

Information Literacy Skills and Academic Performance Among University Students: A Quantitative Investigation in Nigerian Higher Education Institutions

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<https://doi.org/10.56201/ijssmr.vol.12no9.2026.pg90.103>

Abstract

Information literacy is increasingly recognized as essential for academic success in the digital age. This quantitative study examines the relationship between information literacy skills and academic performance among 385 university students across three Nigerian federal universities. Using a cross-sectional survey design, data were collected through a validated Information Literacy Skills Scale ($\alpha = 0.892$) and academic performance metrics (GPA and examination scores). Findings reveal significant positive correlations between overall information literacy and academic performance ($r = 0.687, p < 0.001$), with information evaluation skills ($r = 0.643$) and information search skills ($r = 0.589$) being the strongest predictors. Multiple regression analysis indicates information literacy skills collectively explain 48.2% of the variance in academic performance ($R^2 = 0.482, p < 0.001$). Significant differences emerged based on year of study, with final-year students demonstrating substantially higher information literacy proficiency. Conversely, gender differences were minimal. These findings underscore the critical importance of systematic information literacy instruction within university curricula and library-integrated interventions. Implications for university administration, academic librarians, faculty, and policymakers are discussed. This study contributes to understanding information literacy role in academic success within the African context, addressing a significant research gap in the Global South.

Keywords: *Information literacy, academic performance, university students, information skills, digital literacy, higher education, Nigeria*

Introduction

Background to the Study

The evolution of digital information environments has fundamentally transformed how knowledge is created, disseminated, accessed, and utilized within academic contexts. Contemporary university students navigate unprecedented information abundance, with

estimates suggesting over 5.6 billion active internet users globally (International Telecommunication Union, 2023) generating massive quantities of digital content daily. This information proliferation presents both opportunities and challenges: while expanded access enables learning possibilities, it simultaneously requires sophisticated skills to effectively navigate, evaluate, and synthesize information from diverse, often contradictory sources. University students must therefore develop advanced competencies extending beyond traditional literacy to encompass information literacy the ability to identify information needs, locate relevant resources, evaluate source credibility, and apply information ethically for academic and professional success (American Library Association, 2020). Against this backdrop, understanding the relationship between students' information literacy development and their academic achievement has assumed critical importance for higher education institutions committed to student success and learning outcomes.

Concept and Significance of Information Literacy in Higher Education

Information literacy, formally defined by the American Library Association (2020), encompasses the competencies to recognize information needs, identify potential sources, evaluate information critically, synthesize findings from multiple sources, and utilize information appropriately while considering ethical and legal dimensions. Contemporary frameworks have evolved beyond this foundational definition to emphasize information literacy as metacognitive competency involving self-awareness of one information processing, adaptability across digital contexts, and capacity for lifelong learning (Saunders & Wong, 2021). Within higher education contexts specifically, information literacy constitutes essential foundation for academic inquiry, supporting students' abilities to conduct independent research, engage critically with disciplinary knowledge, and produce original scholarship. Research increasingly demonstrates that information literacy development correlates with multiple positive educational outcomes including improved GPA, enhanced critical thinking, reduced plagiarism, greater academic engagement, and improved retention rates (Mahmood & Wahab, 2021; Okezie, 2021). Beyond immediate academic benefits, information literacy equips graduates with competencies increasingly demanded by employers navigating knowledge-intensive economies, contributing to career success and workplace productivity (Knight & Burn, 2020). Given these multifaceted benefits, many higher education accreditation bodies and international frameworks now position information literacy as core graduate attribute essential for all tertiary students regardless of discipline.

Academic Performance and Information Literacy: Global Perspectives

International evidence documents consistent associations between information literacy skills and academic achievement across diverse higher education contexts. Studies conducted in developed nations (United Kingdom, United States, Australia, Scandinavia) consistently demonstrate that students with higher information literacy demonstrate better academic performance, higher retention rates, and increased engagement with learning (Gaskins et al., 2019; Shumaker & Accardi, 2020). Conversely, research from developing countries, particularly within African contexts, reveals substantial disparities in information literacy proficiency and corresponding academic challenges. A systematic review by Igbinoia and Izustun (2021) examining information literacy in sub-Saharan African universities identified significant gaps between student information needs and available institutional support, contributing to suboptimal academic outcomes. Nigerian higher education specifically faces multiple challenges including

inadequate library infrastructure, limited professional librarian presence, insufficient curriculum integration of information literacy instruction, and students entering university with disparate pre-tertiary information skills (Okezie, 2021). These contextual factors create distinct research questions regarding how information literacy relates to academic performance within Nigerian institutional settings, where infrastructure and resource constraints differ substantially from developed-country contexts often represented in international literature.

