

Research Article

Examine the Immensity of Using E-Textbooks as Opposed to Hardcopy Textbooks by Learners in Botho University: in the 21st Century

Kagiso Kgosiyame¹, Ifeoma R. Eze²

¹Department of Education and Language Studies, Botho University, Botswana

²Department of Special Education, Psychology & Guidance and Counseling BA ISAGO University, Botswana.

ABSTRACT

Today's world depends on the use of technology, to match this world of technology the learning institutions had equipped their libraries with electronic resources like electronic textbooks (e-textbooks) or electronic- journals, etc. This study is guided by the revised TAM called Extended Technological Acceptance Model for Evaluating E-learning in the African Context (ETAM-4EEA) examines the immensity of using e-textbooks as opposed to hardcopy textbooks by learners in Botho University in the 21st century. The study established the frequency of use of e-textbooks in the university, the perceived usefulness and ease of use of e-textbooks, identified the factors affecting the adoption and use of e-textbooks and the reason for the coexistence of e-textbooks and hardcopy textbooks in the university. Mixed method approach was employed, with seventy-two participants for quantitative data and two for qualitative data. Quantitative data was analyzed statistically and, whilst qualitative data was analyzed thematically through narrative description. The researcher chose a mixed-methods approach due to its proven capability to provide superior results than using a single method. The findings of this study affirmed the theoretical studies that highlighted the full acceptance and use of electronic resources as the only source of information still to be realized among many learners in universities and colleges. Conclusion was, the coexistence of both textbooks should continue up until the e-textbooks had gained full acceptance and adoption. Recommendations were drawn and structured to advise the institutional management and librarians on how to increase the e-textbooks adoption among the learners and staff.

Keywords: Botho University, Electronic Books, Hardcopy Books, Electronic Library, Traditional Library, 21st Century.

1. INTRODUCTION

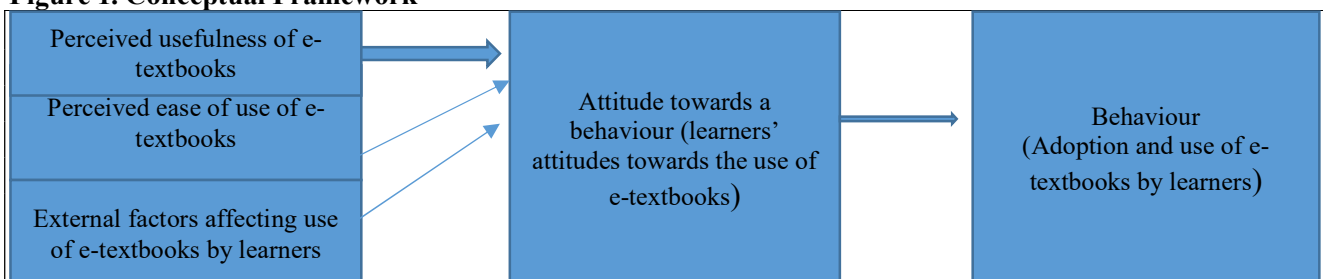
The world today is faced with a digital revolution and digitalization, and the educational sector was not exceptional. [1] states that the educational sector introduced digital textbooks, electronic teaching, and learning to match the world of digitalization. Previous researchers had revealed that e-textbooks had more advantages over hardcopy textbooks. Some major advantages of e-books were mobility, easy accessibility, convenience, interactivity, multi-media features, display customization, hyperlinks to reference sources, language conversion, easy searching and navigation, and free access to many public domain e-books [2]. Despite the intensive use of technology in the 21st century and the vast benefits found in e-textbooks, it is still regarded as an alternative to hardcopy textbooks; this promoted the coexistence of Electronic-libraries and Traditional libraries in the university. 'The e-books were the best alternatives that provided a solution to the issues associated with print books in the hospitality and tourism education [3]. The academic libraries in the 21st century had two collections of textbook versions, namely hardcopy (printed textbooks) and electronic (e-textbooks), Botho University was not exceptional, it had two libraries that had the same textbook collections difference being the version form (a printed version and an electronic

version). The Traditional library can store a minimum of 5 copies to be used by five users at a given time, whereas the Electronic library had databases such as L4U, OPAC, EBSCOHOST, Emerald, and Proquest that allowed many learners to access massive books at a given time. The Traditional library set in one place (university premises) and operate during the day, whereby the Electronic library is accessible day and night provided there is internet connectivity. The advent of ICT-driven technology had transformed the textbook procurement landscape from procurement of printed books which had been the main source of reading for decades to the procurement of electronic books as an alternative [4]. The study examines the immensity of using e-textbooks on oppose to hardcopy textbooks to determine if printed textbooks are still basic books for learning in the world of digital or e-textbooks have taken over. [5], questioned if the traditional book withstands the battle of the digital world, whose cost and maintenance are at a lower rate than printed books. [6], affirms that printed textbooks soon shall be removed from the operation like phone booths and cassette tapes.

