

ROLE OF INFORMATION RETRIEVAL TOOLS IN UTILIZATION OF LIBRARY RESOURCES FOR IMPROVED ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AMONG UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS IN MOSES ORSHIO ADASU UNIVERSITY LIBRARY SCHOOL, MAKURDI, BENUE STATE

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Abstract

This study investigates the role of Information Retrieval Tools (IRTs) in the utilization of library resources and their influence on academic performance among undergraduate students in the Department of Library and Information Science at Moses Orshio Adasu University, Makurdi. Implications for the University Library. Guided by the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), the research adopted a descriptive survey design and employed a census approach involving 218 400level final-year students during the 2020/2021 academic session. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire and analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency counts, mean, and standard deviation. Findings revealed a generally high level of awareness and usage of basic IRTs like OPAC and bibliographic databases. However, advanced tools such as discovery systems and federated search engines recorded lower levels of awareness and utilization. The study further established a positive relationship between the utilization of library resources and academic performance, highlighting the academic benefits of effective library engagement. Major challenges identified include poor internet access, insufficient training, and limited ICT infrastructure, all of which hinder optimal utilization of retrieval tools. Based on these findings, the study recommends the organization of regular training and awareness programs, integration of IRT utilization into academic activities, and infrastructural improvements in library services. These recommendations aim to enhance students' retrieval competencies, promote effective library use, and support academic excellence. The study contributes valuable insights into optimizing library services to meet the evolving research and learning needs of university students.

Keywords: Library Resources, Utilization, Library Resources, Academic Performance, Information Retrieval Tools (IRTs)

Introduction

In contemporary academic environments, university libraries serve as knowledge infrastructures that support teaching, learning, and research through the provision of organized

and authoritative information resources. As the epistemological demands of higher education evolve, emphasis has shifted from the mere availability of print-based collections to the dynamic integration of digital information systems. This transformation has foregrounded the relevance of Information Retrieval Tools (IRTs) as fundamental enablers of academic performance, especially within the discipline of Library and Information Science. Information Retrieval Tools, such as Online Public Access Catalogues (OPAC), electronic databases, indexing and abstracting services, and institutional repositories, are designed to enhance the discoverability, accessibility, and utilization of scholarly content (Osinulu, 2020). These systems facilitate efficient access to bibliographic and full-text materials, allowing undergraduate students to retrieve domain-specific information required for coursework, research, and academic writing.

Within the context of this study, Information Retrieval Tools are viewed as digital systems and interfaces that support students' information-seeking behavior, enabling structured searches and facilitating effective knowledge access. Their role becomes particularly vital in fostering information literacy and promoting independent inquiry, both of which are central to student learning outcomes in LIS education. As retrieval technologies become more embedded in library services, the academic impact of these tools must be evaluated based on their contribution to students' ability to identify, retrieve, and apply relevant information in their academic pursuits.

In the Library and Information Science Department of Moses Orshio Adasu University Makurdi, the utilization of library resources is not only integral to students' academic performance but also central to their professional development as future information managers. As Salami (2014) noted, library resources—including monographs, academic journals, theses and dissertations, electronic books, and reference works—constitute the intellectual capital upon which academic

competencies are built. The concept of utilization in this study refers to the extent to which students access, engage with, and apply these resources in completing academic tasks. Effective utilization is a reflection of digital literacy, search skills, and the availability of instructional and technological support services within the library environment.

Despite the deployment of retrieval technologies in many academic libraries, challenges persist in their effective use, particularly among undergraduate populations. Factors such as limited awareness, poor user orientation, low digital literacy, and infrastructural deficiencies constrain optimal utilization (Aladeniyi & Owokole, 2018). These issues are especially relevant in state-owned institutions like Moses Orshio Adasu University, where constraints in funding, broadband connectivity, and technical support can impact both the functionality of information systems and the user experience. Additionally, students may exhibit varying levels of search expertise, conceptual understanding of information organization, and motivation to explore available resources beyond traditional textbook materials.

Academic performance in this study is defined as the demonstrable outcome of students' academic engagement, often reflected in grades, quality of research output, and mastery of subject matter. From a library and information science perspective, academic performance is not only a product of cognitive ability but is also shaped by access to high-quality information, availability of retrieval tools, and the ability to effectively utilize available resources. Understanding the interaction between retrieval tools, resource utilization, and academic performance is imperative for evidence-based improvement in library service delivery. Within the context of Library and Information Science education, where students are expected to attain proficiency in bibliographic control, cataloguing, indexing, and information access

methodologies, the strategic use of IRTs becomes both a pedagogical and performance imperative.

