

Influence of ICT Tools Utilisation on Research Productivity of OIM Lecturers in Universities in Southern Nigeria

¹Samuel A. OSORE., ²Kofoworola O. POPOOLA

¹Federal Polytechnic, Ilaro

²Department of Office and Information Management, Lead City University, Ibadan

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ABSTRACT

Research productivity is an important indicator of academic performance and institutional development. Increasingly, information and communication technology (ICT) tools have become integral to research activities, including literature searching, data collection, analysis, academic writing, collaboration, and publication. However, limited empirical evidence exists on the influence of ICT Tools Utilisation on the research productivity of Office and Information Management (OIM) lecturers in universities in Southern Nigeria. This study examined the influence of ICT Tools Utilisation on the research productivity of OIM lecturers in universities in Southern Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population comprised 126 OIM lecturers, from whom 119 valid responses were obtained. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire and analysed using descriptive statistics and simple linear regression. Research productivity was assessed across individual, institutional, and leadership characteristics, while ICT Tools Utilisation was measured using perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and actual use. The hypothesis was tested at the 0.05 significance level. The findings revealed that research productivity among OIM lecturers was high, with a weighted mean of 2.63. ICT Tools Utilisation was also high, with a weighted mean of 2.68. The regression analysis showed a strong positive relationship between ICT Tools Utilisation and research productivity ($R = .887$). ICT Tools Utilisation explained 78.6% of the variance in research productivity ($R^2 = .786$). The regression model was statistically significant ($F(1,117) = 430.727, p < .001$), while ICT Tools Utilisation had a significant positive effect on research productivity ($\beta = .887, t = 20.754, p < .001$). The null hypothesis was therefore rejected. ICT Tools Utilisation is a strong and significant predictor of research productivity among OIM lecturers in Southern Nigerian universities. The study recommends sustained investment in ICT infrastructure, reliable internet connectivity, access to scholarly databases and research software, and continuous digital skills training to strengthen lecturers' research productivity further.

Keywords: ICT, Research, Productivity, Universities, OIM

Word Count: 300

INTRODUCTION

Research productivity refers to the extent to which academics engage in research activities that generate identifiable scholarly outputs within a specified period. These outputs include articles published in peer-reviewed journals, books and book chapters, conference and seminar papers, patents, and research reports (Gabbay & Shoham, 2019; Ifijeh et al., 2018). Beyond publication counts, research productivity reflects the quality, relevance, originality, and applicability of scholarly contributions to knowledge development and societal advancement. Gabbay and Shoham (2019) emphasised that research productivity is manifested through the generation and dissemination of scholarly knowledge, while other scholarly contributions include peer-review and editorial activities, research grant acquisition, research supervision, academic discourse, and community engagement (Smith et al., 2018). This broader perspective suggests that research productivity is multidimensional, encompassing both tangible research outputs and sustained scholarly activities through which academics contribute to their institutions and wider society.

Research productivity is also an important indicator of lecturers' academic effectiveness and professional advancement. According to Gbemi-Ogunleye (2023), institutional conditions can significantly influence the extent to which academic staff engage in productive research. Similarly, Ladipo et al. (2022) identified institutional factors as important considerations in understanding variations in lecturers' research productivity in Nigerian universities. These perspectives indicate that research productivity is shaped not only by individual capacity but also by the institutional environment within which research activities are undertaken. Thus, research productivity may be conceptualised as the quantity and quality of research outputs and related scholarly activities generated by academics within a defined period (Basiru, 2018). Although publications remain a dominant indicator, a comprehensive assessment should also recognise the broader research activities that facilitate knowledge creation, dissemination, and application. In the present study, research productivity is viewed as the level of research-related output and scholarly engagement of OIM lecturers, particularly in relation to individual characteristics, institutional factors, and leadership characteristics.

