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**USE OF INTERNET SEARCH ENGINES BY LECTURERS AND INSTRUCTORS  
(ACADEMICS) IN OYO STATE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, LANLATE**

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**Abstract:**

*This Study examined use of Internet Search Engines (ISEs) by academics in Oyo State College of Education, Lanlate. Objectives included: extent of use, which ISEs, relevance, subject areas and search for local information. Survey design was employed, study population was 131, 105 (Female 19(18.1%) and male 86(81.9%)) respondents were purposively selected, interviewed and returned questionnaire titled "UISE 1&2". Collected data were analysed using tables, frequency and percentages. The study revealed that academics used e-mail, ISEs and discussion group preferred Yahoo, Google and Bing, preferred reasons: friendliness, speed of access, quality of items found. 55(52.38%) found results, 80(76.19%) found ISEs easy to use, 90(85.71%) found ISEs useful for academic. Academics used ISEs to search for local information sources. Challenges facing usage of ISEs included: network failure, low information retrieval skills, unstable power and prohibitive cost. Information professionals should be trained, infrastructures for Internet Search Engine and stable power be provided.*

**Keywords:** *Academics, Internet Search Engines, Oyo State College of Education, Lanlate*

**Background to the Study**

Survival of the community depends on the level, exactness and timeliness of available information. Such information are often useful in operational, tactical and strategic decision making. It also assists greatly in eliminating uncertainty. Succinctly put, without information there could not be any form of communication and decision-making. The recent development in the ICT has led to the spread of electronically available information resources. These resources include the internet

search engines which crawl databases and search through several terms, index the searches, then rank the retrieved data and information in order to determine its relevance and make them available to users on demand.

Internet search engines made plethora of information available ranging from the delivery of classroom lecture to teaching in general. It is of tremendous assistance to research often conducted by lecturers and in the service of community development. Students as well often use internet search engines in sourcing data and information useful in writing and presenting term paper, assignment and in conducting final year research project. This is as corroborated by (Agboola, 2003) and (Oduwole, 2004), that in recent years, the opportunity presented by the use of internet search in tertiary institutions is unprecedented.

Search engines also provide easy access to some reference materials like: encyclopedia, thesaurus, dictionary, gazette, journal, conference proceeding, magazine and newspapers. Search engines also provide e-print in details and other types of digital works by authors in an academic department, school or institution which comprise electronic thesis and dissertation, project as well as presentation by authors of different institutions. This has improved the potentials for wide banquet online search and retrieval of electronic content easily.

Since 2006, Google is the top and most used search engine. Yahoo follows at the second place. Msn/Live was between 2006 and 2008 the third most used search engine. But in 2009, Msn/Live gave the place to their new and successful search engine Bing. The ranking is determined by the preferences of users. At the end of 2009, Google is most used search engine, Yahoo is the second one and Bing is the third one. Bing followed by Ask and AOL Search as fourth and fifth. Other popular search engines include: AltaVista, Netscape, Baidu, Excite, Duck Duck Go, Wolfram Alpha, Yandex, Lycos and Cha-cha. There are many more functional search engines but due to limited awareness, researchers do not fully exploit them.

Scholars, researchers and lecturers with Internet Search Engines find information on almost everything. However, a large number of studies have been conducted to identify factors influencing adoption and use of this relatively new information technology search engines, web sites design and usability. Just as Sharna (2023) puts it aptly, Internet helps in professional lives, educational purposes and to

do research or add to the knowledge of various subjects. Popular search engines like Google, Yahoo offer an easy and instant reach to the vast amount of information in just a few seconds. It contains a wealth of knowledge that can be searched at any time. The internet has introduced improvements in technology, communication and online entertainment. The scholar listed the benefits of the internet to include: effective cost and affordable education, allowing students to be in constant touch with their teachers and classmates, being a major tool for effective teaching and learning, offering students easy access to quality education materials. There are many paid sites which provide education resources which are rich in quality and are easily understandable. The internet keeps up to date with the latest information regarding the subjects. It helps the students with the learning process as it helps to simplify the knowledge.