As Nyemezu (2022) emphasized, the effectiveness of retrieval systems in academic libraries should be assessed not merely by their technical deployment but by their impact on user behavior and academic outputs. Undergraduate students, particularly those in the LIS department, serve as both users and future implementers of these systems. Their academic progress is thus intrinsically tied to the functionality and relevance of the information systems they interact with during their studies. This dual role justifies the need for a focused inquiry into how retrieval tools are utilized, the extent to which library resources are engaged, and how these factors collectively influence student performance.

This study therefore seeks to investigate The Role of Information Retrieval Tools in the Utilization of Library Resources for Academic Performance among Undergraduate Students in the Library and Information Science Department of Moses Orshio Adasu University, Makurdi. It aims to examine how the use of these systems correlates with students' academic achievement, information-seeking practices, and research activities. The outcome of this study will provide empirical insights into the functional efficacy of library information systems within LIS education and contribute to institutional strategies aimed at enhancing academic performance through optimized resource utilization.

Statement of the problem

University libraries now operate as hybrid systems that integrate both print and digital resources through the use of Information Retrieval Tools (IRTs), which include Online Public Access Catalogues (OPAC), databases, and institutional repositories. These tools are essential for facilitating access to scholarly content, improving research engagement, and promoting academic

achievement, particularly for students in Library and Information Science. However, despite their availability, concerns persist about their effective usage by undergraduate students. At Moses Orshio Adasu University, Makurdi, students in the Library and Information Science Department are expected to demonstrate high levels of competency in these tools, yet observations suggest a gap between tool availability and actual utilization.

The underuse of IRTs may be attributed to various challenges such as low awareness, insufficient user skills, poor infrastructure, and lack of structured orientation programs. These challenges can hinder effective access to library resources, thereby affecting students' academic performance and limiting their ability to conduct quality research. Previous studies have shown that without strong information literacy and consistent institutional support, students may underutilize available retrieval tools or rely on less credible sources. Furthermore, there is a lack of empirical evidence on the extent to which these tools are being used and how their use affects academic performance among the students. This gap in knowledge limits the ability of university libraries to improve systems and services effectively. Thus, the study aims to explore the role of IRTs in enhancing resource utilization and academic performance, with the goal of informing better strategies for library user support, improving digital engagement, and strengthening academic outcomes within the university environment.

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

1. What is the level of awareness of information retrieval tools among undergraduate students of Library and Information Science, Moses Orshio Adasu University, Makurdi?

2. What is the extent of library resource utilization among undergraduate students of Library and Information Science of Moses Orshio Adasu University, Makurdi?
3. What is the relationship between the utilization of library resources and the academic performance of undergraduate students of Library and Information Science, Moses Orshio Adasu University, Makurdi?
4. What are the major challenges hindering the effective use of information retrieval tools among undergraduate students of Library and Information Science, Moses Orshio Adasu University, Makurdi?

Conceptual Framework

Library Resources: Library resources constitute the foundation upon which academic inquiry, knowledge construction, and research advancement are built. These resources include a wide range of materials such as textbooks, scholarly journals, encyclopedias, electronic books, audiovisuals, and specialized databases curated to support institutional mandates in teaching, learning, and research (Ukih, 2016). With the digitization of information, university libraries have transformed into hybrid environments that combine physical and digital assets, enabling easier access through cataloguing, indexing, and discovery platforms. As Ekpang and Ekeng (2021) noted, contemporary libraries increasingly rely on digital discovery tools and federated search systems that streamline access across multiple collections. Such developments not only expand students' access to diverse resources but also enhance their capacity to retrieve, evaluate, and utilize relevant scholarly content. However, the extent to which these resources translate into improved academic outcomes depends significantly on how students interact with them.

Utilization of Library Resources: The utilization of library resources refers to the practical engagement of students with available academic materials in support of their

intellectual development. This involves more than just physical or digital access; it requires deliberate integration of resources into learning activities such as assignments, term papers, literature reviews, and exam preparation (Okeuhie et al., 2021). Effective utilization depends on a range of factors, including information literacy skills, relevance of materials, and how well the resources are organized for retrieval. Daramola (2016) observed that the rise of digital interfaces—such as OPAC, institutional repositories, and electronic databases—has significantly improved search efficiency. However, in many Nigerian universities, including state-owned institutions, challenges such as poor internet connectivity, limited digital competencies, and low awareness continue to constrain full resource utilization. This limited interaction with core academic resources may have implications for student learning outcomes and overall academic performance.

