

INFORMATION LITERACY SKILLS AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF FOUNTAIN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS, OSOGBO, OSUN STATE.

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Abstract

This study examines information literacy and academic performance of Fountain University students. Four research questions guided this study. The study adopted quantitative methods with the use of a survey. The total population is 1900. The Israel (2003) model for determining sample size was adopted to arrive at total 185 sample size. Simple random sampling was used to pick the respondents for equal representation from the existing departments in the university, while a prepared questionnaire was administered virtually via Google form. The finding shows that most students do not have access to literacy facilities; it reveals lack of application skills by majority but shows positive effect of information literacy on student's academic performance. Finding shows that 72.9% Undergraduate students utilized their Smartphone while 27.1% do not use Smartphone as the type of information literacy facility for their academic performance. 56.5% applied internet as the high level of accessibility for their literacy skills more than other access window provided. Also, finding shows that 85.8% said information literacy skills can help to enhance accessibility, evaluation, processing and use of information for academic activities while 14.2% said no. Again, 71.1% said lack of basic literacy training led to the current literacy challenges. The Management, therefore, has a responsibility to facilitate the amelioration of the identified challenges.

Keyword: Information, Literacy, Academic performance, Fountain University

Introduction

In developing a nation, there is no alternative to quality education. University is the institution which provides quality higher education to the nation and higher education is one of the most important tools for research productivity. Every year a large number of students are being enrolled in different disciplines in these universities and, they are the important assets and main power of the nation. Their earned skills from academic background can develop the economy of a country as the socio-economic development of a country is directly linked with students' academic performance. Students' academic performance plays a vital role in producing the best quality graduates who will become the great leader and manpower for the country in future and contribute to the country's socio-economic development (Sele & Wanjiku, 2024; Adeyemo, 2025). Therefore, students' academic performance measurement has received considerable attention from researchers.

The library is basic to any educational development. It inculcates in people to love reading for its own sake quite early in life, develops in them the spirit of inquiry and self-development through reading (Bruce, 2001). According to the Association of College and Research Libraries (Information Literacy Competency Standards, 2017), information literacy forms the basis for lifelong learning. It is common to all disciplines, to all learning environments, and to all levels of education. It enables learners to master the content of their investigations, become more self-directed, and assume greater control over their own

learning. Literacy is the ability to acquire knowledge through learning, usually in an educational setting. This aligns with Ekong & Essien (2022) declaration that “literacy is not an inborn human characteristic, but rather an ability that is learned, most often in schools.” Although schooling is very critical for literacy to flourish, it is not enough. It is unthinkable to achieve a modern and literate society without libraries, which according to Wilson (2001) “are uniquely situated to promote literacy”. Library is therefore a veritable instrument for the promotion of inclusive literacy.

University libraries serve as the central hub for storing and disseminating resources, supporting students by providing access to a variety of information materials (Islam & Rahman, 2023). These resources include both print and electronic formats. For undergraduates, having a foundational understanding of information literacy is essential to effectively utilize these resources for academic work, career development, and personal growth. The benefits of information literacy skills cannot be quantified, due to its contributions to students’ academic achievement and career progression in a digital and information driven environment (McElroy, 2022).

Statement of the problem

In today's digital age, students have access to vast amounts of information, but they may struggle to evaluate and effectively use it. They may feel overwhelmed by the volume of information available, leading to difficulties in discerning credible sources and relevant content. Information literacy involves critical thinking, analysis, and evaluation of

information. Students who lack these skills may have trouble distinguishing between reliable and unreliable sources, identifying biases, or understanding the context and credibility of the information they encounter.

Information literacy skills are indispensable skills every student must possess not only to succeed in their present academic endeavours but to become a lifelong learner. Giving every student equal right to learning resources in the schools is also pivotal to their academic achievement. The education system in Nigeria is faced with so many challenges which have certainly brought about a rapid decline in the quality of education. It is therefore of great importance to explore some of the trending issues facing students with regards to the use of Information literacy skills. Several studies have been carried out on Information literacy skills and academic performance; however, none of those studies examined Information literacy skills and academic performance by undergraduate students of Fountain University. Therefore, this study intends to examine Information literacy skills and academic performance specifically by students of Fountain University.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study

1. What are the impacts of information literacy on student's academic activities in fountain university?
2. What is the Level of accessibility of students to literacy skills?
3. What are the types of information literacy facilities use by fountain students?

