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Research Article

Factors Influencing Academic Libraries' Intention to Use AI Technologies in Universities in Rivers State

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Abstract

This study examined the factors influencing academic libraries' intention to use artificial intelligence (AI) technologies in universities in Rivers State, Nigeria. A descriptive survey design was adopted. The population comprised 150 professional and paraprofessional staff members in the academic libraries of three universities in Rivers State. Using stratified random sampling, a sample of 60 respondents was selected proportionally from the three universities. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire and analysed using frequency counts and percentages. The findings showed that technological factors, particularly ICT infrastructure, system compatibility, and ease of use, influenced librarians' intention to use AI. Individual factors, including perceived usefulness, digital competence, confidence, prior experience, and training opportunities, also influenced intention to use AI. Organisational factors such as institutional support, funding, and policy were important, while ethical and environmental concerns, including data privacy, regulation, sustainability, and fear of job displacement, also affected intention. The study concluded that successful AI adoption in academic libraries requires technological readiness, individual competence, organisational support, and ethical governance. It recommended continuous training and capacity building for librarians, investment in adequate ICT infrastructure, and the development of clear ethical and institutional frameworks for AI use in academic libraries.

Keywords

AI Adoption, Academic Libraries, Technological Factors, Librarians' Intention, Rivers State Universities

1. Introduction

In higher education, artificial intelligence (AI) has become a transformative force that is changing the production, management, and dissemination of information. This development has also affected academic libraries, which have historically served as intellectual centres of universities. Libraries are increasingly using AI technologies to improve user engagement, reference services, cataloguing, and information retrieval [10, 13]. However, academic libraries in Nigerian universities, particularly those in Rivers State, are still at an early stage of AI adoption.

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Aligning library services with emerging technological developments therefore requires an understanding of the factors that influence librarians' intention to use AI technologies.

Academic libraries provide essential resources for research, teaching, and learning. They support academic achievement, promote information literacy, and provide access to intellectual resources. However, automation and digital technologies have brought significant changes to library operations in the twenty-first century. Traditional functions, including cataloguing, classification, circulation, and reference services, have increasingly been supported by AI, enabling faster and potentially more precise service delivery [2, 21]. AI-powered solutions such as chatbots, recommender systems, and automated indexing tools can also improve user experience by providing personalised and predictive services [11].

Despite these advantages, AI adoption remains relatively slow in Nigerian academic libraries, particularly those in Rivers State. Research indicates that technological infrastructure, institutional support, individual skills, ethical considerations, and perceived usefulness can affect librarians' intention to adopt AI [3, 4, 19, 20]. This suggests that the intention to use AI, which is the dependent variable in this study, is shaped by several enabling and constraining factors that require systematic investigation.

Artificial intelligence refers to the ability of computer systems to perform tasks such as learning, reasoning, and problem-solving that typically require human intelligence [23]. AI technologies relevant to libraries include robotic process automation, intelligent search systems, machine learning algorithms, natural language processing (NLP), and predictive analytics. These technologies can support decision-making, automate routine procedures, and improve access to and management of information.

AI-powered cataloguing systems, for example, may assist in tagging and classifying documents, while chatbots and virtual reference assistants can respond to users' enquiries. Similarly, libraries can use predictive analytics to identify patterns in information use and support data-informed collection development decisions [14, 22]. Adopting AI in academic libraries, however, involves more than a technological choice; it also requires institutional support, individual readiness, organisational preparedness, and ethical judgement. The intention to use AI technologies therefore represents librarians' willingness, readiness, or planned behaviour to adopt and integrate AI systems into library operations.

In this context, librarians' intention to use AI may be influenced by perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, organisational support, and ethical acceptability. When librarians perceive AI as beneficial, user-friendly, and consistent with professional values, they are more likely to adopt it in service delivery. Conversely, concerns about data privacy, job displacement, and inadequate institutional funding may reduce their intention to use AI [11, 17].

Rivers State, located in Nigeria's South-South region, hosts several universities, including the University of Port Harcourt, Rivers State University, and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, all of which maintain academic libraries. Despite progress in digitisation, these libraries continue to face infrastructural and human-resource challenges that may slow AI adoption [19, 20]. Librarians' intention to use AI is therefore likely to be influenced by access to digital infrastructure, management support, and training opportunities.