Investigating the factors that influence user acceptance of search engines and its adoption in different contexts continues to be a focal interest in Management Information Systems (MIS) and Information Science (IS) research. However, limited studies have also been conducted on the usefulness and ease of use of websites and search engines. It would help MIS, IS and search engines designers to improve the system performance and build optimized search engines. It is also expected that IS, MIS and researchers will benefit from this study to better understand users' interaction with the search engines.

It is assumed that the practice of search engine use for information search will be most prevalent amongst lecturers and instructors. As such as an academic environment as the Oyo State College of Education, Lanlate fits well into this group. In view of this, lecturers and instructors from various departments (because they are more into lecturing and research) work formed the study population for the survey. Therefore, this study examined the use of Internet search engines' by the academics.

#### **Aim and Objectives of the Study**

The main aim of this study was the examination of the use of Internet search engines' by lecturers and instructors (academics) in Oyo State College of Education, Lanlate. The specific objectives included the following.

- (i) Extent to which the lecturers and instructors use Internet search engines.
- (ii) Internet Search Engine the lecturers and instructors prefer.
- (iii) Relevance of these Internet Search Engines to lecturers and instructors.
- (iv) Subject areas on which lecturers and instructors used Internet to source local information.
- (v) Extent to which lecturers and instructors search for local information sources.

To put the research in its proper focus, the following research questions were put forward and answered in this study.

### **Research Questions**

To keep the study in its' proper focus, attempts were made to provide answers to the following questions:

- (i) To what extent do the respondents use the Internet?
- (ii) What search engine(s) are commonly used and why?
- (iii) Do respondents prefer any particular search engine(s) and why?
- (iv) How relevant are Internet Search Engines to lecturers and instructors?
- (v) On which subject area(s) do respondents use the Internet to source local information?

### **Review of Relevant Literature**

The literature is awash with scholarly articles on the use of Internet search engines. For instance, Oladapo (2006) comparatively analysed the extent to which Internet Search Engines covered local information sources on five selected African countries. In realization of its objectives a subsidiary study was conducted that investigated the use of internet by lecturers in the University of Ibadan using survey approach. From the study, it was evident that local information sources on African countries on the Internet were at the lowest ebb. The study then concluded that governments and public sector need to expand global linkages and accessibility, thereby increasing African local content on the information super highway such that the much-desired economic, social and political developments would not elude us in Africa.



Shahibi and Rusli (2017) discussed the use of the Internet among final year students of the Faculty of Information Management, UiTMPuncakPerdana and the impact of its use on their academic achievement. The results showed that student interest in university among final year students of the faculty of information management is the most effective factor in improving student academic achievement. Besides, the researcher also found that online media usage for Education also helped students in improving their academic achievement.

In another article, Oyewole and Alegbeleye (2018) examined undergraduates' preference between web search engines and reference sources for research activities. Descriptive research design was adopted for their study and the study population consisted of all 12,173 regular undergraduates in University of Ibadan (UI) and 2,388 in Redeemer's University, Ede, Osun State, Nigeria (RUN). Multistage random sampling technique was used to select the sample size of 386 and the questionnaire was research instrument. Results of their study showed that majority of undergraduates in UI and RUN indicated their preference for web search engines for research activities as against reference sources.

Talking about the use of Web search engines and personalisation in information searching for educational purposes, SalehiDu and Ashman (2018) surveyed 120 university students about their information-seeking behaviour. Students' information access while using Web search, through twenty-eight one-on-one study sessions was examined using survey participants. First, most participating students declared that they use Google search engine as their primary information-seeking tool. Second, 60% of the clicked result links during the study sessions were located in pages 2+ of the search results without personalisation influencing the relevance of the top-ranked search results. In real-life scenarios pages 2+ of the search results receive only 10% of the clicks. Students also expressed more satisfaction with the relevance of non-personalised over personalised search results.