Resources Academic Performance: Academic performance refers to the measurable outcomes of students' academic efforts, typically assessed through coursework, projects, examinations, and research activities. It reflects not only students' understanding of subject content but also the effectiveness of the educational ecosystem in supporting learning (Omotunde et al., 2014). Several studies (Al Husaini & Ahmad-Shukor, 2023; Suleiman et al., 2024) have identified access to relevant academic resources as a critical factor influencing academic success. University libraries, by providing curated and credible materials, support student achievement by promoting independent inquiry, critical thinking, and scholarly writing. Nonetheless, performance may suffer where students lack awareness of available library tools, or where access is hindered by technological or infrastructural constraints. In such settings, even the best resources may remain underutilized, weakening their intended impact on academic achievement.

Information Retrieval Tools (IRTs): Information Retrieval Tools (IRTs) are digital systems that facilitate efficient access to scholarly content within academic libraries. These include OPAC, indexing and abstracting databases, bibliographic services, and institutional repositories. Their primary function is to aid users—particularly undergraduate students—in locating, retrieving, and evaluating relevant academic materials with accuracy and speed (Solomon, Onwuesi & Ijeh, 2022). IRTs have evolved to include advanced search capabilities and integration with AI-driven discovery tools that support personalized search results. Despite their potential, the effectiveness of these tools is often limited by students' digital literacy and inadequate training on their use (Tella, 2017). In some cases, students may resort to general-purpose search engines instead of academic databases, reducing the quality of their academic work. At Moses Orshio Adasu University, where the Library and Information Science Department is expected to demonstrate expertise in bibliographic access and information organization, the utilization of IRTs becomes both a pedagogical necessity and a performance determinant. Examining the interface between tool utilization and academic outcomes is essential for guiding library development and improving user support systems.

Theoretical framework

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), developed by Davis (1989), provides a useful theoretical lens for understanding user acceptance and usage behavior in relation to technological systems. It posits that two primary beliefs—perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use—determine an individual's attitude toward a technology, which in turn influences their behavioral intention and actual use. Within the library and information science domain, TAM has been widely applied to study the adoption of digital tools in academic libraries. In relation to this study, TAM is particularly relevant for exploring how undergraduate students in

the Library and Information Science Department of Moses Orshio Adasu University, Makurdi, engage with information retrieval tools.

The model explains how students' perceptions of the relevance and usability of tools such as OPAC, electronic databases, and institutional repositories can influence their willingness to use them for academic purposes. When students perceive these tools as beneficial to their academic tasks and easy to navigate, they are more likely to integrate them into their study routines. Furthermore, this framework supports the investigation into how such perceptions may affect the utilization of library resources and, by extension, influence academic performance. The application of TAM in this context helps to reveal the cognitive and attitudinal factors that may facilitate or hinder students' effective use of retrieval systems. It also informs the need for institutional interventions, such as user training and system improvements that can enhance the effectiveness of library services and support academic success.

Review of Related Empirical Studies

Afebende and Nna-Etuk (2019) explored how IRTs influenced the use of library resources among undergraduates in federal universities in Nigeria's South-South zone. The study covered 952 library users across three institutions during the 2017/2018 academic year. Using survey design and regression analysis, the researchers found a strong positive relationship ($R = .489$) between IRT knowledge and library resource use. The study also found that awareness of IRTs was generally low among students.

Both the previous and current studies adopt survey research design and structured questionnaires to explore similar issues. However, the present study focuses on a smaller, discipline-specific group: 218 final-year 400level undergraduate students in the Library and Information Science Department at Moses Orshio Adasu University during the 2020/2021

academic session. A census approach was adopted, and data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. While the earlier study assessed multiple universities and did not examine academic performance, this study investigates how IRT use influences both resource utilization and academic achievement within a single department. By narrowing the focus to one university and linking IRTs directly to academic performance, this study addresses a critical gap. It also provides evidence relevant for departmental planning, user training, and library policy decisions aimed at improving both access and learning outcomes

Enweani and Muokebe (2019) conducted a study on the Accessibility and Utilization of Information Resources and their Impact on Students' Learning Outcomes in selected Government Secondary Schools in Onitsha North, Anambra State. Using a descriptive survey design and structured questionnaire, data were analyzed through contingency tables. The researchers found a significant relationship between the availability, accessibility, and utilization of information resources and students' learning achievements. Their findings emphasized the importance of resource provision in enhancing teaching and learning. While their study targeted secondary schools, it offers foundational relevance to the current investigation by highlighting the correlation between resource access and learning outcomes. However, their research did not examine the role of Information Retrieval Tools (IRTs), which are critical in university-level resource engagement. In contrast, the present study focuses on a specific university department and seeks to understand how undergraduate students utilize digital retrieval systems such as OPAC and institutional repositories in the academic environment. The gap addressed by the current study is the absence of focused empirical evidence on the influence of IRT awareness and usage on academic performance at the university level—an area that Enweani and Muokebe (2019) did not explore.