The Nigerian Higher Education Context

Nigeria higher education landscape encompasses 176 universities (40 federal, 50 state, 86 private) serving approximately 1.9 million students (National Universities Commission, 2023). Despite this scale, significant quality disparities exist, with library facilities, technology access, and instructional resources varying dramatically across institutions. Academic performance remains suboptimal by international standards, with factors including inadequate academic support systems, limited integration of information and digital literacy in curricula, and students frequently underdeveloped independent learning skills (Edem et al., 2022). University libraries, historically central to information literacy instruction, operate with constrained budgets, limited staffing, and often inadequate digital infrastructure. Consequently, many Nigerian students progress through tertiary education without systematic information literacy instruction, entering the workforce and professional practice with significant gaps in critical competencies (Bakare & Ganiyu, 2022). This research context justifies focused investigation of information literacy role in Nigerian university students' academic performance, potentially informing institutional interventions to strengthen learning outcomes.

Research Gap and Significance

While extensive literature documents information literacy importance and its relationship with academic outcomes in developed-country contexts, significant research gaps persist. First, comparative data examining information literacy impact within African higher education remain limited, with most empirical studies conducted in North America, Europe, or Oceania. Second, few studies specifically investigate information literacy relationship with academic performance within Nigerian university contexts, limiting institutional understanding of locally-relevant intervention strategies. Third, existing research insufficiently explores how demographic factors (year of study, gender, discipline) moderate the information literacy-academic performance relationship within African contexts. Addressing these gaps through empirical investigation within Nigerian higher education will generate evidence supporting institutional policy development, curriculum design, and resource allocation decisions.

Study Objectives

This study aims to:

1. Assess information literacy skill levels among university students across three Nigerian federal universities
2. Examine student's academic performance and identify variation across institutions and student subgroups
3. Investigate the statistical relationship between information literacy skills and academic performance
4. Identify information literacy dimensions most strongly predicting academic performance
5. Examine demographic differences (year of study, gender) in information literacy levels

6. Provide evidence-based recommendations for strengthening information literacy instruction in Nigerian universities

Literature Review

Concept of Information Literacy: Definitional Perspectives

Information literacy has evolved substantially since the American Library Association foundational 1989 definition, expanding from basic computer competency to encompass complex cognitive and metacognitive skills. The ACRL Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education (2015) positions information literacy as threshold concept involving six interconnected frames: authority as constructed and contextual, information creation as process, information has value, research as inquiry, scholarship as conversation, and searching as strategic exploration. This framework emphasizes critical engagement with information rather than mechanical search processes, recognizing that expert information literacy involves understanding disciplinary knowledge creation processes, evaluating author authority, and engaging with scholarly conversation (ACRL, 2015). Complementary conceptualizations from developing-country contexts highlight information literacy particular relevance for students navigating resource-constrained environments, emphasizing resilience, creativity, and ability to extract value from limited information access (Okezie, 2021). While definitional nuances exist across international frameworks, convergence emerges around core elements: information need identification, strategic searching, critical evaluation, synthesis, and ethical application. For this study, information literacy is operationalized as multidimensional competency encompassing information search skills, evaluation skills, digital literacy, information ethics understanding, and self-awareness of one own information behaviors.

Dimensions of Information Literacy Skills

Contemporary information literacy conceptualizations distinguish multiple interrelated skill dimensions. Information search skills encompass ability to formulate effective search strategies, utilize diverse search tools appropriately, and navigate library catalogs and databases (Mahmood & Wahab, 2021). Information evaluation skills arguably most critical in information-abundant environments involve assessing source credibility, identifying author authority and bias, evaluating currency and relevance, and determining reliability and accuracy (Shumaker & Accardi, 2020). Critical thinking within information literacy contexts emphasizes questioning information, recognizing bias and propaganda, understanding information production contexts, and synthesizing information from multiple sources (Tuominen et al., 2020). Digital literacy represents increasingly essential component, encompassing competencies with digital tools, platforms, and information formats spanning text, video, multimedia, and interactive content (Mahmood & Wahab, 2021). Information ethics understanding involves awareness of plagiarism, citation practices, intellectual property, and ethical information use. Research by Knight and Burn (2020) emphasizes metacognitive dimensions—students' awareness of their own information-seeking processes, ability to reflect on information strategies, and capacity to adapt approaches across contexts. These multidimensional skill sets develop progressively through undergraduate years, with greater sophistication emerging among final-year students (Gaskins et al., 2019).

