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Peter Olubunmi Olubiyo

*Adeyemi College Education, Ondo, Nigeria, olubiyopeter@gmail.com*

Samuel Oke Ogunniyi PhD

*Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo, Nigeria, samogunniyi2015@gmail.com*

Susan Omolade Ademilua

*Federal College of Agriculture, Akure, Nigeria., ademiluasusan@gmail.com*

Victoria Yemi Akanmidu-Fagbemi

*University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Enugu State, Nigeria, victoria.fagbemi@unn.edu.ng*

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# **A Survey of Information Literacy Skills among Undergraduates of Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo, Nigeria.**

**By**

**\*Peter Olubunmi Olubiyo (MLS)**

**\*\*Samuel Oke Ogunniyi (PhD)**

College Library, Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo, Nigeria.

\*[olubiyopeter@gmail.com](mailto:olubiyopeter@gmail.com), +2348075305171

\*\*[samogunniyi2015@gmail.com](mailto:samogunniyi2015@gmail.com), +2348066053878

**Susan Omolade Ademilua**

College Library, Federal College of Agriculture, Akure, Nigeria.

[ademiluasusan@gmail.com](mailto:ademiluasusan@gmail.com), +2349023986541

**Victoria Yemi Akanmidu-Fagbemi (MLS)**

Department of Library and Information Science

University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Enugu State, Nigeria.

[victoria.fagbemi@unn.edu.ng](mailto:victoria.fagbemi@unn.edu.ng), +2347063426457

## **Abstract**

*This study reported about information literacy among undergraduates in Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo, Nigeria. Six research questions guided the study. Survey method was used for the study. 150 copies of questionnaire were administered to the respondents but 147 copies were filled and returned. Analysis was done using simple statistical tools of frequency counts, percentage and bar chart. The study revealed that undergraduate students of Adeyemi College of Education are fully aware of the concept Information Literacy Skills. It also indicated that the courses that undergraduate students of Adeyemi College of Education are taught Information Literacy Skills are Library Instruction Programme and Use of Computer among others. The findings show that the problems encountered by the undergraduate students of Adeyemi College of Education in the learning of information literacy skills are overcrowded class; inadequate learning equipment and poor/inadequate information literacy evaluation and assessment. It concludes that librarians and teachers in the field should strongly make collaborated effort in teaching information literacy in the college using modern equipment.*

**Keywords: Information Literacy Skills, Undergraduates, Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo, Nigeria.**

## **Introduction**

Information is essential and basic to human existence, national development and global relations. It is as essential as oxygen for human existence. As such there is need for everyone to know how to generate, use and disseminate information for personal, national, global development and peaceful coexistence. Hence, information literacy especially among students, researchers and other literate individual is paramount. Basically, everybody in the society is in need of information literacy skills. Information literate individuals improve the society's quality of life in general and academically. And it helps in day to day life such as buying a house, choosing a school, making an investment, voting for the election, and many more. (Ranaweera, 2008).

The American Library Association defines "information literacy" as a set of abilities requiring individuals to "recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information ( Wikipedia, 2018). Information literacy itself is emerging as a distinct skill set and a necessary key to one's social and economic well-being in an increasingly complex information society. Information literacy is a person's ability to know when information is needed, locate the information, evaluate the information, and use it effectively. It goes beyond just being able to search for something on the internet or in a book. It involves being able to determine whether or not the information obtained is true and reliable and the ability to apply the information where needed. (Goode 2018). Information literacy helps students to locate, correctly evaluate, successfully use and clearly communicate information in its various formats. Beyond writing papers, information literacy is crucial for success at every stage of a person's academic and professional life.

The concept of "information literacy" was first introduced in the United States by Paul Zurkowski in the early 1970's. Information literacy involves an understanding and knowledge of

the structure and sources of information. It is the ability to access and retrieve quality information independently and reflectively in order to build on a personal knowledge base. Computer and information skills are seen as essential components of the wider concept of information literacy (Odede, 2018). Information literacy is not the same as information technology. Information and communication technology skills tend to concentrate on using hardware and software effectively to process and communicate information. Information literacy, on the other hand, is concerned with recognizing when information is needed, and locating, critically evaluating, using and presenting the information to suit a specific purpose (The Open University, 2016).

