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## **Educational Information Need of Undergraduate Music Students**

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### **Abstract**

Information is an important tool for realizing any objective or goal set by individuals, so it remains a vital force for any individual or organization. A set of information required by an information user to make the right decisions when confronted with an issue at any given time is referred to as information need. Undergraduate students' information need ought to be identified so that libraries and information providers can redirect and improve their services to meet their information need. The purpose of this paper is to look into the educational information needs of undergraduate music students at public universities in southern Nigeria. For this study, a descriptive survey design was used, with a researcher-developed questionnaire distributed to 250 undergraduate music students. Results show that there was no statistically significant mean difference in the educational information need of male and female undergraduate music students at the universities studied. Additionally, this study revealed a non-statistically significant difference in the educational information need of undergraduate music students in first-two years and final years of study. The findings of this study indicate that information on all courses taught in the department and musical instruments mastery were the most frequently requested by undergraduate music students, at 98.8 percent and 80 percent respectively. These findings will be useful to librarians in identifying the educational information required by undergraduate music students and improving information sources to meet these students' educational information need.

**Keywords:** educational information, educational information need, information sources, undergraduate music students

## **Introduction**

The world would be a bleak place without information. Information is required for our daily survival and well-being (Emmanuel, 2012). An individual's level of growth is determined by his or her level of information awareness, acquisition, and appropriation. Information is one of the most important factors influencing people from all walks of life. Apata and Ogunrewo (2010) see information as a source of power and a valuable tool for advancing humans and society. Similarly, Ekoja (2010) stated that information is an absolute necessity for individual development, which leads to societal change and growth. He went on to discuss the importance of information in an individual's personal, social, and professional life. Information is an important tool for realizing any objective or goal set by individuals, so it remains a necessary force for any individual or organization (Emmanuel, 2012). It is a valuable requirement in any society; the presence of information opens up options and serves as a foundation for important decision-making.

Undergraduate music students require critical information to meet their educational information needs in order to improve their experience and educational productivity. The need for information can never be fully understood unless the human needs that created it are understood. According to Solomon (2002), information need is defined as information or a set of information required by an information user to make the right decisions when confronted with a related difficulty at any given time. According to Kuhlthau (1993), information need is the awareness of something missing that culminates in the search for information that will contribute to the comprehension and significance of that missing something. Case (2009), in a similar vein, defined information need as a desire in an individual or group to locate and obtain information to meet a need, whether conscious or unconscious. Ekoja (2010), on the other hand, defined information needs as the information required by information seekers to conduct their businesses and live their daily lives. When a

student's information need is identified, finding the information to meet that need becomes easier (Emmanuel, 2012).

Undergraduate students' information need ought to be identified so that libraries and information providers can redirect and improve their services to meet their information need. Newton (2019) asserts that the emergence of information and communication technology (ICT) has caused a shift in learners' information-seeking behavior from print to electronic. Due to the emergence of the internet, a revolution in the pursuit of knowledge has caused undergraduates to cope by utilizing various strategies in their search for information for assignments and examinations (Mahmood and Saeed, 2014). Music has always existed since the beginning of time, and the importance of having access to high-quality music cannot be overstated. Undergraduates in music study the various facets of music in a four-year bachelor's degree program at any university of their choice, in order to become competent musicians in the international sense, with an understanding of both the art and science of music, as well as the tools for music appreciation. They are also trained to analyze and practice both western and African music, and to communicate the principle to others. They are taught how to create creative and performance concepts based on the presentation of African traditional music as a contemplative art form and the use of notation in the composition of music cultures. Music as a course prepares students for a career in the practice and teaching of music at various levels of education, broadcasting, the military, media houses, and other avenues of private and public use and entertainment; it also enables the student to play a maximum role in the international world of music; and it lays the foundation for further studies in music leading to professions in music such as tertiary level teaching, research, and other functions (Obafemi .Awolowo University, 2019).

Educational information is important in ensuring that learners receive a high-quality education (Oyediran-Tidings et al., 2019). Undergraduate students' educational information

needs are the desire to locate and obtain information in order to write their course assignments, seminar papers, prepare for class discussions, prepare for examinations and tests, and write their final year research paper (Baro et al., 2010). According to Oyediran-Tidings et al. (2019), the educational information needs of secondary school learners included information on university admission, subjects taught at school, and career guidance. Conversely, Yetunde and Ogunniyi (2020) discovered that the primary needs of undergraduates were academic development, knowledge updating, and exam preparation. There has been little research on the educational information needs of undergraduate students, with much emphasis on their information needs and information seeking behaviors. This study aims to investigate the educational information needs of undergraduate music students in Nigeria.

### **Objectives of the study**

The study's overall objective is to ascertain the educational information needs of undergraduate music students.

### **Research Questions**

**RQ 1:** What is the most frequently requested educational information and most used source of educational information among undergraduate music students?

