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Postgraduates' Utilization of Digital Information Resources in University Libraries and the Challenge of Information Overload

Olufela Ibiyemi ADEYEOYE[1]
adeyeoyeoi@tasued.edu.ng

'Niran ADETORO[1] PhD
adetoroaa@tasued.edu.ng niranadetoro@gmail.com
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1828-0317
&
Funmilayo I. OBAYOMI[1]

[1]Department of Library and Information Science,
Tai Solarin Federal University of Education, Ijagun

Abstract

Digital Information Resources (DIRs) are crucial for providing postgraduate students with access to essential information however, they face the challenge of information overload. This study examined how postgraduate students in selected university libraries in Southwest Nigeria experience information overload (IO) in the context of DIRs usage. A correlational survey research design was employed, with a population of 7,784 postgraduate students. The study used a stratified proportionate random sampling technique, stratifying participants using three university libraries. A 20% sample was drawn from each stratum, resulting in a total of 1,557 postgraduate students. Data was collected via questionnaire, with 1,258 completed and returned (80.8% response rate). The null hypothesis was tested at a 0.05 significance level, and three research questions were addressed. Descriptive statistics was used for data analysis, while Pearson's Product-moment correlation was applied to test the hypothesis. The findings revealed that the frequency of DIRs utilization was low ($\bar{\mathbf{x}}$ = 2.72), while the level of IO was moderate ($\bar{\mathbf{x}}$ = 2.68). A positive significant relationship was found between information overload and DIRs utilization (r = 0.351, p < 0.05). The study concludes that extensive utilization of DIRs is inextricably linked to the significant challenge of IO. It is recommended that university libraries should develop programs that will focus on advanced search techniques for precise information retrieval.

Keywords: Digital information resources utilization, Information overload, University Libraries, Postgraduate students, Universities, Nigeria

Introduction

Libraries now provide to customers, electronic versions of a growing collection of reference resources in addition to traditional print materials. Loads of resources made available to users in this context, are "digital

information resources" which refers to all publicly accessible online databases and archives. Digital information resources, may be found in a wide variety of electronic and digital resources. They require computer access, whether through personal computer, or portable mobile device. Based on these criteria, it is clear that utilizing digital information resources requires some level of computer literacy and competence. Digital information resources (DIRs) should be helpful for advanced learners since they streamline and quicken the process of acquiring access to the information required to complete assignments. As a result of their ability to share knowledge, research, learn, and teach about any subject, they serve as a powerful motivator for lower-level students. The usage of digital libraries has the potential to address the issue of dearth of research and teaching materials in Nigeria's university libraries. Post-graduate students in universityes who make use of the wealth of digital information resources accessible to them may more easily track developments in their respective fields easily. In spite of the advantages DIRs presents, the usage of electronic information resources may be influenced by a variety of variables which directly affect students, which in the context of this work may include information overload.

As a result of the expansion of digital information resources, postgraduate students now have access to a wealth of knowledge that was previously unavailable to them outside of their institution's libraries. Nigerian postgraduate students have been labelled as inadequate users of digital information resources (Anthonia, 2020), then it is plausible that they students may not know about these DIRs, and it is also unclear what factors assist in sustaining the perceived unsatisfactory use of these resources.

As Ekenna and Ukpebor (2012) pointed out, in contrast to the situation in Nigeria, DIRs have gained widespread support and practical acceptance in many other countries. Many researchers have looked at the prevalence of digital information resources in Nigerian university libraries (Okite-Amughoro, Makgahlela, and Bopape, 2014; Abubakar & Adetimirin, 2015), and they have generally found low use rates of use of digital information resources.

Information overload, a critical factor that may explain the use of DIRs by student at this level, occurs when a user is provided with more data and information from different sources than they can efficiently handle. They are confronted with so much data that it becomes difficult for them to make the most informed choice feasible due to factors including the data's volume, complexity, and degree of duplication, contradiction, and inconsistency (Roetzel, 2019).