Librarian plays a critical role in teaching those skills to students so that they are college and career ready (University of South Carolina, 2018). Although information literacy for decades has been championed by librarians through users' education; it has recently drawn the interest of educators, administrators and other role-players in higher education on the need to introduce information literacy related courses.

### **Statement of the Problem**

In this era of information explosion, students are often confused on where to get required information for a particular assignment or research. This confusion leads many of them to frustration in their academic work. And Information is the ingredient of research. Without it, no research can be done. But pathetically, from observation and the evidence of literature, most students that approach the librarians for inquiry and assistance have little or no knowledge on how to explore and evaluate needed information in an information environment for use. All the information setting appear strange to them and they spend most of their time not getting what

they need. Based on this fact, the researchers want to survey the information literacy (IL) skills among the undergraduates in Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo.

### **Objectives of the study**

1. To assess the knowledge of undergraduate students on information literacy in Adeyemi College of Education, ondo.
2. To examine the information literacy courses that undergraduate students undertake in Adeyemi College of Education, ondo.
3. To assess the effectiveness of information literacy courses in students' information sourcing.
4. To assess the students' ability to evaluate information undertake in Adeyemi College of Education, ondo.
5. To identify the problems encountered in learning information literacy skills among undergraduates in Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo.
6. To proffer solution to the problem encountered.

### **Research Questions**

1. What is the knowledge of information literacy among undergraduate students in Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo?
2. What information literacy courses do undergraduate students undertake in Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo?
3. How effective is the information literacy courses in students' information sourcing?
4. How effective is the information literacy courses in students' information evaluation?

5. What problems are encountered in learning information literacy skills among undergraduates in Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo?
6. What are the solutions to the problems?

### **Limitation of the Study**

The scope of the study is not only narrowed to a single degree-awarding institution in Nigeria, Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo but to undergraduate students in the institution.

### **Literature Review**

The ability to access, evaluate and use information is a prerequisite for lifelong learning, and a basic requirement for the information society. At the university level, students are expected to contact independent exploration in diverse disciplines and topics and therefore, irrespective of their areas of study, they need to use information effectively. They should not only master the skill of finding information in print format or electronic formats, but also be able to evaluate and use it competently both in their study activities as well as in their later lives. This is called information literacy (Kavulya, 2003).

### **Library Instruction programme**

Odede, (2018) opined that information literacy is rooted in the concept of library instructions and bibliographic instructions. Information literacy training programme initiatives for students have been marginalized in relation to undergraduate information literacy programmes in Nigerian universities. Information literacy instruction can be formal or informal. Formal instruction can include increase in the presence of information literacy in higher institution's curriculum or the introduction of information literacy related courses such as library instruction programme.

## **Information Literacy Skills**

Information literacy skills are fundamental research skills. According to University of South Carolina (2018), there are Ten Top Information Literacy Skills as follows:

- **Know when information is required**

Students should be able to determine when information and research is needed for a specific assignment or academic task.

- **Know how to write a research question**

Once students know what information is required, they should understand how to formulate a research question.

- **Know where to find information**

After receiving instruction from librarians and classroom teachers, students should be able to locate quality materials in the library and online.

- **Determine/understand sources of information**

Students should understand where information comes from. For example, would an assignment be best served by using a book, article, website, or newspaper article, and knowing the difference between each?

- **Select the best source**

Having sought out sources of information, students should be able to determine which ones are the best.

- **Organize information**

The student should be able to decide how to compile and consolidate all of this information.



- **Use the information**

After they have selected quality information sources, students should be able to use the information to complete the assignment, task, or project.

- **Present information**

Whether it is a paper presentation, or project, there is always an outcome to information seeking. Students should be able to present a quality presentation or product.

- **Evaluate information**

Students should be able to look back on their work to see what was successful and what could have been improved. What additional information could be located in the future, what information seeking behaviors could be changed?

- **Use information in an ethical manner**

Students must know how to cite and use their information in a fair and ethical manner.