**RQ 2:** To what extent do the educational information needs of male and female undergraduate music students differ?

**RQ 3:** To what extent do the educational information needs of undergraduate music students in first-two years and final years of study differ?

### **Research Hypothesis**

**H0<sub>1</sub>:** there is no statistically significant mean difference in the educational information need of male and female undergraduate music students at the universities studied

**H0<sub>2</sub>:** The educational information needs of undergraduate music students in first-two years and final years of study will not be significantly different.

### **Method**

This research, guided by three research questions and two null hypothesis, examined the educational information needs of 250 undergraduate music students at sampled public universities in southern Nigeria through a descriptive survey. The researchers received an ethics approval for this study from the University of Nigeria's Research Ethics Committee. The educational information needs of undergraduate music students were investigated using a questionnaire developed by the researchers titled, music students educational information needs questionnaire (MSEINQ) of 27-items with a 5-point Likert scale (strongly agree to strongly disagree). The questionnaire's validity was determined by two music education experts and one expert in measurement and evaluation. Cronbach's alpha (0.90) reliability was established using 20 music students from a university outside the study area. Gender, age, institution, and academic level were all collected as demographic data. However, only 255 questionnaires were returned, and five (5) questionnaires were rejected due to incomplete responses. According to Faul et al.'s (2007) Gpower sample size calculation program, the sample size was sufficient for this study. The demographic data were analyzed using frequency and percentage counts. Frequency and percentage counts, mean, standard deviation, and t-test statistics were used to analyze the research data pertaining to the research questions and hypothesis at the 0.05 probability level.

## Results

### *Demographic variables*

Table 1: Respondents demographic variables

Gender	Male	Female		
	135(54%)	115(46%)		
Age	18-22yrs	23yrs and above		
	22(8.8%)	228(91.2%)		
Level	First year	Second Year	Third year	Fourth year
	83(33.2%)	67 (26.8%)	45(18%)	55(22%)

The data in the Table 1 shows the demographic information of the undergraduate music students. As shown in the table, 54% of the undergraduate music students were male while 46% were female. With respect to age variable of undergraduate music students, 8.8% were between the age bracket of 18-22years while 91.2% were between 23 years and above. In addition, with respect to level of education of undergraduate music students, 33.2% were in first year, 26.8% were in second year, 18% were in third year and 22% were in fourth year.

RQ 1: What is the most frequently requested educational information and most used source of educational information among undergraduate music students?

Table 2: frequency and percentage of music students' the most frequently requested educational information and most used source of educational information.

S/N	Item statements	Frequency	Percentage
<i>Educational Information Needs</i>			
1	Information on department courses	227	98.8%
2	Information on musical instruments	200	80%
3	Information on ICTs	195	78%
4	Information on assignment	199	79.6%
5	Information on seminar presentation	168	67.2%
6	Information on research writing	157	62.8%
7	Information on career opportunities	147	58.8%
8	Information on life skill	147	58.8%
9	Information on vocation	94	37.6%
10	Information on scholarship	147	58.8%
11	Information on soft skill	138	55.2%
12	Information on literacy skill	135	54.0%
13	Information on requirements for further studies	91	36.4%
14	Information on reading culture	99	39.6%

15	Information on sex education	57	22.8%
	<i>Sources of Educational Information</i>		
16	Browsing online	227	90.8%
17	Asking seniors	203	81.3%
18	Discussing with friends	196	78.4%
19	Reading books	199	79.6%
20	Going for IT	168	67.2%
21	Music concert and festival	157	62.8%
22	Recording company	147	58.8%
23	Advice from Lecturers	147	58.8%
24	Watching TV	147	58.8%
25	Listening to radio	138	55.2%
26	Ask librarian	135	54%
27	Read journal articles	94	37.6%

The data in table 2 shows the frequencies and percentages of music students on the frequently requested educational information and most used source of educational information. As shown in Table 2, information on all the courses taught in the department with 98.8% was the largest educational information need of the undergraduate music students, information on musical instruments mastery with 80% was next, information on ICTs with 78% due to the high demand in online skills, information on assignments with 79.6%, information on seminar presentation with 67.2%, information on research writing for publications, project work, research with 62.8%, career opportunities information and life skills education with 58.8%, information on vocation with 37.6%, information on scholarships with 58.8%, information on soft skills (e.g. leadership skills, confidence skills) with 55.2%, information on developing literacy skills with 54.0%. The least needed educational information included Information on requirements for admission for further studies with 36.4%, information on reading culture with 39.6%, and information on sex education with 22.8%.

Furthermore, table 2 equally shows the diverse ways undergraduate music students from both universities get their information. The largest number of participants with 90.8% obtained educational information by browsing online. Secondly followed by talking to music students a year or more ahead of them (81.3%); discussing with friends/relative (78.4%); reading books (79.6%); going for I.T (industrial training) (67.2%); visit to music concerts and



festivals, visit to recording company, and advice from lecturers and watching television (58.8%); listening to radio (55.2%); ask librarian (54%); and read journal articles (37.6%).