1.2 Theoretical Foundations

Significant researchers established many theories concerning the use of e-textbooks in the world of learning. Globally, Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) by Davis applied to many technological innovations and proved to be successful regardless of the continent, but this study adopted the revised Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) [7], made specifically for Africa. The revised TAM is called Extended Technological Acceptance Model for Evaluating E-learning in the African Context (ETAM-4EEA). Original TAM by Davis (1986) had two variables which are Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU) and Perceived Usefulness (PU) of technology that elucidates the users' acceptance of the technology. [7] added five more factors to the original TAM. The added five factors are External Factors (EF), Benefits (B), Perceiving Performance (PP), Behavioral Intentions (BI), and Technological Acceptance (TA). According to [7], the ETAM-4EEA factors PEOU, PU, B, and PP influence the BI, PEOU has the highest influence rate followed by PU while B and PP factors have a lesser influence rate in BI. PEOU is the level at which a user considers that the engagement of a particular system would be effortless [8]). This study adopts the PEOU variable that emphasis the usefulness and effortlessness that happens due to the engagement of a particular system, using an e-library shall be effortless to learners when compared to using a hard copy library. For instance, an e-library is accessible to learners' day and night whereas, a hard copy library is accessible during the day. PU is the level at which the users anticipate performance improvement due to engagement of a particular system [8].PU variable stresses the point that the use of a system improves performance. The study anticipates that the use of e-textbooks can improve learners' performance because of their excellent features. EF can positively or negatively affect the use of e-textbooks; the study adopts this factor as it will reveal the impact of the external factor in the usage of e-textbooks. The positive or negative of EF could influence the behavioral intention of the learners concerning the use of e-textbooks. The benefits of e-textbooks and hardcopy textbooks were analyzed based on factor B, which determined their influence rate on the behavioral intentions of learners toward the usage of e-textbooks. PP factor detected changes in learners' performance brought by the use of e-textbooks. Finally, TA revealed that the rate at which learners had accepted e-textbooks' usage in the university.

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework



Source: Adapted from TAM (Davis, 1998)

As illustrated in the figure above Technology Acceptance Model clearly articulates how users' perceptions affect their adoption of technology like e-textbooks. In this context, the research assumed that a user (learner)'s decision to access and use e-books would be based on his/her perceptions of their usefulness. Secondly, perceived ease of use, assumed a seamless interaction with e-textbooks which was translated as ease of use, in addition, there are external factors proposed by [7] as part of the five additional factors to the original TAM. The rationale for adopting this model was based on its ability to generate scientific evidence which explains the adoption and use of e-textbooks in accessing information by university students.

1.3 The Objectives: The objectives of this study are as follows:

1. To establish the extent to which learners are using e-textbooks at Botho University.
2. To determine factors affecting the adoption and use of e-textbooks by learners at Botho University
3. To evaluate the learners' perceptions of usefulness and ease of use of e-textbooks as compared to hardcopy textbooks at Botho University.
4. To ascertain the reason for the coexistence of hard copy books and e-textbooks compare learners' views between using e-textbooks and hard copy textbook then determine the preferred textbook.

1.4 Research Questions

1. To what extent do learners at Botho University use e-textbooks?
2. How do learners at Botho University perceive the usefulness and ease of use of e-textbooks as compared to hardcopy textbooks?
3. What factors affect the adoption and use of e-textbooks by learners at Botho University?
4. What are the reasons for the coexistence of e-textbooks and hardcopy textbooks to determine factors affecting the adoption and use of e-textbooks by learners at Botho University?

1.5 Electronic Resources Defined

In order to have an understanding of what an e-textbook is, it was imperative to understand what an electronic resource (e-resource) is and how it relates to an e-textbook.