Information Search Behavior and Academic Success

Student's information search behaviors substantially influence academic outcomes. Research demonstrates that effective searchers—those employing sophisticated search strategies, utilizing multiple relevant databases, and conducting iterative searches with refined queries achieve superior academic results compared to students using surface-level search approaches (Edem et al., 2022). However, many university students employ simplistic search strategies, relying on Google or single databases, accepting results without critical evaluation, and frequently failing to locate disciplinary-specific resources (Gaskins et al., 2019). In Nigerian contexts specifically, challenges include limited awareness of available digital resources, insufficient library instruction, and student's dependence on print materials despite expanding digital collections (Bakare & Ganiyu, 2022). Students who receive structured information literacy instruction demonstrate significantly more sophisticated search behaviors and access higher-quality sources supporting better-quality assignments and improved GPA (Mahmood & Wahab, 2021). These patterns highlight search behavior as modifiable through targeted instruction, suggesting intervention potential.

Information Evaluation Skills and Academic Performance

Information evaluation represents perhaps most critical information literacy dimension for academic success, yet many students demonstrate limited evaluation sophistication. Studies consistently document that students struggle assessing source credibility, frequently unable to distinguish peer-reviewed scholarship from unreliable web content or recognizing author expertise (Shumaker & Accardi, 2020). In academic contexts, this skill gap directly manifests in assignments relying on low-quality sources, unsupported claims, and inadequate engagement with disciplinary knowledge. Research by Tuominen et al. (2020) found that students receiving explicit evaluation instruction produced significantly higher-quality academic work, suggesting direct causality between evaluation competency and performance. Demographic factors influence evaluation abilities: students with prior information literacy instruction demonstrate superior evaluation skills compared to those lacking such preparation (Knight & Burn, 2020). Interestingly, disciplinary differences emerged, with science and engineering students demonstrating more systematic evaluation approaches than humanities students, possibly reflecting disciplinary research cultures emphasizing peer review and methodological rigor. Within Nigerian contexts, evaluation skill gaps are particularly pronounced, with many students lacking foundational understanding of peer review, journal hierarchies, and source evaluation frameworks (Okezie, 2021).

Digital Literacy and Information Literacy Intersection

Digital literacy and information literacy increasingly intersect, with contemporary understanding recognizing information literacy as inescapably intertwined with digital competencies. Digital literacy encompasses technical skills with digital tools, critical evaluation of digital information, digital identity management, and safe digital practice (Mahmood & Wahab, 2021). Students require both foundational digital skills (navigating interfaces, basic troubleshooting) and higher-order digital competencies (evaluating online information credibility, recognizing digital manipulation, understanding algorithmic curation). Research demonstrates that students with stronger digital literacy demonstrate superior information evaluation, likely because digital environments demand explicit evaluation (print sources benefit from pre-publication gatekeeping, while digital content frequently lacks such filtering) (Shumaker & Accardi, 2020).

COVID-19 accelerated reliance on digital learning, intensifying digital literacy demands and creating disparities between digitally-proficient students and those struggling with online learning environments (Igbinovia & Izustun, 2021). In Nigerian contexts, digital divide inequities create differential impacts: students with reliable internet access and personal devices demonstrate substantially stronger digital competencies compared to those relying on limited institutional access, contributing to academic disparities (Edem et al., 2022).

Information Ethics and Academic Integrity

Information ethics represents increasingly important information literacy dimension, encompassing plagiarism prevention, appropriate citation practices, intellectual property awareness, and ethical information application. Research documents widespread plagiarism in university settings, with studies suggesting 30-50% of students engage in some plagiarism form (Tuominen et al., 2020). Many plagiarism instances result not from intentional dishonesty but from students limited understanding of citation conventions, paraphrasing techniques, and information use ethics (Knight & Burn, 2020). Targeted information ethics instruction significantly reduces plagiarism, suggesting educational intervention effectiveness (Okezie, 2021). In Nigerian contexts specifically, academic integrity challenges are widely acknowledged, with limited enforcement mechanisms and insufficient student education regarding citation standards and plagiarism consequences contributing to widespread ethical violations (Bakare & Ganiyu, 2022). Information literacy approaches emphasizing ethical dimensions contribute to dual benefits: reduced plagiarism and deeper engagement with source materials through proper attribution and engagement processes.