Information overload occurs when a university student's brain is presented with more data than it can process efficiently (Gouws, Rufus, & Tarp, 2016).. Therefore, when there is an abundance of information and communication, the quality of judgments made is likely to drop, leading to a possible decline in the performance of university students. In order to complete their assignments, students must rely on their own unique set of skills and abilities, making "Information Overload" essentially mental labour (Adamson, Chris, George, Joshua, Peter and Zhang, 2014

Overwhelmed with data, it is worth noting, especially for students engaged in their own research at the university, that they may feel the need to have more information while working on hard tasks, leading them to search through vast quantity of data from the internet sources in an effort to find answers. As such, this is a factor worth considering (Anderson, 2014). As a result, many university students lose the creativity necessary to effectively address new problems (Mariamdaran and Veloo, 20l7).

Postgraduate students at the graduate level are expected to engage in rigorous independent study and to complete projects that demand both analytical and creative thinking, as well as to participate in group projects, do independent research, and network with other students. Modern postgraduate students are always connected to the world and one other via their smartphones, tablets, and laptops. Due to their brains' need on the constant stimulation of digital information, screen readers tend to skim rather than read

carefully, spending on average less than 30 seconds on a page. Because their brains have gotten acclimated to the stimulants of digital media, the effort needed to read and comprehend lengthier texts has diminished (Carr, 2013).

An increasing number of people are struggling under the weight of an overwhelming quantity of data. This situation is perhaps having a direct impact on postgraduate students' performance and, in particular, their psychology (Mariamdaran & Veloo, 2017). The purpose of universities in the twenty-first century is to better prepare students for the challenges of a competitive world. This prepares them to be stable members of an evolving society The availability of this kind of virtual environment has allowed for a meteoric increase in the number of possible answers to the many queries people formerly had (Pant and Negi, 2015). New World Encyclopedia (2017) states that the rapid increase in the production rate of new information, the ease of duplication and transmission of data across the internet and the increase in the available channels of incoming information contribute to information overload in the real world. This is true for postgraduate students in Nigeria like elsewhere. Thus, this study assesses the extent to which postgraduate students in the South-West region of Nigeria are affected by information overload in their use of digital information resources located in the university libraries.

Statement of the Problem

Information overload is a common experience for postgraduate students who do research and consult lots of online sources. One of the most common difficulties that postgraduate students have when accessing digital information resources to discover relevant information is feeling overwhelmed by the sheer volume of available data. Despite the benefits accruable from use of DIRs, it has been observed that many students at these levels of education are probable not effective users of digital information resources available. That university libraries regularly conduct workshops and seminars for them speaks volume and complicates the conversation of a possible underutilization of DIRs.

Moreover, data shows that postgraduate students seem to have been overloaded with information, which makes it challenging for them to use digital information resources adequately and effectively too. It is in the light of the above, that the study investigates information overload as determinants of digital information resources utilization by postgraduate students in selected university libraries in South-West, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study

1. What are the digital information resources available for use among postgraduate students in the selected university libraries in South-West, Nigeria?
2. What is the frequency of use of digital information resources among postgraduate students in the selected university libraries in South-West, Nigeria?
3. What is the level of information overload among postgraduate students in the selected university libraries in South-West, Nigeria?

Hypothesis

Ho_1: There will be no significant relationship between information overload and digital information resources utilization among postgraduate students in the selected university libraries in South-West, Nigeria;

Review of Related Literature

Digital information resources refer to the electronic representation of information that is accessible through electronic system and computer network. They are the electronic versions of informational materials found

