MEDIA CENTRES AND COMPUTER LABORATORIES FOR ACCESS TO DIGITAL ENVIRONMENT BY THE LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE STUDENTS OF UNIVERSITY OF BENIN

BY

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FACULTY OF EDUCATION

UNIVERSITY OF BENIN

BENIN CITY

MARCH, 2025.

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A PROJECT RESEARCH SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT, FACULTY OF EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN CITY, IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT FOR THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE AWARD OF B. (LIS) DEGREE IN LIBRASRY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE

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CERTIFICATION

We the undersigned certify that this project work was carried out by **IYEKEKEPOLOR Ruth Eva** with Matriculation number **EDU2005713** and that the research work is adequate in scope and quality in the Department of Educational Management, University of Benin, Benin City in partial fulfillment for the award of Bachelor's Degree in Library and Information Science (BLIS).

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DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to my late beloved father Mr. Iyekekepolor Sunday, my mom Mrs. Iyekekepolor Patience and my lovely siblings whose endless love, support, and sacrifices have been a cornerstone of my life, your encouragement and believe in my abilities have inspired me to reach this milestone.

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ABSTRACT

Abstract

*This study examines the access, utilization, and challenges of media centers and computer laboratories for Library and Information Science (LIS) students at the University of Benin. Using data collected from **167** respondents, the research explores students' perceptions of the availability, functionality, and impact of these facilities on their academic activities. Findings indicate that while students generally have access to media centers and computer laboratories, usage frequency is moderate due to factors such as overcrowding, technical issues, and occasional internet disruptions. Although functional equipment is available, outdated systems and periodic malfunctions hinder optimal use. The study also specifies the need for improved technical support, better maintenance practices, and facility expansion to accommodate increasing student demand. Addressing these challenges would enhance students' digital literacy, research capabilities, and overall academic experience. The study concludes with recommendations for upgrading infrastructure, optimizing technical assistance, and implementing access management strategies to maximize the benefits of these digital resources.*

Keywords: Media Centers, Computer Laboratories, Digital Environment, Library and Information Science Students, University of Benin, Access to Digital Resources, ICT Facilities, Digital Literacy, Internet Connectivity, Academic Libraries.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

In the digital era, how students access information has changed greatly, especially in schools and universities. Moving from traditional printed materials to digital resources has transformed how students interact with information, making it easier to find and more varied (Rai, 2020). Media centers and computer labs are key to making this access possible, particularly for Library and Information Science (LIS) students at the University of Benin. These places help students develop skills in finding and using information, learning technology, and working together, which are all essential for their future careers in today's rapidly changing job market (Mokhtar & Abdellatif, 2019). They are important for teaching digital skills, providing access to electronic resources, and helping students manage digital information (Ayeni, 2020).

Like other Nigerian universities, the University of Benin has tried to bring more digital technology into its academic system. Media centers and computer labs at the university are meant to give students access to the digital tools and resources they need (Nwosu & Oghenetega, 2019). With technology advancing so fast, libraries are being forced to change how they provide services and resources. Abo-Seada (2019) points out that introducing technologies like cloud computing, artificial intelligence, and the Internet of Things in academic libraries has improved how information is delivered, making it more flexible and focused on the users. Media centers with modern technology allow students to access many digital resources, such as e-books, online databases, and multimedia content (Chisenga, 2017). This variety of resources not only expands what students can learn but also encourages them to learn on their own and think critically (Ajala et al., 2014).

Computer labs, meanwhile, give students practical experience using digital tools and information, which is vital for building the skills needed in today's information-driven world. Nonthacumjane (2011) says that digital literacy—the ability to use and understand digital information—is a crucial skill for success in both school and work. Moreover, changes in academic libraries aren't just about offering technology but also about creating an environment that improves learning outcomes and promotes digital skills (Mokhtar & Abdellatif, 2019).

However, even with these positive steps, challenges remain, such as outdated equipment, not enough computers, and unreliable internet, which prevent students from fully using digital resources (Ojo & Olaniyi, 2021). This is a big issue for LIS students, who need to become experts in managing digital information but may not get enough experience in the digital environments that are so important for modern information systems.

In conclusion, University of Benin work to prepare their Library and information science students for the future, media centers and computer labs are more important than ever. By investing in these facilities, universities can create dynamic learning spaces that not only provide access to information but also help students develop the skills they need to succeed in today's digital world.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Despite the evident importance of media centres and computer laboratories in enhancing access to the digital environment, many Library and Information Science (LIS) students at the University of Benin face significant challenges in effectively utilizing these facilities. One major issue is inadequate training; many students lack the necessary skills to navigate complex digital resources and technologies (Ogunrombi, 2020). As highlighted by Tella et al. (2019), the fast-paced evolution of digital tools demands that students receive ongoing training to remain competent and capable in their field. Without this training, students may struggle to utilize the technologies available to them, leading to a gap in their learning and professional readiness.

Despite the acknowledged importance of media centers and computer laboratories, many Nigerian universities, including the University of Benin, continue to face significant challenges in providing adequate digital access to their students (Akinola & Adewoye, 2020). The availability and quality of these facilities can significantly impact students' academic performance and their ability to acquire the skills necessary for success in a digital information age. For LIS students, whose careers depend on their ability to manage and navigate digital resources, these challenges can be detrimental.

In many cases, the computer laboratories and media centers lack sufficient resources to meet student demand, resulting in overcrowding and limited access. Furthermore, poor internet connectivity and outdated software further exacerbate the difficulties LIS students face when

trying to engage with digital tools (Igbinovia & Osuchukwu, 2018). These issues suggest a critical gap between the digital needs of LIS students and the resources provided by the university, warranting an investigation into the current state of these facilities and how they can be improved.

Additionally, a lack of up-to-date resources further compounds these challenges. Many media centres and computer laboratories may not have the latest software and hardware, limiting students' exposure to current technologies and practices (Abo-Seada, 2019). This situation not only hampers their learning experiences but also puts them at a disadvantage in the job market, where familiarity with cutting-edge tools is often a requirement (Choi & Rasmussen, 2009).

Insufficient technical support is another critical barrier faced by LIS students. When issues arise, a lack of readily available technical assistance can deter students from using the facilities effectively (Patrickson-Stewart & Newman, 2017). This can result in frustration and disengagement, as students may not feel empowered to seek help or troubleshoot problems on their own.

Consequently, this study seeks to explore these challenges in detail and identify strategies to improve access and utilization of media centres and computer laboratories at the University of Benin. By understanding the obstacles students face and proposing actionable solutions, this research aims to enhance the educational experience for LIS students, ultimately better preparing them for the demands of the information profession in a digital world.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The primary objective of this study is to examine the role of media centers and computer laboratories in providing access to the digital environment for Library and Information Science students at the University of Benin. Specifically, the study aims to:

1. Examine the availability and accessibility of media centers and computer laboratories for LIS students.
2. Examine the current state of media centers and computer laboratories available to LIS students at the University of Benin?
3. Examine the challenges LIS students face in accessing and utilizing the digital resources in media centres and computer laboratories available to them?

4. Examine the impact of these media centers and computer laboratories in granting LIS student access to digital environment and resources

1.4 Research Questions

To achieve the above objectives, the study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. To what extent are media centers and computer laboratories available and accessible to LIS students at the University of Benin?

