

**I**NFORMATION LITERACY AS DETERMINANT OF  
**L**IFELONG LEARNING AND KNOWLEDGE ACQUISITION  
**O**F POST SECONDARY SCHOOL USERS IN PUBLIC  
**L**IBRARIES IN SOUTHWEST NIGERIA

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**ABSTRACT**

**T**his study investigated the Information Literacy Skills and Knowledge Acquisition as Determinant of Lifelong Learning of Post-secondary School Users in Public Libraries in South-west Nigeria. The objectives are to ascertain the resources and infrastructure available for information literacy activities on lifelong learning, determine the influence of information literacy skills possessed by post-secondary school users and to find out the challenges faced in promoting lifelong learning through information literacy to post-secondary school users of public libraries in South-west Nigeria. Descriptive survey was adopted. The population comprises of six Librarians and 4294 registered library users. The entire population of the Librarians was adopted while Krejcie and Morgan population table

**Introduction:**

Education is an indispensable instrument for total development of man mentally, physically, socially and psychologically. It is a non stopping process in life of every person who wants to evolve, to expand life opportunities, to find a good job or simply to keep up with modern technologies and ideas. Learning has become more significant as a factor that influences the employability of individuals, such is the scenario whereby even those who are currently employed would have to further enhance or upgrade their knowledge

was used to draw the sample size of 352 patrons. Questionnaire and observation checklist was used for data collection. Mean and standard deviation was used in analyzing the research questions and inferential statistics was used to test the hypothesis. The study discovered that post-secondary school users has a high level of awareness on the importance of lifelong learning which has helped has helped them to be active contributors to the society, the public library staff are also aware that information literacy skills has an efficient impact on lifelong learning of users. The study also revealed there is a significant relationship between information literacy skills, knowledge acquisition and lifelong learning of post-secondary school users in this study. However, limited and outdated resources, erratic power supply and funds were major constrains to information literacy skills training, knowledge acquisition and lifelong learning in public library in South-west Nigeria. The study recommends among others that authority should make provision to ensure adequate training for library staff, resources and facilities to properly implement information literacy skills and information dissemination.

**Keywords:** *Information Literacy Skills, Knowledge Acquisition, Lifelong Learning, Post-secondary School. Public Library*

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and skills to remain relevant in today's workforce. This development and change brought about the concept lifelong learning, which enables individuals to learn the knowledge and skills they need at any stage of their lives. Lifelong Learning is a continuous supportive process which stimulates and empowers individuals to acquire all the knowledge, values, skills and understanding they will require throughout their lifetimes. From above, it is glaring that every individual, regardless of gender, age, race and socio-economic background has an equal opportunity to adjust to the demands of social and economic changes and to participate actively in shaping the country's future. Thus the ability to engage in lifelong self-directed learning is the most important competence that post-secondary school users must possess. It will enhance their understanding of the world, provide more and better opportunity and improve their quality of life.

Lifelong learning is a mind-set skill; one should be open to new ideas, decisions, values or behaviours. Skills for lifelong learning relate to the need to acquire, process and transfer knowledge. Lifelong learners need to know what they want to learn, how to come up with their learning plans and exercise critical and creative thinking, problem solving and decision making accompanied by regular self reflection. (Latif et al. 2012).

Considering the role lifelong learning plays on national development, post-secondary school users who are apparently the managers and leaders of tomorrow should be equipped with skills that will promote their lifelong learning activity.

For a good development of lifelong learning, variables such as information literacy skills and knowledge acquisition are essential. Today the issue is no longer lack of information rather information is unexpectedly flowing in human life regardless of one being willing to or getting prepared for it, people now have to face and handle large quantity of information that information literacy becomes a new skill for people and reveals major effects on human life. Grizzle & Calvo (2013) averred that information literacy skill is a set of abilities to discover, retrieve, analyze, and use information. Such abilities allowed students searching, filtering, utilizing, writing, smoothly completing research and most importantly aiming to become lifelong learners. Information literacy skill is an important gain for post-secondary school users, to know where to acquire the best and the most utilizable information, be able to evaluate information, judge the accuracy, appropriateness, and effectiveness.