ICT tools utilisation refers to the purposeful and effective application of digital technologies to perform research-related activities and improve research outcomes. It extends beyond mere access to technology to encompass the ability to use digital tools efficiently for information retrieval, data collection, processing and analysis, academic writing, collaboration, and dissemination of research findings (Adeleke & Olorunsola, 2022). In academic research, commonly utilised ICT tools include computers and mobile devices, internet resources, electronic databases, digital libraries, reference-management applications, statistical software such as SPSS, spreadsheet applications such as Microsoft Excel, online survey platforms, word-processing applications, video-conferencing platforms, and institutional or research repositories.

The application of these tools has transformed several stages of the research process by improving the speed, accuracy, accessibility, and organisation of research activities. Internet resources, electronic databases, and digital libraries facilitate the identification and retrieval of scholarly literature, while online survey platforms support electronic data collection. Statistical and spreadsheet applications assist in organising, processing, analysing, and presenting research data. Reference-management tools facilitate the organisation of scholarly sources and citation, whereas digital communication and collaboration platforms support interaction among researchers. Yakob (2013) noted the importance of ICT in data collection, processing, capturing, archiving, and dissemination, highlighting its contribution to the efficiency of research activities.

More recently, artificial intelligence (AI)-enabled tools have become an emerging component of ICT utilisation in academic research. AI applications can support activities such as literature searching, information organisation, text summarisation, language improvement, data processing, and identification of patterns within large volumes of information. Their increasing incorporation into research workflows provides additional opportunities for researchers to improve efficiency and manage some research tasks more effectively. However, their use requires appropriate digital competence and responsible judgement, particularly with respect to accuracy, originality, research integrity, and the verification of AI-generated information.

Effective ICT tools utilisation can consequently contribute to research productivity by reducing the time and effort required to undertake research activities and expanding access to scholarly resources. Amador and Silva (2025) reported that ICT adoption can contribute to productivity improvements, while Adeleke and Olorunsola (2022) linked ICT utilisation with academic productivity among university lecturers. Nevertheless, the benefits of ICT utilisation depend on the availability of appropriate technologies, users' digital competencies, reliable infrastructure, and institutional support. Ghavifekr and Rosdy (2015) similarly emphasised the importance of users' competence and supportive conditions for effective technology utilisation.

Despite its benefits, ICT tools utilisation may be constrained by inadequate infrastructure, poor internet connectivity, limited digital skills, and unequal access to technological resources. The emergence of AI also introduces additional considerations relating to responsible use, data privacy, research integrity, and the verification of information. Thus, access to ICT facilities alone does not guarantee effective utilisation; continuous training, reliable infrastructure, technical support, and favourable institutional conditions remain essential. In this study, ICT tools utilisation is conceptualised as the extent to which OIM lecturers purposefully and effectively employ digital technologies; including conventional research technologies and emerging AI-enabled tools; to support their research activities. The construct is assessed principally through perceived

usefulness and perceived ease of use, reflecting the extent to which lecturers perceive ICT tools as useful for improving research activities and as easy to learn, operate, and integrate into their routine research practices. This study is delimited to the Universities that offer Office and Information Management in the Southern Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Research productivity is a critical indicator of academic performance and institutional development, yet academics in Nigerian universities continue to face challenges relating to inadequate research resources, funding, institutional support, and workload (Okoduwa et al., 2018; Ladipo et al., 2022). Although ICT tools such as electronic databases, digital libraries, statistical software, online research platforms, and AI-enabled applications can facilitate literature searching, data analysis, academic writing, collaboration, and dissemination, effective access and utilisation remain constrained by inadequate infrastructure, poor internet connectivity, and limited digital competence. Despite the growing relevance of ICT to academic research, existing studies have focused predominantly on institutional and workplace factors influencing research productivity, with limited empirical attention to ICT tools utilisation as a predictor of research productivity. This limitation is particularly evident among OIM lecturers, whose academic discipline is closely associated with information and technology applications. Furthermore, available evidence provides limited context-specific understanding of this relationship among universities in Southern Nigeria. These gaps; variable, contextual, and geographical; necessitate empirical investigation. Therefore, this study examines the influence of ICT tools utilisation on the research productivity of OIM lecturers in universities in Southern Nigeria.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The study aims to investigate the Influence of ICT Tools Utilisation on Research Productivity of OIM Lecturers in Universities in Southern Nigeria. The objectives are to:

- i. identify the level of research productivity of OIM lecturers in Universities in Southern Nigeria.
- ii. assess the status of ICT Tools Utilisation by OIM lecturers in Universities in Southern Nigeria.
- iii. determine the influence of ICT Tools Utilisation on research productivity of OIM lecturers in Universities in Southern Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the level of research productivity of OIM lecturers in Universities in Southern Nigeria?
2. What is the level of ICT Tools Utilisation by OIM lecturers in Universities in Southern Nigeria?
3. What is the influence of ICT Tools Utilisation on research productivity of OIM lecturers in Universities in Southern Nigeria?

Research Hypothesis

The following hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance:

H_01 : There is no significant influence of ICT Tools Utilisation on research productivity of OIM lecturers in Universities in Southern Nigeria

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Framework

Bland Model of Research Productivity (Bland & Ruffin, 1992)

This study is anchored on the Bland Model of Research Productivity, developed by Bland and Ruffin (1992) and further refined by Bland et al. (2005). The model explains research productivity in terms of the individual,

institutional, and leadership characteristics and conditions associated with productive research activity. In the present study, individual characteristics encompass lecturers' motivation, research skills, confidence, time management, and commitment to professional development. Institutional characteristics include the research environment, institutional support, research policies, and workload, while leadership characteristics encompass research direction, support, collaboration, recognition, and the creation of an enabling research environment. These three dimensions provide a framework for examining the extent to which the conditions and characteristics necessary for productive research activity are present among OIM lecturers. The Bland Model is therefore appropriate for underpinning the examination of research productivity in this study, as it recognises that productive research activity is influenced by the interaction of individual attributes, institutional conditions, and leadership practices.

Technology Acceptance Model by Fred Davis (1989)

The Technology Acceptance Model, proposed by Davis (1989), explains technology utilisation through users' perceptions and behavioural responses. Its two central constructs are perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use. Perceived usefulness refers to the extent to which lecturers believe that ICT tools improve their research performance, while perceived ease of use concerns the extent to which such tools are perceived as easy to learn and operate. These perceptions influence behavioural intention and ultimately actual use of technology. Thus, TAM provides the theoretical basis for examining ICT tools utilisation through perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and actual use.

Conceptual Model

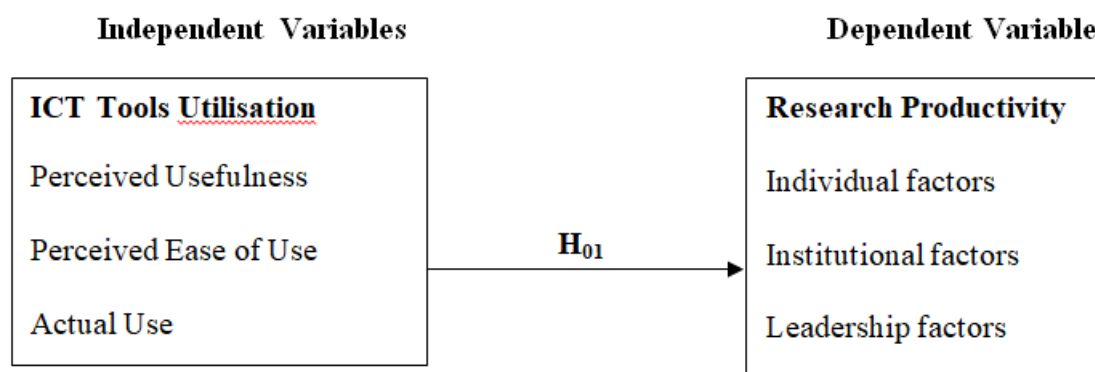


Figure 2.1: The Conceptual Model of ICT Tools Utilisation and Research Productivity.