According to [9], International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA)'s definition of electronic resources is seen as materials that can be accessed through the computers, and other digital devices, such as mobile devices and iPad, etc.

1.5.1 Electronic- Textbooks

Electronic textbooks also, referred to as e-textbooks are digital-based books with simple content that cover the subject of the curriculum [10]. [6] define electronic textbooks as digital book or electronic media used to study.

1.5.2 Hardcopy Textbooks

According to [11], a hardcopy textbook refers to "a set of written, printed or blank sheets bound together between a front and back cover." In other words, a hard copy text book is a printed version of a textbook in a paper format.

II LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 The Immensity of Use of E- Textbooks by Learners in University

The emergence of digital technology has changed and disrupted the library collection development which was dominated by print media based. Thus, without doubt the introduction of e- resources like e-books signifies a paradigm shift from paper

based textbooks to electronic based textbooks [12]. Moreover, e-books are becoming more popular due to their portability, compatible with internet devices, convenient, easy to search, less weight and provision of remote access [13]. In addition, their visual appeal such as graphics, video clips and features that include supportive material, audio, links to activities, and websites made them the most viable option than print books. Hence, this section addressed the immensity of use of e-textbooks by learners in universities by examining empirical studies related to the study. For example, a study by [14] on use of e-resources by learners in one of the leading private universities in Bangladesh revealed that, although the students and faculty members generally valued e-resources, their actual use or the immensity of use is affected by a number of factors. In other words, results of this study showed that it was not enough for learners and users to value e-textbooks as it does not guarantee the actual adoption and use. This is further explained by [15] who highlighted that for many users (learners) the adoption and use of e-learning resources like e-textbooks is not as automatic as it appears because users have to go through the process of adjusting to the changing learning landscape. Hence some are even skeptical about the actual benefit of electronic resources. In addition, a recent study on student's perception and practices of the use of electronic resources in public university libraries in Ghana by [16], concluded that electronic resources have proven to be a central constituent of academic work in universities. The study further revealed the increasing use of e-resources like e-books among learners in the public universities as evidenced by learners' continued use on monthly, weekly and daily basis in their respective institutions [16].

2.2 Factors Affecting the Adoption and Use of E-Textbooks by Learners in Universities

An overwhelming empirical evidence testifies to the abundance of the benefits of e-resources especially in effectively improving the standards of education and research in institutions of higher learning [17] through the provision of essential learning resources such as e-books, journals and databases [18]. This also explains why higher learning institutions all over the world are increasingly prioritizing the acquisition of such resources in their respective institutions. However, despite being highly prioritized and being regarded as a facilitator of advanced teaching and learning in the 21st century [18]), the adoption and use of e-textbooks by learners is subject to a number of factors. There is a general consensus among different scholars the factors that militates against use of e-resources are many and varied. A number of authors argued that these factors are related to inadequate information literacy skills, negative attitude of users; poor internet connectivity, power outages, and lack of funds to subscribe to e-resources [19]; [17]. A recent study by [16] also confirmed the above stated studies by highlighting the major hindrance to full adoption and use of e-resources as lack of adequate computer system to fully implement an efficient electronic resources, lack of training on how to use electronic resources by learners and lack of skills to select relevant e-resources by learners as well as poor and unreliable internet connectivity. It can be seen from the foregoing that there are many factors that affect the adoption and use of electronic resources such e-textbooks. Moreover, it can be inferred from reviewed literature that there is a general consensus among different scholars that the use of e-textbooks are generally affected by lack of adequate skills, scarcity of resources and poor infrastructure and network connectivity. Thus, in a way highlighting that the use and adoption of e-resources like e-textbooks is affected by different factors which are both internal and external. This takes this chapter to the next section which is going to focus on the internal factors which are mostly to do with the user's perceptions as articulated in the technology acceptance model (TAM).

2.3 Learners' Perceptions of the Ease of Use of E-Textbooks As Compared To Hard Copy Textbooks

Perceived ease of use is described as the extent to which an individual or user assumes that adopting and using a particular technology or innovation will be as effortless as possible [20]. Perceived ease of use is regarded as one of the key determinants of adoption and use of technology [20]. It has been observed that regardless of its usefulness, a complicated technology which is perceived as difficult to use, can easily discourage a user from utilizing it. In other words, user's perception of the ease of use of a technology leads to the development of the intentions to adopt and use a technology or innovation. Similarly, learner's perception of ease of use of e-textbook as learning resource can be an indicator of their

willingness or intentions to use that technology. This is confirmed by [21] when they argued that variables like perceived usefulness and ease of use, have been proven to predict the behavioral intention of students to use e-resources. The critical role of increasing adoption and use of e-resources is further reinforced by [17]'s which revealed that perceived ease of searching e-databases fosters the usage of the resources not only in learning but in teaching and research as well.