Information literacy skills serves as a bedrock for lifelong learning and it is pertinent for users to acquire the literacy skills to aid their information retrieval. Okpala (2017) affirmed that information literacy skill helps develops lifelong learning, a skill which not only supports students' tertiary studies but also empower them in their future careers in industry. Post-secondary users must show a tendency for lifelong learning by acquiring information literacy skills to contend with the rapid information growth in the information society (Ekenna & Iyabo, 2013).

Another important variable related to lifelong learning is knowledge acquisition. Knowledge has been recognized as a valuable resource for a coping and competing in an uncertain environment. When post-secondary school users have limited knowledge about the world, they have smaller capacity to learn about it. Abdulsalami et al. (2013) described knowledge as the body of information and understanding which individuals acquire through life experiences and education. Knowledge acquisition is an act of accepting knowledge from the external environment and transforming it so that it can be used to change the mental model. Gallois et al (2015) opined that acquisition of knowledge occurs through complex interactions between the individual and her contextual characteristics. Among these contextual characteristics, daily life experiences are essential determinants in the acquisition of knowledge as they shape not only the kind of knowledge being learned, but also the way such knowledge would be learned along the lifespan. Knowledge acquisition expands the opportunity for post-secondary school user to create new connection and make them better independent lifelong learner. With the increase use of the internet, it is possible to access vast amount of knowledge online. The acquisition, availability and management of knowledge via the internet are critical success issue for lifelong learning, particularly it allow acquisition and dissemination of large quantities of knowledge in short time.

From the fore going, it is necessary to state that a strong information literacy program is crucial for users, not only in strengthening their understanding of the available library resources but also for relaying confidence in their specific academic or social disciplines. Having strong information literacy skills will give post-secondary school users a competitive advantage when entering the workforce or in pursuing further study and attaining a higher academic degree. They need to be equipped with the necessary information literacy skills to know their exact information needs where to find it to become lifelong learners.

### STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

The conventional view of education and vocational training as providing most or all of the skills required for an entire lifetime has become outdated. In its place is a need for individuals to upgrade their skills on a continuous

basis. Literature has established the importance of information literacy skills, lifelong learning and knowledge acquisition as a means of empowering people in all walks of life to access, evaluate and use information effectively and efficiently to achieve their personal, social, occupational and educational goals. Hence it becomes pertinent for library users to develop efficient information literacy skills. Despite several conceptual researches on the relationship between Lifelong learning and information literacy skills there still seems a gap between theories and ideas in research and actual implementation of Lifelong Learning, Information Literacy skills and Knowledge Acquisition in Public libraries. Therefore, the fundamental question that triggers this research investigation is, “does public library take the center stage in educating their users which can be linked to their lifelong learning skills?” The factors proposed to explain this gap are either the library staff lacks the skills to train its users. Or the resources and infrastructure (including the Internet resources) at the disposal of staff is limited, hence limiting the degree of public librarians’ involvement in enhancing information literacy skills of users. This research sought to establish in literature how information literacy skills and knowledge acquisition can affect the lifelong learning of post-secondary school users in public libraries in south-west Nigeria.

## OBJECTIVES

The aim of the study is to determine the influence of information literacy skills on lifelong learning and knowledge acquisition of post-secondary school users of public libraries in south-west Nigeria. The specific objectives are to:

1. ascertain the resources and infrastructure available for information literacy activities on lifelong learning in public libraries in south-west Nigeria.
2. determine the influence of information literacy skills possessed by post-secondary school users for lifelong learning in public libraries in south-west Nigeria.

3. determine the challenges faced in promoting lifelong learning through information literacy to post-secondary school users of public libraries in South-west Nigeria.

A null hypothesis was formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance  
 $H_0$  There is no significant relationship between information literacy skills possessed and lifelong learning of post-secondary school users in public libraries in South-west Nigeria.

### LITERATURE REVIEW

Now-a-days the term Information Literacy has become a buzzword and has been used by several authors in different ways such as infoliteracy, informacy, information empowerment, information competence, information literacy and skills, information handling skills, information problem solving skills etc (Biradar and Swapna 2017). Hall (2010) stated that information literacy is more than a set of skills; it must include the abilities needed to engage with information and to transform the information to make it useful in a variety of contexts. The emerging need for information literacy demands the ability to identify, locate, evaluate and apply information on the part of the user. Several studies have shown that a lack of information literacy is partly the cause of the under-utilisation of information resources and lifelong learning in Africa. Adeleke et al (2015) averred that documented evidence in the literature on libraries reveal that user instruction in public libraries is minimal. Similarly, Amartefio (2015) pointed out that, other than a few initiatives reported by the South Africa public libraries, information literacy in Africa is still largely invisible. Ejedarifu (2015) surveyed the state of information literacy in public libraries in the Delta State in Nigeria found out that there was still a lack of relevant studies investigating information literacy training in public libraries in Nigeria. The researcher also noted that this was because of poor funding, lack of adequate staff, poor physical facilities, lack of adequate space and inability to cope with technology trends, basic infrastructure, low levels of literacy, lack of adequate information services,