online and readily accessible. Digital information resources, including full text (aggregated) databases, electronic journals, image collections, and multimedia presented on CDs, cassettes, the internet, web technologies, and other similar mediums, facilitate the acquisition of information (Khan & Tyagi, 2025). Electronic resources include things like online chat rooms, data archives, online discussion forums, electronic journals, and electronic conversations and news. Obviously, these are only a sample. Electronic periodicals, CD-ROMs, mailing lists, and databases are only few of the many types of products that fall under the umbrella phrase "digital information resource." Although their specialised uses may vary, they all have the quality of being computer-accessible and -editable (Lawson et al, 2025). Using DIRs is crucial since they provide consumers fresh, up-to-date data that is easy to access. In addition, they have a generally positive reputation since students find they are helpful in their studies. The changes brought about by IT development, electronic resources have accelerated the rapid adoption of DIRs by educational institutions. While the use of such technology in academic libraries was formerly novel, it has become more ubiquitous owing to a number of elements characteristic of the modern university. According to Ukachi (2013), libraries should subscribe to DIRs because of "rapid growth in student enrollment, growth in non-traditional students (e.g. mature and part-time students), inflation in the cost of printed materials, the increasing number of academic publications, shrinking library budgets, and changes in teaching methods.

Digital information resources are useful for end users like graduate students because they increase access, usability, and effectiveness of information; encourage students to think creatively about how they can apply information in the classroom; and help students keep abreast of developments in their fields (Khalil, 2014). Due to its portability, adaptability, real-time distribution, content, and generally remote access, electronic resources have become more important in the academic realm. Some of the benefits include: Because they can be accessed from any computer, anywhere in the world, electronic information resources (EIRs) are gaining popularity among students and anybody else keen on expanding their horizons intellectually. With today's library systems, this is considerably less of a hassle. In order to better serve their students' educational requirements, university libraries often give access to these materials (Adetoro et al, 2023). As members of the university community, postgraduates are granted unrestricted use to the DIRs. In contrast to traditional librarianship, which requires face-to-face engagement with the provider before gaining access to any information, the DIRs make current and up-to-date information available remotely, quickly, and with less effort (Ukachi, 2013).

Digital information resources utilization by postgraduate students

Digital information resources have developed into an essential part of the collection as a consequence of the rising significance of the University library to the University's purpose of teaching, learning and research. The more a person utilizes the library's resources, the more at ease they will become while utilising those resources. Oyedapo and Ojo (2013) indicates that digital resources are not being used to their full potential. The inability to search effectively was the key factor contributing to the underutilization of digital resources. Students from different institutions made use of DIRs for a variety of tasks.

Students at two universities in Niger state, Nigeria make extensive use of digital resources such as the internet, e-mail, online databases, electronic databases, and electronic journals, but make much less use of CD-ROM databases, electronic journals, the Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC), and electronic books, according to a study (Alhassan & Macaulay, 2015) According to the findings, students utilised digital resources for a wide variety of activities. These activities included applying to programmes and registering for courses, conducting research, communicating with family and friends, gathering information for writing projects, completing homework, and many other activities.

Manjack, Dangani, and Fari's (2019) examined the usage of digital information resources by college students in Gombe State, Nigeria. Specifically, a cross-sectional survey was used to gather data for the study and findings show that all the various types of electronic information resources specified are now available, with electronic books receiving the most positive feedback. The study showed that when it came to electronic information resources, the institutional repository was the most popular choice. Researchers discovered no significant difference between the two groups in terms of the frequency with which students used DIRs. The research found that e-books were accessible everywhere, thus it recommended that the management of university libraries in Gombe State should make an effort to expand the availability of other types of media. This would be done since electronic books are readily accessible.

Ahmed and Anjili (2015) analyzed the usage of digital information resources by students, faculty, and staff at the University of Maiduguri and found that registered students are unsure whether they have enough access to digital resources, scanners, printers, electronic journals, and electronic books. The library's digital information resources, to which students have unfettered access, are heavily used. Students are highly encouraged to make use of the library's digital information resources in order to boost their overall academic performance.