Information literacy augments students' competency with evaluating, managing, and using information. It is increasingly important in the present era of information explosion (Odede, 2018). Information literacy skills are important because of the rapid growth of information systems and information resources. In studies, work or other activities students are likely to be faced with an increasing range of information sources available through libraries, in online specialist databases, and on the internet. But all this information raises questions about how to search for and locate what they need, as well as issues about the quality, accuracy and reliability of the information. A large quantity of information on its own does not make students better informed; the onus is to be critical and skilful users of that information and the sources to which they have access. The key skill of information literacy is intended to develop their critical

awareness and competences in handling information and information systems. (The Open University, 2016)

### **Information Literacy Skills and Education**

The value attached to ILS in relation to formal education cannot be overemphasized (Osman, 2017). Issa, Amusan and Daura (2009) stressed that information literacy depends on collaboration between classroom faculty, academic administrators, librarians and other information professionals. Information skills are vital to the success in education, occupation, and day to day communication of all citizens. It is considered as the solution for the data smog. Data Smog refers to the idea that too much information can create a barrier in our lives. Especially students and the society require a special skill to handle this fast increasing information, in order to use their educational and economical purposes more effectively (Ranaweera, 2008).

In the twenty-first century, lifelong learning has become one of the main themes in the higher education sector. Therefore the students need to be educated with regard to the abilities and skills of how to learn, or learning to learn, by developing the aspects of reasoning and critical thinking. Information literacy skills will help students to achieve this target in a broader sense, in student centered learning. When children are educated with the necessary information literacy skills, consequently, the society becomes information literate (Ranaweera, 2008). Also, IFLA Global Vision Discussion, (2017) corroborated that information literacy can enhance lifelong learning and gives children and adults the skills they need to survive and thrive in a global information society.

In addition, Cooney and Hiris (2003) as cited by Osman (2017) concurred that ILS leads to independent learning and creates a greater responsibility on the learner of becoming dynamic thinker with creative, analytical and efficient mind instead of mere regurgitation of facts.

### **Librarians and Information Literacy**

Traditionally, we assume that the students will gain information literacy skills automatically by themselves. But it is not. In fact, information literacy skills need to be inculcated among the students, by the teachers and librarians. Learning mainly focuses on achieving knowledge, skills and attitudes, associated with particular subject areas. Irrespective of the disciplinary stream, each and every student should be able to access, use and communicate information in an innovative manner. The Information literacy curriculum plays a major role in order to cultivate these skills among the university and school students. The curriculum can be implemented by the library professionals (Ranaweera, 2008). Also, Gilbert (2017) asserted that librarians working with students in nearly any discipline should not overlook the importance of technology in information literacy skills.

Information literacy programmes need to be implemented mainly by the librarians in schools, universities, public and other libraries in order to achieve library goals and to convert their users to lifelong learners and critical thinkers. However, it is very important to note here that these programmes would be more successful, if the librarians are able to enlist the co-operation of the teaching and administrative staff too. In addition to this, information literacy programmes will enable librarians to play a more prominent and meaningful role among their clients (Ranaweera, 2008). Therefore, Nyamboga (2004) as cited by Sasikala and Dhanraju (2011) reiterated the need for the training of the library and information professionals in the planning and implementation of IL programmes. These findings suggested the design and implementation of IL programmes for students at postgraduate and undergraduate level and the

librarian need to play crucial role in imparting information literacy education to students (Sasikala and Dhanraju 2011).

Hence, Librarians are working closely with students and researchers to provide skills to effectively and efficiently retrieve and use the information available from the large pool of resources (Information Literacy Skill, 2018).

## **Methodology**

This research uses a survey method. Its population includes all active users of the Adeyemi College of Education Library, who are registered undergraduates (degree students). From this number, a total of 150 were sampled. Questionnaire was distributed to 150 respondents but 147 copies were filled and returned. Data were obtained through administration of the questionnaire to the students. Analysis was done using simple statistical tools of frequency counts, percentage and bar chart.

## **Data Presentation and Analysis**

This section presents the demographic information of the participants used for this study. It presents answers to the research questions that were asked. It equally presents the discussion of the findings that are generated based on answers to the research questions.

### **4.1 Demographic Information of Respondents**

Table 4.1

*Distribution by Gender of Respondents*

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Male	68	46.3
Female	79	53.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 4.1 shows that 147 respondents took part in the study. Out of 147 undergraduates, 68(46.3%) were male while the remaining 79(53.7%) were female. The result from this table

implies that the female students were more than the male students. Figure 4.1 below further presents the result in a pie chart.