Tella (2017) examined Predictors of Information Retrieval Effectiveness among Library and Information Science (LIS) undergraduates in two universities in Kwara State, Nigeria. The study employed a descriptive survey design, with a sample of 160 students selected through simple random sampling. Using structured questionnaires, the research explored psychological and skill-based variables—such as emotional intelligence, computer self-efficacy, and Boolean search skills—as predictors of retrieval effectiveness. The study found that all these variables significantly influenced students' ability to retrieve information effectively, with computer self-efficacy having the strongest predictive value.

This research aligns closely with the present study in its focus on undergraduate LIS students and their interaction with retrieval tools. However, the current study diverges by shifting emphasis from psychological predictors to the practical outcome of academic performance, as influenced by the utilization of library resources via IRTs. The present study also offers a broader institutional analysis by engaging a full census of 218 final-year students within a single university, thereby strengthening internal validity. Unlike the previous study, which focused on predictors of retrieval skills, this present research investigates how these retrieval interactions directly relate to academic performances, thus filling a critical gap in the existing literature.

Buruga, Guma, and Izaruku (2013) conducted a study in Uganda assessing Drivers and Barriers to Electronic Information Resource (EIR) Usage in academic libraries. Using a descriptive research design and a stratified random sampling technique, the study distributed structured online questionnaires via Google Forms to teaching staff and final-year students at Muni and Lira universities. Data from 351 respondents were analyzed using SPSS and RStudio, with descriptive statistical methods. The study identified key drivers of EIR usage, including

user training, perceived relevance, ease of access, prior experience, and institutional policies. A SWOT analysis was used to classify internal and external influences on EIR adoption.

This study shares similarities with the present one, particularly in examining digital platforms that facilitate academic engagement. However, its broad institutional and cross-user focus differs from the present research, which is department-specific and centers on undergraduate LIS students' academic performance as influenced by IRT use. The Ugandan study examined both staff and student perspectives, using SWOT as its analytical framework. In contrast, the current study uses descriptive statistics and explores how retrieval tools impact academic outcomes in a more focused academic setting. It fills a gap by offering an in-depth, user-specific understanding of IRT utilization within the framework of academic performance—an angle not explored in Buruga et al.'s work.

Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design to investigate The Role of Information Retrieval Tools in the Utilization of Library Resources for Academic Performance among Undergraduate Students in the Library and Information Science Department of Moses Orshio Adasu University: Implications for the University Library. The choice of a descriptive survey design was appropriate because it allowed for the systematic collection and analysis of data reflecting students' awareness, usage patterns, and the perceived academic benefits of library resources and information retrieval tools (IRTs) within a real university environment.

The study population consisted of all 218 final-year (400 level) undergraduate students enrolled in the Department of Library and Information Science at Moses Orshio Adasu University, Makurdi, during the 2020/2021 academic session. Due to the relatively small and accessible size

of the population, a census approach was adopted, meaning that the entire population was studied without sampling. This method ensured that findings were comprehensive and representative of the departmental context, minimizing sampling bias.

Data were collected through a structured questionnaire specifically developed in line with the study's four research questions and assessed the level of awareness of IRTs; the extent of library resource utilization; the relationship between library use and academic performance; and the challenges affecting the effective use of IRTs. Responses were measured using a four-point Likert scale to gauge frequency, agreement levels, and perceived effectiveness. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency counts, mean, and standard deviation. To aid interpretation, real number limits were used to categorize the mean values as follows: 3.50–4.00 (Very High), 2.50–3.49 (High), 1.50–2.49 (Low), and 1.00–1.49 (Very Low). This analytical framework enabled a clear understanding of how students interact with information retrieval systems and library resources, the degree to which these are integrated into academic routines, and the key barriers to optimal usage. The results are intended to inform practical improvements in the university library's services, particularly in strengthening access to and effective use of IRTs to support student learning and academic performance.

Result and Discussion

This section presents the result of the data collected and analysed in line with the research questions that guided the study.

