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Adoption and use of emerging technologies by learners in higher education institutions: the case of open education resource currency at Africa university in Zimbabwe

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Abstract

The overarching goal of this study was to investigate and understand the determining variables affecting adoption and use of Open Education Resources (OER) among Africa University students. The theoretical framework used was the second generation Unified Theory for Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT2). The study adopted a critical realist perspective, using the mixed methods approach. Stratified probability sampling and purposive convenience sampling were used to select a sample size of 375 participants from the population consisting of learners, at Africa University. An adapted UTAUT2 psychometric questionnaire was used to collect quantitative data for the main research component, while document analysis (archival records) and interviews were used to collect data for the complementary qualitative component of the research. Confirmatory factor analysis, theoretical propositions and examining plausible rival explanations were used as strategies to analyse and interpret data. Analysis techniques included pattern matching, logic and explanation building. The major findings from the research were: (1) There is no significant adoption and use of EcoSchool OER resources among Africa University students and (2) There is significant adoption and use of other forms of OER among Africa University students. The contribution this study makes is the modification of UTAUT2 by adding Utility Value to the original UTUAT2 research model. Ultimately, a new research model referred to in this thesis as the Modified UTAUT2 model was presented. In essence, the recommended modification of the UTAUT2 could have a significant impact on explaining acceptance and use of emerging technologies in higher education contexts and could be applicable to acceptance and use of emerging technologies universally. In terms of future research, it is recommended that another post-implementation research using the Modified UTAUT2 research model and the recommended research instruments be undertaken.