Source: Researchers, 2026

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The population comprised 126 Office and Information Management lecturers in selected universities in Southern Nigeria. Because the population was manageable, a total enumeration (census) approach was adopted; therefore, all 126 lecturers constituted the target population of the study. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire adapted from previously validated empirical instruments (Adenekan & Ologun, 2023; Dauda and Babalola, 2022; Innocent and Bupo, 2025; Ayodele & Adeyeye, 2024). The questionnaire consisted of three sections. Section A obtained respondents' demographic information, while Sections B and C measured research productivity and ICT tools utilisation, respectively. The items were rated on four-point Likert scales appropriate to each construct. The instrument was subjected to face and content validation by experts in Office and Information Management. Their observations were incorporated into the final instrument. Reliability was established through a pretest involving 20 OIM lecturers from Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria Northern Nigeria. Cronbach's alpha coefficients were 0.970 for research productivity and 0.965 for ICT tools utilisation, indicating satisfactory internal consistency. However, the exceptionally high coefficients observed for some constructs were interpreted cautiously because very high Cronbach's alpha values may also suggest redundancy among items. The items were therefore reviewed for conceptual distinctiveness to ensure that high internal consistency did not arise primarily from repetitive item wording. Data were collected

electronically. Descriptive statistics, frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations, were used to answer the research questions, while simple linear regression was employed to test the null hypothesis. The hypothesis was tested at the 0.05 level of significance.

Table 3.1 Population of OIM lecturers in Universities that offer in Southern Nigeria

S/N	Institution	Population
1	Lead City University, Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria	8
2	Bamidele Olumilua University of Education, Science and Tech. Ikere-Ekiti	35
3	Adeleke University, Ede, Osun State	6
4	Delta State University, Abraka	23
5	Elizade University, Ilara-Mokin, Ondo State	5
6	Southern Delta University (Formerly Delta State University of Science and Technology, Ozoro)	5
7	Niger Delta University, Yenogoa	10
8	Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Rumuolumeni, Port Harcourt, Rivers State	25
9	Lagos State University of Science and Technology	9
	Total	126

Note: A total of 119 questionnaires were retrieved and found valid for the analysis, representing 94.44% of the 126 questionnaires distributed.

Analysis and Presentation

Demographic Data Analysis

Table 4.1 Demographic Information of Respondents

Variables	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	40	33.6%
	Female	79	66.4%
Age	20 – 25	3	2.5%
	26 - 30years	8	6.7%
	31 - 35years	14	11.8%
	36 years and above	94	79.0%
Level	Lecturer III – I	11	9.2%
	Senior Lecturer – Reader	74	62.2%
	Ass. Prof. – Professor	34	28.6%
Qualification	B. Sc.	2	1.7%

	M.Sc.	9	7.5
	Ph.D	108	90.8

Source: Field Survey Data (2026)

The respondents were predominantly female (66.4%), with most aged 36 years and above (79.0%). The majority were Senior Lecturers–Readers (62.2%), while 90.8% held Ph.D. qualifications. This profile indicates that the respondents were largely experienced and highly qualified academics, which enhances the relevance of their views on ICT tools utilisation and research productivity. It also implies that the findings reflect perspectives from lecturers who are likely to have substantial exposure to academic research activities.

Research Question One: What is the Level of Research Productivity of OIM Lecturers in Universities in Southern Nigeria?

Table 4.2: Level of Research Productivity of OIM Lecturers in Universities in Southern Nigeria

Research Productivity	VH	H	L	VL	Mean	Std. Dev.
Individual Characteristics						
To what level does your motivation to engage in research enable you to produce research outputs?	26 (21.8%)	41 (34.5%)	34 (28.6%)	18 (15.1%)	2.63	0.990
To what level do your research skills enable you to complete research projects and produce scholarly outputs?	31 (26.1%)	36 (30.3%)	33 (27.7%)	19 (16.0%)	2.66	1.036
To what level does your confidence in publishing enable you to convert completed research into publishable articles?	26 (21.8%)	37 (31.1%)	36 (30.3%)	20 (16.8%)	2.58	1.013
To what level does your ability to manage time effectively enable you to complete research activities alongside teaching and administrative responsibilities?	27 (22.7%)	36 (30.3%)	38 (31.9%)	18 (15.1%)	2.61	1.002
To what level does your commitment to continuous professional development contribute to your ability to produce research outputs?	30 (25.2%)	37 (31.1%)	35 (29.4%)	17 (14.3%)	2.67	1.009
Average Mean					2.63	-
Institutional Characteristics						
To what level are you able to successfully complete the research projects you undertake within the expected time frame?	29 (24.4%)	33 (27.7%)	39 (32.8%)	18 (15.1%)	2.61	1.018