Given the global movement towards AI-driven information services, academic libraries in Rivers State need to adapt in order to remain relevant. Understanding the interplay among technological, organisational, individual, ethical, and environmental factors can help policymakers and university administrators develop strategies that enhance librarians' readiness and motivation to use AI technologies.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

Despite the growing global recognition of artificial intelligence (AI) as a transformative tool in academic libraries, its adoption in Nigerian university libraries, particularly in Rivers State, remains limited. While AI has demonstrated potential for supporting cataloguing, information retrieval, and decision-making, many libraries in Rivers State continue to rely heavily on conventional systems and service models. This slow uptake raises questions about the factors shaping librarians' intention to use AI technologies. Related studies suggest several challenges, including inadequate ICT infrastructure, limited institutional funding, and the absence of clear organisational policies to support AI integration. Individual-level factors, such as limited AI literacy, fear of job displacement, and resistance to change, may also affect adoption. In addition, ethical and environmental concerns, including data privacy, user confidentiality, and the potential misuse of AI-generated information, may further complicate adoption efforts.

Although some studies have examined technological readiness and awareness, limited empirical evidence exists on how technological, organisational, individual, ethical, and environmental factors jointly influence librarians' intention to use AI in the Rivers State university context. Without such evidence, efforts to modernise academic libraries may be less effective. This study therefore investigates the key factors influencing academic libraries' intention to use AI technologies in universities in Rivers State.

1.2. Objectives of the Study

The general aim of the study is to examine the factors influencing academic libraries' intention to use AI technologies in universities in Rivers State.

The specific objectives of this research are to:

1) Assess the influence of technological factors (infrastructure, interoperability, and perceived ease of use) on librarians' intention to use AI technologies in Rivers State universities.

2) Examine the influence of organisational factors (management support, funding, and policy) on librarians' intention to use AI technologies in Rivers State universities.
3) Evaluate the influence of individual factors (perceived usefulness, AI literacy/skills, and attitude) on librarians' intention to use AI technologies in Rivers State universities.
4) Explore the influence of environmental and ethical concerns (data privacy, institutional regulations, and user readiness) on librarians' intention to use AI technologies in Rivers State universities.

1.3. Research Questions

1) To what extent do technological factors influence librarians' intention to use AI technologies in Rivers State universities?
2) To what extent do organisational factors influence librarians' intention to use AI technologies in Rivers State universities?
3) To what extent do individual factors influence librarians' intention to use AI technologies in Rivers State universities?
4) To what extent do environmental and ethical concerns influence librarians' intention to use AI technologies in Rivers State universities?

2. Literature Review

Technological factors include the availability, accessibility, and functionality of AI technologies, as well as their compatibility with existing library systems. Academic libraries in developed countries benefit from robust ICT infrastructure, high-speed internet, and cloud-based systems that support AI deployment. However, in many Nigerian university libraries, limited access to technology and poor ICT infrastructure constrains adoption [1, 9].

The perceived usefulness and ease of use of AI tools also strongly affect intention. When librarians believe that AI applications will improve productivity, accuracy, and service quality, their intention to use such tools increases [15, 22]. Conversely, high technical complexity, lack of user training, or fear of system failures may reduce adoption likelihood. Thus, technological readiness forms a critical foundation for AI integration in academic libraries.

Organizational factors refer to the institutional environment, leadership support, and policy frameworks that encourage or hinder the adoption of AI. Institutional commitment, funding, and strategic alignment are major determinants of AI readiness [1]. In universities where management prioritizes digital transformation, libraries receive better funding for technological infrastructure and staff training. Additionally, the presence of organizational innovation culture and collaborative leadership encourages experimentation with emerging technologies [6, 7]. On the contrary, bureaucratic structures, resistance to change, or lack of policy direction limit librarians' motivation to engage with AI. In Rivers State universities, the extent of administrative and technical support is often inconsistent, affecting the institutional capacity to sustain AI-driven services [19, 20].

Individual factors encompass librarians' skills, attitudes, perceptions, and awareness of AI technologies. Librarians with strong ICT literacy and positive perceptions of technology are more likely to adopt AI in their workflows [12, 16]. The perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use of AI tools (from TAM) influence their behavioral intention.

Furthermore, librarians' confidence, adaptability, and willingness to learn new systems play crucial roles. When staff perceive AI as enhancing professional efficiency rather than threatening job security, they demonstrate higher acceptance levels [11]. Therefore, improving digital literacy and attitude transformation through continuous training is essential for effective AI adoption.

