An assessment of the information literacy competence of undergraduate students at the University of Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria

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This paper investigates the IL competence of the final year undergraduate students at the University of Ilorin, Nigeria; identifying their information needs and ability to satisfy such needs, exposure to IL programmes, strategies employed and the challenges faced. The survey research design was adopted. From a study population of 5,867, a sample size of 1,205 (20.58%) was drawn, using purposive sampling technique. Questionnaire was the instrument used for data collection which had 6 sections. The study found that majority of the respondents had information needs on their academic engagements like class assignments and project writing. Strategies employed in meeting their information needs revealed their limited IL skills even as they only have little exposure to available IL programmes. Thus, majority expressed dissatisfaction with their present status of information availability, accessibility and usage. Many considered difficulty in identifying their needs, cost of Internet browsing, subscription requirement, as challenges; hence their low level IL competence, constituting hindrance against the full exploration of information resources that may be available for their use. The study recommended that the University authorities should consider the teaching of IL as a course to fresh students with credits attached.

Keywords: information literacy competence; undergraduates; University of Ilorin; Kwara State; Nigeria

Introduction

It is no longer news that we presently live in information age, and an information society, in which information/knowledge is power. The 21st Century has so much depended on knowledge creation and utilization to engender the unprecedented developments it aims to achieve. Due to rapid technological advancement that characterized this century, coupled with ever increasing creation and demand for information and ease of communicating and accessing information, a new society has emerged--the "knowledge society" which depends entirely on the use of data and information, rather than labour, for social and economic advancement. Information is now very important and useful in our daily lives; for decision making activities, as well as for planning, reducing uncertainty level and for accomplishing tasks. Information becomes useful when it has value, which is inherent in its characteristics or nature namely accessible, complete, and reliable.

Undergraduate students are among the information users in the contemporary knowledge society; using information for academic and research purposes. A major characteristic of this age, ICT, is increasingly being used for information management. To seek, access and use information accordingly therefore, certain skills must be acquired. Thus, students need to be information literate by demonstrating a mastery over their ability to define their information needs, seek and access information from available sources, identify those that are relevant, create an information product (in an ethical way), useful to complete a given task. There is no doubt, therefore, that to function effectively in the contemporary society, undergraduate students, like others, need to be competent in information literacy (IL); as it teaches them how to learn since an

information literate student is one who has learned how to learn. Hence, IL competence is a necessity and core for undergraduate students, especially as it affects their research and academic endeavours, as it is meant to sharpen their analytical, critical thinking and creativity skills.

Review of literature

Although literature on IL is aplenty, giving full accounts of its definition, listing competencies and outcomes, there is a dearth of studies on the assessment of IL competencies among students, especially undergraduates who "do not possess adequate information skills for some of the course work they are required to do, let alone for lifelong learning"[1]. University of Texas Library[2] defines IL as "the ability to think critically about information", stating further that it is a fundamental part of central inquiry in this age; comprising skills that are needed by people in everyday life, including undergraduate students who are mostly concerned with learning and research.

Oregon State University Libraries[3] identifies the imperatives of IL skills to undergraduate students who struggle with the process of research. Thus, effective IL competencies were developed for "students to see research as a process of discovery-reading, learning, creating new connections…participating in larger intellectual conversations, contextualizing their own ideas and acknowledging the ideas of those from whom they are learning."