technical competencies on the part of public library staff and absence of information literacy programmes in the state.

Lifelong learning is an all purposeful learning activity undertaken on an ongoing basis with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and competence. It contains various forms of education and training, formal, non-formal and informal. Wall (2012) broadly defined Lifelong learning as learning that is pursued throughout life; learning that is flexible, diverse and available at different times and in different places. Lifelong learning crosses sectors, promoting learning beyond traditional schooling and throughout adult life. Amarteifio (2015) reported on a survey investigating the promotion of lifelong learning through information literacy. The findings showed the library staffs were aware of the training programmes the library organizes for users. To buttress their claims that the library had the required resources to be able to promote lifelong learning and information literacy, respondents were asked to list the resources used in the promotion of lifelong learning and information literacy. This gives the library a window of opportunity to draw the youth into lifelong learning and information literacy programmes.

Theodoridou & Fanara (2011) in 33 Greek public libraries aiming to collect information about lifelong learning programs provision and librarians' views on lifelong learning. The research revealed that almost all the participants claimed to be familiar to the concept of lifelong learning; while more than half of them answered that their libraries provided lifelong learning programs.

Seifi et al (2020) investigated The effect of information literacy instruction on lifelong learning readiness. The results of the ANCOVA showed that, at a significance level of 0.05, teaching information literacy skills is influential on the information literacy components, and the modified mean scores show that the components of information literacy skills increased after training. In other words, information literacy skills instruction had a positive effect on the information literacy of the users of the public libraries. The results of this study also revealed that information literacy skills instruction had a positive effect on readiness to overcome deterrents

to the participation of users. It can be argued that information literacy skills could create the ability to overcome learning barriers.

It has been observed that, most of the research on information literacy has been from an academic or school library perspective as seen from reviews of the information literacy literature. Despite the obvious potential of the public library in developing information literate citizens and stimulate lifelong learning, there is only a minor part of the research that relates specifically to the public library. Gilton (2012) identify two main reasons for this; the first reason is that the public librarians do not generally write and publish about their instruction activities. The second reason is that public librarians would report instructional activities as anything but instruction.

Okoye (2019) investigated the information literacy skill sustainability key to lifelong learning: Case of students in institutions in Nigeria. The findings revealed the importance of information literacy skill to students, it enables one to sieve out right information from others as well as helps in the discussion of matters of interest. More so the respondents are of the opinion that the skill helps when carrying out an in-depth research, help one in sporting out error in any research work and their lifelong learning activities.

The knowledge and skill from this literacy programme will prevent overdependence on internet. The result therefore indicates that most of the students are aware of the role information literacy play in their academic performance and lifelong learning. From this there is need to sustain the programme in the institutions.

Martin (2013) analyses four selected standards for information literacy and shows that information literacy cannot be attained through brief, one-time experiences, but need lifelong and continuous refinement by becoming part of the learning experience.

In spite of the acknowledge role of public libraries in information literacy, there is still a lack of relevant study investigating information literacy training in public libraries in Nigeria in general, especially in the quality and organization of Information Literacy courses and skills of public

librarian. This could be traced to the poor funding, lack of adequate staff, poor physical facilities, lack of adequate space and inability to cope with technological trends. Ejedafiru and Toyo 2015)

## METHODOLOGY

Descriptive survey design was used and the population comprised of six public libraries in South-west Nigeria. The target population of the study includes the Librarian of the public libraries and registered post-secondary school library users in the libraries, making a total population of 4294 respondents across the states studied. Krejcie and Morgan Population and Sample Size Table was use to draw a sample size of 352 for library patrons.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