2.4 Learners' Perceptions of the Usefulness of E-Books As Compared To Hard Copy Textbooks

Perceived useful of a technology is one of the constructs of the theory technology acceptance model (TAM) which is basically concerned about the extent to which an individual or user finds a particular technology or innovation to be useful in addressing their needs [20]. It is regarded as an important measure or determinants of adoption and use of technology [20]. In other words, the more an individual or user finds a particular technology to be useful, the more he or she develops the intentions to make usage of that technology. Similarly, learners are most likely to make use of e-textbooks if they perceive them to be useful in addressing their information needs.

This is confirmed by a number of scholars who argue that perceived usefulness can be predictor of the usage of e-resources [22]. In concurrence, [17] added that the use of e- resources is bound to increase as learners perceive them as critical in improving their learning experience. A number of authors share the same sentiments by highlighting that, perceived usefulness of e-resources promote their usage by learners and has been also proven to improve the academic performance of learners [23]; [22]. Similarly, in universities where students are normally pressed for time, they are most likely to make use of those resources that they perceive as useful to their information needs.[15] conducted a study on the acceptability of electronic resources among Rajshahi University students as a learning tool and found that its perceived usefulness was positive as evidenced by its high usage among learners who participated part in the survey. It is apparent from the foregoing discussion that perceived usefulness is a very important determinant of the intentions to use a technology. Similarly, learners are most likely to use e-textbooks if they find them to be useful in addressing their education and information needs. This is supported by the theory of Technology Acceptance model which been widely applied in different technology related studies and have proven to be very effective.

2.5 The Reasons for the Coexistence of E-Textbooks and Hard Copy Textbook

Prior to the advent of electronic resources in libraries, hardcopy textbooks were the predominant media of information. However, the rapid advancement of ICT technology and its subsequent application in libraries and information centers has drastically transformed and disrupted the way information is stored and disseminated as it is now managed electronically [24]. Thus, as a result of the disruption of paper based information resources system, electronic based resources are fast becoming more acknowledged and its benefits are widely published [25]. However, despite the widely acknowledged benefits of e-resources such as increased access to databases and other electronic resources that offer more up to date information with global scope that is sometimes not accessible elsewhere, electronic resources remain unacceptably underutilized in universities [26]; [27]; [28]. Probably this explains why university library collections continue to hold dual collections of both electronic and hardcopy textbooks. The general expectation was a total transformation from hardcopy text books to a fully-fledged electronic based information system and that user/ learners will be more eager to fully utilize the benefit that comes with use of electronic resources. This is the question that has been vexing many scholars in the field as they attempt to understand the reason for the coexistence of e-textbooks and hardcopy textbooks. In an attempt to understand this, a number of studies have been conducted but the results were mostly inconclusive as there were two different schools of thoughts with group facts embracing the electronic resources whilst another camp either preferred printed text books or both.

2.6 Summary and Literature Gaps

Review of literature in this study has shown that despite the existence of a myriad of studies on electronic resources use by learners, there are limited studies which focused on the immensity of use of e-textbooks by learners in universities. Those studies which attempted to do so mostly focused on the broad use of electronic resources and only a few took a specific focus

on the use of e-textbooks. Never the less, the fact that e-books are part of electronic resources makes it acceptable to generalize the findings from electronic resources to e-textbooks since they share the same characteristics. However, this is the literature gap that has been identified that the researcher intends to fill by going to the field to get primary data from people involved in the use of e-textbooks.