The SCONUL model illustrates a process by which information users' progress by practicing the IL skills. With the increasing rate of information creation and ease of information transfer prompted by the rapid increase in the use of ICT that characterized the knowledge age, a new breed of challenges is being experienced by information users. Dominant among these is the choice of an information source among the avalanche of sources available on the Internet, library and other information centres and the speed at which the information is being made available. Therefore, IL is seen as a solution to this challenge as it sets out to equip information users with the skills required to evaluate information sources and pick relevant ones to be used to complete a given task. Hence, Chakravarty[4] concludes: "Information (literacy) competencies are a key factor in lifelong learning. Kalu[5] on his part, reiterated the fact that inasmuch as many librarians have become computer literate, only a few of them are information literate
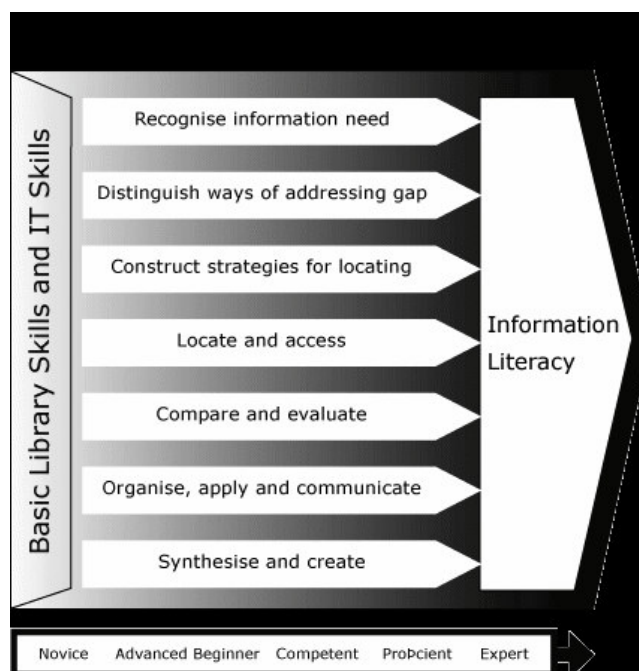

Fig. 1—SCONUL seven pillars model for Information literacy[4].

since the ability to use the computer alone does not qualify one as being information literate.

Assessing undergraduate students' IL competencies

Undergraduate students are part of information users in the knowledge society, thus, need to be adept in IL skills to cope with the flood of information sources that now available. Considering the current educational system, certain challenges are unfolding, which must be tackled to equip undergraduate students with knowledge for academic excellence, and engage them in life-long learning. Mittermeyer and Quirion[6] stress the goals of higher institutions and imperatives of IL to students especially, as they engage in life-long learning. Similarly, Ojedokun[7] highlights the challenges before African higher institutions in producing graduates with relevant skills to function effectively today. For students to effectively search, retrieve, evaluate and use information efficiently to engage in independent learning, research and life-long learning, IL competence becomes inevitable. Thus, Abubakar and Isyaku[8] stated that IL skills are essential to academic endeavours, considering the exponential growth of information in forms, size and sources. It is a solution to proliferation of information sources and multifarious methods of access.

Regarding approaches employed some institutions teach IL as a stand-alone course while others teach it as an embedded course. Abbas[9] notes that in Nigerian universities, the popular practice is the stand-alone

courses/classes normally conducted by the General Studies Unit. However, regardless of forms, the ultimate goal is to improve the information searching and evaluation skills of students for independent learning. Caravello, Herschman and Mitchell[1], sought to understand the IL competence of undergraduates at UCLA, concluding that "the randomly selected group of undergraduate students tested did not display a high level of information competence as measured by the instrument". They found that high library-use group did better due to more experience with online systems, more trial and error, more exposure to information-seeking problems/solutions; thus increasing their knowledge.

There was also an assessment of the challenges facing IL instructions in US, UK and Australian higher education[1]. Issa, Amusan and Daura[10] examined IL effects on the use of e-library resources among University of Ilorin students and found the majority with challenges in accessing/using information and thus did not meet up with ACRL IL standards. Mittermeyer and Quirion[6] reported that some students in Quebec have difficulties in retrieving relevant information, identifying the citation to a journal article, recognizing when to cite a source and evaluating information found on the Internet.

Nwalo and Oyedum[11] evaluated the IL skills of undergraduate students in six federal universities in Nigeria, particularly the use of library/computer literacy and found them to be generally poor in IL skills. Madu[12] studied the role of IL in teaching/learning process in a Nigerian university of technology, and found most staff and students without a clear understanding of what IL is. Availability of information resources, qualified IL instructors and adequate training were recommended. Igwe and Esimokha[13] assessed the IL skills of students of Federal Polytechnic Offa, Kwara State, Nigeria, and found poor IL skills, especially in evaluating information resources, citation/referencing and plagiarism. Absence of an IL course for students, non-integration of IL in the curriculum, ill-equipped and poor state of resources in the library were responsible for this.