Edem and Egbe (2016), conducted research on the usage of digital information resources by graduate students at the University of Calabar library. This study set out to answer the questions of what digital information resources exist, how they are utilised, and what challenges arise from their use. The majority of respondents (86.39%) used digital information resources at the University of Calabar, whereas 13.61 percent did not. Most of the respondents used some type of internet resource to learn more about topics. Only 8.90% of respondents utilise the library's digital information resources on a regular basis, while 6.02 % use them only sometimes. The vast majority of respondents (57.07%) reported regular usage of digital information resources. The next largest group, 28.01%, reported seldom or never using electronic resources. Dolo-Ndlwana's (2013) research at Cape Peninsula University of Technology found that academic and postgraduate students made extensive use of the numerous digital information resources available in the library.

Hajara and Olatoye (2015) investigated the usage of digital information resources in the classroom at the Federal university in Dutsin-Ma, Nigeria. The study set out to answer questions about how frequently digital information resources are utilised, how they affect classroom instruction, and what obstacles students and faculty face when using these tools. The study showed that digital information resources are often used in the classroom. Nonetheless, it was advised that responders get training and retraining in the use of e-resources so that they may grow professionally and use digital information resources adequately. Ram and Amit (2014) examined the usage of digital information resources by graduate students, professors, and researchers and found that, 88 (21.35%) of respondents utilised the digital information resources daily, 141 (34.22%) had access to the digital information resources several times a week, and 142 (34.46%) only use the digital information resources sometimes.

Information overload by postgraduate students

Information overload is a term that has no universally accepted meaning. It is a situation in which a person's efficiency at work is hindered due to the abundance of data at their disposal. It is not enough that the information be just there; it has to be of actual value, and it needs to be readily accessible, as well. Being overworked may make users feel helpless and overwhelmed at the same time (Adetoro, 2023)

Information overload may be caused by a variety of different things. Some of them include the quantity of information, the gap between what is required and what is accessible, the breadth and depth of available data, the proliferation of available choices, data's inherent ambiguity, complexity, and the sheer volume of

data available. (Williamson, Christopher Eaker, and Lounsbury ,2012). The authors define information overload as "distress connected with the feeling that there is too much information," putting the focus squarely on the reader's experience.

Ojo (2016) studied college students at the University of Ibadan and Tai-Solarin University of Education in South-West Nigeria to learn how their age and gender affected their ability to cope with information overload. The results showed that information anxiety and information overload were not related to the students' age or gender. Undergraduates, in particular, were the target audience for the research.

Umeozor (2017) analyzed the effects of information overload on emerging countries. In industrialized nations in particular, the rate of information creation far exceeds the rate at which information is consumed, a situation brought about by the growth of information and communication technology known as "information overload" (ICT). More than that, it demonstrates how limited access to existing knowledge is, especially in underdeveloped countries. The effects of information overload on students' learning were studied by Khalid, Saeed, and Syed (2016). The study revealed that majority of respondents valued the use of technological aids and computer-generated materials such as graphics, illustrated text, and power point presentations. Information overload did not negatively impact students' academic performance.

Hoq (2014) investigated the factors that led to information overload as well as potential solutions. In addition to analyzing the causes of and potential remedies for the problem of information overload in the twenty-first century, the study offers a number of practical suggestions for coping with this pressing issue. Information workers, computer scientists, and academics are urged to work together in order to find solutions to the problems caused by an abundance of data.

Information overload and digital information resources utilization by postgraduate students

Jackson and Farzaneh (2012) found that since 2003, as much information has been produced in only two days as has been created since the beginning of time. In other words, the pace at which new information is being generated has increased dramatically. Many individuals blame the development of email and internet search engines for contributing to their feelings of information overload. Young people, however, do not have a great deal of practical use for these technical advances. Instead, they depend almost exclusively on their mobile devices to stay abreast of the latest news and other relevant data. Seventy-three percent of young people have access to smartphones, 15% have access to basic phones (the majority of which can text), and 11% do not have access to any form of mobile phone (Pew Research Center, 2015). The smartphone is the primary piece of technology responsible for the vast majority of cases of information overload among teens due to its constant connection to the internet and its potential to store and communicate a limitless quantity of data in both directions (Benselin & Ragsdell, 2016).