Research Question 1: What is the level of awareness of information retrieval tools among undergraduate students of Library and Information Science, Moses Orshio Adasu University, Makurdi?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of Respondents on the Level of Awareness of Information Retrieval Tools Among Undergraduate Students

S/N	Item Statement	VHL	HL	LL	VLL	$\bar{x}$	SD	Dec.
1	Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC)	68	93	39	18	2.98	0.83	HL

2	Bibliographic databases (e.g., EBSCOhost)	52	79	60	27	2.76	0.92	HL
3	Institutional repositories	39	82	71	26	2.63	0.88	HL
4	Abstracting and indexing services	18	74	89	37	2.39	0.91	LL
5	Subject gateways	11	63	97	47	2.20	0.89	LL
6	Discovery tools (e.g., Primo, Summon)	13	41	100	64	2.05	0.87	LL
7	Library mobile apps or portals	28	76	74	40	2.45	0.94	LL
8	Federated search engines	22	69	81	46	2.34	0.91	LL
9	Citation databases (e.g., Scopus, Web of Science)	35	71	72	40	2.54	0.94	HL
10	Library guides and tutorials	57	86	54	21	2.87	0.85	HL
Cluster Mean						2.52	0.38	HL

Key: $\bar{x}$ = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation, **VHL** Very High Level **HL** = High Level **LL** = Low Level, Dec. = Decision

The results in Table 1 reveal that students in the department generally possess a high level of awareness of information retrieval tools (Cluster Mean = 2.52). Tools such as OPAC, library guides, and bibliographic databases were rated highly, while more advanced tools like discovery systems and federated search engines showed lower awareness levels. This suggests that while students are familiar with foundational retrieval platforms, further training is needed to enhance awareness of advanced tools critical to scholarly research.

Research Question 2. What is the extent of library resource utilization among undergraduate students of Library and Information Science of Moses Orshio Adasu University, Makurdi?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of Respondents on the Extent of Library Resource Utilization

S/N	Item Statement	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	$\bar{x}$	SD	Dec.
1	Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC)	68	91	39	20	2.95	0.83	HE
2	Bibliographic databases (e.g., EBSCOhost)	58	88	47	25	2.82	0.86	HE
3	Institutional repositories	61	83	46	28	2.80	0.89	HE
4	Abstracting and indexing services	49	79	56	34	2.66	0.91	HE
5	Subject gateways	41	77	62	38	2.54	0.90	HE
6	Discovery tools (e.g., Primo, Summon)	29	68	76	45	2.29	0.94	LE
7	Library mobile apps or portals	34	66	72	46	2.33	0.93	LE
8	Federated search engines	47	85	53	33	2.68	0.88	HE
9	Citation databases (e.g., Scopus, Web of Science)	25	61	82	50	2.21	0.91	LE

10	Library guides and tutorials	63	89	44	22	2.89	0.84	HE
Cluster Mean						2.62	0.37	HE

Key: $\bar{x}$ = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation, **VHE**= Very High Extent, **HE**= High Extent, **LE**= High Extent, **VLE** = Very High Extent,

The findings in Table 2 indicate that the extent of library resource utilization among the students is generally high (Cluster Mean = 2.62). Most students frequently use traditional tools like OPAC and bibliographic databases. However, utilization of certain digital tools such as discovery platforms and mobile apps remains low, possibly due to limited awareness or technical barriers. These findings emphasize the need for improved access to and training on modern library systems.

Research Question 3: What is the relationship between the utilization of library resources and the academic performance of undergraduate students of Library and Information Science, Moses Orshio Adasu University, Makurdi?

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation of Respondents on the Relationship between Utilization of Library Resources and Academic Performance

S/N	Item Statement	SA	A	D	SD	$\bar{x}$	SD	Dec.
1	Effective use of library resources improves academic results	72	91	34	21	2.94	0.86	Agree
2	Students who regularly use library tools perform better in examinations	68	85	40	25	2.84	0.91	Agree
3	Use of OPAC and databases enhances assignment quality	61	88	47	22	2.82	0.87	Agree
4	Reference materials contribute to better research reports	54	83	56	25	2.69	0.90	Agree
5	Irregular library use leads to poor academic performance	43	79	64	32	2.51	0.92	Agree
6	Awareness of library services is linked to better grades	48	82	58	30	2.57	0.89	Agree
7	Academic performance is unaffected by library use	20	45	83	70	1.99	0.91	Disagree
8	There is a direct link between high library use and high GPA	55	90	48	25	2.74	0.88	Agree
9	Access to updated resources improves academic achievement	62	92	44	20	2.89	0.85	Agree
10	Students using library tutorials score	59	85	50	24	2.77	0.86	Agree

higher in assessments			
Cluster Mean	2.68	0.39	Agree

Key: SA = Strongly Agree, A = Agree, D = Disagree, SD = Strongly Disagree, $\bar{x}$ = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation, Dec. = Decision