2. What is the current state of the media centers and computer laboratories available to LIS students at the University of Benin?

3. What challenges do LIS students face in accessing and utilizing the digital resources in these media centers and computer laboratories?

4. How do media centers and computer laboratories impact the access to digital environment and resources by LIS students in university of Benin?

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study is significant to students of library and information science in the university of Benin and the university of Benin administrators. It therefore would help students know the roles of media centers and computer laboratories in supporting their digital literacy and academic performance. It would give the parents institution (UNIBEN) administrators valuable insight of the challenges and limitations of media centres and computer laboratories and how it affects their exposure to digital environment together with the overall educational experience of LIS students at the University of Benin (Nwosu & Oghenetega, 2019).

1.6 Scope of the Study

The study focuses on media centres and computer laboratories for access to digital environment by library and information science students. It is delimited to library and information science students of university of Benin.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

This study examines the access and utilization of media centers and computer laboratories by LIS students at the University of Benin. However, several limitations were encountered. The

study focused on LIS students, which may not fully represent the experiences of students from other faculties. A broader sample could provide a more comprehensive understanding of digital resource accessibility across the university. The research was conducted within a limited timeframe, restricting data collection and analysis. A longer study period could have allowed for a more detailed examination of long-term trends in media center and laboratory usage. Some students were unavailable or rushed through the questionnaire, affecting the accuracy of responses, especially on the Likert scale. A more interactive approach, such as interviews or focus groups, could have improved data reliability. The study was limited to the University of Benin, making it difficult to generalize findings to other institutions with different digital resource challenges and infrastructural capacities. Limited funding restricted the scale of research, affecting the ability to conduct extensive fieldwork or employ diverse data collection methods. More funding could have supported in-depth studies, including qualitative interviews and observational research.

1.8 Definition of Terms

Media Centres: Media centres are specialized facilities designed to enhance learning through the use of various technological tools and resources, including audio-visual equipment, computers, and software applications (Chisenga, 2017). They serve as hubs for multimedia learning, enabling students to engage with diverse digital content, conduct research, and collaborate on projects. The integration of modern technologies in media centres facilitates innovative teaching and learning methodologies, contributing to improved educational outcomes (Mokhtar & Abdellatif, 2019).

Computer Laboratories: Computer laboratories are dedicated spaces within educational institutions where students can access computers and related technologies for academic purposes. These labs provide essential resources for practical training, skill development, and research activities (Ogunrombi, 2020). Equipped with internet connectivity and relevant software, computer laboratories enable students to engage in hands-on learning experiences that are critical for mastering digital competencies and navigating the digital landscape effectively (Bok, 2019).

Digital Environment: The digital environment refers to the online landscape composed of digital resources, tools, and platforms that facilitate information access, communication, and collaboration (Igwe, 2010). This environment encompasses a wide range of content, including e-

books, online databases, social media, and digital repositories, which are essential for modern education and research. The digital environment has transformed the way information is created, shared, and consumed, necessitating new skills and competencies for effective engagement (Tella et al., 2020). As LIS students navigate this environment, understanding its structure and functionality is crucial for their academic and professional success.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents a comprehensive reviews of related literature on the media centres and computer laboratories for access to Digital Environment by library and information science students of university of Benin. It is reviewed under the following sub-headings:

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORKS

- Concept of Media Centres in Educational Institutions
- Computer Laboratories in Higher Education
- Digital literacy and Access to technology
- Availability and Accessibility of Media Centres and Computer Laboratories to his students at the University of Benin
- Current State of Media Centres and Computer labs for LIS students at the University of Benin
- Challenges faced by LIS Students in Accessing and Utilizing Digital Resources in Media Centres and Computer Labs.
- The Impact of Media centres and Computer labs on Granting LIS students' Access to the Digital Environment and Resources.

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SUMMARY OF LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1.1 Concept of Media Centers in Educational Institutions

Media centers in educational institutions have become pivotal in enhancing access to digital resources, especially in the digital age. These centers, which offer a variety of technological tools and multimedia resources, function as hubs where students can access e-books, academic databases, and other digital content. Chisenga (2017) emphasizes that media centers play a crucial role in promoting digital literacy and information literacy, empowering students to interact with technology and information efficiently. In particular, institutions with well-equipped media centers are able to create environments where students engage with diverse forms of media, which is essential in cultivating both academic and professional competencies (Ayeni, 2020). In line with this, Khan and Ahmed (2018) further argue that media centers have

become instrumental in providing access to global educational resources, allowing students to develop skills necessary for the global workforce.

Furthermore, media centers foster collaborative learning environments, enabling students to engage in group work and research in ways that were not feasible with traditional library setups. As observed by Ajala, Arinola, Adigun, and Ogunmodede (2014), these centers provide spaces where students can work with digital tools, audiovisual equipment, and multimedia resources to complete assignments and projects that require technological input. For Library and Information Science (LIS) students, media centers allow the development of crucial skills for future roles in information management. Obaseki (2021) adds that media centers facilitate an interactive and immersive learning experience, enabling students to engage with content through various formats, such as virtual reality and interactive e-learning modules, further enriching the learning process.

2.1.2 Computer Laboratories in Higher Education

Computer laboratories are essential components of educational institutions, particularly in higher education. These laboratories provide students with hands-on access to digital resources and necessary technological tools. For LIS students, computer laboratories are fundamental in building technical competencies critical for navigating today's information-driven world. According to Nonthacumjane (2011), computer laboratories serve as practical environments where students develop essential digital skills, such as data management, information retrieval, and using specialized software tools for research and analysis. These skills are indispensable in the modern academic and professional landscape, where proficiency in technology is increasingly a requirement.

At the University of Benin, computer labs aim to equip students with the technological knowhow needed to thrive in the digital environment. However, many institutions, particularly in developing regions, struggle with maintaining up-to-date infrastructure. As Ojo and Olaniyi (2021) point out, outdated computer systems and slow internet connectivity are major hindrances to students' ability to access digital resources effectively. This situation is not unique to Nigeria but is a challenge across various institutions in Sub-Saharan Africa, where budget constraints limit the ability to upgrade facilities (Ogunrombi, 2020). Despite these challenges, Onwuegbuzie

and Nwafor (2019) argue that well-managed computer laboratories remain critical in fostering digital skills necessary for both academic success and professional development.

2.1.3 Digital Literacy and Access to Technology

Digital literacy refers to the skills required to navigate and utilize digital environments effectively. It encompasses the ability to find, evaluate, and create information using various digital tools. In today's academic settings, digital literacy is increasingly critical for students to access information, complete academic tasks, and participate in the global digital economy (Mokhtar & Abdellatif, 2019). For LIS students, in particular, digital literacy is essential, as their future careers will likely involve managing digital repositories, online databases, and other electronic resources. Nonthacumjane (2011) highlights that LIS students who are proficient in digital tools will be more competitive in the job market, especially in a world that is transitioning rapidly towards digital information management.