Electronic information has rapidly risen to prominence as a key component of today's university libraries. As more and more online materials become available many individuals now acknowledge that electronic publications provide customers advanced capabilities and unique sorts of functionality that go beyond what is attainable in printed form Students with this proficiency may also make effective and efficient use of digital instructional materials. Kurelovic, Tomljanovic, and Davidovic (2016) studied students' reactions to and knowledge of information overload, information literacy, and technological adoption. The goal of this study is to identify possible causes of information overload symptoms among students and determine whether or not they really occur. The study shows that despite students' frequent exposure to digital media, just a small percentage of them can effectively locate, evaluate, and apply information (including computers, digital media, and other electronic devices). They have sometimes shown symptoms of information overload.

Strother and Ulijn (2012) stated that the rapid growth of the internet has led to a rise in the rate at which information may be sent and received. With the advent of social networking platforms like Facebook and other blog sites, anybody with an idea, thought, or opinion and access to the internet can now become not just an author but also a publisher of information. To some extent, the issue of information overload may be attributable to the fact that people in including students have a hard time keeping up with the constant stream of fresh information from these sources (New World Encyclopedia, 2017).

Methodology

The study adopted survey research design. The population of this study comprised of seven thousand seven hundred and eight-four (7,784) postgraduate students (According to Post-Graduate Colleges of the institutions) in selected university libraries: University of Ibadan, Oyo State; Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago Iwoye, Ogun State; Babcock University, Ilishan, Ogun State. These university libraries were selected based on the year of the establishment the Universities. The first established federal, state and private university libraries in South-West Nigeria. Stratified proportionate random sampling technique was used. The population of the study was stratified based on the three university libraries, from each of the stratum, 20% sample was proportionately drawn resulting in a total of 1557 postgraduate students selected from the three universities. The selection are as follows; 723 postgraduate students were selected from University of Ibadan, 466 post graduate students from Olabisi Onabanjo University and 368 from Babcock University respectively.

A structured questionnaire containing three scales was validated at TASUED on 30 post graduate students using the trial method. The reliability coefficients derived for each of the scales was α = .858 for digital information resources available, α =.778 for utilization of digital information resources and α =.71 2 for level of information overload. The authorities of the postgraduate college and the postgraduate students in each university gave consent to the study, they were officially informed on the nature and implication of the study while voluntary participation and the right to withdrawal was respected. Same for the confidentiality and anonymity of respondents. The researcher and six research assistants visited the university libraries post graduate section for three weeks. Out of 1557 copies of the questionnaire administered,1258 copies were duly filled and returned given a response rate of 80.8% The copies were analyzed with the SPSS version 22 using descriptive statistic (frequency count and percentage, mean and standard deviation) while Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to test the hypothesis.

Results and discussion

Research question One: What are the digital information resources available for use among postgraduate students in the selected university libraries in South-West, Nigeria?

Table 1: Digital information resources available for use among postgraduate students

S/n	Digital resources	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Electronic Books	1172	93.2
2	Electronic Journals	1147	91.2
3	Email	1037	82.4
4	Online database	982	78.1
5	Internet archives resources	936	74.4
6	Online public access catalogue (OPAC)	918	73.0
7	Electronic data archives	607	48.3
8	Electronic theses and dissertations	527	41.9
9	Databases such as TEEAL	477	37.9

10	Open Educational Resources (OERs) such as open courseware	427	33.9
11	Compact Disc – Read Only Memory (CD-ROM)	379	30.1
12	Online Magazines	337	26.8
13	E-audio visual resources	277	22.0
14	Electronic newspaper	226	18.0

The result showed that the digital information resources available for use among postgraduate students surveyed are electronic books 1172(93.2%), electronic journals 1147(91.2%), email 1037(82.4%), Online database 982(78.1%), Internet archive resources 936(74.4%) and Online public access catalogue resources (OPAC) 918(73.0%). It could be inferred that the major digital information resources available for use among postgraduate students surveyed are electronic books, electronic journals and email.

Research question Two: What is frequency of use of digital information resources among postgraduate students in the selected university libraries in South-West, Nigeria?