Concerning knowledge of principles of information ethics as an IL competency, Babalola[14] examined undergraduate students' awareness and incidence of plagiarism at Babcock University Ilishan-Remo, Ogun State, Nigeria; and found most students were unable to understand behaviours constituting plagiarism.

Significant positive relationship between awareness level and plagiarism incidents, implying that awareness of the behaviours may not necessarily deter students from engaging in it.

Baro, Seimode and Godfrey[15] compared IL practices in university libraries in Nigeria, the UK and the US, and found that only those in UK and US provide IL training in all the areas mentioned, aside the differences in their IL training delivery methods. Nigeria lacked facilities/understanding of IL, students have nonchalant attitude towards it, and low acceptance of online approach. Igwe and Ndubuisi-Okoh[16] assessed the level of IL awareness, perception and skills of students of National Open University of Nigeria. Findings revealed low awareness level and poor IL perception arising from rejection level in seven of ten statements. However, the other accepted three see IL issues as antidote to poor IL skills of students. The IL assessment test shows that more students, when summed together, lack IL skills and recommended integration of IL instruction into the university's curriculum.

Thus, it is clear that the justification for assessing the IL competence of the final year students in this study derives from the fact that whereas only a handful of such studies have Nigerian populations, hardly there is any one which targets this particular group of students in this respect. This creates a gap as to the correct situation regarding their IL competence considering their years of experience in the University; hence, the need for this study.

Statement of the problem

Prior to ICT revolution, especially the Internet, information availability, accessibility, relevance and currency had always attracted research attention owing to the widely acknowledged dearth of required literature. The issues were due to scarcity of needed information sources in circulation. Today, it is about the deluge of information sources/ services availability; available in overwhelming quantity. Over-abundance of information is now the real issue for information-seekers. Indeed, navigating the avalanche of available information to an average user requires some degree of competence in information literacy, which many do not seem to have, including the undergraduate students.

If education and learning are to be made more profitable and lasting, individuals who go through the school systems must demonstrate abilities to make them independent learners; an area in which many have failed. This is particularly relevant for the final year

undergraduate students; having acquired experiences during the course of their programmes. Thus, this study isolates the final year students of the University of Ilorin for the assessment of their IL competence. Its objectives were to: identify their information needs; determine their IL skills regarding their major information needs; know the level of their exposure to IL programmes; ascertain their skills through the strategies employed to meet the needs; and identify the challenges hindering their IL competence.

Research questions

The study sought answers to the following research questions:

1. What are the information needs of the final year students at the University of Ilorin?
2. What strategies do the students employ to meet their information needs?
3. What exposure to information literacy programme do they have?
4. How satisfied are the students in meeting their information needs?
5. What challenges are facing their information literacy skills?

Significance of the study

In a world characterized by a deluge of information sources, services and products, the need for IL competence by students attracts research attention. Where they have obstacles towards satisfying their information needs optimally, it is imperative that their IL competence is determined to promote their independent/life-long learning. Today, users are bound to contend with lots of challenges on information availability and usage. Much of information sources, services and products, in themselves, constitute obstacle to optimal usage by those who lack the required competence. This is particularly relevant to final year undergraduate students who have heavy academic engagements: assignments, term-paper and research project writings. This study will therefore assist to expose the strategies they adopt in carrying out these assignments, using various competencies, including those of IL.

Determining their present IL competencies will assist the university library authorities to formulate appropriate strategies in enhancing their information provision towards meeting their specific needs optimally. Knowing about their IL challenges will assist lecturers teaching in the IL programme to adopt result-oriented methods. Lastly, the study's findings would constitute a useful addition to the growing literature in the area of IL in general.