The responses in Table 3 suggest a positive relationship between library resource utilization and academic performance. The cluster mean of 2.68 confirms that students perceive effective library use as beneficial to their academic outcomes. Most respondents agree that tools such as OPAC, tutorials, and updated databases enhance grades and performance. This affirms the value of library engagement in fostering academic excellence.

4.What are the major challenges hindering the effective use of information retrieval tools among undergraduate students of Library and Information Science, Moses Orshio Adasu University, Makurdi?

Table 4: Mean and Standard Deviation of Respondents on the Major Challenges Hindering the Effective Use of Information Retrieval Tools

S/N	Item Statement	SA	A	D	SD	$\bar{x}$	SD	Dec.
1	Poor internet connectivity limits access to online tools	76	90	34	18	3.03	0.82	Agree
2	Lack of awareness of available retrieval tools	72	86	37	23	2.96	0.87	Agree
3	Inadequate user training or library orientation	68	83	41	26	2.88	0.89	Agree
4	Limited number of functional computer systems in the library	59	88	47	24	2.80	0.88	Agree
5	Difficulty in navigating electronic databases	62	85	49	23	2.84	0.87	Agree
6	Absence of user-friendly retrieval interfaces	55	79	56	28	2.71	0.91	Agree
7	Inconsistent electricity supply affects usage of ICT tools	63	84	50	21	2.84	0.86	Agree
8	Low digital literacy skills among some students	60	81	53	24	2.79	0.88	Agree
9	Outdated or irrelevant retrieval tools and platforms	51	76	60	31	2.61	0.93	Agree
10	Negative attitude towards the use of electronic resources	48	70	67	33	2.54	0.94	Agree
	Cluster Mean					2.80	0.37	Agree

Key: SA = Strongly Agree, A = Agree, D = Disagree, SD = Strongly Disagree, $\bar{x}$ = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation, Dec. = Decision

Findings in Table 4 show that students encounter multiple hindrances to effective IRT use. The most significant challenges include poor internet access, lack of awareness, and insufficient training. Additional obstacles like limited ICT infrastructure and digital literacy gaps also contribute to underutilization. Despite agreement across all items, the overall implication is a strong need for enhanced infrastructure, orientation programs, and continuous support systems.

Recommendations

1. The university library should organize periodic awareness campaigns and practical training sessions to improve students' familiarity with advanced information retrieval tools such as discovery systems, federated search engines, and citation databases. This will help bridge the gap in awareness and equip students with the skills needed for in-depth scholarly research.
2. Library services should be strengthened by increasing access to modern digital platforms such as mobile applications and institutional repositories. Additionally, digital literacy and training on the use of these tools should be integrated into departmental activities and coursework to encourage active and efficient resource utilization.
3. Faculty members and librarians should collaborate to embed the use of library resources and retrieval tools into students' academic work. This includes incorporating OPAC, databases, and tutorials into assignments and research projects to reinforce their relevance and impact on academic performance.

4. The university administration should prioritize improvements in internet connectivity, increase the number of functional ICT facilities in the library, and ensure stable electricity supply. In addition, the library should establish a continuous user support system to provide technical guidance and training on the effective use of information retrieval tools.

Conclusion

The study highlights the significance of information retrieval tools (IRTs) in supporting the effective use of library resources and improving academic achievement among undergraduate students in the Department of Library and Information Science at Moses Orshio Adasu University, Makurdi. Findings reveal that although students demonstrate reasonable familiarity with basic retrieval systems such as OPAC and bibliographic databases, there is insufficient awareness and application of advanced tools like discovery layers and federated search engines. The study also establishes a positive connection between the frequency and quality of library resource use and students' academic performance. However, several obstacles—including poor internet access, inadequate user training, and limited technological infrastructure—continue to restrict optimal engagement with these tools. Based on these observations, the study recommends strategic efforts to enhance students' information retrieval competencies through regular training, improve access to modern retrieval systems, and invest in necessary infrastructural support. Such measures are essential for strengthening students' academic experiences and ensuring that the university library fulfills its role in advancing scholarship and research.

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