III METHODS AND PROCEDURES

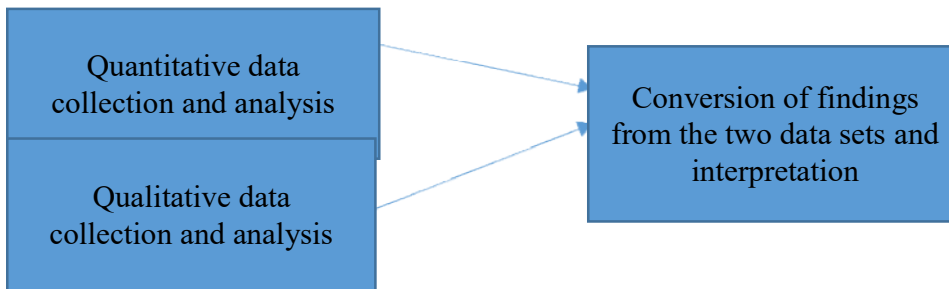
This study took the mixed method approach because many studies had proven that it had the capability to provide superior results than using a single method. Combining two methods might be more advantageous than using a one method, as it had ability to add rich insights into the research phenomena that cannot be fully understood when using only qualitative or quantitative methods [29]. It provides a logical ground and methodological flexibility as well as comprehensive appreciation of research phenomenon [30].

Table 1 displays the research questions and the type of tools used to gather information for each question

	Research Questions	Data required	Data sources	Tools
1	To what extent do Learners use e-books?	The immensity of use of e-textbooks	Botho University Learners Library staff	Questionnaire Interviews
2	What factors affect the adoption and use of e-books by university students?	Factors affecting the adoption of e-textbooks	Botho University Learners Library staff	Questionnaire Interviews
3	How do university Learners perceive the ease of use of e-books and usefulness of e-books as compared to hard copy textbooks?	Leaners' perceptions of the ease of use of e-textbooks compared to hard copy text books	Botho University Learners	Questionnaire
4	What is the reason for the coexistence of e-textbooks and hard copy textbooks	The justification for the coexistence of e-textbooks and hard copy textbooks	Botho University Learners Library staff	Questionnaire Interviewee

The questionnaires were used to collect quantitative data in this study. The questionnaires were based on Likert's five-point scale comprising five levels for each question ranging from strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), neutral (3), agree (4), and strongly agree (5). The Likert scale was relevant in the design of this questionnaire because of its ability to provide greater flexibility in measuring the extent to which different individuals agree or disagree with the statements concerning the use of e-textbooks. The qualitative data was collected through semi-structured interviews, the rationale for adopting a semi-structured interview was based on its flexibility to ensure minimum departure from objectives and at the same time allowed the researcher to seek clarification as well as took note of nonverbal cues.

Figure 2. Concurrent Mixed Methods Strategy



As illustrated in the Fig 2 above, the study specifically used a concurrent mixed methods approach where two types of data sets are collected concurrently. These data sets are analyzed separately, through the use of quantitative and qualitative analytical approaches [31]. The obtained results shall be integrated to provide the conclusions.

IV. DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Quantitative Data Presentation and Analysis

Table 2 Quantitative Data Presentation and Analysis

Questionnaire Questions	Highest Percentage obtained	Lowest Percentage obtained
1. Frequency of use of electronic textbook in the University		
1.1 How often do you use electronic textbooks?	27 % Always 67 % Sometime	6% Never
2. Perceived usefulness of e-textbooks	Highest Percentage obtained	Lowest Percentage obtained
2.1 E- textbooks are useful in my studies when compared to hardcopy textbooks	65 % Agreed 29 % Natural	6% Disagreed
2.2 Using E –textbooks save time as oppose to using hardcopy textbooks	66 % Agreed 25 % Natural	9% Disagreed
2.3 Using E- textbooks improves my academic performance as compared to hardcopy textbooks	56 % Agreed 40% Natural	4% Strongly disagreed & Disagreed,
3. Perceived ease of use e-textbooks	Highest Percentage obtained	Lowest Percentage obtained
3.1 Learning to use E- textbooks much easier than hardcopy textbooks	62 % Agreed 27 % Natural	10% Strongly disagreed & Disagreed
3.2 Finding the information that I need through e-textbooks is easier than a hardcopy textbook	77% Strongly Agreed & Agreed, 22 % Natural	8 %Disagreed
3.3 Becoming skilful in using E- textbooks much easier than a hardcopy textbook	57% Strongly Agreed & Agreed, 33% Natural	10% Strongly disagreed & Disagreed