**Table 1: Resources and Infrastructure Available to Promote Lifelong Learning**

S/N	Statements	HA	A	SA	NA	N	FX	$\bar{X}$	STD
		4	3	2	1	6			
1	Fund to facilitate information literacy training	0	1	3	2	6	11	1.83	0.67
2	Information materials (such as books newspapers, audio-visuals, CD- ROMS)	2	3	1	0	6	19	3.17	0.67
3	Computers	2	3	1	0	6	19	3.17	0.67
4	Projectors, video cameras, and other communication gadgets	1	3	2	0	6	17	2.83	0.33
5	Photocopiers machines	1	2	3	0	6	16	2.67	0.17
6	Personnel/staff with information literacy skills	2	3	1	0	6	19	3.17	0.67
7	Internet service/online databases	1	3	2	0	6	17	2.83	0.33
8	Space conducive for learning activities	3	3	0	0	6	21	3.50	1.00

**KEY: Highly Available (HA), Available (A), Slightly Available (SA) and Not available (NA)**

Table 1 showed that eight items were listed for the respondent to respond on the resources and infrastructure available to promote lifelong learning. Seven items produced high means scores which were above the average benchmark mean of 2.50. These include: space conducive for learning activities ( $x=3.50$ ;  $SD=1.00$ ), Information materials, Computers ( $x=3.17$ ;  $SD=0.67$ ), Personnel/staff with information literacy skills ( $x=3.17$ ;  $SD=0.67$ ), Projectors, video cameras, and other communication gadgets ( $x=2.83$ ;  $SD=0.33$ ), Internet service/online databases ( $x=2.83$ ;  $SD=0.33$ ) and Photocopiers machines ( $x=2.67$ ;  $SD=0.17$ ). while Fund ( $x=1.83$ ;  $SD=0.67$ ) produced low mean score below the average benchmark mean of 2.50

**Table 2: To what extent the information literacy skill possessed by post-secondary school users' influence their lifelong learning in public libraries in south-west Nigeria.**

S/N	STATEMENTS	VH	H	L	VL	n	FX	$\bar{x}$	STD
		4	3	2	1	301			
1	Information literacy skills possessed helped me to articulate information needs	85	91	78	47	301	816	2.71	0.21
2	Information literacy skills possessed helped me to find and access appropriate information	83	97	69	52	301	813	2.70	0.20
3	Information literacy skills possessed helped me to evaluate and synthesize information acquired	74	87	89	51	301	786	2.61	0.11
4	Information literacy skills possessed helped me to ability to make better decision	93	98	53	57	301	829	2.75	0.25
5	Information literacy skills possessed helped me to ability to learn in contemporary environment of technological change	94	99	90	18	301	871	2.89	0.39

6	Information literacy skills possessed helped me to meet people, learn from them, and become more sociable	68	63	102	68	301	733	2.44	0.06
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**KEY: Very High (VH), High (H), Low (L), Very Low (VL)**

The result from Table 2 showed that six items were listed for registered post-secondary school library users to respond on the extent the information literacy skill possessed influence their lifelong learning. The five items produced high mean scores which were above the average benchmark mean of 2.50. These items include: Information literacy skills possessed helped me to ability to learn in contemporary environment of technological change ( $\bar{x}=2.89$ ;  $SD=0.39$ ), Information literacy skills possessed helped me to ability to make better decision ( $\bar{x}=2.75$ ;  $SD=0.25$ ), Information literacy skills possessed helped me to articulate information needs ( $\bar{x}=2.71$ ;  $SD=0.21$ ), Information literacy skills possessed helped me to find and access appropriate information ( $\bar{x}=2.70$ ;  $SD=0.20$ ) and Information literacy skills possessed helped me to evaluate and synthesize information acquired ( $\bar{x}=2.61$ ;  $SD=0.11$ ). On the other hand, one item produced low mean score below the average benchmark mean of 2.50 which is item 6: Information literacy skills possessed helped me to meet people, learn from them, and become more sociable ( $\bar{x}=2.44$ ;  $SD=0.06$ ).