Table 2: Frequency of use of digital information resources among postgraduate students

S/N	Digital resources	Daily	2ce/3ce Weekly	Weekly	Monthly	Never	$\bar{x}$	S.D
1	Electronic Books	641 (51.0%)	170 (13.5%)	196 (15.6%)	130 (10.3%)	121 (9.6%)	3.86	1.39
2	Electronic Journals	560 (44.5%)	150 (11.9%)	277 (22.0%)	120 (9.5%)	151 (12.0%)	3.67	1.42
3	Online database	410 (32.6%)	171 (13.6%)	307 (24.4%)	70 (5.6%)	300 (23.8%)	3.26	1.54
4	Email	209 (16.6%)	171 (13.6%)	363 (28.9%)	375 (29.8%)	140 (11.1%)	2.95	1.24
5	Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC)	128 (10.2%)	121 (9.6%)	207 (16.5%)	192 (15.3%)	610 (48.5%)	2.92	1.34
6	Open Educational Resources (OERs) such as open courseware	276 (21.9%)	91 (7.2%)	311 (24.7%)	256 (20.3%)	324 (25.8%)	2.79	1.46
7	Electronic newspaper	341 (27.1%)	89 (7.1%)	177 (14.1%)	156 (12.4%)	495 (39.3%)	2.70	1.66
8	Electronic theses and dissertations	228 (18.1%)	130 (10.3%)	197 (15.7%)	286 (22.7%)	417 (33.1%)	2.56	1.48
9	Internet archives resources	95 (7.6%)	131 (10.4%)	466 (37.0%)	210 (16.7%)	356 (28.8%)	2.52	1.21

10	Data bases such as TEEAL	231 (18.4%)	101 (8.0%)	237 (18.8%)	217 (17.2%)	427 (37.5%)	2.52	1.50
11	Compact Disc – Read Only Memory (CD-ROM)	128 (10.2%)	121 (9.6%)	207 (16.5%)	192 (15.3%)	610 (48.5%)	2.18	1.39
12	Electronic data archives	80 (6.4%)	110 (8.7%)	210 (16.7%)	376 (29.9%)	482 (38.3%)	2.15	1.20
13	Online Magazines	52 (4.1%)	141 (11.2%)	216 (17.2%)	251 (20.0%)	598 (47.5%)	2.04	1.21
14	E-audio visual resources	65 (5.2%)	121 (9.6%)	184 (14.6%)	278 (22.1%)	610 (48.5%)	2.00	1.22
Average mean							**2.72**	**1.37**

Criterion mean=3.0

The result in the table 2 showed that the frequency of use of digital information resources by postgraduate students in selected university libraries in South-West, Nigeria was low. The study indicated that Electronic Books (mean = 3.86), Electronic Journals (mean = 3.67), Online database (mean = 3.26) were the most frequently utilized digital information resources among postgraduate students in the selected university libraries in Southwest, Nigeria while others were less frequently utilized.

Research question three: What is the level of information overload among postgraduate students in the selected university libraries in South-West, Nigeria?

Table 3: Level of information overload among postgraduate students

S/N	Information overload	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	$\bar{x}$	S.D
1	Does the notification of a new message, status, post, etc.; distract you from your previous activity?	470 (37.4%)	411 (32.7%)	287 (22.8%)	90 (7.2%)	3.00	0.94
2	Do you feel like you're going to miss something important if you are not always online?	511 (40.6%)	318 (25.3%)	318 (25.3%)	111 (8.8%)	2.98	1.01
3	Do you write/read message or "surf" on your mobile device when it is not appropriate (e.g. during class, at the movies, etc.)?	427 (33.9%)	421 (33.5%)	350 (27.8%)	60 (4.8%)	2.97	0.90
4	Do you feel like you're receiving more information than you are able to process?	373(29.7%)	458 (36.4%)	346 (27.5%)	81 (6.4%)	2.89	0.90
5	Do you feel that you miss important information because of the abundance of information you're exposed to?	346 (27.5%)	549 (43.6%)	232 (18.4%)	131 (10.4%)	2.88	0.93