The Information Literacy-Academic Performance Relationship: Empirical Evidence

International research demonstrates consistent positive correlations between information literacy skills and academic performance. Gaskins et al. (2019), examining 412 undergraduate students across two US universities, found significant correlations between information literacy assessment scores and GPA ($r = 0.612$, $p < 0.001$). Mahmood and Wahab (2021) conducted meta-analysis of 23 studies published 2010-2020, finding mean effect size of $r = 0.58$ across studies, with stronger associations in disciplinary fields requiring extensive research (engineering, sciences) compared to some humanities fields. Shumaker and Accardi (2020) examined 156 students across three institutions, finding that information literacy instruction produced GPA improvements averaging 0.35 points (approximately one-third grade increase). These international findings are encouraging, yet significant research gaps persist regarding whether these relationships hold consistently across different educational contexts, particularly developing-country higher education. Studies from African contexts remain scarce: Igbinovia and Izustun (2021) examined information literacy among 287 Nigerian and South African students, finding significant correlations with academic performance ($r = 0.54$), though effect sizes were somewhat smaller than developed-country studies, possibly reflecting contextual factors including resource constraints and educational infrastructure differences. This pattern suggests information literacy impact may be moderated by institutional context, motivating investigation within specific Nigerian setting.

Research Gaps and Justification for Current Study

Despite growing literature, significant research gaps persist. First, most empirical research originates from developed-country contexts, potentially limiting applicability to African higher

education where resource constraints, infrastructure differences, and student population characteristics differ substantially. Second, few studies examine multiple information literacy dimensions simultaneously using validated instruments, instead focusing on single skills or using unstandardized measures. Third, longitudinal investigation tracking information literacy development across undergraduate progression remains limited. Fourth, contextual factors moderating information literacy-performance relationships require clarification: how do institutional resources, library access, and curriculum integration influence this relationship? Fifth, Nigerian higher education specifically lacks empirical examination of this relationship despite acknowledged information literacy challenges. This study addresses these gaps through rigorous investigation within Nigerian setting, utilizing validated instruments, examining multiple skill dimensions simultaneously, and generating evidence informing institutional intervention.

Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded in multiple complementary theoretical perspectives. The Big6 Skills Model (Eisenberg & Berkowitz, 1990) conceptualizes information problem-solving through six sequential stages: task definition, information seeking strategies, location and access, use of information, synthesis, and evaluation. This framework provides structure for understanding information literacy as systematic process rather than isolated skills. The ACRL Framework for Information Literacy emphasizes information literacy as threshold concept involving conceptual shifts in understanding information authority, creation, and use. Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) theory (Zimmerman, 2002) posits that effective learning requires metacognitive awareness, strategy selection, and performance monitoring processes intimately connected with information literacy. Students demonstrating high information literacy effectively regulate their learning by identifying information needs, selecting appropriate strategies, monitoring comprehension, and adjusting approaches all SRL processes predicting academic success. Constructivist Learning Theory (von Glasersfeld, 1989) emphasizes learners active knowledge construction through engagement with information and ideas, connecting information literacy (as competency for engaging with information effectively) to deeper learning. This theoretical integration suggests that information literacy enables self-regulated, constructivist learning processes through which students actively develop understanding, implying information literacy should correlate with academic achievement. The theoretical framework justifies examining multiple information literacy dimensions (information searching, evaluation, ethics) as interconnected competencies supporting self-regulated learning and academic success.

Methodology

Research Design

This study employed quantitative, cross-sectional survey design examining relationships between information literacy skills and academic performance. Cross-sectional design enables snapshot examination of relationships at single time point across diverse student population, efficiently addressing research questions regarding association magnitude and direction. Survey methodology efficiently collects self-reported data from large samples, facilitating statistical analysis identifying patterns and relationships.

Population and Sample

The study population comprises undergraduate students across three Nigerian federal universities selected to represent geographic and institutional diversity: University of Lagos (South-West), University of Ibadan (South-West), and Ahmadu Bello University (North-West). These three were selected based on large student populations, established library systems, and institutional research cooperation. Combined, these universities enroll approximately 45,000 undergraduate students. Stratified random sampling, stratified by year of study (100, 200, 300, 400 levels) and gender, generated sample of 385 students, calculated to achieve 95% confidence level, 5% margin of error, assuming expected correlation of $r = 0.55$ based on previous research. Institutional student records provided sampling frames; stratification ensured representation across years of study and genders proportional to university enrollment patterns.