Other scholars such as Abdullahi, Muhammad and Amao (2021) investigated the awareness and use of search engines for information retrieval by lecturers of two universities in Bauchi State. Quantitative research methodology through cross sectional survey design was

adopted. The respondents of the study were 200 lecturers using purposive sampling method. The analysis in the study was done using frequency counts and simple percentages. The results revealed that many lecturers were aware and used search engines daily to access information on internet. Google scholar, Chrome and Firefox were the most used search engines. The study also revealed that lecturers are well skilled in the use of search engines. Challenges of use of search engines included: network failure, low information retrieval skills, irregularly power supply and low network bandwidth. The study recommended that lecturers should be provided with updated or new ICT infrastructures for search engines in research and academic purpose, and power should be provided regularly.

### Methodology

This study investigated the use of Internet search engines' by lecturers and instructors in the Oyo State College of Education, Lanlate. The descriptive survey research design was employed in this study. Survey approach has the capability of exploring the field of information science by direct measurement. The lecturers and instructors from various schools in Oyo State College of Education, Lanlate as presented in table 1 formed the study population for the survey.

**Table 1: Academic Staff of Oyo State College of Education, Lanlate**

S/N	Category	Male		Female		Total	
		No	%	No	%	No	%
1	Chief Lecturer	35	92.1	3	7.9	38	29
2	Principal Lecturer	13	81.25	3	18.75	16	12.21
3	Senior Lecturer	34	87.18	5	12.82	39	29.77
4	Lecturer I	12	75	4	25	16	12.21
5	Lecturer II	4	80	1	20	5	3.81
6	Lecturer III	9	81.82	2	18.18	11	8.40
7	Assistant Lecturer	-	-	-	-	-	-
8	Instructor	5	83.34	1	16.66	6	4.60
	Total	<b>112</b>	<b>85.5</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>14.5</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>100</b>

*Genuinely and accurately obtained from records, 24<sup>th</sup> January, 2023*

**Source:** Establishment Office, Oyo State College of Education, Lanlate

Since the total academic staff (lecturers and instructors) was 131, all of them served as the study population. However, with several visits only 105 questionnaires were duly filled and returned. The total number of respondents for this study was therefore 105 representing 80.1% of the study population. This was presented in table 2.

**Table 2: Sample size**

S/N	Category	Male		Female		Total	
		No	%	No	%	No	%
1	Chief Lecturer	20	86.96	3	13.04	23	100
2	Principal Lecturer	8	72.72	3	27.28	11	100
3	Senior Lecturer	30	85.71	5	14.29	35	100
4	Lecturer I	11	73.33	4	26.67	15	100
5	Lecturer II	4	80.00	1	20.00	5	100
6	Lecturer III	8	80.00	2	20.00	10	100
7	Assistant Lecturer	-		-		-	
8	Instructor	5	83.33	1	16.67	6	100
	Total	86	81.90	19	18.10	105	100

**Source:** Author's Analysis, 27<sup>th</sup> January, 2023.

All the female lecturers and the only instructor, representing 19 (18.10%) of the total respondents were selected, while, 86 (81.90%) were male lecturers and the five instructors were also selected as respondents. The questionnaire and interview schedule were the principal methods of data collection used in this study for collection of data from the respondents. The targeted respondents were internet search engine users. The use of questionnaire and interview schedule availed the opportunity to achieve some or all of the following purposes: to have common and structure questions in achieving set objectives, remove bias during analysis and presentation of findings and to afford the respondents convenient time to attend to the questions. The data collection instruments were designed to provide insight into such questions as follow. (i) To what extent do the respondents use the Internet? (ii) What search engine(s) are commonly used and why? (iii) Do respondents prefer any particular search engine(s) and why? (iv) How relevant have search engines become to lecturers? (v) On which subject area(s) are respondents using the Internet to source local information? (vi) To what extent do the respondents search for local information sources on the Internet, (if

they do)? Apart from the structured questions however, there were few open-ended questions in which the respondents were requested to provide answers without a list of suggested choices. The instruments were divided into six sections, each contained questions flowing from one section to the other and structured in such a way as to provide answers that helped accomplish the set aim and objectives of the study.