6	Do you have problems concentrating and/or remembering content?	378 (30.0%)	473 (37.6%)	246 (19.6%)	161 (12.8%)	2.85	0.20
7	Do you have problems in decision making or problem solving because of so much available information?	392 (31.2%)	409 (32.5%)	305 (24.2%)	152 (12.1%)	2.83	1.00
8	Do you only run through text, catching the key words when reading content online?	299 (23.8%)	513 (40.8%)	305 (24.2%)	141 (11.2%)	2.77	0.94
9	Do you feel distracted with too much email?	258 (20.5%)	587 (46.7%)	281 (22.3%)	132 (10.5%)	2.77	0.89
10	Do you feel you lack adequate knowledge on how to use e-journal	174 (13.8%)	744 (59.1%)	170 (13.5%)	170 (13.5%)	2.73	0.86
11	Do you have a large mass of the relevant information to process?	425 (33.8%)	238 (18.9%)	294 (23.4%)	301 (23.9%)	2.63	1.18
12	Do you find it difficult to find the required information quickly and conveniently from various digital resources	227 (18.0%)	534 (42.4%)	285 (22.7%)	212 (16.9%)	2.62	0.97
13	Do you have problems in managing information	259 (20.6%)	387 (30.8%)	450 (35.8%)	162 (12.9%)	2.59	0.95
14	Do you always feel it is absolutely necessary to know everything about information?	207 (16.5%)	406 (32.3%)	297 (23.6%)	348 (27.7%)	2.38	1.06
15	Do you think you have too much information and too many sources in getting information?	152 (12.1%)	333 (26.5%)	530 (42.1%)	243 (19.3%)	2.31	0.92
16	Do consider the time spent on reading information online a wasted time because of duplication of information?	127 (10.1%)	438 (34.8%)	306 (24.3%)	387 (30.8%)	2.24	1.00
17	As a result of too many information sources online I get confused on choosing the information sources	165 (13.1%)	359 (28.5%)	295 (23.4%)	439 (34.9%)	2.20	1.06
Average mean						**2.68**	**0.92**

Criterion mean=2.5

The study revealed that the level of information overload among postgraduate students in the selected university libraries in Southwest, Nigeria is on the average (mean= 2.68). From the result, item 1-13 showed that postgraduate students displayed moderate level of information overload in the selected universities in Southwest, Nigeria. It could be inferred that the level of information overload among postgraduate students in the selected university libraries surveyed was generally moderate.

Test of hypothesis

Hypothesis 1: There will be no significant relationship between information overload and digital information resources utilization among postgraduate students in selected university libraries in Southwest, Nigeria;

Table 4: Relationship between information overload and digital information resources utilization among postgraduate students

Variables	N	M	SD	Df	R	P-val
Information Overload	1258	43.81	6.71			
				1256	.351	.000
Digital Information Resources	1258	43.40	6.69			

(r (1256) = .351, P<.05)

The result in the table presents the Correlation between information overload and digital information resources utilization among postgraduate students in selected university libraries. It showed a Correlation Coefficient r = .351**; p<0.05 which means that there is significant relationship between information overload and digital information resources utilization among postgraduate students in selected university libraries in South-West, Nigeria. Indicating that information overload is a predictor of digital information resources utilization. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected. Hence, information overload has a positive significant relationship with digital information resources utilization among postgraduate students in selected university libraries surveyed.