**Table 3: Challenges of Promoting Lifelong Learning through Information Literacy to Post-Secondary School Users (Librarians)**

S/N	Statements	SA	A	D	SD	n	FX	$\bar{x}$	STD
		4	3	2	1	6			
1	Outdated resources	3	2	1	0	6	19	3.17	0.67
2	Inadequate ICT facilities	1	3	1	1	6	16	2.67	0.17
3	Erratic power supply	3	3	0	0	6	21	3.50	1.00
4	Limited subscription	1	4	1	0	6	18	3.00	0.50
5	Lack of resources for user orientation	1	1	3	2	6	15	2.50	0.10
6	inadequate fund	2	4	0	0	6	20	3.33	0.83

**KEY: Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Disagreed (D), Strongly Disagreed (SD)**

Table 3 showed that six items were listed for librarians to respond on the challenges confronting lifelong learning through information literacy to post-secondary school users. All the six items produced high mean scores which were above the average benchmark mean of 2.50. These items include: Erratic power supply ( $\bar{x}$ =3.50; SD=1.00), inadequate of fund ( $\bar{x}$ =3.33; SD=0.83), Outdated resources ( $\bar{x}$ =3.17; SD=0.67), Limited subscription ( $\bar{x}$ =3.00; SD=0.50), inadequate ICT facilities ( $\bar{x}$ =2.67; SD=0.17) and Lack of resources for user orientation ( $\bar{x}$ =2.50; SD=0.10). All the six items show that these challenges are mainly affecting the lifelong learning through information literacy among post-secondary school users.

**Table 4: Relationship between Information Literacy Skills Possessed and Lifelong Learning**

Variable	N	Df	Mean	SD	R-value	P
Information Literacy Skills	301	299	12.92	2.35	0.356	0.05
Lifelong Learning			13.90	1.65		

Table 4 showed that the P value = 0.356 is greater than P value of 0.05. This depicts that there is relationship between information literacy skills and lifelong learning of post-secondary school users in public libraries in South-west Nigeria. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between information literacy skills possessed and lifelong learning of post-secondary school users in public libraries in South-west Nigeria is not rejected. This shows that the literacy skills of post-secondary school users will enhance their lifelong learning.

## DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

The findings of the study revealed that level of lifelong learning possessed by post-secondary school users is high. The lifelong learning has help them adjust to evolving need of global market, cultivate enthusiastic learning, develop skills and talents, acquire knowledge and share with others and

the level of lifelong learning has enable them to be flexible in learning pursued throughout life. This is in line with the findings of Okoye (2019) that the content of information literacy and lifelong learning for post-secondary users contained the abilities to cultivate enthusiastic learning attitudes, present fundamental cognition, learn how to learn, use learning resources, and teamwork.

The findings of the study collaborated with Digital library (2009) findings where different types of electronic resources for the diverse information needs of the targeted users are identified. The types of information resources and library infrastructure available for information literacy activities on lifelong learning in the public libraries studied include books, journals, reference sources, electronic databases, Internet, computer, printers, photocopier, staff with information literacy skills, newspapers, air conditioners, tables, chairs, fans, book shelves, Internet facilities, library building, catalogue cabinet, lighting and power supply.

The study equally revealed that the respondents agreed with all the challenges facing information literacy skills of post-secondary school library users for their lifelong learning. This in turns shows that the information literacy and lifelong learning of post-secondary school library users is negatively affected. This is in line with the findings of Ejedafiru and Toyo (2015) that the most common problems with libraries are low speed Internet connectivity, technical problems such as electricity problems, unavailability of sufficient resources and high purchase price of electronic databases.

The test of the null hypothesis between information literacy skills and lifelong learning of post-secondary school library users has shown that there is significant relationship between them. This means that the ability to possess information literacy skills will significantly increase or enhance lifelong learning among post-secondary school library users. This is in line with the findings of Okpala (2017), Seifi et al. (2020) the researchers affirmed that information literacy skill develops lifelong learning; a skill

which not only supports students' tertiary studies but also empower them in their future careers

## CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, it could be concluded that information literacy skills are facilitators of lifelong learning and knowledge acquisition of post-secondary school users. Though there are information literacy programs in the libraries studied but there is low resources to facilitate training. Information literacy programmes need to be implemented mainly by the library staff in public and other library types in order to achieve library goals and convert their users to lifelong learners and critical thinkers.

## RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. The public library management should set up a department to promote or specifically carryout information literacy skills training and lifelong learning programmes.
2. There should be policy on information literacy training and lifelong learning to coordinate the programme.
3. The management of public libraries in South-West, Nigeria should ensure the provision of current and up-to-date information resources relevant to the need of post-secondary school users in order to improve their information literacy level.

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