To what level do the research facilities and resources provided by your institution enable you to complete research projects and produce scholarly outputs?	32 (26.9%)	36 (30.3%)	32 (26.9%)	19 (16.0%)	2.68	1.041
To what level does institutional research funding enable you to conduct and complete research projects?	28 (23.5%)	37 (31.1%)	35 (29.4%)	19 (16.0%)	2.62	1.017
To what level do institutional research policies and incentives encourage you to produce scholarly publications?	31 (26.1%)	37 (31.1%)	34 (28.6%)	17 (14.3%)	2.69	1.015
To what level does the research support provided by your institution enable you to successfully complete and disseminate your research outputs?	31 (26.1%)	37 (31.1%)	32 (26.9%)	19 (16.0%)	2.67	1.034
Average Mean					2.65	
Leadership Characteristics	VH	H	L	VL	Mean	Std. Dev.
To what level does the research direction and vision provided by your Head of Department/Dean facilitate the completion of your research activities?	34 (28.6%)	33 (27.7%)	33 (27.7%)	19 (16.0%)	2.69	1.056
To what level does academic leadership support through resources, funding, or workload arrangements enable you to produce research outputs?	26 (21.8%)	37 (31.1%)	37 (31.1%)	19 (16.0%)	2.59	1.003
To what level does leadership encouragement of research collaboration contribute to your scholarly publications and other research outputs?	31 (26.1%)	39 (32.8%)	32 (26.9%)	17 (14.3%)	2.69	1.011
To what level does recognition of research achievements motivate you to produce additional research outputs?	25 (21.0%)	41 (34.5%)	36 (30.3%)	17 (14.3%)	2.62	0.974
To what level does the leadership of your institution create an environment that facilitates the completion and dissemination of your research?	29 (24.4%)	35 (29.4%)	35 (29.4%)	20 (16.8%)	2.61	1.034
Average Mean					2.64	
Weighted Mean for Research Productivity					2.63	-

Decision Rule: Very Low=1.00 - 1.74, Low=1.75-2.49, High=2.50-3.24, Very High=3.25-4.00

Key: VH=4, H=3, L=2, VL=1

Source: Field Survey Data (2026)

Table 4.2 shows that the level of research productivity among OIM lecturers in universities in Southern Nigeria was high, with an overall weighted mean of 2.63, although the score was close to the lower boundary of the high category. Individual characteristics recorded a mean of 2.63, with continuous professional development having the highest mean (2.67) and confidence in publishing the lowest (2.58), indicating a need to strengthen lecturers' capacity to convert research into publishable outputs. Institutional characteristics recorded the highest dimension mean (2.65), with research policies and incentives having the highest mean (2.69), while ICT support and research funding recorded relatively lower means of 2.61 and 2.62, respectively. Leadership characteristics recorded a mean of 2.64, with research direction and collaboration encouragement scoring highest (2.69), while resource, funding, and workload support recorded the lowest mean (2.59). The findings indicate that research productivity was supported by individual, institutional, and leadership conditions, but improvements in research funding, ICT support, publishing capacity, and leadership resources could further enhance scholarly output.

Research Question Two: What is the level of ICT Tools Utilisation of OIM Lecturers in Universities in Southern Nigeria?