Institutions like the University of Benin have a responsibility to ensure that their students, especially those in the LIS department, have adequate access to technology and opportunities to enhance their digital literacy. However, Ogunrombi (2020) points out that many Nigerian academic institutions still face significant challenges in providing consistent access to up-to-date digital resources. This gap is echoed by Adebayo and Oluwole (2022), who stress that without access to sufficient technological tools and training, students' ability to acquire critical digital literacy skills is severely hampered, limiting their potential in both academic and professional contexts.

2.1.4 Availability and Accessibility of Media Centers and Computer Laboratories to LIS Students at the University of Benin:

Media centers and computer laboratories in academic institutions play a crucial role in enhancing access to digital resources and technologies, which are essential for academic success. However, the extent to which these facilities are available and accessible to Library and Information Science (LIS) students varies significantly. According to Ogunrombi (2020), many Nigerian academic institutions, including the University of Benin, struggle with providing consistent access to well-equipped media centers. This is due to challenges such as inadequate funding,

outdated infrastructure, and limited technological resources, which hinder the ability of students to access these facilities as frequently as they need. Ojo and Olaniyi (2021) support this view, arguing that although institutions have established media centers, their accessibility is often limited by logistical challenges such as restricted opening hours, inadequate seating capacity, and a lack of technological tools such as computers and software.

At the University of Benin, the availability of media centers and computer labs for LIS students is reported to be below optimal. Okebukola and Ajayi (2019) highlight that while the university has made efforts to establish these facilities, there are gaps in ensuring regular access due to overcrowding and underfunding, limiting the students' ability to utilize them fully. This situation is not unique to the University of Benin, as Onwuegbuzie and Nwafor (2019) note that many higher institutions in Nigeria face similar challenges, with limited access to digital resources in media centers and computer labs, which hampers students' academic performance.

2.1.5 Current State of Media Centers and Computer Laboratories for LIS Students at the University of Benin

The current state of media centers and computer laboratories available to LIS students at the University of Benin reflects the broader infrastructural challenges present in Nigerian higher education institutions. According to Ogunrombi (2020), the media centers at the University of Benin, though established to support academic research and digital literacy, often suffer from outdated technological infrastructure and insufficient digital resources. These centers often house old computers with outdated software, limited access to high-speed internet, and inadequate technical support staff. Okebukola and Ajayi (2019) further explain that the state of these centers is not reflective of modern academic needs, as they lack the advanced tools required for students to engage with complex digital environments or participate in e-learning.

Moreover, Adebayo and Oluwole (2022) found that the computer laboratories at the University of Benin are often ill-maintained and suffer from frequent technical malfunctions, reducing their efficacy in supporting student learning. This problem is exacerbated by the fact that the laboratories are often overcrowded, and students have to contend with long wait times to access a workstation. Ojo and Olaniyi (2021) add that the computer labs are typically under-resourced in

terms of both hardware (computers and peripherals) and software (digital library tools and research databases), further impeding the ability of LIS students to develop necessary digital skills.

2.1.6 Challenges Faced by LIS Students in Accessing and Utilizing Digital Resources in Media Centers and Computer Laboratories.

1. **Outdated Technology and Insufficient Digital Resources**

One of the primary challenges that LIS students face in utilizing digital resources is the outdated technology available in the media centers and computer laboratories. Ogunrombi (2020) emphasizes that many of the computers and digital devices in these facilities are obsolete, running on outdated software that is incompatible with modern research tools and databases. For students who require access to up-to-date information and specialized digital tools for their academic work, these limitations severely hinder their ability to perform effectively. The lack of adequate resources such as updated software, digital databases, and relevant research tools further compounds the problem, as many students are left with no alternative but to use inadequate technology that slows down their research processes. Moreover, Ojo and Olaniyi (2021) argue that the shortage of sufficient digital materials, such as e-books and online journals, presents another barrier. Many students are forced to rely on a limited collection of digital resources, which may not cover the breadth of topics required for their studies. This shortage not only affects the depth of academic research but also restricts the ability of students to keep pace with developments in the field of Library and Information Science.

2. **Infrastructural Challenges and Power Outages**

Frequent power outages represent a significant infrastructural challenge that disrupts access to digital resources. According to Ogunrombi (2020), many Nigerian universities, including the University of Benin, experience regular electricity interruptions, which cause media centers and computer labs to be temporarily unavailable. Even when power is restored, these interruptions can result in lost work, especially if the facilities lack backup power systems. This issue creates a cycle of inefficiency where students are constantly forced to stop their work due to power outages, diminishing the productivity that digital resources are supposed to enhance. Additionally, Okebukola and Ajayi (2019) highlight the unreliable internet connectivity in many academic institutions, which is another infrastructural obstacle. Slow or intermittent internet

access makes it difficult for students to access online databases, engage with e-learning platforms, or even download important academic resources. As the majority of academic information is now found online, poor internet connectivity renders the available digital resources inaccessible, preventing students from maximizing the potential of the media centers and computer laboratories.

3. Overcrowding and Limited Workstations

The issue of overcrowding is one of the most pressing challenges LIS students face in accessing digital resources at the University of Benin. Ojo and Olaniyi (2021) point out that the demand for media centers and computer laboratories far exceeds the available workstations, leading to long wait times and reduced opportunities for students to engage with the digital tools they need. Overcrowding is particularly severe during peak academic periods such as exam preparations or project deadlines, where students compete for limited space and resources. In these circumstances, the time students can spend using these facilities is drastically reduced, limiting their ability to complete assignments that require significant time on digital platforms. Okebukola and Ajayi (2019) add that overcrowding also affects the overall environment in the labs, creating noise and distractions that make focused academic work difficult. The overcrowded nature of these facilities reflects broader infrastructural inadequacies, such as insufficient investment in expanding the number of workstations available to meet the needs of the growing student population.

4. Lack of Technical Support

Another significant challenge is the lack of technical support available to students using the media centers and computer labs. Okebukola and Ajayi (2019) report that technical assistance is often insufficient, with few staff members available to help troubleshoot issues such as software malfunctions or hardware failures. When technical problems arise, students may have to wait for extended periods for assistance, during which they are unable to use the digital resources they need. This lack of support not only frustrates students but also discourages them from using the facilities as frequently as they might otherwise. In contrast, institutions with adequate technical support staff allow students to focus on their academic work rather than deal with the inefficiencies of malfunctioning equipment or incompatible software. Without proper technical

assistance, LIS students miss opportunities to develop critical digital competencies that are essential in their field of study.

5. **Insufficient Training on Digital Resource Utilization**

Finally, many LIS students face challenges related to insufficient training in utilizing digital resources efficiently. Obaseki (2021) highlights that despite the increasing importance of digital literacy, many students are not provided with the proper instruction on how to use the digital tools available to them. Without proper training, students may not be aware of the full range of resources available or how to access them effectively, resulting in underutilization of valuable tools such as online databases, digital catalogs, and library management software. This lack of digital literacy is particularly problematic for LIS students, who are expected to develop advanced skills in information retrieval and digital resource management. Ojo and Olaniyi (2021) suggest that institutions like the University of Benin should integrate digital literacy training into their curriculum, ensuring that all students, especially those in information-related fields, are equipped with the skills necessary to thrive in a digital academic environment. Providing regular workshops and technical training would help students overcome these barriers and improve their ability to utilize digital resources for academic purposes.