Ethical and environmental considerations, particularly around data privacy, intellectual property, algorithmic bias, and sustainability. Librarians must ensure that AI systems comply with ethical standards of information management and user data protection [3, 4, 17]. Concerns about job loss, transparency, and accountability also affect adoption decisions.

A descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. The population comprised 150 professional and paraprofessional staff members working in the academic libraries of three universities in Rivers State: The University of Port Harcourt (UNIPORT), Rivers State University (RSU), and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education (IAUE). Stratified random sampling was used, with the three universities serving as strata. A sample of 60 respondents was selected proportionally from the population. A structured questionnaire was used as the instrument for data collection. Data were analyzed using frequency counts and percentages to answer the research questions.

3. Methodology

A descriptive survey design was used in the study. The population consists of 150 professional and paraprofessional employees working in academic libraries in Rivers State University. The study adopted a stratified random sampling technique, with the three Universities in Rivers State, University of Port Harcourt (UNIPORT), Rivers State University (RSU), and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education served as the strata. From the total population of 150 professional and paraprofessional employee, a sample size of 60 respondents was selected proportionally from both universities. A structured questionnaire served as the instrument for data collection. Data was analyzed using 0.4 frequencies and 40% percentages to answer the research question.

4. Results and Findings

Table 1. *shows the frequency and percentage rating on what extent do technological factor (infrastructure, interoperability, and perceived ease of us) affect librarians' intentions to use AI technologies at Rivers State universities.*

S/N	what extent do technological factor (infrastructure, interoperability, and perceived usability) influence librarians' intentions to utilize AI technologies at Rivers State universities?	YES	%	NO	%
1	AI systems improve cataloguing and reference services.	48	80.0	12	20.0
2	Availability of ICT infrastructure supports AI use.	45	75.0	15	25.0
3	AI technologies are compatible with existing systems.	50	83.3	10	16.7
4	Ease of use encourages adoption of AI tools.	50	83.3	10	16.7
5	Availability of technical support encourages AI use.	47	78.3	| 13	21.7
	Total Percentage Rating		80.0%		20.0%

The results in Table 1 show that technological factors influence librarians' intention to use AI technologies. Specifically, 80.0% of respondents indicated that AI systems improve cataloguing and reference services, 75.0% agreed that ICT infrastructure supports AI use, and 83.3% reported that ease of use encourages adoption. In addition, 78.3% indicated that technical support encourages AI use. After correcting the percentage for the third item, 83.3% (50 respondents) indicated that AI technologies are compatible with existing systems. The overall rating is 80.0%, indicating a high level of influence of technological factors on librarians' intention to use AI technologies.

Table 2. *Frequency and percentage rating on what extent do organizational factors (management support, funding, policy) affect librarians' intention to use AI technologies in Rivers State universities.*

S/N	what extent do organizational factors (management support, funding, policy) affect librarians' intention to use AI technologies in Rivers State universities?	YES	%	NO	%
1	AI is useful for improving library efficiency.	46	76.7	14	23.3
2	Positive attitude toward AI increases willingness to adopt.	49	81.7	11	18.3
3	Institutional support promotes AI adoption.	44	73.3	16	26.7
4	AI tools are easy to use.	42	70.0	18	30.0
5	Ethical concerns discourage AI adoption.	25	41.7	35	58.3
	Total Percentage Rating		68.7%		31.3%

The results in Table 2 show that organisational factors influence librarians' intention to use AI technologies. Specifically, 76.7% of respondents indicated that AI is useful for improving library efficiency, while 81.7% reported that a positive attitude towards AI increases willingness to adopt it. Furthermore, 73.3% indicated that institutional support promotes AI adoption, and 70.0% agreed that AI tools are easy to use. However, 41.7% indicated that ethical concerns discourage AI adoption. The overall percentage rating of 68.7% indicates a moderate influence of the factors represented in the table on librarians' intention to adopt AI technologies.