Table 4.3: Level of ICT Tools Utilisation of OIM Lecturers in Universities in Southern Nigeria

ICT Tools Utilisation	VH	H	L	VL	Mean	Std. Dev.
Perceived Usefulness						
To what level do ICT tools enhance the quality of your research activities?	31 (26.1%)	42 (35.3%)	29 (24.4%)	17(14.3%)	2.73	1.006
To what level do ICT tools improve your efficiency in conducting academic research?	32 (26.9%)	39 (32.8%)	33 (27.7%)	15 (12.6%)	2.74	0.995
To what level do ICT tools support data collection, analysis, and interpretation in your research work?	27 (22.7%)	38 (31.9%)	36 (30.3%)	18 (15.1%)	2.62	1.000
To what level do ICT tools facilitate access to scholarly journals and research databases?	31 (26.1%)	37 (31.1%)	32 (26.9%)	19 (16.0%)	2.67	1.034
To what level do ICT tools enable you to complete your research tasks more quickly?	36 (30.3%)	29 (24.4%)	38 (31.9%)	16 (13.4%)	2.71	1.043
Average Mean					2.69	-
Perceived Ease of Use	VH	H	L	VL	Mean	Std. Dev.
To what level are ICT tools easy for you to learn and operate for academic purposes?	32 (26.9%)	37 (31.1%)	31 (26.1%)	19(16.0%)	2.69	1.039
To what level do you find ICT tools user-friendly for research and teaching activities?	32 (26.9%)	34 (28.6%)	33 (27.7%)	20 (16.8%)	2.66	1.053
To what level can you use ICT tools effectively without requiring technical assistance?	35 (29.4%)	36 (30.3%)	33 (27.7%)	15 (12.6%)	2.76	1.014
To what level is it easy to integrate ICT tools into your routine research activities?	29 (24.4%)	39 (32.8%)	32 (26.9%)	19 (16.0%)	2.66	1.020

To what level does your familiarity with ICT tools reduce the effort required to conduct research?	31 (26.1%)	33 (27.7%)	36 (30.3%)	19 (16.0%)	2.64	1.039
Average Mean					2.68	
Actual Use	VH	H	L	VL	Mean	Std. Dev.
To what level do you regularly use ICT tools for research and academic writing?	31 (26.1%)	35 (29.4%)	36 (30.3%)	17 (14.3%)	2.67	1.018
To what level do you use online databases and digital libraries for scholarly publications?	31 (26.1%)	34 (28.6%)	42 (35.3%)	12 (10.1%)	2.71	0.969
To what level do you utilise ICT tools for collaboration with other researchers?	29 (24.4%)	34 (28.6%)	37 (31.1%)	19 (16.0%)	2.61	1.026
To what level do you use statistical or data-analysis software in your research work?	28 (23.5%)	40 (33.6%)	37 (31.1%)	14 (11.8%)	2.69	0.963
To what level do you rely on ICT tools for submitting manuscripts and managing publications?	26 (21.8%)	40 (33.6%)	37 (31.1%)	16 (13.4%)	2.64	0.972
Average Mean					2.66	
Weighted Mean for ICT Tools Utilisation					2.68	-

Decision Rule: Very Low=1.00 - 1.74, Low=1.75-2.49, High=2.50-3.24, Very High=3.25-4.00

Key: VH=4, H=3, L=2, VL=1

Source: Field Survey Data (2026)

Table 4.3 indicates that the overall level of ICT tools utilisation among OIM lecturers was high, with a weighted mean of 2.68, which falls within the high-level range of 2.50–3.24. Among the three dimensions, perceived usefulness recorded the highest mean (2.69), followed by perceived ease of use (2.68) and actual use (2.66). For perceived usefulness, the mean scores ranged from 2.62 to 2.74. The highest mean was recorded for the perception that ICT tools improve efficiency in academic research (2.74), while support for data collection, analysis, and interpretation recorded the lowest (2.62). This suggests that lecturers generally recognise ICT tools as useful for improving the efficiency and quality of their research activities. Perceived ease of use also recorded a high level (2.68). The highest mean was for the ability to use ICT tools without technical assistance (2.76), while familiarity with ICT tools reducing the effort required for research had the lowest (2.64). This implies that most lecturers find ICT tools relatively easy to learn and operate. For actual use, the dimension recorded a mean of 2.66. The highest mean was recorded for the use of online databases and digital libraries (2.71), followed by the use of statistical/data-analysis software (2.69). The lowest was utilisation of ICT tools for collaboration with other researchers (2.61). This indicates that lecturers actively use ICT tools for core research activities, particularly accessing scholarly information and analysing data, although ICT-supported research collaboration appears comparatively less utilised. The findings demonstrate that OIM lecturers have a high level of ICT tools utilisation, both in their perceptions of ICT usefulness and ease of use and in their actual application of ICT tools in research. This provides a favourable basis for examining whether such utilisation significantly influences their research productivity.