In order to address these challenges, it is crucial for LIS programs in Nigeria to invest in updated technologies, provide adequate training in ICT and information literacy, and improve internet connectivity in media centers and computer laboratories. Collaborations between institutions and stakeholders can also foster the development of better infrastructure and resources, ultimately enhancing the quality of LIS education and preparing graduates for the demands of the digital age.

2.1.7 The Impact of Media Centers and Computer Laboratories on Granting LIS Students Access to the Digital Environment and Resources

Media centers and computer laboratories have a significant impact on providing Library and Information Science (LIS) students at the University of Benin access to the digital environment and resources essential for their academic and professional development. These facilities serve as

vital spaces where students can engage with digital tools, access online databases, and enhance their digital literacy.

1. **Access to Digital Information and Resources**

Media centers and computer laboratories provide LIS students with access to digital libraries, e-books, academic journals, and other electronic resources that are crucial for their studies. According to Chisenga (2017), well-equipped media centers promote information literacy and digital literacy by enabling students to navigate digital information systems efficiently. This access helps LIS students to conduct research using digital resources, which are increasingly replacing traditional paper-based information. By utilizing these facilities, students can stay up to date with recent publications, developments in the field of library science, and academic resources that would otherwise be inaccessible due to financial or infrastructural constraints. Additionally, Mokhtar and Abdellatif (2019) note that media centers and computer laboratories play a central role in allowing students to interact with cutting-edge digital tools and platforms. For LIS students, who are expected to manage digital repositories, catalogs, and other forms of electronic resources in their future careers, this experience is invaluable. Through access to specialized software for library management and information retrieval, students develop skills that are directly transferable to professional settings, enhancing their employability.

2. **Skill Development in Digital Literacy and Information Management**

Media centers and computer labs are essential in fostering the development of critical digital literacy and information management skills. Nonthacumjane (2011) asserts that hands-on access to digital resources through computer labs allows LIS students to practice using information systems, data management software, and online search tools. These skills are essential for modern librarians, as many aspects of library science now revolve around the ability to organize, retrieve, and manage digital information. The practical experience gained in these labs allows students to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and real-world application. For example, LIS students at the University of Benin are able to work with integrated library systems (ILS) and other digital platforms that are increasingly central to library operations. Ajala et al. (2014) highlight that the ability to interact with these tools helps students not only perform better academically but also prepares them for professional responsibilities in digital libraries and information centers. This hands-on training is particularly critical as the role of information professionals continues to evolve in the digital age.

3. Enhancement of Academic Performance

By providing access to these digital resources, media centers and computer labs also enhance the academic performance of LIS students. Ojo and Olaniyi (2021) emphasize that students with regular access to well-maintained computer laboratories perform better academically due to the availability of resources that support research, coursework, and project completion. For instance, students can access e-journals, complete assignments requiring digital resources, and engage in group research using the collaborative technologies available in media centers. Furthermore, Chisenga (2017) argues that the presence of media centers encourages self-directed learning, allowing students to explore academic resources at their own pace and according to their specific research interests. This autonomy in learning fosters deeper engagement with course material, improving comprehension and academic outcomes. As students become more proficient in navigating the digital environment, their confidence and competence in conducting academic research increase, further contributing to their success.

4. Overcoming the Digital Divide

Media centers and computer laboratories also play a key role in bridging the digital divide for LIS students at the University of Benin. Ogunrombi (2020) identifies the digital divide as a major challenge in Nigerian higher education, where many students do not have access to personal computers or reliable internet at home. By offering these resources on campus, media centers and computer laboratories provide equitable access to technology, ensuring that all students, regardless of their socioeconomic background, can engage with digital tools and resources. The availability of media centers and computer laboratories mitigates the impact of the digital divide by providing a controlled environment where students can use the internet, access online learning platforms, and conduct research without the limitations they may face outside the university. This has a direct impact on leveling the playing field for students from different backgrounds, ensuring that everyone has an equal opportunity to develop digital competencies crucial for academic and professional advancement.

2.2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The integration of technology into education has dramatically transformed how students engage with learning materials and acquire knowledge (Chisenga, 2017). In higher education, access to digital tools such as media centers and computer laboratories is pivotal in shaping the learning

experiences of students, particularly in specialized fields like Library and Information Science (LIS) (Obaseki, 2021). For students at the University of Benin, these digital resources not only facilitate research and academic success but also help bridge the gap between traditional education and the demands of the information-driven economy (Ogunrombi, 2020). This theoretical framework draws on two key concepts—Technological Determinism and Digital Divide Theory—to explore how access to media centers and computer laboratories influences the educational experiences of LIS students at the University of Benin. Understanding these theories will provide insight into how technology shapes education and the challenges faced by students who lack equitable access to these digital resources (Zambrano & Rodriguez, 2018).

1. Technological Determinism

Technological Determinism is a theory that suggests technology is the primary driver of societal change, influencing human behavior, social structures, and interactions with the environment. In educational institutions, this theory posits that access to technological tools—such as media centers and computer laboratories—directly impacts students' learning experiences by enabling greater engagement with digital resources. As AboSeada (2019) argues, advancements in technologies like cloud computing and artificial intelligence have revolutionized the way students and academic institutions approach education, transforming traditional libraries into interactive learning hubs. For LIS students at the University of Benin, access to these technologies is crucial for developing digital literacy skills, which are essential in today's information economy. According to Obaseki (2021), university libraries and media centers have transitioned from physical repositories of books to digital spaces where students can access a wide array of online resources, conduct research, and engage in collaborative projects. This transformation aligns with the technological determinism perspective, which emphasizes that the availability of digital tools is critical for shaping how students learn and interact with information. As students increasingly rely on digital content for research, their ability to adapt to modern information environments is heavily influenced by the technological infrastructure provided by the university. Technological determinism states how access to functioning media centers and computer labs can either facilitate or hinder the development of necessary digital competencies among LIS students. By fostering greater engagement with digital content, these resources equip

students with the tools needed to succeed academically and professionally in a rapidly evolving digital landscape.

2. Digital Divide Theory

While technological determinism focuses on the transformative power of technology, Digital Divide Theory emphasizes the disparities between individuals or groups who have access to modern digital technologies and those who do not. In the light of higher education, the digital divide manifests as unequal access to media centers, computer laboratories, and reliable internet connections, which results in unequal educational opportunities (Ogunrombi, 2020). This divide is particularly prevalent in developing countries like Nigeria, where underfunded universities struggle to provide adequate digital resources for all students. For LIS students at the University of Benin, access to digital tools is critical for their academic and professional development. However, many students face challenges such as outdated equipment, overcrowded media centers, and intermittent internet access, which limit their ability to fully engage with the digital resources necessary for success (Ojo & Olaniyi, 2021). These barriers create significant disadvantages for students who rely on digital tools to conduct research, complete assignments, and acquire the digital literacy skills required for the LIS field. Zambrano and Rodriguez (2018) argue that addressing the digital divide requires institutional commitment to providing equitable access to technology. This means investing in the upgrade and expansion of media centers and computer laboratories to ensure that all students, regardless of socioeconomic background, have access to the digital tools they need for academic success. For the University of Benin, this study highlights the importance of prioritizing such investments to bridge the gap between students who have access to digital resources and those who do not. The Digital Divide Theory underscores the need for inclusive policies that ensure all students benefit equally from technological advancements in education. As universities increasingly incorporate digital tools into their curricula, efforts to reduce digital inequality must be intensified to provide equitable learning opportunities.