Information literacy programme at the University of Ilorin

The University of Ilorin, a second generation university, was one of the seven institutions of higher learning established by a decree of the Federal Military Government in August, 1975. It started off as a University College with 200 foundation students in October, 1976, spread across three foundation faculties namely: Arts, Science and Education, and attained full autonomous status in October 1977. The initial student population of 200 in 1976 stand at about 30, 000 across 80 programmes in 15 faculties presently. The university library, as the heart of the university, remains an integral part, serving as a key instrument for IL programme delivery in the university. This is usually in the form of library orientation, user education and provision of a pamphlet, *A Guide to the University of Ilorin Library*, as well as the teaching of *Use of the Library* as a component of *Use of English*- a general course. Staff from both the university library and the faculty teach on the course, aimed at improving students' competence in the exploitation of the print and digital library resources, for maximum satisfaction of their varying needs. They, however, represent a far cry from the requirements of a standard IL programme, owing to their varying limitations; hence the desire for a full-blown IL programme in the university.

Methodology

This is a survey research design seeking to investigate the IL competence of the final year undergarment students at the University of Ilorin numbering thousands, spread across 10 Faculties. These are faculties with students in the final year of their respective programmes. The study population and sample are presented in Table 1.

Table 1—Study population and sample

Sl. no.	Faculty	Population	Sample (%)
1.	Agriculture	244	50(20.49)
2.	Arts	629	130(20.67)
3.	Basic Medical Sciences	147	30(20.41)
4.	Business and Social Sciences	946	190(20.08)
5.	Clinical Sciences	304	65(21.38)
6.	Comm. & Inf. Sciences	246	50(20.32)
7.	Education	1,567	320(20.42)
8.	Engineering	314	65(20.70)
9.	Law	210	45(21.42)
10.	Science	1,260	260(20.63)
Total		5,867	1,205(20.58)

From a study population of 5,867, a sample size of 1,205 (20.58%) was drawn, with no faculty contributing less than 20% on the average; considered representative of the population, in line with Israel[18]. The purposive sampling technique was adopted, targeting only experienced students mainly at the final year levels excluding other levels. A self-designed questionnaire was used for data collection, having 6 sections with varying number of items under each viz: bio-data (5), information needs (6), information seeking strategies (14), exposure to information literacy (11) satisfaction with information needed (15) and information literacy challenges (14).

Expert opinions were obtained while other instruments used by previous researchers in related areas were consulted and adapted. The reliability test returned r=0.83 Cronbach Alpha, showing its reliability, following a pilot study carried out among the final year students of the Kwara State University, Malete, who were not a part of the study, eventually. The convenience sampling procedure was used with two principal points of contacts: the University Library and e-Library; being the places from where students normally seek information on their academic pursuits in school. Two research assistants were employed for distributing, supervising and collecting back the completed questionnaire, for a period of three weeks;

accounting for the high return rate recorded. The Likert scale measure was used where SA= Strongly Agree, A= Agree, D=Disagree and SD= Strongly Disagree.

Analysis

The bio-data of the respondents showed that majority 864 (71.70%) attended private secondary schools, indicating their distinctive educational backgrounds. The distribution according to sex showed a slight male dominance 649 (53.86%) as against 556 (46.14%) females.

Table 2 showed that respondents' information needs tilt more towards their educational pursuits: class assignments (91.53%), research project writing (94.19%) and general information needs (94.20%).

Seeking to know the strategies, which respondents employ in meeting the identified needs, was an indirect, subtle way of examining their information literacy competence. The strategies employed may point in the direction of their competences in understanding their needs, where and how to find relevant information to meet the needs, how to evaluate and use the information.