Hypothesis Testing

H₀₁: There is no significant influence of ICT Tools Utilisation on research productivity of OIM lecturers in Universities in Southern Nigeria.

Table 4.4a: Model Summary of H₀₁ on the influence of ICT Tools Utilisation on research productivity of OIM lecturers in Universities in Southern Nigeria

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.887 ^a	.786	.785	.41145
a. Predictors: (Constant), ICT Tools Utilisation				

Table 4.4b: ANOVA^a of H₀₁ that there will be no significant influence of ICT Tools Utilisation on research productivity of OIM lecturers in Universities in Southern Nigeria

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	72.918	1	72.918	430.727	.000 ^b
	Residual	19.807	117	.169		
	Total	92.725	118			
a. Dependent Variable: Research Productivity						
b. Predictors: (Constant), ICT Tools Utilisation						

Table 4.4c: Coefficients^a of H₀₁ that there will be no significant influence of ICT Tools Utilisation on research productivity of OIM lecturers in Universities in Southern Nigeria

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.102	.128		.793	.429
	ICT Tools Utilisation	.948	.046	.887	20.754	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Research Productivity						

The regression results in Tables 4.4a–4.4c show that ICT Tools Utilisation has a significant and strong positive influence on the research productivity of OIM lecturers. The model produced a strong correlation coefficient ($R = .887$) and an R^2 of .786, indicating that ICT Tools Utilisation explains 78.6% of the variation in research productivity, while the remaining 21.4% is attributable to other factors not included in the model. The ANOVA result further confirms that the regression model is statistically significant ($F(1,117) = 430.727$, $p < .001$). The coefficient result shows that ICT Tools Utilisation has a strong positive effect on research productivity ($\beta = .887$, $t = 20.754$, $p < .001$). The unstandardised coefficient ($B = .948$) indicates that a one-unit increase in ICT Tools Utilisation is associated with an estimated 0.948-unit increase in research productivity. Since the significance value ($p < .001$) is less than the 0.05 significance level, the null hypothesis (H₀₁) is rejected. Therefore, ICT Tools Utilisation has a statistically significant positive influence on the research productivity of OIM lecturers in universities in Southern Nigeria. The high R^2 value also suggests that ICT Tools Utilisation is a particularly strong predictor of research productivity within the sampled population.