Both Technological Determinism and Digital Divide Theory offer valuable perspectives for understanding the impact of media centers and computer laboratories on the educational experiences of LIS students at the University of Benin. Technological determinism emphasizes

the transformative role of technology in shaping student learning (AboSeada, 2019), while the Digital Divide Theory highlights the inequities that arise from unequal access to these digital tools (Zambrano & Rodriguez, 2018). Together, these frameworks underscore the critical importance of investing in digital infrastructure to ensure that all students can fully engage with the technological resources available to them (Obaseki, 2021). By improving access to media centers and computer laboratories, the University of Benin can enhance the academic performance and professional preparedness of its LIS students, ultimately bridging the gap between traditional education and the demands of the digital age (Ogunrombi, 2020).

2.3. EMPIRICAL REVIEW

This section explores existing studies, data, and evidence that highlight the relationship between access to digital resources and students' educational outcomes. This project explores the impact of media centers and computer laboratories on the access to digital environment by Library and Information Science (LIS) students at the University of Benin. Several empirical studies have been conducted on the role of technology in higher education, particularly in developing countries, and their findings provide insight into how access to digital tools influences student success.

Mokhtar and Abdellatif (2019), in their study "The Impact of Media Centers on the Academic Performance of University Students: A Study from Egypt," investigated how the availability of media centers in universities affects academic performance. They found that students with access to well-equipped media centers performed better in research and assignments due to their ability to access digital resources. This study is particularly relevant for the University of Benin, as it underscores the importance of providing comprehensive media center facilities to support student learning in LIS programs.

Adebayo and Oluwole (2022), in their research "Bridging the Digital Divide in Nigerian Universities: Strategies and Solutions," examined the digital divide in Nigerian higher education institutions and suggested strategies to address this gap. Their findings indicate that students in under-funded institutions struggle to access necessary digital resources, limiting their ability to compete with students from more privileged universities. This directly relates to the challenges faced by LIS students at the University of Benin, who may experience limited access to modern

computer labs and internet resources, which affects their academic performance and professional readiness.

Abubakar and Auyo (2019) conducted a study titled "Library and Information Science (LIS) Education in Universities in North-West Geo-Political Zone of Nigeria: Perspective and Challenges," which highlights the challenges faced by LIS students in Nigerian universities, including inadequate technological infrastructure. Their findings emphasize that for LIS students to develop the digital literacy skills required in their profession, universities must invest in media centers and computer laboratories that offer access to the latest digital tools and resources. This has implications for the University of Benin, where outdated or insufficient technology may hinder students' academic progress.

Obaseki (2021), in the study "Digital Transformation in African Academic Libraries: Challenges and Prospects," discussed how African academic libraries are adapting to digital transformation, including the role of media centers in this evolution. The study found that institutions that successfully implemented digital infrastructure in their libraries saw significant improvements in student engagement and learning outcomes. This reinforces the idea that improving the digital infrastructure at the University of Benin's media centers and computer laboratories could positively impact the educational experiences of LIS students.

Georgy (2009) in "Library Education in Europe and Paradigm Shift in Curricula," examined the shift in library education towards more digital and technology-based curricula. This study suggests that for LIS programs to remain relevant in the digital age, they must incorporate access to modern media centers and computer laboratories into their curriculum. This finding supports the argument that the University of Benin must upgrade its digital facilities to ensure that its LIS students are equipped with the necessary skills for the information economy.

These empirical studies provide a comprehensive view of how media centers and computer laboratories impact the academic experiences of LIS students. For the University of Benin, investing in the development and expansion of media centers and computer labs is not only

essential for bridging the digital divide but also for ensuring that LIS students are adequately prepared for the demands of the modern information landscape.

2.4 SUMMARY OF LITERATURE REVIEW

In summary, the literature emphasizes the importance of media centers and computer laboratories in higher education as key tools in fostering digital literacy and academic success. These facilities are essential not only for providing access to digital resources but also for developing the skills needed for both academic and professional growth. However, challenges such as outdated technology, slow internet connectivity, and inadequate access continue to hinder the full utilization of these resources in many academic institutions, particularly in developing countries. Addressing these challenges requires substantial investment in infrastructure and a commitment to bridging the digital divide, ensuring that students can acquire the skills necessary for success in the modern workforce (Ojo & Olaniyi, 2021; Ogunrombi, 2020).

In conclusion, media centers and computer laboratories are essential for enhancing the academic performance and skill development of LIS students at the University of Benin. However, the current state of these facilities—characterized by outdated technology, limited access, and overcrowding—poses significant challenges for students attempting to utilize digital resources. As Ogunrombi (2020) and Ojo and Olaniyi (2021) argue, addressing these challenges through infrastructural improvements and increased investment in digital resources is crucial to bridging the digital divide and equipping LIS students with the necessary skills to thrive in a technology-driven world.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the method and procedure used by the researcher in conducting the study. It is presented under the following sub heading: Research design, population of the study, sample and sampling technique, research instrument, validity of instrument, method of data collection and method of Data analysis.

3.2 Research Design

The research adopts a quantitative approach, utilizing a descriptive survey design to collect data from LIS students. This design is suitable for assessing students' perceptions and experiences regarding the availability and utilization of digital resources within the university's media centers and computer laboratories.

3.3 Population of the Study

The target population for this study comprises all Library and Information Science students enrolled at the University of Benin. According to the university's academic records, there are approximately 300 LIS students across various levels of study.

3.4 Sample and Sampling Technique

A simple random sampling method was employed to select participants for the study. This technique ensures that every member of the population has an equal chance of being included in the sample, thereby enhancing the representativeness and validity of the findings. The following steps outline the sampling process. A list of all LIS students was obtained from the university's department of Library and Information Science.

To calculate the sample size and determine the sampling technique, let's use Taro Yamane's formula for sample size calculation:

Where:

- n = sample size
- N = total population size (300 students)
- e = margin of error (0.05 for a 95% confidence level)

Using a reduced sample size based on a smaller margin of representativeness:

To align with the study's scope and resources, the sample size is reduced to 171 respondents, which is sufficient to achieve representativeness and reliable findings.

3.6 Research Instrument

The questionnaire was the major instrument used for the collection of primary data for this study. The questionnaire was used because it is capable of reaching a large number of respondents and it provides privacy and confidentiality. The questionnaire is made up of five sections: Section A includes personal information (Demography of the respondents) and Sections B, C, D, and E is based on the research questions. The questionnaire was distributed to library and information science students individually.

3.7 Validity of the instrument

The validity of the questionnaire, used as the primary data collection instrument, was established through content and face validity. The research supervisor reviewed the questionnaire to ensure alignment the research objectives and relevance to the study. This steps ensured that the instrument effectively measured the variables under investigation and provide credible data for the study.

3.7 Method of Data Collection

The questionnaires will be distributed to the selected 171 LIS students. Data collection will be conducted during lectures peak hours to maximize participation. Respondents will be informed about the study's purpose and assured that participation is voluntary and responses are anonymous.