4. What is the major challenges militating against accessibility to information literacy skills?

Literature Review

Concept of Information Literacy skill

The concept of information literacy has been defined by Šobota (2025) as follows: “an information literate person should have the ability to be a lifelong learner and to be able to reflect on what one does”. Information literacy (IL) is the ability to define one’s information needs and then access, evaluate, process and use retrieved information strategically. Information literacy is a part of knowledge or learning that is about acquiring sets of skills or competencies. An information literate individual cares about the quality of the answer he/she is investigating and is prepared to work to guarantee that quality.

Shikali & Muneja (2024) posit that Information literacy is important in the contemporary environment of rapid technology change and proliferation of information resources information and communication technology (ICT) advancements and the use of electronic resources, especially the internet promises to improve the flow of information to research and academic communities. Students’ academic performance means the extent to which a student academically achieved the educational goals. Most of the researchers in previous studies have measured the academic performance by GPA in a particular year or semester (Ali, S., Haider, Z., Munir, F., Khan, H. and Ahmed, A. (2013). GPA of a student depends on many factors. Information literacy skill is one of them. Generally, literacy

means the ability of a person to read and write. There are different types of literacy such as visual literacy, computer literacy, media literacy, technical literacy, information literacy and so on. Nowadays, the importance of information literacy is increasing significantly. Information literacy means the ability to know the need for information and the ability to identify, locate, evaluate, and effectively use of information for solving a problem practically. "To be information literate, a person must be able to recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate and use effectively the needed information" is stated by The American Library Association (ALA) (American Library Association. Presidential Committee on Information Literacy: Final report 1989).

Challenges Militating against Accessibility to Information Literacy Skills

There are also challenges in information literacy in Nigeria tertiary institutions today. It is in that regard that Ojo et al. (2025) stressed that, students have to grapple with a lot of search skills in different discipline among different databases and print resources which is a challenge. Alabi and Zaid (2025) observed that the student population of today is very diverse and lecturers handle classrooms that represent students of different colors, racial and ethnic groups, religion languages, backgrounds, ages and learning styles and computer skills. As such, students enter the university with a greater polarity of skills thereby making it difficult for academic and library staff to pitch information literacy sessions at the same level.

Alabi and Zaid (2025) noted that diversity in the case of students involves two issues, namely intergroup and individual differences. Intergroup differences are more pronounced in socio-economic levels, racial, ethnic and language groups and physical ability. Within the intergroup differences and within each learner group, there are individual differences in learning rates, attitudes and motivational rates. Which have a bearing in achievement outcomes that academic and library staff must accommodate.

Alabi and Zaid, (2025) noted that students regard library instruction as an isolated activity, unless they are required to apply what they have learned. The answer lies in delivering instruction that is directly applicable to students` projects. This needs the collaboration of academic departments and the library staff. Technology issue is another challenge facing the information literacy. Insufficient computer facilities and slow internet connections make efficient information literacy teaching very difficult. To compound the problem, some students do not have computing skills. The problem of slow connectivity affects the time frame in which a topic could be taught and its completion according to Nwonye et al. (2025).

Research Methodology

The current study adopted a quantitative design. The research design for this study is a social survey research design which is one of the designs for a quantitative study. Putting all these into consideration, a survey method was designed to effectively and efficiently carry out the research work using Fountain Undergraduate Students as a case

study. The population constitutes all undergraduate students of Fountain University Osogbo. The total number of undergraduate students of Fountain University Osogbo, Osun State is 1900 which is derived from the website of Unirank; a foremost search engine with concern for classification and ranking of higher institutions of learning worldwide. To determine the required sample for the population, the Israel (2003) model for determining sample size was used to arrive at this actual sample for this study.

A simple random sampling technique was used in this study to justify 185 respondents. Being quantitative research, the major instrument that was used was a questionnaire. The questionnaire was administered across the departments in the four colleges of the university through online Google forms. A total of 170 out of the expected responses were returned and were subsequently analyzed using simple percentages and appropriate descriptive statistics.