Table 3 provides the data on the strategies that respondents employed in meeting their information needs, revealing their ignorance concerning the

Table 2—Information needs of the final year students

I need information mainly on:	SA	A	D	SD
class assignments	752(62.40%)	351(29.13%)	89(7.39%)	13(1.08%)
writing research project	825(68.46%)	310(25.73%)	46(3.82%)	24(1.99%)
general academic matters	702(58.26%)	410(34.02%)	80(6.64%)	13(1.08%)
current affairs only	93(7.72%)	145(12.03%)	686(56.93%)	281(23.32%)
general matters only	853(70.79%)	282(23.41%)	45(3.73%)	25(2.07%)
academic, recreational, local national and international matters	952(79.00%)	253(21.00%)	-	-

Table 3—Strategies employed to meet information needs

I consult:	SA	A	D	SD
primary sources for class assignments,	87(8.90%)	274(22.74%)	680(56.43%)	164(13.61%)
secondary sources for research writing	52(4.32%)	140(11.62%)	895(74.27%)	118(9.79%)
books only for class assignment, in the library	450(37.34%)	593(49.21%)	84(6.97%)	78(6.47%)
newspapers and magazines only for class assignment, in the library	64(5.31%)	38(3.15%)	890(73.86%)	213(17.68%)
journals only for my class assignments, in the library	82(6.80%)	156(12.95%)	720(59.75%)	247(20.50%)
classmates in doing my class assignments	485(40.25%)	720(59.75%)	-	-
my classmates in writing my research project	78(6.47%)	46(3.82%)	920(76.34%)	164(13.36%)
the library in doing my class assignments	880(73.03%)	262(21.74%)	40(3.32%)	23(1.91%)
the library in writing my research project	920(76.35%)	185(15.35%)	70(5.81%)	30(2.45%)
the Internet in doing my class assignments	728(60.41%)	225(18.67%)	152(12.61%)	100(8.30%)
the Internet in writing my research project	820(68.05%)	385(31.95%)	-	-
the catalogue to locate needed materials in the library	220(18.56%)	181(15.02%)	650(53.94%)	154(12.78%)
I seek the Librarian's assistance to locate needed materials in the library	450(37.34%)	120(9.96%)	535(44.40%)	100(8.30%)
I find needed materials easily by browsing the library's shelves directly	200(16.60%)	150(12.45%)	665(55.19%)	190(15.77%)

existence of both primary and secondary sources of information as indispensible for doing class assignments (29.96%) and writing research projects (15.94%). In the library, majority (86.55%) consult books mainly, indicating that they do not realize the essence of consulting the newspapers, magazines (8.46%) and journals (19.75%) in doing class assignments.

Seeking respondents' exposure to IL, Table 4 presents relevant data, indicating that 86.80% had no exposure to the annual Library orientation programme, while 58.09% got the exposure through the taught course, *Use of Library*. Majority who

claimed exposure in this regard got it from friends and colleagues (79.51%), probably accounting for why many are unaware of the materials available in their fields of studies; in the library (76.10%), e-library (69.29%) and on the Internet (31.95%). That many respondents claimed awareness of available information materials in their fields of studies, on the Internet, clearly shows its popularity among them generally. Overall, however, only 38.01% claimed that they have no problems whatsoever in identifying, locating and using needed information, revealing, though indirectly, their low IL competence. But even at that, 69.18% of them indicated that they do not

Table 4—Exposure to information literacy programme

Items	SA	A	D	SD
Library orientation has exposed me to easy accessibility to needed information	57(4.73%)	102(8.46%)	76(63.07%)	286(23.73%)
Use of library course has exposed me to easy location of needed information	470(39.00%)	230(19.09%)	307(25.48%)	198(16.43%)
Friends/colleagues have exposed me to easy accessibility to needed information	638(52.95%)	320(26.56%)	200(16.60%)	47(3.90%)
Ease of accessibility/location of needed materials makes me confident in my academic activities	89(7.39%)	220(18.26%)	696(57.76%)	200(16.60%)
My exposure to Use of Library course assists in better use of library materials	722(59.92%)	302(25.06%)	122(10.12%)	59(4.90%)
I do not need IL to conduct my academic activities	603(51.42%)	214(17.76%)	288(23.90%)	100(8.30%)
I know what to do whenever I am in need of information	750(62.24%)	276(22.90%)	106(8.80%)	73(6.06%)
I am aware of information materials available in the Library on my field of study	96(7.97%)	617(51.20%)	617(51.20%)	300(24.90%)
I am aware of information materials available on the Internet on my field of study	517(42.90%)	303(25.15%)	320(26.56%)	65(5.39%)
I am aware of information materials available in the e-Library on my field of study	120(9.96%)	250(20.75%)	670(55.60%)	165(13.69%)
I have no problems identifying, locating and using needed materials.	180(14.94%)	278(23.07%)	500(41.49%)	247(20.50%)