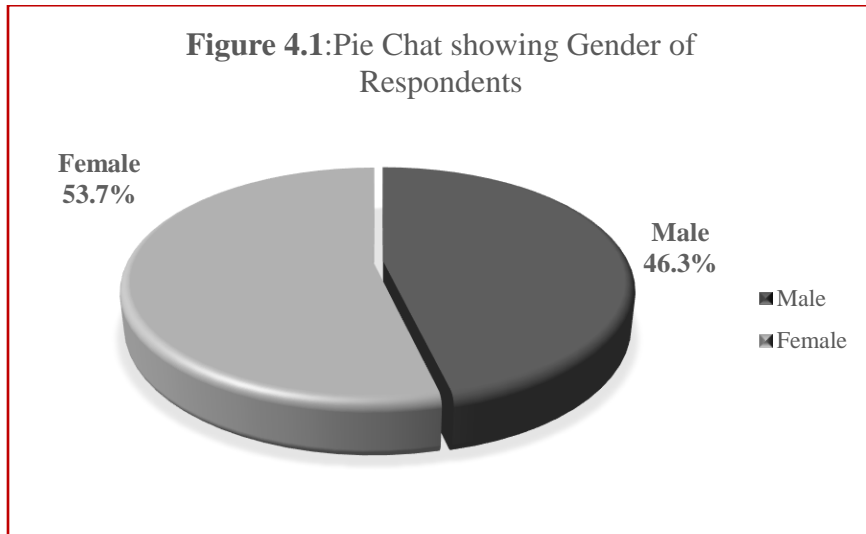
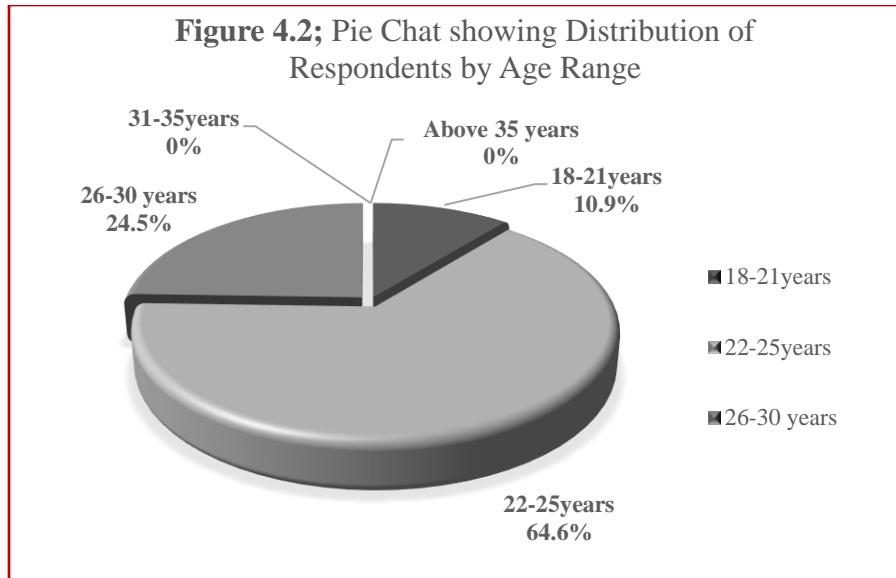


Table 4.2

*Distribution by Age of Respondents*

Age	Frequency	Percentage
18-21years	16	10.9
22-25years	95	64.6
26-30 years	36	24.5
31-35years	0	0
Above 35 years	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 4.2 shows that 16(10.9%) of the respondents' age ranged between 18 to 21 years, followed by 95(64.6%) of those who were between 22 to 25 years, 36(24.5%) were between 26 to 30 years while students between 31 to 35 years and 36 years and above had 0 % and 0% respectively. The result from this table implies that many of the students (64.6%) that participated in the study had their age ranged between 22 to 25 years old. Figure 4.2 below further presents the result from the table in a pie chart.



## 4.2 Answer to the Research Question

**Research Question 1:** What is the knowledge of information literacy among undergraduate students in Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo?