**RQ 2:** To what extent do the educational information needs of male and female undergraduate music students differ?

Table 3: mean ratings and standard deviation scores of extent of the educational information needs of male and female undergraduate music students.

Gender	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Male	3.71	135	.866
Female	3.69	115	.846

The data in Table 3 shows the mean ratings and standard deviation of extent of the educational information needs of male and female undergraduate music students. As shown in table 3, male student had mean rating of 3.71 with corresponding standing deviation of .866 while the female student had mean rating of 3.69 with corresponding standard deviation score of .846. The standard deviation score indicated that there was moderate spread of individual mean ratings of male and female music students around their group mean rating.

**RQ 3:** To what extent do the educational information needs of undergraduate music students in first-two years and final years of study differ?

Table 4: mean rating and standard deviation of extent do the educational information needs of undergraduate music students in first-two years and final years of study.

Level	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
First-two years of study	3.66	131	.865
Final years of study	3.73	119	.846

The data in Table 4 shows the mean ratings and standard deviation of extent of the educational information needs of undergraduate music students in first-two years and final years of study. As depicted in table 4, undergraduate music students in first-two years of study had mean rating of 3.66 with corresponding standing deviation of .865 while the

undergraduate music students in final years of study had mean rating of 3.73 with corresponding standard deviation score of .846. The standard deviation score indicated that there was moderate spread of individual mean ratings of undergraduate music students in first-two years and final years of study around their group mean ratings.

**H0<sub>1</sub>:** there is no statistically significant mean difference in the educational information need of male and female undergraduate music students at the universities studied.

Table 5: t-test analysis of no statistically significant mean difference in the educational information needs of male and female undergraduate music students at the universities studied.

T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
.164	248	.870	.018	.109	-.196	.232

Table 5 shows the t-test analysis of no statistically significant mean difference in the educational information needs of male and female undergraduate music students at the universities studied. The result indicated that there is no significant difference between the male and female undergraduate music students on the educational information needs,  $t(248) = .164$ ,  $p = .870$ . Therefore, the null hypothesis of no significant difference was accepted since p-value is greater than 0.05 level of significance.

**H0<sub>2</sub>:** The educational information needs of undergraduate music students in first-two years and final years of study will not be significantly different.

Table 6: t-test analysis of no statistically significant mean difference in the educational information needs of undergraduate music students in first-two years and final years of study

T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
-.655	248	.513	-.07105	.10847	-.28468	.14259

Table 6 shows the t-test analysis of no statistically significant mean difference in the educational information needs of of undergraduate music students in first-two years and final years of study at the universities studied. The result indicated that there is no significant difference between undergraduate music students in first-two years and final years of study,  $t(248) = -655$ ,  $p = .513$ . Therefore, the null hypothesis of no significant difference was accepted since p-value is greater than 0.05 level of significance.

## **Discussion**

The purpose of this study was to ascertain the educational information needs of undergraduate music students at universities in southern Nigeria. The findings of this study indicate that information on all courses taught in the department and musical instruments mastery were the most frequently requested by undergraduate music students, at 98.8 percent and 80 percent respectively. This finding correlates with Victor-Aigbodion's (2021) finding that the most frequently requested educational resource by students was information on subjects taught in school.

There was no statistically significant mean difference in the educational information need of male and female undergraduate music students at the universities studied. Additionally, this study revealed a non-statistically significant difference in the educational information need of undergraduate music students in first-two years and final years of study. Additionally, the study indicates that examinations accounted for 79.6 percent of educational information required; this result indicates that the majority of undergraduate music students seek information in order to succeed on examinations; this finding concurs with Shehu and Shaibu's (2021) finding that the majority of undergraduate students sought information for examinations and assignments.

Additionally, this study demonstrated the varied methods by which undergraduate music students at the universities obtain educational information. The majority of participants

(81.8%) obtained educational information through online browsing. This could be due to the growing amount of information available on the internet. This finding contradicts the findings of Kasmarini et al. (2016), who revealed in their study that the majority of students obtained necessary information through discussions with friends and relatives; this finding also contradicts the findings of Oyadeyi (2014), who revealed in his study that undergraduate students obtained necessary information from lecture notes; however, this finding concurs with the findings of Ajiboye and Tella (2007) and Yetunde and Ogunniyi (2020), who revealed in their studies that undergraduate students obtained necessary information using the Internet with percentages of 54.4 percent and 47.9 percent respectively.

### **Conclusion**

This study examined the educational information need of undergraduate music students. There was no statistically significant mean difference in the educational information need of male and female undergraduate music students at the universities studied. Also, this study revealed a non-statistically significant difference in the educational information need of undergraduate music students in first-two years and final years of study. Librarians will be assisted by these findings in identifying the educational information required by undergraduate music students and be able to improve the information sources available to meet these students' educational information needs.

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