Research Question One: What are the impacts of information literacy on student's academic activities in fountain university?

Table 1: The Impact of Information Literacy on Students' Academic Performance in Fountain University

ITEMS	Yes	No
Enhance accessibility, evaluation, processing and use of information for academic activities	146 (85.8%)	24 (14.2%)
Enhances quick access to information/research material	98 (57.6%)	72 (42.4%)
Enhance the quality of research work	104 (61.1%)	66 (38.9%)
Makes research easier	120 (70.5%)	50 (29.5%)
Helps to identify, locate and effectively use information sources and formats	96 (56.4%)	74 (43.6%)
Helps in achieving greater academic success	108 (64%)	62 (36%)

Development of searching skills	136 (80%)	34 (20%)
Helps in knowledge development	100 (58.8%)	70 (41.1%)

Source: Field Work, 2025

Table 1 shows the impacts of Information Literacy on the students' academic performance in fountain university. The result shows that 146 (85.8) of the respondents agree that it enhance accessibility, evaluation, processing and use of information for academic activities, 98 (57.6%) agree that it enhance quick access to information/research materials, 104 (61.1%) agree that it enhances the quality of research work, 120 (70.5%) agree that it makes research easier, 96 (56.4%) agree that it helps to identify, locate and effectively use information sources and formats, 108 (64%) agree that it helps in achieving greater academic success, 136 (80%) agree that it develops

searching skills, while 100 (58.8%) agree that it helps in knowledge development.

Question Two: What is the Level of accessibility of students to literacy skills?

Table 2: Showing the Level of Accessibility by Fountain University Students to Literacy

ITEMS	YES	NO
Application of Internet	96 (56.5%)	74 (43.5%)
Library/Usage skills	93 (54.7%)	77 (45.3%)
Knowledge/Literacy skills	48 (28.2%)	122 (71.8%)
Interest/aspiration for library	91 (53.5%)	79 (46.5%)
Relevant framework avail.	57 (33.5%)	113 (66.5%)
Leisure purpose	66 (38.9%)	104 (61.1%)
Conducive environment	84 (49.4%)	86 (50.6%)
Personal effort/skills	88 (51.8%)	82 (48.2%)

Source: Field Work, 2025

Table 2, 56.5% applied internet while 43.5% do not, 54.7% have library/usage skills while 45.3% do not have, and 28.2% have information literacy skills while 71.8 claimed ignorance, 53.5% have interest and aspiration for information literacy while 46.5% do not. It shows that 33.5% agreed with relevant library framework while 66.5% disagreed, 38.9% access information for leisure purpose while 61.1% said no, 49.4% agreed with a conducive library environment while 50.6% opposed, 47.1% satisfied with the library staff attitude while 52.9% do not and 51.8% used personal effort while 48.2% sought assistance.

Research Question Three: What are the types of information literacy facilities use by fountain students?

Table 3: Showing the Type of Information Literacy Facility Used by Fountain Students

ITEMS	YES	NO
Physical Resources	114 (67.1%)	56 (32.9%)
Online Resources /OPAC/OER	108 (63.5%)	62 (36.4%)
Electronic Media	55 (32.4%)	115 (67.6%)
Personal Computer	75 (44.1%)	95 (55.9%)
Smart Phone	124 (72.9%)	46 (27.1%)
Library Service	107 (62.9%)	63 (37.1%)
Commercial Service	84 (49.4%)	75 (44.1%)
All of the above	89(52.4%)	81 (47.6%)

Source: Field Work, 2025

The perceptions of respondents toward the kind of literacy facility they used were shown in Table 3. From the data, 67.1% of respondents used physical resources, compared to 32.9% who do not. 62.9% used library services while 37.1 do not, 63.5% prefer online resources like OPAC and OER while 36.4% chose to use something else, 32.4% preferred to

use media resources while 67.6% said no, 44.1% used a personal computer while 55.9% do not, 72.9% used a smartphone while 27.1% do not, 49.4% prefer commercial services while 44.1% said no, and 52.4% used all of the above items while 47.6% do not. It has been determined that UG students use smartphones frequently as a tool for information literacy.