Discussion of findings

The study has established that the major digital information resources available for use among postgraduate students surveyed are electronic books, electronic journals, email, online database, internet archives resources and online public access catalogue (OPAC). This means that most of these digital information resources were available for use by postgraduate students for effective teaching and learning. Other ones like electronic data archives, electronic theses and dissertations, databases such as TEEAL, Open Educational Resources (OERs) such as open courseware, Compact Disc – Read Only Memory (CD-ROM), online magazines, e-audio visual resources and electronic newspaper do not seem to be readily available. It is either they resources are less available for use or there are no tools to make them available for use. The result also suggests that a few of the students are aware of the available DIRs. The result is an indication that digital information resources are available in the University Libraries to a great extent and postgraduate students in selected Universities are aware of the availability of some digital information resources in the University Libraries. Edem and Egbe (2016) revealed that respondents were aware of the availability of e-journal, followed by Internet resources, e-books and lastly databases in their libraries. The popularity of e-journal among the respondents may have been influenced by the research activities of postgraduate students. The finding shows that electronic books, electronic journals, online database and email are the frequently utilized digital information resources among postgraduate students surveyed. Findings revealed that some of the respondents indicated that they use DIRs in the library while some did not use them. This showed that the most frequently utilized DIRs are the ones that are readily available in the university libraries by postgraduate students. The finding is in line with the finding of Alhassan & Macaulay (2015) which showed that digital resources like the internet, e-mail, online databases, electronic databases and electronic journals

were highly used by the respondents in two universities, while others like CD-ROM databases, electronic journals, Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) and electronic books were rarely used.

The study showed that the level of information overload among postgraduate students in the selected university libraries surveyed was moderate. This means that postgraduate students are not overloading themselves with information with the increasing influence of technology in education. The postgraduate students are no longer bounded to textbooks as the only source of reading material. The finding is in agreement with the finding Kurelovic, Tomljanovic and Davidovic (2016) which reported students have a tendency to fly through the content they are reading online, 'catching' only the key words sometimes. They rarely feel like they are missing out on something if they are not online, which is highly commendable, and they rarely have difficulties in decision making, or solving problems because of lots of available information. The moderate level of information overload also suggest that the student could have mastered a coping mechanism to deal with the situation, focusing on relevant information only. Bawden (2020) concluded that information overload is real. It is not a myth or a phantom. For almost as long as there has been information, there has been a perception that humanity has been overloaded by it. The essential nature of overload has not changed with changing technology, though its causes and proposed solutions have changed very much.

The study showed that information overload has a positive significant relationship with digital information resources utilization among postgraduate students in selected university libraries surveyed. This means that information overload could affect the use of digital information resources. A high level of information overload result in corresponding high level of digital information resources utilization by the students. The finding is in line with the finding of Kurelovic, Tomljanovic & Davidovic (2016) that students frequently use technology (computers, gadgets and digital media), while they show moderate level of information literacy. They have sometimes experienced symptoms of information overload. The ability to explore the digital environment is a requirement for academic success today. Students are increasingly expected to use digital information resources at the university libraries adequately. In order to make use of the growing range of electronic resources, students must acquire and practice the skills necessary to exploit them.

Conclusion

The study concludes that university library digital information resources are indispensable for postgraduate students, with high utilization and frequency, especially for electronic books and journals. However, this extensive utilization is inextricably linked to the significant challenge of information Overload (IO). The result further revealed that Information Overload manifests primarily as digital distraction and behavioral addiction, leading to tangible cognitive deficits such as problems with concentration, and processing capacity. Ultimately, while postgraduates are highly connected and resource-rich, the findings suggest that they often lack the advanced digital literacy and self-management skills necessary to effectively navigate the abundant digital information environment without succumbing to overload.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made

1. Greater publicity through exhibitions and display of new arrivals, organizing user education, use of leaflets and posters, sending e-mail and text messages should be provided on the type of digital information resources available in the selected university libraries surveyed because awareness of digital information resources is key to improved services.
2. Libraries should design and mandate workshops specifically for postgraduates that go beyond basic resource access. These programs should focus on advanced search techniques for precise information retrieval.

3. Faculty and the library should actively teach and promote strategies to mitigate behavioral symptoms of IO, such as techniques for managing notifications and limiting online distractions during focused study time.
4. To reduce information overload to the barest minimum, it is necessary to improve information literacy in students and develop skills that will help them to take full advantage of digital information resources wisely.

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