Instrumentation and Measures

The Information Literacy Skills Scale (ILSS), a 38-item instrument measuring five dimensions, was adapted from validated international instruments with modifications reflecting Nigerian context. Dimensions included: Information Search Skills (8 items), Information Evaluation Skills (9 items), Digital Literacy (8 items), Information Ethics (7 items), and Metacognition (6 items). All items utilized 5-point Likert scales (1=Strongly Disagree to 5=Strongly Agree). Academic performance was operationalized as cumulative GPA and most recent examination scores, collected from institutional records. Demographic data included year of study, gender, and discipline.

Validity and Reliability

Content validity was established through expert review by five information literacy experts and three Nigerian academic librarians who verified item relevance and appropriateness for Nigerian context. Construct validity was examined through exploratory factor analysis on pilot sample ($n=60$), confirming five-factor structure explaining 64.3% of variance. Confirmatory factor analysis on main sample confirmed factor structure (CFI = 0.914, RMSEA = 0.062). Internal reliability was assessed through Cronbach alpha: Overall scale ($\alpha = 0.892$), Information Search Skills ($\alpha = 0.824$), Information Evaluation Skills ($\alpha = 0.856$), Digital Literacy ($\alpha = 0.798$), Information Ethics ($\alpha = 0.812$), Metacognition ($\alpha = 0.784$). All values exceeded 0.70 thresholds, indicating adequate reliability.

Data Collection and Ethical Considerations

Data were collected during March-May 2024 through trained research assistants at each institution. Participants completed questionnaires in paper format or through online platform (Qualtrics), according to individual preference. Written informed consent was obtained from all participants; institutional review boards at each university approved the study protocol. Confidentiality was protected through anonymous questionnaires. Completion time averaged 25 minutes.

Data Analysis Techniques

Descriptive statistics characterized sample demographics and variable distributions. Pearson correlation coefficients examined bivariate relationships between information literacy dimensions and academic performance. Independent samples t-tests and one-way ANOVA examined demographic differences in information literacy levels. Multiple regression analysis

identified information literacy dimensions predicting academic performance. Statistical significance was established at $\alpha = 0.05$. All analyses were conducted using SPSS 26.0.

Results

Demographic Characteristics

Demographic Variable	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
100 Level	92	23.9
200 Level	98	25.5
300 Level	99	25.7
400 Level	96	24.9
Male	189	49.1
Female	196	50.9
Total	385	100.0

The sample comprised 385 students (mean age = 20.4 years, SD = 1.8), relatively equally distributed across year of study and gender. Institutional distribution was: University of Lagos (n=128, 33.2%), University of Ibadan (n=132, 34.3%), Ahmadu Bello University (n=125, 32.5%).

Information Literacy Descriptive Statistics

Information Literacy Dimension	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Overall Information Literacy	3.42	0.68	1.50	5.00
Information Search Skills	3.28	0.74	1.00	5.00
Information Evaluation Skills	3.51	0.71	1.33	5.00
Digital Literacy	3.38	0.76	1.13	5.00
Information Ethics	3.55	0.69	1.43	5.00
Metacognition	3.41	0.73	1.17	5.00

Information literacy levels ranged from low to high (overall M=3.42/5, SD=0.68). Information Ethics demonstrated highest mean (M=3.55), while Information Search Skills showed lowest (M=3.28).

Academic Performance

Performance Measure	Mean	SD	Range
Cumulative GPA	2.84	0.53	1.42–4.00
Recent Exam Score (0-100)	68.3	11.4	38–96

Bivariate Correlations

Information Literacy Dimension	r (GPA)	r (Exam Score)	Combined (r)
Overall Information Literacy	0.652	0.695	0.687
Information Search Skills	0.512	0.643	0.589
Information Evaluation Skills	0.623	0.655	0.643
Digital Literacy	0.489	0.568	0.534
Information Ethics	0.421	0.498	0.465
Metacognition	0.516	0.601	0.572

Note: $p < 0.001$. All information literacy dimensions significantly correlated with academic performance. Overall information literacy showed strongest correlation ($r=0.687$).

Multiple Regression Analysis

Information Literacy Dimension	β	t	p
Information Search Skills	0.182	3.89	0.001
Information Evaluation Skills	0.298	5.42	<0.001
Digital Literacy	0.112	2.31	0.021
Information Ethics	0.058	1.23	0.219
Metacognition	0.165	3.41	0.001

Regression model ($F[5,379]=62.42$, $p<0.001$) was statistically significant with information literacy dimensions explaining 48.2% of academic performance variance ($R^2=0.482$). Information Evaluation Skills emerged as strongest predictor ($\beta=0.298$).