3.4 Using E –textbooks is easier than hardcopy textbooks	66% Strongly Agreed & Agreed, 23 % Natural % Agreed % Natural	11% Strongly disagreed & Disagreed
4 Factors affecting the adoption and use of e-textbooks	Highest Percentage obtained	Lowest Percentage obtained
4.1 Inadequate information literacy skills negatively affect the use of e-textbooks	55% Strongly Agreed & Agreed, 22 % Natural	33% Strongly disagreed & Disagreed
4.2 Lack of suitable gadgets to access e-textbooks	70% Strongly Agreed & Agreed, 18% Natural	12% Strongly disagreed & Disagreed
4.3 Poor or Inadequate infrastructure affect the use of e-textbooks	63% Strongly Agreed & Agreed, 23% Natural	14% Strongly disagreed & Disagreed
4.4 Problems in locating information	45% Strongly Agree & Agreed, 31% Natural	24% Strongly disagreed & Disagreed
4.5 Difficulties in reading on the screen	42% Strongly Agree & Agreed, 28% Natural	30% Strongly disagreed & Disagreed
4.6 Inadequate funding for subscribing to relevant – e-textbooks	77% Strongly Agree & Agreed, 17% Natural	6% Strongly disagreed & Disagreed
5. Coexistence of e-textbook and hardcopy textbook	Highest Percentage obtained	Lowest Percentage obtained
5.1. E- textbooks and hardcopy textbook should continue to be used in parallel?	79% Strongly Agree & Agreed, 18% Natural	3% Strongly disagreed & Disagreed
5.2 Using E –textbooks should be prioritized over hardcopy textbooks	39% Strongly Agree & Agreed, 35% Natural	26% Strongly disagreed & Disagreed
5.3 Hardcopy textbooks should be prioritized over e- textbooks	55% Strongly disagreed & Disagreed	14% Strongly Agree & Agreed, 30% Natural

The data revealed that a substantial number of learners, use electronic textbook sometimes and they agreed with the perceived usefulness and ease to use of e-textbooks when compared to hardcopy textbooks. Furthermore, the collected data revealed that learners want the coexistence of e-textbook and hardcopy textbook.

4.2 Qualitative Data Presentation and Analysis

The researcher interviewed two librarians at Botho University. Data collected were categorized according to the question asked, then it was presented and analyzed. Furthermore, answers to specific questions were put under the question asked, to enable the researcher to easily make conclusions from the data given by the respondents

From observation of the statistics of library use and the material used, which library (Electronic or Traditional) shows a higher number of users per day? They are getting used to it because of COVID 19 pandemic, the circumstance force them to use electronic library, now they started to like it due to its available references.” Interviewee2

The responses revealed that traditional libraries had a higher usage rate when compared to electronic libraries before the time of the COVID-19 pandemic. Even though the learners still preferred hardcopy textbooks, the statistics showed a slight shift from using hardcopy textbooks nowadays to using electronic textbooks.

From the feedback you get from users (learners) may I know the reason they prefer to use that particular library? “They say a lot of things like because we are used to it, and the electronic library is new.” Interviewee 1: “They say, they are

familiar with the traditional library, also they say they struggle to connect to the database due to poor internet connectivity, and their gadgets' storage capacity does not allow them to search more books at a time." **Interviewee 2.**

Based on your answer to the above question, as a librarian do you see a need to continue purchasing E-textbooks?

"Yes! Whatever it is, we have to purchase e-books because you see COVID 19 pandemic gave us a wakeup call, apart from that, traditional library has a lot of cost implication. They have to run parallel until the student fully accept and adopt electronic books."

Interviewee 1: "Yes, they should run parallel because some printed textbooks are not available in the database, also it is Botswana Qualification Authority (BQA) requirement, and they want us to have two libraries so that learners can have a choice". **Interviewee 2**

It is apparent from the responses that librarians believed that the coexistence of the two library collections was justified and that the two library collections would continue to coexist. It also came out that their observation of the use made of electronic textbooks by students showed that many students were not yet very comfortable with completely embracing electronic textbooks and discarding hardcopy textbooks.