Section one dealt with demographic characteristic of respondents, section two with basic background about Internet awareness, and section three about the use of Internet search engines. Section four sought information on whether Internet search engines have become part of what lecturers use in lecturing. Section five and six provided data on the level of proficiency, perception and behaviour within which the users of Internet searched engines respectively.

The items in the data collection instruments were edited by one expert each, who is a Chief Lecturer from Departments of Geography and Computer Science, Oyo State College of Education, Lanlate. This ensured the face and content validity of the instruments. The reliability Cronbach's alpha of 0.89 and 0.77 were computed for the interview schedules and questionnaires respectively. Hence, the instruments were reliable. The data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics such as tables, cross tabulations, frequency counts and simple percentages, where necessary graphs were used to show pertinent trends.

### **Findings and Discussion**

Information was extracted from the questionnaire and the interview schedule in such a way that it reflected the objectives of the study. The data was analysed using descriptive statistics. Tables showing frequencies, percentages, cross tabulations and graphs were drawn to present the results and these guided the discussion of findings and conclusions made at the end of this study.

### **Research Question One: To what extent do the respondents use the Internet?**

In an attempt at answering research question two, the analysis was presented in terms of period and frequency of use of internet by the academics. These were presented in tables 3 and 4 respectively.

**Table 3: Period of Internet Usage**

S/N	Period	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Less than 1 year	05	4.76
2.	Between 1 and 5 years	35	33.33
3.	Above 10 years	65	61.91
4.	Total	105	100

**Source: Author's Analysis, 2023**

The usage of internet search engines by the lecturers and instructors in the Oyo State College of Education, Lanlate was as contained in table 2. A total of 65 (61.91%) responded that they used internet search engines for over 10 years. Another 35 (33.33%) used it between 1 and 5 years. The remaining 5 (4.76%) used it less than 1 year ago.

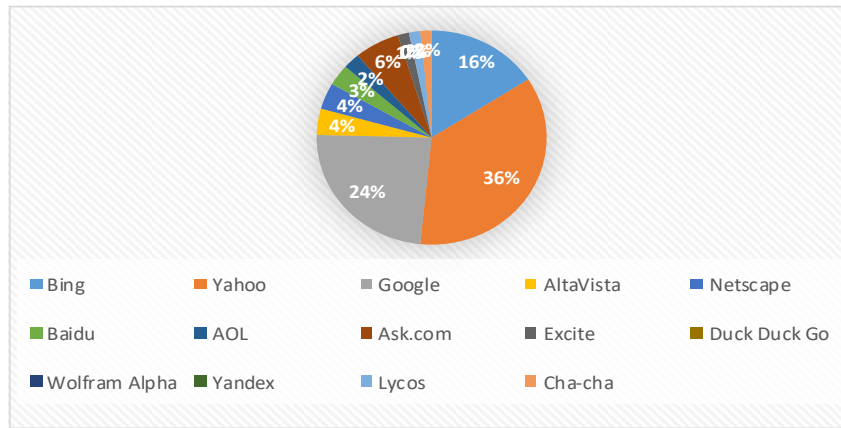
**Table 4: Frequency of Use of Internet Tools by Lecturers and Instructors in Oyo State College of Education, Lanlate**

S/N	Internet Tools	6-7 days a week	3-5 days a week	1-2 days a week	Once every few weeks	Less than once every few weeks	Not at all
1.	E-mail	15 (14.28%)	24 (22.85)	24 (22.85)	36 (34.28%)	05 (4.76%)	01 (0.95%)
2.	Web Browser	-	-				
3.	Search Engine		30 (28.57%)	25 (23.81%)	30 (28.57%)	20 (19.05%)	-
4.	Chat	-	-	50 (47.61%)	15 (14.28%)	35 (33.33%)	05 (4.76%)
5.	Newsgroup	-	-	-	10 (9.52%)	60 (57.14%)	45 (42.86%)
6.	Discussion Group	-	-	-	18 (17.14%)	62 (59.07)	35 (33.33%)
7.	Use-net	-	-	-	-	75 (71.42%)	30 (33.33%)
8.	List serves	-	-	05 (4.76%)	15 (14.28%)	35 (33.33%)	50 (47.61%)