Research Question Four: What is the major challenge militating against accessibility to information literacy skills?

Table 4: The Challenges Militating against Accessibility to Information Literacy and Academic Performance of Fountain University Students.

ITEMS	YES	NO
Poor internet services	102 (60%)	68 (40%)
Frequent power blackout	116 (68.2%)	54 (31.8%)
Lack of basic literacy training	121 (71.1%)	49 (28.9%)
High cost of data/equipment	97 (57.0%)	73 (43%)
Lack of ICT skills	89 (52.3%)	81 (47.7%)
Lack of internet subscription	56 (32.9%)	114 (67.1%)
Strict library regulations	66 (38.9%)	104 (61.1%)
Perceived nature	51 (30%)	119 (70%)

Source: Field Work, 2025

Table 4 highlights that, 60% poor internet service was the reason behind challenges against accessibility to information literacy according to respondents while 40% disagreed with the assertion, 68.2% said frequent power blackout contributed to the current literacy challenges while 31.8% said no, 71.1% agreed on the lack of literacy training while 28.9% disagreed, 57.0% agreed with high cost of both data and equipment while 43% disagreed, 52.3% attested that lack of ICT skills is a factor while 47.7% said no, 32.9% confirm that lack of internet subscription hinder access to literacy skills while 67.1% disagreed, 38.9% said strict library rules and regulation as basis for not accessing information literacy and

can also prevent use while 61.1% debunk and 70% perceive nature of literacy skills as not necessary while 30% sees the need of information literacy skills.

Discussion of Findings

According to the study's findings on the respondents' use of information literacy resources, undergraduate students utilize their smartphones at a significant rate. This demonstrates their interest in contemporary (ICT) literacy resources and tools. This is consistent with a study conducted by Ngozi (2024) to determine the impact of ICT skills on undergraduate academic performance in higher education, which found that students' proficiency in ICT skills has increased as a result of their ability to evaluate, interpret, locate, use, and disseminate information. Data on the Level of Accessibility by UG Students to Literacy abilities shows a high rate of internet application but no comprehension of the impact information literacy handling abilities or basic literacy skills have on their academic performance.

According to Ojo et al. (2025), there are a few issues that students face when using information retrieval tools, including the need for adequate power supplies, the absence of internet access, and not having enough time to use informational resources and services. The lack of fundamental reading instruction, followed by frequent blackouts and subpar internet services, was cited in the study as the main barrier preventing Fountain University undergraduate students from using information literacy. Nwonye et al. (2025) posited that because of the information age in which information is being driven by globalization; many

students enumerated some users of ICTs encountered problems to be ignorance, unavailability of internet access, low bandwidth, subscription problem and lack of skills in information retrieval. From this analysis we deduce that majority of the students positively impacted by the use of available literacy skills facilities in the library. Their positive response is seen to be as a result of their interest and intense academic activities.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions drawn, the following recommendations were proffered

1. Fountain University management should introduce a compulsory general study course on information literacy to enable potential graduate literacy skills for research project.
2. To achieve the objective of learning and research, proper utilization of information resources to improve student literacy skills should be given priority for their overall intellectual growth and development.
3. Students should be encouraged to partake in information literacy classes, so as to enhance their accessibility, evaluation, processing and use of information for academic activities.
4. There should be organized training of the students on the use of information resources so as to efficiently assist them in accessing and retrieving information for research and other academic activities.

Conclusion

The study concluded that a new educational paradigm has made it necessary to adopt new practices and redefine the contribution that libraries make to information literacy in higher education. As information literacy becomes a non-negotiable indicator of capacity building and empowerment, developing countries must create information infrastructures for their information literate populations. The study revealed high level of Smartphone usage among Fountain Undergraduate students as information literacy facility. The respondents also indicated that data collected on the level of accessibility by undergraduate students to literacy skills, revealed high rate of internet application but did not possess basic literacy skills or understanding of information literacy handling skills on their academic performance. The study also reveals the major challenges of information literacy and academic performance are lack of basic literacy training, frequent power blackout and poor internet services.

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