V. DISCUSSION OF THE MAJOR FINDINGS

The discussion of the major outcomes of the study was guided by the research objective:

5.1 The extent at which learners in Botho University use e-textbook

The findings revealed that the majority of learners in Botho University use e-textbooks sometimes with a higher percentage of 67%, followed by 27% of those who use the e-textbooks always. These numbers established an immersive use of e-textbooks by learners in Botho University even though it might not be their favorite textbook, the percentage showed more usage of e-textbooks in the university. In concurrence with the above findings, results from interviews confirmed the same sentiments the interviewees highlighted that learners had slightly shifted from using printed books to using electronic books: "In terms of usage is still a challenge, Yes they are using electronic library but not that much," **Interviewee1:** They are getting used to it because of COVID 19 pandemic, the circumstance force them to use electronic library, now they started to like it due to its available references." **Interviewee2.** The study by [16] supported the findings by revealing that there was an increase in the use of e-resources like e-books among learners in the public university as evidenced by learners' continued use on a monthly, weekly, and daily basis on their respective institutions.

5.2. Perceived usefulness and ease use of e-textbooks

The perceived usefulness of a technology or innovation is one of the key variables of the technology acceptance model (TAM) which is regarded as an equally important determinant of the adoption and use of a technology [20]. Findings from the study seem to concur with the technology adoption model in highlighting the importance of users' perception of the usefulness of technology as a determinant of their adoption and use of it. This is demonstrated by the significant number of respondents who took part in the study who expressed the opinion that e-textbooks were more useful as compared to hardcopy textbooks. This was substantiated by the majority of respondents who agreed as demonstrated by 65% of the respondents who agreed. In addition, 66% agreed that e-textbooks are useful in saving time. Lastly, 56% agreed that e-textbooks help to improve the academic performance of learners as opposed to hardcopy textbooks.

Thus, it was apparent from the findings that a substantial number of learners agreed that using e-textbooks was useful compared to hardcopy textbooks. The study by Samuel, et al., (2018) evidenced that using an e-textbook saves time and improves learners' academic performance. One interviewee highlighted that the learners find electronic books useful due to its features: "now they started to like it due to its available references." **Interviewee 2.** The high usage of electronic textbooks by learners at Botho University seemed to suggest that the students had a positive perception of the usefulness of the technology (e-textbooks). Findings from the study revealed that learners seemed to find the use of electronic textbooks easier as demonstrated by the majority 66% respondents who agreed expressed the opinion that using e-textbook is easier than hardcopy textbooks. In addition, 77% agreed that is easier to find information in e-textbooks than in hardcopy textbooks. Followed by 62% who agreed that learning to use e-textbooks was much easier than hardcopy textbooks. Last but not least, 57% agreed that becoming skillful in using e-textbooks is much easier than a hardcopy textbook. The findings supported the study by [32], which revealed users are becoming more dependent on using e-resources. The variable PU in the original

TAM theory advocate the ability of the system to improve performance, learners affirmed that e-textbooks used improved their performance for they were able to use and find information in e-textbooks easily. Thus the study was also in line with the Technology adoption (TAM) which advances that users' decision to adopt a certain technology was determined by their perceptions of the ease of use (PEU).

5.3. Factors affecting the adoption and use of e-textbooks

The findings in this study concur with the literature by revealing many factors that significantly affected the adoption and use of e-textbooks by learners at Botho University. This is demonstrated by 77% who agreed that inadequate funding for subscribing to relevant e-textbooks is a contributing factor to less usage of e-textbooks. This was followed by 70% of the respondents who agreed that the lack of suitable gadgets to access e-textbooks contributed to less usage of e-textbooks. In addition, inadequate information literacy skills were also reported as a contributing factor to low utilization of e-textbooks, as demonstrated by 55% of the respondents who agreed that inadequate information literacy skills negatively affect the use of e-textbooks. Finally, poor or inadequate infrastructure was also implicated as a contributing factor affecting the use of e-textbooks by learners at Botho University. This was demonstrated by 63%. EF variable in ETAM-4EEA theory explained that external factors could affect the system positively or negatively. The findings revealed that external factors in this study negatively affected the adoption of e-textbook. To support the learner's views, one librarian confirmed that the external factors affected the acceptance and adoption of e-textbooks: *"also they say they struggle to connect to the database due to poor internet connectivity and their gadgets storage capacity does not allow them to search more books at a time."* **Interviewee 2.** This was also explained by [18] who argued that despite being highly prioritized and being regarded as a facilitator of advanced teaching and learning in the 21st century the adoption and use of e-textbooks by learners was subject to many factors.

5.4. The reasons for the coexistence of e-textbook and hardcopy textbooks

The findings from the study seemed to suggest that the coexistence of e-textbook and hardcopy textbooks is still necessary, as affirmed by the majority of learners and the librarians who emphasized that the textbooks should run parallel until the e-textbooks were fully adopted by learners and staff members.