Table 5—Satisfying information needs by students

	SA	A	D	SD
I always find needed information from the:				
Library	250(20.75%)	213(17.68%)	542(44.98%)	200(16.60%)
e-Library	305(25.31%)	403(33.44%)	390(23.37%)	107(8.88%)
Internet	155(12.86%)	455(37.76%)	315(26.14%)	250(23.24%)
For meeting my information needs, I prefer using the:				
Library	150(12.45%)	289(23.98%)	586(48.63%)	180(14.94%)
e-Library	450(37.34%)	289(23.98%)	300(24.90%)	166(14.78%)
Internet	720(59.75%)	215(17.84%)	160(13.28%)	110(9.13%)
I find it easier to locate needed information from the:				
Library	360(29.88%)	280(23.24%)	385(31.95%)	180(14.94%)
e-Library	380(31.54%)	120(9.96%)	525(43.57%)	180(14.94%)
Internet	225(18.67%)	110(9.13%)	790(65.56%)	80(6.64%)
Library sources provide more relevant information for:				
doing my class assignments	180(14.94%)	250(20.75%)	695(57.68%)	80(6.64%)
writing the research project	200(16.60%)	180(14.94%)	740(61.41%)	85(7.05%)
e-Library sources provide more relevant information for:				
doing my class assignments	190(15.77%)	200(16.60%)	690(57.25%)	125(10.37%)
writing my research project	450(39.83%)	320(26.56%)	290(24.07%)	115(9.54%)
Internet sources provide more relevant information for:				
doing my class assignments	380(31.54%)	350(29.04%)	380(31.54%)	95(7.88%)
writing my research project	680(56.43%)	310(25.73%)	118(14.77%)	37(93.07%)

need IL to be able to carry out their academic activities.

On satisfaction in meeting their information needs, there were no major variations in the results for the Library (38.43%), e-Library (58.75%) and Internet (50.62%) regarding the sources from which they always find needed information. On their preferences, however, 77.59% opted for the Internet, 61.32% for e-Library and 36.43% for the Library which was the least preferred. On the sources from which they locate needed information easily, the Library had 53.12%; e-Library (41.50%) and the Internet with 27.80%. This interesting finding may not be unconnected with the Library being an organized pool of information sources made easy for retrieval and use; as against the rather chaotic world of the Internet.

To be able to pin down the specific areas of the respondents' deficiency in literacy competence, the challenges in meeting their information needs were sought and the responses are as presented in Table 6.

Majority (64.57%) found navigating the library as frustrating while 66.81% could not find needed materials in the e-library without difficulty; just as the Internet was considered as time-wasting by 21.16%. An impressive 85.48% did not consider the cost of browsing as a challenge. Yet, 65.56% respondents could not access needed information for doing their class assignments without difficulty. For majority to agree that finding needed information from the Library and the e-Library requires training/instruction, evidently point to the need for IL skills.

Discussions

Findings revealed that information needs of most respondents are geared towards academic endeavours: class assignments and research. This affirms Nwobasi, Uwa and Ossai-Onah[19] findings, but contradicts Westwood[20] findings "that students at the CAADI appear to use information resources more often when pursuing internally motivated objectives than in response to an immediate externally imposed objective" like doing homework assignments/ preparation for class presentations.

They do not use primary and secondary sources for class assignments/project writing, claiming ignorance of their existence. Majority consult books mainly, indicating failure to realize the essence of consulting newspapers/magazines/journals in doing class assignments. Simularly, Igwe and Esimohka[14], reported poor IL skills, required for 'evaluating information resources, citation, referencing and engagement in other acts that constitute plagiarism' among the students studied.