3.8 Method of Data Analysis

The data collected for this study was analyzed using simple descriptive statistics, which consists of tables, frequency and percentages, mean and decision.

It can be calculated in the way below.

Mean

Where:

- $\sum X$ is the sum of all observations
- N is the total number of observations (students surveyed)

3.9 Ethical Considerations

Ethical guidelines will be adhered to throughout the study. Participants will provide informed consent, ensuring they understand the purpose of the study and their right to withdraw at any point. Confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained, with all findings reported in aggregate form.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, RESULT PRESENTATION, DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This chapter presented, analyzed and discussed the data that were collected for the study. The presentation and the analysis of data have been done under the following sub-heading:

- Questionnaire Response rate
- Analysis of Respondents bio data
- Answering of Research questions
- Discussion of Findings

4.1. Questionnaire Response Rate

Table 4.1.1: Response Rate

Institution	Questionnaire distributed	Questionnaire collected	Return rate
Library and Information science, University of Benin.	171	167	97.7%

The data in Table 4.2.1 presents the response rate of a questionnaire survey conducted among Library and Information Science (LIS) students at the University of Benin. A total of 171 questionnaires were distributed to respondents. Out of the 171 distributed, 167 were successfully collected. The response rate of 97.7% indicates a very high level of participation from the respondents. A response rate above 90% suggests strong engagement and interest in the study. The high return rate implies that the questionnaire distribution method was effective and that the respondents were likely motivated to complete and return the survey. This high response rate enhances the reliability of the data, reducing concerns about non-response bias. The high response rate of 97.7% strengthens the credibility and validity of the research findings. Since the majority of the targeted respondents participated, the data collected can be considered highly representative of the LIS students at the University of Benin.

4.2 Analysis of Respondents bio-data

The demographic distribution of respondents based on gender and user category is presented below.

Table 4.2.2: Students' Gender

Gender	**Frequency**	**Percentage %**
Male	85	50.9
Female	82	49.1
TOTAL	167	100

The data in Table 4.2.2 presents the gender distribution of the respondents in the study. The total number of respondents is 167**.** 85 respondents are male, making up 50.9% of the total. 82 respondents are female, accounting for 49.1%**.** The percentage values sum up to 100%**,** confirming that all responses were categorized correctly. The gender distribution shows a nearly equal representation of male and female students in the study. The 1.8% difference between male (50.9%) and female (49.1%) respondents suggests a balanced gender composition among Library and Information Science (LIS) students at the University of Benin. This balanced distribution helps ensure that the study findings are not significantly biased towards one gender.

Table 4.2.3. Age Range

Age Range	**Frequency (F)**	**Percentage (%)**
15-20 years	45	26.9
21-25 years	89	53.3
26-30 years	33	19.8
TOTAL	**167**	**100%**

The data in Table 4.2.3 presents the age distribution of the respondents in the study. The total number of respondents is 167**.** 45 respondents (26.9%) fall within the 15-20 years age range. 89 respondents (53.3%) are in the 21-25 years age range. 33 respondents (19.8%) are within the 26-30 years age range. The majority of the respondents **(**53.3%**)** are in the 21-25 years age group, indicating that most Library and Information Science (LIS) students at the University of Benin fall within this category. This suggests that the program primarily attracts students in their early twenties. The 15-20 years group represents 26.9%, showing that a significant number of students start their university education at a younger age. The 26-30 years category, making up 19.8%**,** includes students who may have started university later, had study interruptions, or are pursuing further education. The age distribution suggests a diverse mix of students**,** but with a concentration in the 21-25 years range, which is typical for undergraduate students. The study population is predominantly young, with over 80% (53.3% + 26.9%) of respondents aged 15-25 years**.** This suggests that Library and Information Science at the University of Benin is primarily pursued by students in their late teens and early twenties, with a smaller proportion of older students.

Table 4.2.4. Level of Students

Level	**Frequency (F)**	**Percentage (%)**
100	42	25.1
200	48	28.7
300	39	23.4
400	38	22.8
TOTAL	**167**	**100%**

The data in Table 4.2.4 presents the distribution of respondents based on their academic levels. The total number of respondents is 167**.** 42 students (25.1%) are in 100 level**.** 48 students (28.7%) are in 200 level**.** 39 students (23.4%) are in 300 level**.** 38 students (22.8%) are in 400 level**.** The highest number of respondents (28.7%) are in 200 level, suggesting that students in their second year of study were the most engaged or accessible for the survey. 100 level students (25.1%) form the second largest group, indicating a significant number of freshers in the program. 300

level (23.4%) **and** 400 level (22.8%) students have slightly lower representation, which may be due to academic workload, project commitments, or reduced availability for participation in surveys. The relatively even distribution across levels suggests that the study captured a balanced perspective across different stages of the program, enhancing the generalizability of findings. The student distribution across levels is fairly balanced, with 200-level students having the highest representation (28.7%)**.** The data suggests that participation was well spread across all academic levels, ensuring a diverse range of responses from both early and advanced students in the Library and Information Science program at the University of Benin.

4.3 Answering of the Research Questions

Table 4.3.1: Availability and Accessibility of Media Centers and Computer Laboratories

SN	ITEM	VLE	LE	R	N	TOTAL	MEAN	DECISION
1.	How often do you access media centers and labs?	35	63	35	34	167	2.59	Agree
2	How easy is it to access these facilities?	32	58	49	28	167	2.56	Agree
3.	Are the operating hours convenient?	51	49	30	37	167	2.68	Agree
4	Availability of functional systems?	38	65	37	27	167	2.56	Agree
5	Frequency of overcrowding?	78	55	20	14	167	3.18	Agree

Source: ***Researcher's Field Survey*** **Note: Criterion Mean = 2.5**

The data in Table 4.3.1 presents the availability and accessibility of Media Centers and Computer Laboratories. Access Frequency (Mean = 2.59, Agree). The majority of students agree that they access media centers and computer laboratories. However, the moderate mean score suggests that access is not as frequent as expected. Possible reasons could include limited awareness, time constraints, or difficulties in booking available resources. Ease of Access (Mean = 2.56, Agree). Students generally agree that accessing these facilities is relatively easy. However, the score indicates that some challenges may still exist, such as administrative bottlenecks, restricted hours, or overcrowding, which may hinder seamless accessibility. Convenience of Operating Hours (Mean = 2.68, Agree). While students agree that the operating hours are generally convenient, the moderate score suggests that some students may find them restrictive or misaligned with their schedules. Expanding operating hours, especially during peak periods, may improve accessibility. Availability of Functional Systems (Mean = 2.56, Agree). Students agree that functional systems are available, but the relatively low score suggests that not all equipment is in optimal condition. This could mean that some computers may be outdated, experience frequent malfunctions, or require maintenance and software upgrades to enhance usability. Frequency of Overcrowding (Mean = 3.18, Agree)**.** The highest mean score in the table indicates that students strongly agree that overcrowding is a significant issue. Overcrowding may limit access to computers, slow down work efficiency, and create an uncomfortable learning environment. This suggests the need for increased capacity, additional computer labs, or improved facility management strategies.