**Source: Author's Analysis, 2023**

Regarding the frequency of use of Internet tools by Lecturers and Instructors in Oyo State College of Education, nearly all the respondents used e-mail with the exception of only 1 (0.95%) of them. However, 36(34.28%) respondents used e-mail at least once a week. Another 24(22.85%) of the respondents often used e-mail 3-5 days a week and 1-2 days a week respectively. E-mail was common and popular among the academic staff of Oyo State College of Education, Lanlate. Some of the respondents said they used e-mail to send their manuscripts and receive correspondence on it. While web browser was alien to them, as no one use it. As regards Internet Search engines 30(28.75%) used it 3-5 days a week and once every few weeks, another 25 (23.81%) and 20 (19.05%) respondents used the e-mail 1-2 days a week and Less than once every few weeks respectively. The academic added that they used it to search for scholarly articles on the web. Only 10 (9.52%) and 60 (57.14%) respondents used Newsgroup once every few weeks and less than once every few weeks, another 45 (42.86%) did not use it at all. Only 62 (59.07) used Discussion Group less than once every few weeks, another 18 (17.14%) used it once every few weeks, while 35 (33.33%) did not use it at all. The academics said they used Discussion Group to attend and participate in online seminars and conferences, hence its popularity. Only 75 (71.42%) used Use-net, while 05 (4.76%), 15 (14.28%) and 35 (33.33%) used List serves 1-2 days a week, once every few weeks and less than once every few weeks respectively.

**Research Question Two: What search engine(s) are commonly used and why?**

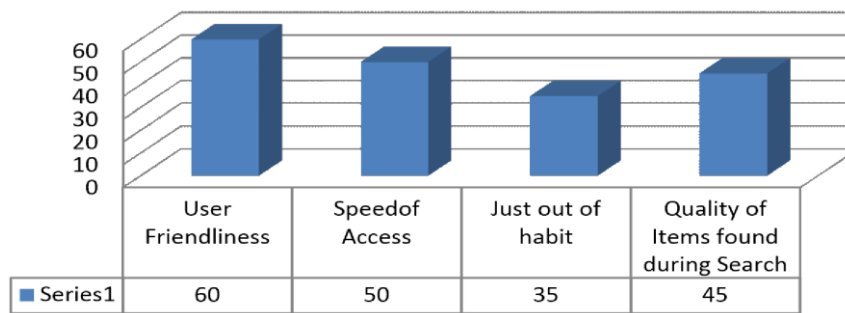


**Figure 1:**Internet search Engines’ preferred by lecturers and instructors in the Oyo State College of Education, Lanlate

**\*Source:** Author’s Analysis, 2023

At a glance the figure 1 showed that Yahoo was the most preferred Internet Search among the lecturers and instructors in Oyo State College of Education, Lanlate. 36% of the respondents used Yahoo, another 24% and 16% used Google and Bing respectively.

**Research Question Three: Do respondents prefer any particular search engine(s) and why?**



**Figure 2:** Reasons for preferring Internet Search Engines by Lecturers and Instructors in Oyo State College of Education, Lanlate

*\*Responses greater than 105 because of multiple responses*

**\*\*Source:** Author’s Analysis, 2023

A quick glance at the Figure 2 showed the reasons while academics in the Oyo State College of Education, Lanlate preferred internet search engines. It revealed that 60 of the respondents preferred using Internet Search Engines because they are user friendly, another 50 because of speed of access, 45 owing to quality of items found during the search, only 35 used Internet search engines just out of habit.