The factorability of the 30-item instrument was assessed using the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity. The KMO value of 0.960 indicated excellent sampling adequacy, while Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was statistically significant, $\chi^2(435) = 4064.136$, $p < .001$, confirming that the correlation matrix was suitable for factor analysis. The individual Measures of Sampling Adequacy obtained from the anti-image correlation matrix ranged from 0.941 to 0.973, indicating that all items demonstrated adequate sampling adequacy. The extracted communalities ranged from 0.576 to 0.776, showing that each item shared substantial variance with the extracted factor. Principal Component Analysis with one component extracted showed that the component accounted for 67.551% of the total variance, with factor loadings ranging from 0.759 to 0.881. Since all item loadings exceeded the acceptable threshold, the results provide strong evidence of the adequacy and construct coherence of the 30-item instrument. Consequently, all 30 items were retained for subsequent analysis.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The finding of a high level of research productivity among OIM lecturers is consistent with the view that scholarly output is shaped by a combination of individual capacity, institutional conditions, and leadership support. This finding, however, contrasts with Gbemi-Ogunleye (2023) and Ladipo et al. (2022), who reported lower levels of research productivity and identified institutional support and funding as important determinants. The difference may reflect variations in institutional resources, workload conditions, research culture, respondent characteristics, and the measures used to assess productivity. Similarly, the generally low research productivity reported by Uwizeye et al. (2021) across African higher education institutions may be explained by the broader geographical and institutional coverage of their review, compared with the more specific OIM context examined in the present study. Despite these differences, the findings support the Bland and Ruffin Model by demonstrating that research productivity operates within an environment shaped by individual capabilities, institutional provisions, and leadership conditions. The relatively weaker ratings associated with funding, incentives, and research resources further suggest that favourable research productivity can be strengthened when these enabling conditions are improved. The high level of ICT tools utilisation among OIM lecturers is consistent with Dauda and Babalola (2022), who found that ICT facilitated literature searching, data collection, analysis, and scholarly collaboration. The similarity suggests that ICT has become an important component of contemporary academic research across related information-intensive professions. However, the present finding extends this evidence by demonstrating the relevance of ICT utilisation specifically to OIM lecturers and their research activities. From the perspective of the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), the high level of utilisation can be understood in terms of lecturers' recognition of the usefulness of ICT for performing research tasks and their ability to use such technologies with reasonable ease. Thus, perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use provide a plausible mechanism through which ICT acceptance translates into actual utilisation. The comparatively weaker ratings for some ICT-related activities also indicate that acceptance alone may not guarantee optimal utilisation where infrastructure, connectivity, digital skills, or institutional support remain inadequate. The strong positive influence of ICT Tools Utilisation on research productivity provides further empirical support for the connection between TAM and the research-productivity perspective of the Bland and Ruffin Model. The finding is consistent with Oyefara et al. (2026), who reported that access to and utilisation of ICT facilities, including internet connectivity, computers, electronic libraries, and data-analysis software, influenced research output among lecturers in Nigerian universities, while inadequate infrastructure and funding constrained productivity. The convergence between the two studies suggests that ICT contributes to productivity not merely because technology is available, but because lecturers utilise it to perform research-related activities more efficiently. In TAM terms, technologies perceived as useful and relatively easy to use are more likely to be utilised; within the Bland and Ruffin Model, such utilisation operates within institutional and leadership conditions that can either facilitate or constrain research productivity. The implication is that investment in ICT infrastructure should be accompanied by digital skills development, adequate research funding, reliable connectivity, and supportive institutional and leadership practices if improvements in research productivity are to be sustained.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that ICT Tools Utilisation is an important determinant of research productivity among OIM lecturers in universities in Southern Nigeria. The findings indicate that lecturers generally make substantial use

of ICT in performing research-related activities, while their research productivity is also at a high level. More importantly, the strong positive influence of ICT Tools Utilisation on research productivity demonstrates that effective use of digital technologies can substantially enhance lecturers' capacity to undertake, complete, disseminate, and produce scholarly research outputs. The findings provide an integrated theoretical explanation through TAM and the Bland and Ruffin Model. TAM explains how lecturers' perceptions of the usefulness and ease of using ICT encourage its utilisation for research activities, while the Bland and Ruffin Model highlights the importance of individual, institutional, and leadership conditions in creating an environment conducive to research productivity. ICT utilisation can therefore be regarded as an important mechanism through which technological acceptance is translated into more effective research activities and outputs. However, the relatively weaker areas relating to research funding, incentives, resources, and some ICT applications indicate that technology utilisation alone may not be sufficient to achieve optimal productivity. Sustained improvement therefore requires reliable ICT infrastructure, access to research databases and analytical tools, digital skills development, adequate research funding, supportive workload arrangements, and leadership practices that facilitate and recognise scholarly research.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. University management should sustain and further strengthen the high level of research productivity among Office and Information Management lecturers by promoting research-friendly policies, supporting scholarly publication, conference participation, and continuous professional development.
2. Universities should continue to invest in ICT infrastructure and digital research resources by ensuring lecturers have sustained access to digital libraries, online databases, statistical software, research management tools, and high-speed internet facilities to support research activities.
3. Regular ICT training and digital capacity-building programmes should be organised for lecturers, while lecturers should also be encouraged to make more practical and consistent use of ICT tools in literature search, data analysis, collaboration, manuscript preparation, and publication management.

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