Table 4.3.2: Condition of Media Centers and Computer Laboratories

SN	ITEM	SA	A	D	SD	TOTAL	MEAN	DECISION
1	Condition of equipment is good	47	58	37	25	167	2.88	Agree
2	Encounter technical issues frequently	63	52	33	19	167	2.94	Agree
3	Internet Connectivity is reliable	39	55	45	28	167	2.73	Agree
4	Enough Technical Staff to assist users	41	53	40	33	167	2.68	Agree
4	Satisfied with internet connected devices	44	56	37	30	167	2.81	Agree

Source: ***Researcher's Field Survey*** **Note: Criterion Mean = 2.5**

The data in Table 4.3.2 presents the availability and accessibility of Media Centres and Computer Laboratories. Condition of Equipment (Mean = 2.88, Agree), the majority of students agree that the condition of equipment in media centers and computer labs is good. However, the relatively low score suggests that while functional, some equipment may be outdated or in need of maintenance**.** Encounter Technical Issues Frequently (Mean = 2.94, Agree)**.** Students agree that technical issues are common, indicating that equipment malfunctions, software glitches, or system failures are frequent**.** This may hinder smooth learning experiences and limit the effectiveness of the facilities. Internet Connectivity Reliability (Mean = 2.73, Agree)**,** While students generally agree that internet connectivity is reliable, the moderate score suggests occasional disruptions or slow speeds**.** This could affect research activities, online learning, and access to digital resources. Availability of Technical Staff (Mean = 2.68, Agree)**,** the presence of technical staff is acknowledged, but the relatively low score suggests that they may not be sufficient to meet demand**.** Possible challenges include staff shortages, delayed response times, or lack of specialized expertise**.** Satisfaction with Internet-Connected Devices (Mean = 2.81, Agree)**,** students agree that they are somewhat satisfied with internet-connected devices, but the score suggests room for improvement**.** Issues like limited devices, outdated software, or slow internet speeds may affect overall satisfaction.

SN	ITEM	SA	A	D	SD	TOTAL	MEAN	DECISION
1	I use these facilities for academic purposes	92	51	15	9	167	3.35	Agree
2	These facilities improve my coursework	78	56	20	13	167	3.19	Agree
3	Enhance My technical Skills	74	53	24	16	167	3.10	Agree
4	Contribute to my academic performance	81	50	23	13	167	3.18	Agree
5	Need for improvements for better outcomes	89	52	14	12	167	3.31	Agree

Table 4.3.2: Impact of Media Centers and Computer Laboratories

Source: ***Researcher's Field Survey*** **Note: Criterion Mean = 2.5**

The data in Table 3.2. presents students' perceptions of the impact of media centers and computer laboratories on their academic activities and overall learning experience. Usage for Academic Purposes (Mean = 3.35, Agree). A significant majority of students agree that with using these facilities for academic purposes. This suggests that media centers and computer labs play an essential role in supporting students' learning, research, and coursework. However, ensuring consistent availability and accessibility will further enhance their effectiveness. Improvement in Coursework (Mean = 3.19, Agree). Students agree that these facilities positively impact their coursework. This indicates that digital resources, research tools, and practical learning opportunities provided by the media centers and computer labs contribute to their academic success. Enhancements such as updated software, digital libraries, and improved internet access could further support students' coursework. Enhancement of Technical Skills (Mean = 3.10, Agree). The data shows that students agrees with the role of these facilities in improving their technical skills. This suggests that access to computers, software, and digital tools contributes to their practical learning. However, additional training programs or workshops on specialized skills may further enhance students' technical competencies. Contribution to Academic Performance (Mean = 3.18, Agree). Students agree that these facilities contribute positively to their academic performance. The availability of digital learning resources, research tools, and computing services likely aids in better understanding course materials and completing assignments. Expanding resources and ensuring uninterrupted access could improve the facilities'

impact on academic success. Need for Improvements for Better Outcomes (Mean = 3.31, Agree). Despite being satisfied with the facilities, students strongly agree that improvements are necessary to achieve better outcomes. This indicates that while the media centers and computer laboratories are beneficial, there are areas that require enhancements, such as better internet connectivity, more up-to-date technology, and increased accessibility.

Table 4.3.4 Challenges Faced by LIS Students

ITEM	SD	D	A	SA	N	MEAN	DECISION
Limited access to functional systems	71	55	24	17	167	3.08	Agree
Overcrowding is a major issue	83	52	18	14	167	3.22	Agree
Equipment often non-functional	59	60	31	17	167	2.97	Agree
Outdated technologies hinder usage	67	57	25	18	167	3.03	Agree
Limited Internet Access	74	51	27	15	167	3.10	Agree

Source: ***Researcher's Field Survey*** **Note: Criterion Mean = 2.5**

The data in Table 4.3.4 presents the challenges faced by Library and Information Science (LIS) students in utilizing media centers and computer laboratories. Limited Access to Functional Systems (Mean = 3.08, Agree). Students indicate that access to functional systems is a challenge, although the mean score suggests they moderately agreed. This implies that while functional systems are available, they may not be sufficient to meet the demand or are not always in optimal working condition. Overcrowding is a Major Issue (Mean = 3.22, Agreed). Overcrowding is identified as a significant challenge, with students expressing a high level of disagreement. The high mean score indicates that excessive demand for limited resources results in difficulty accessing the facilities when needed. This can negatively impact students' academic performance by limiting their study time and access to essential digital resources. Equipment Often Non-Functional (Mean = 2.97, Agreed). Students report that non-functional equipment is a recurring issue, though the mean score suggests moderate agreement. This indicates that while some equipment is operational, frequent breakdowns, lack of maintenance, or slow repair processes may hinder effective use. Outdated Technologies Hinder Usage (Mean = 3.03, Agreed)**.** The presence of outdated technology is acknowledged as a challenge. The moderate mean score suggests that while students manage to use available technology, older systems and software may

slow down their work, limit access to advanced digital tools, and reduce efficiency. Limited Internet Access (Mean = 3.10, Agreed). Students express concerns over internet access, with a mean score indicating that while connectivity is available, it may not always be sufficient. Factors such as slow speeds, network downtimes, or restrictions on digital resources could hinder effective learning and research.

4.5 Discussion of Findings

The findings in table 4.3.1 indicate that while media centers and computer laboratories are accessible and functional, several challenges persist. Issues such as occasional difficulties in access, restricted operating hours, outdated or insufficient equipment, and overcrowding may limit the efficiency of these facilities. Improvements in resource allocation, equipment upgrades, extended operating hours, and expansion of facilities would enhance the overall student experience and ensure more effective utilization of media centers and computer laboratories. The findings in table 4.3.2 indicate that while the media centers and computer laboratories are functional, several challenges persist**.** Frequent technical issues, occasional internet disruptions, and inadequate technical support may reduce the efficiency of these facilities. Improvements in equipment maintenance, internet reliability, and staff availability are necessary to enhance student experiences. The findings of table 4.3.3 suggest that media centers and computer laboratories significantly impact students' academic activities, coursework, and technical skills. However, there is a clear need for improvements to maximize their effectiveness. Upgrading infrastructure, expanding digital resources, and providing more hands-on technical training could further enhance students' learning experiences and academic performance. The findings of table 4.3.4 highlight that while LIS students have access to media centers and computer laboratories, several challenges affect their ability to maximize these resources. Overcrowding, non-functional or outdated equipment, and limited internet access are the most pressing issues. Addressing these challenges through infrastructure upgrades, better maintenance practices, and increased internet capacity will significantly enhance the learning experience and improve students' academic performance. The findings suggest the need for improved infrastructure, better facility management, and increased technical support to enhance digital resource utilization. By addressing these issues, students' academic performance and digital literacy skills can be

significantly improved, ensuring better integration of technology into higher education learning environments.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