#### Research Question Four: How relevant are Internet Search Engines to lecturers and instructors?

**Table 5: Internet Search Engines relevance to lecturers and instructors**

S/N		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total Agree	Total Disagree
1.	I usually find the needed information when I use Internet search Engine.	28 (26.67%)	77 (73.33%)	-	-	105 (100%)	-
2.	I usually find the most relevant information on the first page of the search results.	81 (77.14%)	24 (22.86%)	-	-	105 (100%)	-
3.	I don't usually look beyond the first page of the search results for relevant information.	20 (19.05)	65 (61.90%)	20 (19.05)	-	85 (80.95%)	20 (19.05%)
4.	I don't usually look beyond the first 5 pages of the search	20 (19.04%)	60 (57.14%)	15 (14.29%)	10 (9.52%)	80 (76.19%)	25 (23.81%)



	results for relevant information.						
5.	Too many search results are usually returned for my search	15 (9.52%)	40 (38.09%)	40 (38.09%)	10 (9.52%)	55 (52.38%)	50 (47.62%)
6.	I usually find Internet search Engine difficult to use.	12 (11.43%)	13 (12.38%)	75 (71.43%)	05 (4.76%)	25 (23.81%)	80 (76.19%)
7.	I usually find Internet Search Engine useful for academic purposes	15 (14.29)	75 (71.43%)	05 (4.76%)	10 (9.52%)	90 (85.71%)	15 (14.29)

Source: Author’s Analysis, 2023

In table 5, the total of ‘agree and disagree’ was as presented towards right end of the table. All the respondents 105 (100%) agreed that they usually find the needed information when they used Internet search Engine. Another 105 (100%) usually find the most relevant information on the first page of the search results. Another 85 (80.95%) of the respondents did not usually look beyond the first page of the search results for relevant information, while only 20 (19.05%) looked beyond the first page. Another 55 (52.38%) of the respondents often found too many search results for their search, while 50 (47.62%) did not find too many returns. Only 25 (23.81%) of the respondents usually found Internet search Engine difficult to use, while 80 (76.19%) did not find it difficult. Finally, 90 (85.71%) of the respondents found Internet Search Engine useful for academic purposes, while 15 (14.29) did not.

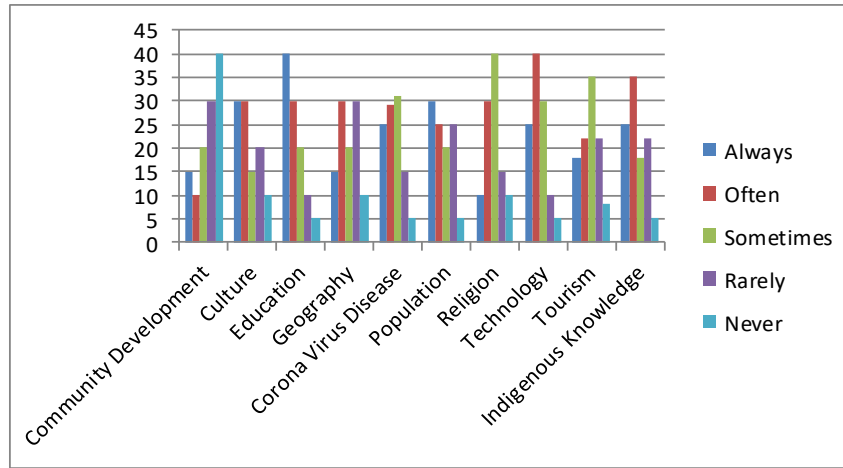
**Research Question Five: On which subject area(s) do respondents use the Internet to source local information?**