This was highlighted by the findings of the study which revealed the following outcome; 79% of the respondents agreed. Secondly, concerning the need to prioritize electronic textbooks over hardcopy textbooks there seemed to be mixed opinion, with results from the study showing that a significantly higher percentage (35%) of the respondents were neutral followed by only 39% of the respondents agreed. In concurrence with the above findings, results from interviews confirmed the same sentiments in highlighting the necessity of running parallel libraries, *"they have to run parallel until the student fully accepts and adopts electronic books."* **Interviewee 1,** thus justifying the coexistence of the e-textbooks and the hardcopy textbooks. This was evidenced by one of the respondents who highlighted by saying *"Yes, they should run parallel because some printed textbooks are not available in the database, also it is Botswana Qualification Authority (BQA) requirement, they want us to have two libraries so that learners can have a choice"*. **Interviewee 2.** The above findings was also supported in the literature by several authors. For example, [13] emphasized that students preferred to use both books as they believe e-books were as good as printed books. This probably explained the fact that, despite being acknowledged and widely publicized as a very powerful learning tool due to benefits like increased access to wide information databases and the ability to offer more current information with global scope that is sometimes not accessible elsewhere, electronic resources do not seem to be fully utilized by learners in institutions of higher learning, as expected [26]; [27]; [28].

VI. FINDINGS

Drawing from the main findings of the study, conclusions on the immensity of use of e-textbooks among learners in institutions of higher learning were made as follows;

The findings of the study showed that although a higher percentage of the respondents who took part in the study highlighted that they made use of e-textbooks in their study, it should be noted that they did not imply that they always used electronic textbooks but the keyword here was "sometimes".

Based on the findings on research learners' perceptions of the usefulness and perceptions ease of e-textbooks, it can therefore be concluded that the majority of the students from Botho University find e-textbooks to be significantly useful in enhancing their learning experience. The learners had an overall positive perception of the ease of use of e-textbooks which was also supported by both empirical evidence and theoretical backing like Davies' TAM model.

Based on that finding on research question 3 factors affecting the adoption and use of e-textbooks,, it can be concluded that inadequate funding for subscribing to relevant e-textbooks and lack of suitable gadgets to access e-textbooks was affecting learners' ability to access electronic resources like e-textbooks. Finally, it can also be concluded that inadequate information literacy skills and poor or inadequate infrastructure also contribute to the use of e-textbooks by learners at Botho University.

Based on the findings the reasons coexistence of e-textbooks and hardcopy textbook, it can therefore be concluded that the majority of students from Botho University prefer the library to continue to run parallel library collection of both electronic and hardcopy textbooks. In addition, it can also be concluded that the library staff also concur that learners were not yet ready to fully embrace electronic resources like e-textbook hence the need to maintain the parallel collection.

VII CONCLUSION

This paper aimed to examine the immensity of using e-textbooks as opposed to hardcopy textbooks by learners in Botho University: in the 21st century. The study revealed the learners' attitude towards the use of both textbooks, therefore it bought about the conclusion that the coexistence of e-textbooks and hardcopy textbooks should continue up until the e-textbooks had gained full acceptance and adoption. The practical implications of this study may help the University Management and Librarians on the usage level of e-resources in the University. Therefore the University Management and Librarians could use the findings to improve the quality of service delivery by eliminating all the factors that deter full acceptance and adoption of the e-textbooks usage, in addition the librarians could know if there is a need to intensify the promotions for electronic textbooks and furthermore continue to educate the users on the importance of using electronic resources in this era.

VIII. RECOMMENDATIONS

This section presented the recommendations of the study which were made in the context of the findings of the study:Based on the above findings, the library management, and staff should put deliberate effort to educate its users on the importance and use of electronic resources. It is further recommended that the library should embark on the promotion of information literacy skills among learners and lecturers through various initiatives like library user education, library promotion and publicity, library orientation, and library reference services. Finding from the study also revealed that some hardcopy textbooks were not available in softcopy format in the library. To correct the current situation, librarians should ensure that all study recommended textbooks are available in softcopy format. Furthermore, they had to find new strategies to approach literacy training. Furthermore, the university management should update the blackboard as prescribed to avoid difficulty in login.

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