Table 4.3

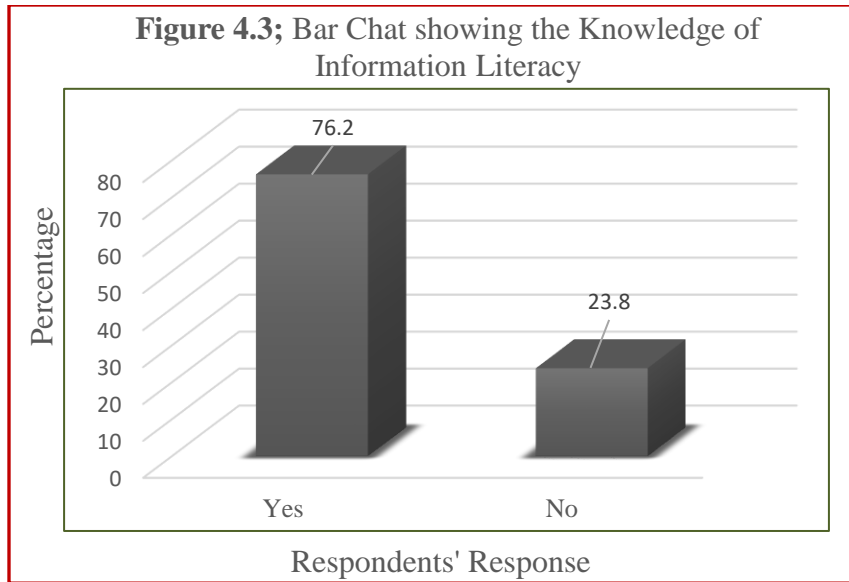
*Undergraduate Students' Awareness of Information Literacy in ACE*

S/N	Item	Yes		No	
		Freq.	%	Freq.	%
1	Are you aware of the concept "Information Literacy Skills" in some of your courses?	112	76.2	35	23.8

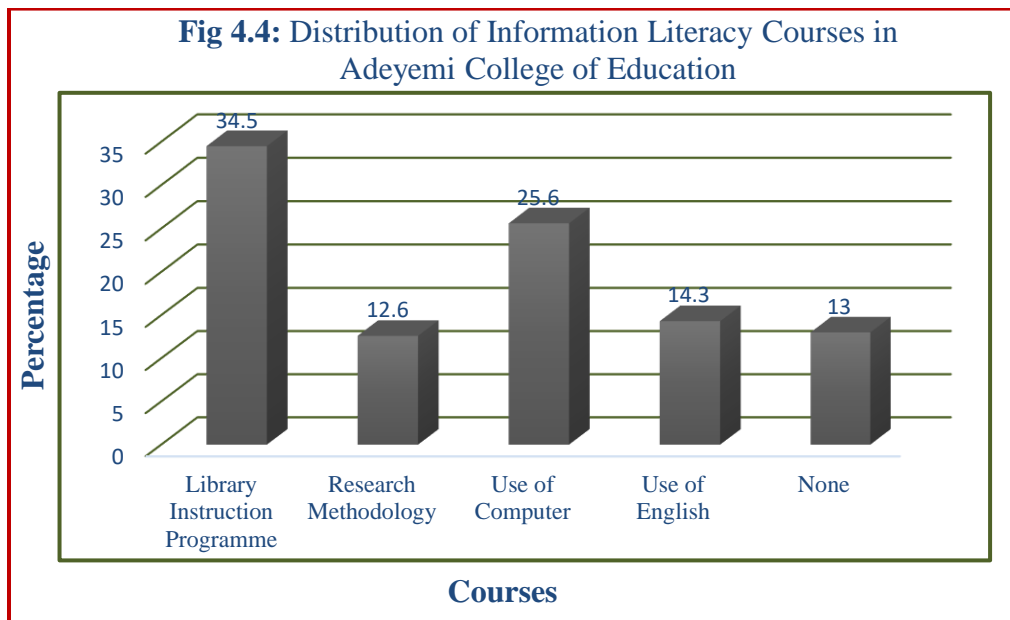
N = 147

Table 4.3 shows if the undergraduates' students in Adeyemi College of Education are aware of information literacy skills in some of their various courses offered. The table shows that (76.2%) of the students indicated Yes that they are aware of information literacy skills while (23.8%) of them indicated No.