**Table 6: Usage of Internet Search Engines to search for Local Information Sources**

		Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
1.	Community Development	15 (14.29)	10 (9.52%)	20 (19.05%)	30 (28.57%)	40 (38.09%)
2.	Culture	30 (28.57%)	30 (28.57%)	15 (14.29)	20 (19.05%)	10 (9.52%)
3.	Education	40 (38.09%)	30 (28.57%)	20 (19.05%)	10 (9.52%)	05 (4.76%)
4.	Geography	15 (9.53%)	30 (28.57%)	20 (19.05%)	30 (28.57%)	10 (9.52%)
5.	Corona Virus Disease	25 (23.81%)	29 (27.61%)	31 (29.52%)	15 (14.29)	05 (4.76%)
6.	Population	30 (28.57%)	25 (23.81%)	20 (19.05%)	25 (23.81%)	05 (4.76%)
7.	Religion	10 (9.52%)	30 (28.57%)	40 (38.09%)	15 (14.29)	10 (9.52%)
8.	Technology	25 (23.81%)	40 (38.09%)	30 (28.57%)	10 (9.52%)	05 (4.76%)
9.	Tourism	18 (17.14%)	22 (20.95%)	35 (33.33%)	22 (20.95%)	08 (7.62%)
10.	Indigenous Knowledge	25 (23.81%)	35 (33.33%)	18 (17.14%)	22 (20.95%)	05 (4.76%)

**Source: Author's Analysis, 2023**

The extent to which lecturers and instructors used Internet search engines to search for local information sources was as presented in table 6. This was also presented graphically in figure 3 to show its trend.



**Figure 3: Usage of Internet Search Engines to search for Local Information Sources**

**Discussion of Topical Findings**

E-mail is commonly used by academic staff of Oyo State College of Education, Lanlate. Nearly all the respondents were using e-mail. They used e-mail to send their manuscripts and receive correspondence on it, while web browser is alien to them. The academics often used Internet Search engines to search for scholarly articles on the web. The academics said they used Discussion Group to attend and participate in online seminars and conferences, hence its popularity. The respondents preferred using Internet Search Engines because they are user friendly, another speed of access, quality of items found during the search, and just out of habit. This finding is in tandem with Shahibi and Rusli (2017) when the scholars expressly opined that using Internet Search Engines to source information positively impacted on academic achievement and Abdullahi, Muhammad and Amao (2021) confirming this claim, also submitted that Internet Search Engines considerably improved academic achievement.

Yahoo was the most popular Internet Search Engines among the lecturers and instructors in Oyo State College of Education, Lanlate, followed by Google and Bing in that order. This finding partly contracted with Abdullahi, Muhammad and Amao (2021) who revealed that many lecturers of two universities in Bauchi State used Google

scholar, Chrome and Firefox mostly used as their Internet Search Engines.

All the respondents agreed that they usually find the needed information when they used Internet Search Engine and usually find the most relevant information on the first page of the search results. Most of the respondents did not usually look beyond the first page of the search results for relevant information. 55 (52.38%) of the respondents often found too many search results for their search. Only 80 (76.19%) of the respondents did not find Internet Search Engine difficult to use. Interestingly, 90 (85.71%) respondents found Internet Search Engine useful for academic purposes. This finding partly agreed with SalehiDu and Ashman (2018) who declared that most participating students used Google search engine as their primary information-seeking tool and 60% of the clicked result links during the study sessions were located in pages 2+ of the search results. Lecturers and instructors in Oyo State College of Education, Lanlate used Internet search engines to search for local information sources on these ten subject areas Community Development, Culture, Education, Geography, Corona Virus Disease, Population, Religion, Technology, Tourism, and Indigenous Knowledge.

### **Conclusion**

Using Internet Search Engines for educational purposes helped in improving academic achievement. However users often indicated their preference for Internet Search engines for research activities are based on certain informed opinions; it could be user friendliness, speed of access, and quality of items found during the search as well as just out of habit. This brings about users' satisfaction that motivates them to always want to use it again and again.

### **Recommendations**

Challenges associated with the use of Internet search engines in academic pursuit are numerous. These include: incessant network failure, low information retrieval skills, unstable power and low network bandwidth. The costs of providing and maintaining ICT infrastructures are also very costly and as such they are out of reach of individual academics. The study therefore recommended the following:

- lecturers should be provided with updated or new ICT infrastructures for Internet search Engines useful in Research and academic purpose,
- academics should be trained more on building of queries and web searching techniques,
- training of more web developers, information professionals and technicians, and
- power should also be provided regularly.

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