This study examined how Library and Information Science (LIS) students at the University of Benin access and use media centers and computer laboratories. The findings show that while students generally have access to these facilities, they do not use them as often as expected. This could be due to busy class schedules, limited awareness of available resources, or a preference for personal devices. Although students agree that functional equipment is available, technical issues such as slow computers, outdated software, and system failures still affect usability. Regular maintenance and upgrades are needed to improve performance. Overcrowding is a major challenge, making it difficult for students to find available workspaces. This leads to discomfort, distractions, and reduced productivity. Expanding facilities, using booking systems, or providing remote access to digital resources could help address this issue. Internet connectivity is generally reliable but sometimes experiences disruptions. While technical support staff are available, students feel that assistance is not always prompt or sufficient. More support staff, faster response times, and IT workshops could improve the situation. The overall condition of media centers and computer labs is considered good, but frequent technical problems and outdated systems hinder smooth usage. Upgrading hardware, updating software, and proactive maintenance would enhance user experience. While these facilities are accessible and useful, overcrowding, technical issues, and limited support services still pose challenges. Improving these areas would help students make better use of digital resources for their academic needs.

5.2 Conclusion

This study highlights the importance of media centers and computer laboratories at the University of Benin in providing LIS students with access to digital resources. However, challenges such as overcrowding, occasional internet disruptions, and technical issues with outdated systems hinder optimal use. While students appreciate the availability of functional equipment and technical support, gaps remain in maintenance and responsiveness. Addressing these challenges through facility expansion, regular upgrades, and improved support services will enhance students' learning experiences and digital literacy. Institutions must prioritize these improvements to create a more effective and accessible academic environment.

5.3 Recommendations

The following are the recommendations based on the findings:

1. **Expansion of Media Centers and Computer Laboratories:** To address overcrowding, the university should invest in expanding these facilities by increasing the number of available computer systems and study spaces.
2. **Upgrading Equipment and Infrastructure:** Outdated and malfunctioning systems should be replaced with modern, high-performance computers. Regular maintenance and software updates should also be prioritized.
3. **Enhancing Internet Connectivity:** The university should invest in more reliable internet infrastructure to ensure uninterrupted access to online resources. Increasing bandwidth capacity and providing backup systems can help address connectivity issues.
4. **Extending Operating Hours:** Many students may find it difficult to access these facilities during peak hours. Extending operating hours, especially during examination periods, would enhance accessibility.
5. **Increasing Technical Support Staff:** Employing additional technical staff and training them to provide timely assistance would improve students' experience and reduce downtime caused by technical difficulties.
6. **Implementing a Booking System:** To manage overcrowding, an efficient digital booking system should be introduced. This will help regulate usage and ensure that students have equal opportunities to access the facilities.
7. **Digital Literacy Training:** Conducting periodic workshops on how to effectively use digital resources and computer laboratories would empower students with the necessary skills to maximize the available facilities.

5.4 Limitations of the Study

This study examines the access and utilization of media centers and computer laboratories by LIS students at the University of Benin. However, several limitations were encountered. The study focused on LIS students, which may not fully represent the experiences of students from other faculties. A broader sample could provide a more comprehensive understanding of digital resource accessibility across the university. The research was conducted within a limited

timeframe, restricting data collection and analysis. A longer study period could have allowed for a more detailed examination of long-term trends in media center and laboratory usage. Some students were unavailable or rushed through the questionnaire, affecting the accuracy of responses, especially on the Likert scale. A more interactive approach, such as interviews or focus groups, could have improved data reliability. The study was limited to the University of Benin, making it difficult to generalize findings to other institutions with different digital resource challenges and infrastructural capacities. Limited funding restricted the scale of research, affecting the ability to conduct extensive fieldwork or employ diverse data collection methods. More funding could have supported in-depth studies, including qualitative interviews and observational research.

5.4 Suggestions for Further Research

While this study provides valuable facts into the role of media centers and computer laboratories in providing access to digital environments, further research could be conducted in the following areas:

1. A comparative study between LIS students and students from other disciplines to assess the level of digital access and engagement across departments.
2. The impact of remote access to digital resources on students' academic performance.
3. An evaluation of student satisfaction with specific digital learning tools and software available in media centers and computer laboratories.

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APPENDIX

MEDIA CENTERS AND COMPUTER LABORATORIES FOR ACCESS TO DIGITAL ENVIRONMENT BY LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE STUDENTS OF UNIVERSITY OF BENIN.

QUESTIONNAIRE

INSTRUCTIONS: Please read each question carefully and tick where ( ) where appropriate

SECTION A: BIO DATA

1. **Gender:** Male [ ] Female [ ]
2. **Age Range:** 15–20 years [ ] 21–25 years [ ] 26–30 years [ ]
3. **Level of Study:** 100 Level [ ] 200 Level [ ] 300 Level [ ] 400 Level [ ]

SECTION B:

Please tick (√) in the items that represents your opinion and response.

Research Question 1: To what extent are media centers and computer laboratories available and accessible to LIS students at the University of Benin?

Key: Very large extent (VLE), Large extent (LE), Rarely, (R), Never (N)

SN	ITEM	VLE	LE	R	N
1.	How often do you access media centres and computer laboratories?				
2	How easy is it to access these facilities during peak hours?				
3.	Are the operating hours of these facilities convenient for your use?				
4	How would you rate the availability of functional systems in these facilities?				
5	How frequently do you face overcrowding in these facilities?				

Research Question 2: What is the current state of the media centers and computer laboratories available to LIS students at the University of Benin?

Key: Strong Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD)

SN	ITEM	SA	A	D	SD
1.	The condition of the equipment in these facilities are good for use				
2	How often do you encounter technical issues such as internet failure or hardware malfunctions?				
3.	Is internet connectivity in these facilities reliable?				
4	Are there enough technical staff available to assist users when needed?				
5	I am satisfied with the availability of working internet-connected devices?				

Research Question 3: What challenges do LIS students face in accessing and utilizing the digital resources in these media centers and computer laboratories?

Key: Strong Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD)

SN	ITEM	SA	A	D	SD
1.	I experience limited access to functional systems?				
2.	I experience overcrowding in the media centres and computer laboratories?				
3.	I find equipment (e.g., computers, printers) non-functional?				
4	The technologies are outdated and it is a barrier to using these facilities?				
5	I find internet access limited in these facilities?				

Research Question 4: How do media centers and computer laboratories impact the access to digital environment and resources by LIS students in university of Benin?

Key: Strongly Agree (A), Agree (A), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD)

SN	ITEM	SA	A	D	SD
1.	I use these facilities for academic purposes				
2	These facilities improved my ability to complete coursework				
3.	These facilities enhance my technical skills				
4	These facilities contribute to improving my academic performance?				
5	I recommend improvements to these facilities for better academic outcomes?				