Meanwhile, the students that indicated Yes were more the ones that indicated No. Therefore, it can be inferred that the undergraduate students of Adeyemi College of Education are fully aware of the concept Information Literacy Skills.



**Research Question 2:** What information literacy courses do undergraduate students undertake in Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo?



As indicated in Fig. 4.4, 34.5% of the participants said they were taught information literacy skills in Library Instruction Programme, 12.6% of them said it was from Research Methodology, 25.6% picked Use of Computer, 19.3% said it from Use of English while 13% of the students

said they were not taught information literacy skills from any of the courses listed. This implied that Library Instruction Programme and Use of Computer are the courses undergraduate students of Adeyemi College of Education are taught Information Literacy Skills.

**Research Question 3:** How effective are the information literacy courses in students' information sourcing?

Table 4.4

*Information Literacy Course Effectiveness in Information Sourcing (N=235)*

Information Sourcing in the Library	Multiple Responses	
	Frequency (N)	Percent (%)
Through the use of a library catalogue	89	37.9
Through the assistance of library staff	23	9.8
Through shelf browsing	97	41.3
Through the assistance of co-students	20	8.5
Don't source for information in the library	6	2.6

Table 4.4 above reveals that 89(37.9%) of undergraduates indicated that their source of information in the library is through the use of a library catalogue, 23(9.8%) source information through the assistance of library staff, 97(41.3%) accessed information source through shelf browsing while 20(8.5%) indicated that they source information through the assistance of co-students. Only 6(2.6%) of the undergraduate students indicated they don't source for information in the library. This results therefore shows that information literacy courses is effective by helping the undergraduate students to know the right way of information sourcing in the library which are through the use of a library catalogue and through shelf browsing.

**Research Question 4:** How effective is the information literacy courses in students' information evaluation?



Table 4.5

*Information Literacy Course Effectiveness in Information Evaluation (N=234)*

Information Evaluation	Multiple Responses	
	Frequency (N)	Percent (%)
Read text and select main ideas	56	23.9
Compare information from various sources	60	25.6
Investigate various view points of the literature	44	18.8
Using information techniques for studying	31	13.2
Identifying verbatim for later quoting	20	8.5
Knowing the criteria used in evaluating the quality of a website	11	4.7
Checking the qualification of the author	12	5.1

Table 4.5 above show the various ways in which students evaluate information during research through the knowledge of information literacy. The findings showed that 56(23.9%) of the students indicated that they read text and select main ideas, 60(25.6%) of them compare information from various sources, 44(18.8%) investigate the various viewpoints of a literature, 31(13.2%) indicated using information techniques for studying, 20(8.5%) identified verbatim for later quoting, 11(4.7%) said by knowing the criteria used in evaluating the quality of a website while the remaining 12(5.1%) of the students evaluate information by checking the qualification of the author. It can be inferred from the findings therefore that undergraduate students of Adeyemi College of Education evaluate information during research by reading text and select main ideas, compare information from various sources and by investigating various viewpoints of the literature.

**Research Question 5:** What problems are encountered in learning information literacy skills among undergraduates in Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo?

Table 4.6

*Problems Encountered in Learning Information Literacy Skills (N=227)*

Items	Multiple Responses	
	Frequency (N)	Percent (%)
The class is overcrowded	50	22.0
The time for training is inadequate	27	11.9
There is inadequate learning equipment	54	23.8
Lack of information literacy promotion and awareness in the lecture	25	11.0
Poor/inadequate information literacy evaluation and assessment	47	20.7
Unfriendly attitude of lecturers	24	10.6

Table 4.6 above shows problems encountered by the undergraduate students in learning information literacy skills. It was noted that 50(22%) of the undergraduates stated that their class is overcrowded, 27(11.9%) said the time for training is inadequate, there is inadequate learning equipment 54(23.8%), lack of information literacy promotion and awareness in the lecture 25(11.0%), poor/inadequate information literacy evaluation and assessment 47(20.7%) and 24(10.6%) indicated unfriendly attitude of their lecturers. It is revealed from the findings that the class is overcrowded, there is inadequate learning equipment and poor/inadequate information literacy evaluation and assessment are the problems undergraduate students of Adeyemi College of Education encountered in learning information literacy skills.