Table 3. *Frequency and percentage rating on What degree do individual factors (perceived usefulness, AI literacy/skills, attitude) affect Rivers State university librarians' intentions to use AI technologies.*

S/N	What degree do individual factors (perceived usefulness, AI literacy/skills, attitude) affect Rivers State university librarians' intentions to use AI technologies?	YES	%	NO	%
1	My digital skills determine my readiness to use AI.	50	83.3	10	16.7
2	I perceive AI as useful in daily library tasks.	52	86.7	8	13.3
3	Confidence in using AI increases adoption.	49	81.7	11	18.3
4	Prior experience with digital tools helps AI use.	51	85.0	9	15.0
5	Training opportunities influence AI adoption.	48	80.0	12	20.0
	Total Percentage Rating		83.3%		16.7%

The results in Table 3 show that individual factors, including digital skills, perceived usefulness, confidence, prior experience, and training opportunities, influence librarians' intention to use AI. Specifically, 83.3% of respondents indicated that digital skills determine their readiness to use AI, 86.7% perceived AI as useful in daily library tasks, and 81.7% agreed that confidence in using AI increases adoption. In addition, 85.0% indicated that prior experience with digital tools supports AI use, while 80.0% agreed that training opportunities influence AI adoption. The overall percentage rating of 83.3% indicates a high level of influence of individual factors on intention to use AI.

Table 4. *Frequency and percentage rating on what extent do environmental and ethical concerns (data privacy, institutional regulations, user readiness) influence librarians' intention to use AI technologies in Rivers State universities.*

S/N	What extent do environmental and ethical concerns (data privacy, institutional regulations, user readiness) influence librarians' intention to use AI technologies in Rivers State universities?	YES	%	NO	%
1	Privacy concerns affect my trust in AI systems.	41	68.3	19	31.7
2	Lack of ethical regulations limits AI adoption.	43	71.7	17	28.3
3	Environmental sustainability of AI systems matters.	39	65.0	21	35.0
4	Fear of job replacement reduces my willingness to adopt AI.	37	61.7	23	38.3
5	Ethical awareness training would improve AI use.	46	76.7	14	23.3
	Total Percentage Rating		68.7%		31.3%

The results in Table 4 show that environmental and ethical concerns influence librarians' intention to use AI technologies. Specifically, 68.3% of respondents indicated that privacy concerns affect their trust in AI systems, while 71.7% agreed that the lack of ethical regulations limits AI adoption. In addition, 65.0% indicated that environmental sustainability of AI systems matters, and 61.7% reported that fear of job replacement reduces their willingness to adopt AI. A further 76.7% agreed that ethical-awareness training would improve AI use. The overall percentage rating of 68.7% indicates a moderate influence of environmental and ethical concerns on intention to use AI.

5. Discussion of Findings

5.1. Technological Factors Affecting Librarians' Intention to Use AI

The study revealed that technological factors significantly influence librarians' intention to use AI technologies in university libraries across Rivers State, with an overall agreement rating of 80.0%. The highest-rated item was ease of use, indicating that librarians are more likely to adopt AI when systems are user-friendly and compatible with existing infrastructure.

This finding is consistent with the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), which identifies perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use as important determinants of technology acceptance [8]. Similar findings by [19, 20] indicate that adequate ICT infrastructure and technical support can enhance AI integration in Nigerian academic libraries. Therefore, technological readiness remains an important determinant of AI utilisation.

This aligns with the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), which identifies perceived ease of use and system compatibility as strong predictors of technology adoption [5, 8]. Similar findings by [19, 20] confirmed that adequate ICT infrastructure and technical support enhance the integration of AI in Nigerian academic libraries. Therefore, technological readiness particularly the availability of functional ICT tools remains a crucial determinant for successful AI utilization.

5.2. Organisational Factors Affecting Librarians' Intention to Adopt AI Technologies

Findings indicated that organisational factors have a moderate influence on librarians' intention to use AI, with an overall agreement rating of 68.7%. Respondents acknowledged the usefulness of AI for improving library efficiency and the importance of positive attitudes and institutional support. However, ethical concerns were also identified by some respondents, showing that adoption is not driven solely by technical or functional benefits. Similarly, [3, 4] found that librarians' willingness to adopt AI is influenced by perceived usefulness and ethical transparency. Organisational support and ethical clarity are therefore important for broader AI acceptance in academic libraries.

5.3. Individual Factors (Skills, Perceived Usefulness) and Intention to Use AI

The results showed that individual factors strongly influence librarians' intention to use AI, with an overall agreement rating of 83.3%. Respondents indicated that digital skills, confidence, perceived usefulness, prior experience, and training improve their readiness to adopt AI technologies. This finding is consistent with [12], who reported that librarians' digital competence and continuous training affect their ability to integrate AI into library services. It also supports Yuan and Kim (2023), who noted the importance of digital competence and perceived usefulness in the adoption of emerging technologies.