Year of Study Differences

Year of Study	Information Literacy M (SD)	GPA M (SD)	Exam Score M (SD)
100 Level	3.08 (0.71)	2.52 (0.48)	63.2 (12.1)
200 Level	3.32 (0.65)	2.78 (0.51)	66.8 (11.3)

300 Level	3.54 (0.62)	2.94 (0.52)	71.1 (10.2)
400 Level	3.74 (0.58)	3.11 (0.51)	74.9 (9.8)

One-way ANOVA revealed significant year-of-study differences ($F[3,381]=28.34$, $p<0.001$), with 100-level students demonstrating substantially lower information literacy than upper-level students.

Discussion

This study provides empirical evidence that information literacy skills significantly predict academic performance among Nigerian university students. Information Evaluation Skills emerge as most critical dimension, supporting international literature emphasizing evaluation importance. The 48.2% variance explained by information literacy indicates these skills represent important contributor to academic success. Year-of-study progression demonstrates information literacy develops progressively through undergraduate years.

Key Findings

The overall correlation ($r=0.687$) is consistent with international research. Information Evaluation Skills as strongest predictor aligns with literature emphasizing evaluation importance in academic writing. Year-of-study differences show expected progression. Gender differences absence contrasts with some literature, possibly reflecting Nigerian context-specific factors.

Implications for University Libraries

Findings justify library investment in information literacy instruction, particularly targeting first- and second-year students. Emphasis on evaluation skills suggests libraries should prioritize evaluation instruction. Discipline-specific instruction with academic staff collaboration might enhance discipline-tailored search and evaluation skills.

Implications for Academic Staff

Faculty integration of information literacy within disciplinary courses is essential. Explicit evaluation instruction might be integrated into courses requiring research papers. Assessment practices might incentivize higher-quality source use through grading rubrics emphasizing source quality.

Implications for Student Success

Strong relationships between information literacy and academic performance suggest interventions could meaningfully improve outcomes. Early intervention targeting 100-level students represents strategic opportunity. Given that approximately 65% demonstrated below-adequate information literacy proficiency, widespread intervention could benefit substantial student population.

Conclusion

This study provides empirical evidence that information literacy skills significantly predict academic performance among Nigerian university students. Information Evaluation Skills emerge as most critical dimension, while Information Search Skills, Metacognition, and Digital Literacy also substantially predict performance. Information literacy progressively develops through undergraduate progression. Implications extend to university libraries, academic staff,

curriculum development, and student support systems. Systematic information literacy instruction integrated across universities represents strategic intervention supporting student success and institutional effectiveness.

Recommendations

For University Libraries

1. Develop comprehensive information literacy instruction programs integrated across curricula
2. Prioritize information evaluation skills instruction
3. Implement librarian-faculty partnerships
4. Establish assessment practices measuring information literacy development
5. Develop peer tutoring programs

For Academic Staff

1. Integrate information literacy within disciplinary teaching
2. Use assessment practices rewarding high-quality source use
3. Collaborate with librarians in course design
4. Model information literacy in teaching practice

For Student Success

1. Early intervention targeting 100-level students
2. Widespread intervention supporting substantial student population
3. Integration across disciplines
- 4.

Contribution to Knowledge

Theoretical Contribution

This study extends information literacy research to African context, providing empirical validation beyond predominantly developed-country samples. Multidimensional approach clarifies which competencies most strongly predict academic outcomes.

Practical Contribution

Findings provide university administrators and librarians evidence justifying information literacy program investment. Identification of evaluation skills as strongest predictor directs resources toward highest-impact instruction.

Policy Contribution

Findings provide evidence supporting information literacy integration within Nigerian quality assurance frameworks. Study demonstrates information literacy relationship with core institutional outcomes justifying policy requirements.

Limitations

1. Cross-sectional design precludes causal inference
2. Study limited to three federal universities
3. Self-reported measures subject to social desirability bias
4. Academic performance as GPA and examination scores only
5. Unmeasured variables potentially confounding findings

Suggestions for Further Research

1. Longitudinal investigations tracking information literacy development
2. Intervention studies examining instruction effectiveness
3. Qualitative research exploring experiences and barriers
4. Discipline-specific studies examining discipline-varying relationships
5. Research on institutional factors influencing relationships

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