No major variations in their satisfaction with the Library, e-Library and the Internet regarding the sources from which they readily find needed information. Majority preferred the Internet, e-Library and the Library, in that other; probably explaining the Library as an organized system made easy for retrieval/use against the rather chaotic world of Internet. Some of the findings by Baro, Seimode and Godfrey[16] also implied this, suggesting corroboration.

Majority had no exposure to the annual Library Orientation programme while some got the exposure

Table 6—Challenges faced by students regarding their IL skills

	SA	A	D	SD
Finding needed information:				
in the Library is frustrating	350(29.05%)	420(35.52%)	380(31.54%)	55(4.56%)
in the Library is difficult	485(40.25%)	320(26.56%)	320(26.56%)	80(6.64%)
from the Internet is time wasting	200(16.60%)	55(4.56%)	680(56.43%)	270(22.41%)
Cost of browsing the Internet is a problem	150(12.45%)	25(2.07%)	830(68.88%)	200(16.60%)
for my class assignment is difficult	260(21.58%)	640(54.11%)	205(17.01%)	100(8.30%)
for my research project-writing is frustrating	120(9.96%)	260(21.58%)	730(60.58%)	95(7.88%)
from Internet sites are usually for subscription needs	340(28.22%)	680(56.43%)	120(9.96%)	65(5.39%)
Open sources are not sufficient to meet my information needs	189(15.68%)	264(21.91%)	552(45.81%)	200(16.60%)
I am sometimes:				
confused identifying my information needs	640(53.11%)	200(16.60%)	300(24.90%)	65(5.39%)
frustrated locating identified materials	530(43.98%)	250(20.75%)	325(26.97%)	100(8.30%)
in difficulty using the located materials	122(10.12%)	240(19.92%)	643(53.36%)	200(10.60%)
requiring training/instructions in using the library	570(47.30%)	280(23.24%)	255(21.167%)	100(8.30%)
from the e-Library requires training/instruction	420(34.85%)	260(21.58%)	325(26.97%)	200(19.60%)
from the Internet requires training/instruction	130(10.79%)	180(14.94%)	795(65.98%)	100(8.30%)

through the taught course on Use of Library. This revealed the strategy/approach employed by the University Library to orient the users, usually once at the beginning of every academic session to the freshmen; and not on a continuous basis. This contrasted the situation reported in Crain and Parker[21] where various IL outcomes were prepared for University of Washington Campus Library, covering over 100-200 level students. Abubakar and Isyaku[8] equally opined that IL education should be a collaborative effort requiring multi-disciplinary approach.

There are difficulties in navigating through the libraries' (traditional/electronic) resources; hence, the low level of their exposure to the annual library orientation and the course on use of library. This finding corroborates that of Baro, Seimode and Godfrey[15], which include lack of facilities as well as of the understanding of IL, coupled with students' nonchalant attitude towards attending IL sessions, and low acceptance of the online approach militate against librarians' efforts in these regards

Conclusion

This study concludes that the students have low level of IL competence, capable of hindering full exploitation of the information resources. They claimed not to need IL to conduct academic activities; translating into possible poor quality academic work. Ignorance of the majority about the existence of primary and secondary sources of information reveals a gap in their IL competency. This corroborates Islam and Tsuji[22] finding that the IL skills of their respondents were limited. Tendency to consult only a particular source (Internet) as identified in this study is undesirable. As future independent learners, searching for information from multiple/diverse sources and format is necessary.

The challenges indicated by many respondents in identifying, locating, and using needed information pointed to the fact that majority lack basic IL competency skills; similar to the findings of Shoeb[23] on freshman undergraduate business students of Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB). Most of them realized that they need IL education to solve their information-related problems.

Recommendations

1. The University of Ilorin authorities should consider the teaching of information literacy as a course to the fresh students with credits attached

so as to make the students to take it very seriously.

2. The University Library should not only be a key player in its teaching but must tailor its user orientation towards the further teaching of the IL course.

3. Because the IL contents are far more than what is taught under the Use of Library course, the Department of Library and information Science should collaborate to teach the course.

4. Lecturers in the university should saddle the students with assignments that would compel them to search for information from various information sources.

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