**Research Question 6:** What are the solutions to the problem encountered by the undergraduates during the learning of information literacy skills?

Table 4.6

*Solutions to the Problems Encountered in Learning Information Literacy Skills (N=209)*

Items	Multiple Responses	
	Frequency (N)	Percent (%)
Larger lecture theatre should be built	42	20.1

The time for the training should be increased	23	11.0
More learning equipment e.g. PAS should be provided	40	19.1
More awareness on information literacy should be created	41	19.6
Lecturers should be friendly for proper knowledge impartation	44	21.1
More test and assessment should centered on information literacy	19	9.1

Table 4.6 above shows the solutions to the problems encountered by the undergraduate students in learning information literacy skills. It was revealed that 42(20.1%) indicated that larger lecture theatre should be built, 23(11%) said time for the training should be increased, 40(19.1%) more learning equipment e.g. PAS should be provided, 41(19.6%) more awareness on information literacy should be created, 44(21.1%) said lecturers should be friendly for proper knowledge impartation and only 19(9.1%) indicated that more test and assessment should centered on information literacy. It can therefore be concluded from these findings that larger lecture theatre should be built, provision of more learning equipment, creation of high level of awareness on information literacy and that lecturers should be more friendly for proper knowledge impartation are the solutions to the problems of information literacy skills learning in Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo.

### **Discussion of Findings**

The study revealed that undergraduate students of Adeyemi College of Education are fully aware of the concept Information Literacy Skills. In agreement a Student of LIB 120 Fall (2001) as cited by Burkhardt, MacDonald and Rathemacher, (2002) asserted that “Information literacy is a great class where you learn everything about the library, databases, and the internet. I discovered how to distinguish internet sites, how to use search terms, how to look up books using the Library of Congress system, and much more. Doing research papers is not the hassle it

was before and I feel well-versed in the Library system. I enjoyed the class so much that I think I'm going to go into information sciences and skills myself.” This is an indication that the students are aware of the concept.

From the finding, the courses that undergraduate students of Adeyemi College of Education are taught Information Literacy Skills are Library Instruction Programme and Use of Computer. This corroborate with Ali, Abu-Hassan, Md Daud and Jusoff (2010) that historically, information literacy education was initiated by academic librarians who used several approaches to develop information literacy among students.

Information literacy courses is effective by helping the undergraduate students to know the right way of information sourcing in the library which are through the use of a library catalogue and through shelf browsing. In support of this, (Adeleke, Arikawe and Asaolu, 2015) expressed that the ability to locate and access information was the leading skill taught; closely followed by ability to recognize needed information in information literacy education.

The undergraduate students of Adeyemi College of Education evaluate information during research by reading text and select main ideas, compare information from various sources and by investigating various viewpoints of the literature. In support, Issa, Blessing and Daura (2009), in a research carried out expressed that more than 40 percent of respondents read through information to select main ideas, while another 30 percent compare information from different sources to determine reliability, accuracy, timeliness or bias of such information.

The problems encountered by the undergraduate students of Adeyemi College of Education in the learning of information literacy skills are: overcrowded class; inadequate learning equipment and poor/inadequate information literacy evaluation and assessment.

The solutions to the problems encountered by the undergraduates during the learning of information literacy skills are: larger lecture theatre should be built, provision of more learning equipment, creation of high level of awareness on information literacy and that lecturers should be friendly for proper knowledge impartation.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

Information literacy has become the basis of 21<sup>st</sup> century learning in the technologically evolving world. Librarians and teachers in the field should strongly make collaborated effort in teaching information literacy using modern learning equipment like the public address system (PAS) due to the large size of the class in Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo. Students hardly hear what the lecturer is saying without PAS. This leads to wasted effort because they cannot grab what the lecturer is passing across. And the basic skills they should have gotten are lost. This could be the reason for the students' inability to explore information in an information environment like library. However, when necessary corrections are taken into consideration, students become lifelong learners as they are grounded in the knowledge of information literacy. Thus, the uses of information ethically become easier for them. The college management should also address other challenges confronting students in the learning of information literacy.

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