypcje EBD. Badanie wykazało, że nigeryjskie biblioteki akademickie zazwyczaj subskrybują bazy danych EBSCOhost i Research4Life z kilkoma dodatkowymi bazami specjalistycznymi, takimi jak Law Pavilion, HeinOnline, Legalpedia i ScienceDirect. Aby zapewnić odpowiedni zwrot z inwestycji, biblioteki masowo zapewniają infrastrukturę pomocniczą, edukację użytkowników i inne usługi informacyjne. Jednak wyzwania ograniczające powszechne korzystanie z internetowych baz danych obejmują między innymi nieregularne zasilanie i powolną łączność z Internetem.

Wyniki: Z badania wynika zatem, że zwrot z subskrybowanych EBD w nigeryjskich bibliotekach akademickich jest średni lub niski. Jednak nadal istnieją różne narady, które należy przeskalować, aby nigeryjskie biblioteki akademickie mogły uzyskać odpowiedni zwrot z inwestycji w elektroniczne bazy danych online.

Adekunle Emmanuel Oyadeyi

Ajayi Crowther Universität in Oyo. Universitätsbibliothek

E-Mail: oyadeyi.adekunle@gmail.com

ORCID: 0000-0002-7932-4934

Taofeek Abiodun Oladokun

Lead City Universität in Ibadan

E-Mail: taofeekoladokun1@gmail.com

ORCID: 0000-0001-7015-9496

Oludare Adebajji Shorunke

Universität Lagos. Medizinische Bibliothek

E-Mail: darebanji@gmail.com

ORCID: 0000-0002-2993-4881

Omobolanle Seri Fasola

Ajayi Crowther Universität in Oyo. Universitätsbibliothek

E-Mail: os.fasola@acu.edu.ng

ORCID: 0000-0002-7446-4137

Return on Investment (ROI) in den Subskriptionsdatenbanken nigerianischer Hochschulbibliotheken. Eine Untersuchung

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Adekunle Emmanuel Oyadeyi ist verantwortlich für die Dienste im Bereich der elektronischen Informationsbestände in der T. Y. Danjuma Bibliothek der Ajayi Crowther Universität in Oyo. Er hat eine über neunjährige Erfahrung in der Verwaltung von elektronischen Informationsbeständen und ist Autor von zahlreichen Zeitschriftenpublikationen. Seine Forschungsinteressen umfassen das Informationsverhalten der Benutzer, die Nutzung von elektronischen Informationsbeständen, die Digitalisierung, das Digitalrepositorium, die Software zum Bibliotheksmanagement, die Motivierung der Bibliothekare am Arbeitsplatz und ihre Zufriedenheit. Er ist Mitglied des Verbandes der Nigerianischen Bibliotheken (weiter im Text als VNB).

Taofeek Abiodun Oladokun ist verantwortlich für die Dienste im Bereich der elektronischen Informationsbestände der Lead City Universität in Ibadan und hat eine über fünfjährige Erfahrung in der Verwaltung von elektronischen Informationsbeständen. Er ist

Autor von Zeitschriftpublikationen. Seine Forschungsinteressen umfassen elektronische Informationssysteme, die Erfahrung des Benutzers der digitalen Bibliothek, die Software zur Verwaltung von elektronischen Informationen und der Bibliothek. Er ist Mitglied des VNB.

Oludare Adebajji Shorunke ist zuständig für die elektronischen Bestände der medizinischen Bibliothek der Universität Lagos (Idi-Araba), Diplombibliothekar in Nigeria mit einigen Publikationen in einigen in- und ausländischen Zeitschriften. Er ist zurzeit Teilnehmer des Doktorandenstudiums am Institut für Bibliothekswissenschaft und Wissenschaftliche Information an der Universität Ilorin. Seine Forschungsinteressen beziehen sich auf die Nutzung der elektronischen Bestände, die Zugänglichkeit, die Zufriedenheit der Benutzer wie auch die Qualität der Bibliotheksdienste. Er ist Mitglied des VNB.

Omobolanle Seri Fasola ist zuständig für die technischen Dienste der T. Y. Danjuma Bibliothek der Ajayi Crowther Universität in Oyo; Diplombibliothekarin in Nigeria (CLN) mit einigen Publikationen in den in- und ausländischen Zeitschriften und Tagungsbänden. Sie ist zurzeit Teilnehmerin des Doktorandenstudiums am Institut für Bibliothekswissenschaft und Wissenschaftliche Information an der Universität Ibadan. Ihre Forschungsinteressen umfassen das Wissensmanagement, Organisationsverhalten, die Sozialmedien für die Bibliotheksdienste sowie das Bibliotheksmanagement. Sie ist Mitglied des VNB.

S **tichworte:** Return on Investment; Subskriptionsdatenbank; Kosten; Nutzung; Bibliothekar; Universitäten; Nigeria

Z **usammenfassung. Ziel:** Wie es scheint, gibt es sehr wenig Literatur darüber, wie viel die nigerianischen Universitätsbibliotheken für den Erwerb von elektronischen Datenbanken (weiter im Text als EDB) ausgeben. Die vorliegende Bearbeitung hat zum Ziel, die jährlichen Kosten des Erwerbs von diesem wichtigen und evolvierenden Teil der Bibliotheksbestände zu analysieren, um festzustellen, ob die Nutzungswerte dem investierten Geld entsprechen.

F **orschungsmethode:** In der Bearbeitung bediente man sich einer quantitativen Forschungsmethode. Um die Daten von 55 Bibliothekaren aus 41 Universitätsbibliotheken in Nigeria zu sammeln, nutzte man die eigenständig bearbeitete Umfrage. Die gesammelten Daten wurden dann mithilfe vom Statistikpaket für Sozialwissenschaften (SPSW) 2.0 verarbeitet.

S **chlussfolgerung:** Die Universitätsbibliotheken in Nigeria geben durchschnittlich 12.500.000 Naira bzw. 32.637 USD jährlich für die Subskription der EDB. Die Untersuchung bewies, dass die nigerianischen Universitätsbibliotheken gewöhnlich die Datenbanken EBSCOhost und Research4Life subskribieren, und zwar zusätzlich mit den Fachdatenbanken wie Law Pavilion, HeinOnline, Legalpedia und ScienceDirect. Um den entsprechenden Return on Investment zu erhalten, sorgen die Bibliotheken massenweise für die Hilfsinfrastruktur, die Ausbildung der Benutzer und andere Informationsdienste. Die Herausforderungen, die die breite Nutzung der Internetdatenbanken einschränken, beziehen sich u. a. auf die unregelmäßige Energieversorgung und eine langsame Internetverbindung.

E **rgebnisse:** Aus der Untersuchung ergibt sich also, dass der Return on Investment aus den subskribierten EDB in den nigerianischen Universitätsbibliotheken entweder mittel oder niedrig ist. Doch gibt es immer noch verschiedene zu überdenkende Lösungen, dank denen die nigerianischen Universitätsbibliotheken den entsprechenden Return on Investment aus den elektronischen Datenbanken erhalten können.