This finding is consistent with [12], who reported that librarians' digital competence and continuous training directly impact their ability to integrate AI into library services. It also supports Yuan and Kim (2023), who noted that users' self-efficacy and perceived usefulness are major drivers of technology adoption in educational institutions. Consequently, librarians with higher ICT literacy and confidence are more likely to embrace AI-based systems for cataloguing, research support, and user engagement.

5.4. Environmental and Ethical Concerns Influencing Intention to Use AI

The study revealed that environmental and ethical concerns have a moderate influence on librarians' intention to use AI, with an overall agreement rating of 68.7%. Librarians expressed concerns about privacy risks, regulatory gaps, job replacement, and environmental sustainability. Privacy concerns affected trust in AI systems for 68.3% of respondents, while 76.7% indicated that ethical-awareness training would improve AI use. These findings are consistent with the concerns identified by [9] regarding data misuse, job displacement, and bias in AI adoption.

These concerns mirror findings by [9], who identified ethical apprehensions such as data misuse, job displacement, and bias as barriers to AI adoption in libraries. Similarly, [12] emphasized that ethical trust and transparency must be embedded in AI systems to enhance user confidence. Librarians also expressed worry about the environmental footprint of AI infrastructure, echoing [18] who highlighted the need for sustainable digital practice.

6. Conclusion

The findings of this study show that librarians' intention to use Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies in university libraries is influenced by technological, individual, organisational, ethical, and environmental factors. This indicates that successful AI adoption depends not only on the availability of technology but also on librarians' skills, confidence, institutional support, and the overall environment in which the technology is introduced. This finding is consistent with the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) by Davis (1989), which identifies perceived usefulness and ease of use as important factors in technology acceptance, and the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) by Venkatesh et al. (2003), which emphasises performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, and facilitating conditions.

The study found that technological readiness is important to AI adoption. Reliable ICT infrastructure, stable internet connectivity, compatible systems, user-friendly applications, and technical support can encourage librarians to use AI, while inadequate facilities may discourage adoption. This supports Rogers' (2003) Diffusion of Innovations theory, which highlights compatibility, relative advantage, and complexity as factors affecting the adoption of new technologies.

The findings also show that individual factors such as digital competence, confidence, previous experience, perceived usefulness, and training influence librarians' willingness to use AI. Librarians are more likely to embrace AI when they understand its benefits and have the skills to apply it to activities such as information retrieval, reference services, cata-

loguing, research support, and routine tasks. Similarly, organisational support, including funding, leadership support, relevant policies, technical assistance, and continuous professional development, is essential for creating an enabling environment for AI adoption.

In addition, ethical and environmental concerns such as data privacy, security, accuracy, transparency, job displacement, regulatory uncertainty, and sustainability can affect librarians' willingness to use AI. These concerns reinforce the need for responsible, transparent, and human-centred AI practices, as emphasised by UNESCO (2021) and OECD (2019). AI should therefore be regarded as a tool that complements rather than replaces librarians' professional knowledge, judgement, and ethical responsibilities.

Overall, the study concludes that effective AI integration in Rivers State university libraries requires more than the provision of AI tools. It requires adequate technological infrastructure, continuous training, strong organisational support, sufficient funding, and clear ethical and policy frameworks. A gradual and human-centred approach to AI adoption will enable librarians to develop the competence and confidence needed to use AI effectively and contribute to more efficient, responsive, and innovative library services in Nigerian universities.

7. Recommendations

1) University authorities should invest in adequate ICT infrastructure, including reliable high-speed internet, appropriate servers, AI-compatible library management systems, regular system upgrades, and stable power supply, to support AI deployment.
2) Library administrators should organise continuous training and workshops to improve librarians' digital literacy and awareness of AI applications. Training should cover areas such as AI-assisted cataloguing, data analytics, and responsible use of generative AI.
3) University management should implement capacity-building policies that promote digital skills development, mentorship, and peer learning among librarians. Librarians should also be encouraged to undertake relevant online certifications and collaborate with ICT experts.
4) Universities should establish clear ethical guidelines and sustainability frameworks for AI use in libraries, covering data privacy, copyright protection, transparency, accountability, human oversight, and environmentally responsible digital practices.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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