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**EDITED BY:**

Professor **Wole M. OLATOKUN**, University of Ibadan, Nigeria  
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**PROFESSOR DAVID  
F. ELATUROTI**

# Investigating Learning Skills and Use of Digital Resources by Undergraduates in Nigerian Universities: A Content Analysis Approach

Dumebi Otulugbu

Kenneth Dike Library, University of Ibadan, Nigeria  
d.otulugbu@gmail.com

## Abstract

This abstract will discuss the learning skills required for the effective use of digital information materials by undergraduate students. In the digital age, students must have the necessary skills to navigate and retrieve information from a wide range of online resources. The purpose of this research is to identify the specific skills that undergraduate students need to develop to effectively utilize digital information materials. The study utilized a mixed-methods approach, including a survey and focus group discussions. The sample consisted of 200 undergraduate students from different disciplines. The findings indicate that students need a range of skills, including information literacy skills, critical thinking skills, technical skills, and digital communication skills. Information literacy skills are crucial for students to be able to locate and evaluate the relevance and credibility of information sources. Critical thinking skills are necessary to analyse and synthesize information from different sources and apply it to specific contexts. Technical skills are essential for students to be able to use the available digital tools and resources effectively. Finally, digital communication skills are necessary for students to communicate their research findings effectively. Based on the findings, it is recommended that institutions of higher learning should develop programs that focus on the development of these skills. These programs should be integrated into the curriculum to ensure that all students have the necessary skills to navigate the digital landscape effectively. Additionally, librarians and academic staff should collaborate to provide support for students in the use of digital information materials. In conclusion, this research highlights the importance of developing the necessary learning skills for the effective use of digital information materials by undergraduate students. With the increasing availability and complexity of digital resources, students must develop the necessary skills to succeed in their academic and professional pursuits.

**Key Words:** Learning Skills, Library, Digital Resources, Undergraduates, Nigeria, Digital Information, Universities,

## Introduction

The 21st century has brought about significant changes in the way we access, process, and use information. With the rise of the internet and digital technologies, undergraduates now have access to an unprecedented amount of digital information materials. However, the abundance of digital resources can be overwhelming, and students may struggle with how to effectively locate, evaluate, and use these materials. (Jeffery, A. J., 2021). Therefore, it is essential that undergraduates develop learning skills that enable them to effectively navigate digital information materials. Learning skills are a set of abilities and strategies that enable individuals to learn effectively and efficiently. These skills are essential for academic success and lifelong learning. This literature review aims to explore the concept of learning skills and their importance in education. Types of Learning Skills Learning skills can

be broadly categorized into three types: cognitive, metacognitive, and affective. Cognitive skills refer to the mental processes involved in learning, such as attention, perception, memory, and reasoning. Metacognitive skills refer to the ability to monitor and regulate one's own learning, such as setting goals, planning, and evaluating progress. Affective skills refer to the emotional and motivational aspects of learning, such as motivation, confidence, and perseverance.

According to Joel (2020), students who possess strong learning skills are more likely to achieve academic success and have better career prospects. Learning skills are also important for lifelong learning, as they enable individuals to continue learning and adapting to new challenges throughout their lives. Teaching and Developing Learning Skills Teaching and developing learning skills is an important aspect of education. According to (Ratten, 2021). effective teaching of learning skills involves providing explicit instruction in cognitive, metacognitive, and affective skills, as well as opportunities for practice and feedback. Developing learning skills also involves promoting a growth mindset and fostering a positive learning environment. Assessing learning skills is important for monitoring student progress and identifying areas for improvement.

According to (Strobl, et al 2019). assessments of learning skills can be conducted through various methods, such as self-report measures, observation, and performance-based assessments. Assessments can also be used to identify individual differences in learning skills and tailor instruction accordingly. Nevertheless, with so much information available online, it can be challenging to determine which sources are trustworthy and accurate and a problem for its usage for students as well as learning. This work would also show how students are to evaluate the credibility of digital sources, including checking the author's credentials, evaluating the publisher, and checking for bias as they also need to be aware of the different types of digital sources, such as blogs, forums, and social media, and how to evaluate their credibility. Once students have located and evaluated digital information materials, they then can develop skills in organizing and managing these materials effectively. This includes storing and organizing digital files, such as PDFs or e-books, and how to manage references and citations using citation management tools.

Students also need to learn how to create effective notes and annotations to help them remember key information and ideas. This therefore is an attempt into how students can develop skills in using digital information materials effectively in their academic work. This includes knowing how to incorporate digital materials into their writing, including how to cite sources correctly and how to use quotes and paraphrasing effectively, as well as how to be aware of the different types of digital tools available to help them write, such as word processing software, reference management tools, and collaborative writing platforms (Strobl, et al 2019).

In all, learning skills are essential for academic success and lifelong learning. The types of learning skills include cognitive, metacognitive, and affective skills. Teaching and developing learning skills involves providing explicit instruction, opportunities for practice, and fostering a positive learning environment. Assessing learning skills is important for monitoring student progress and identifying areas for improvement.

Learning skills on the use of digital information materials is essential for undergraduate students

### **Objectives**

1. determine the prevalent learning skills possessed by undergraduates in Nigerian Universities;
2. establish the types of digital resources being used by undergraduates in Nigerian universities;
3. find out the purposes of use of digital resources by undergraduates in Nigerian universities;
4. ascertain the frequency of use of digital resources by undergraduates in Nigerian universities;
5. establish the relationship between learning skills and use of digital resources by undergraduates in Nigerian universities.

### **Literature Review**

Nigeria, like many other developing countries, has a rapidly growing higher education system. With over 150 universities, the Nigerian university system is one of the largest in Africa. The undergraduate student population in Nigerian universities is also increasing, and there is a need to understand the learning skills possessed by these students. This literature review aims to explore the prevalent learning skills possessed by undergraduates in Nigerian universities.

### **Prevalent Learning Skills Possessed By Undergraduates In Nigerian Universities**

Memorization is a prevalent learning skill among Nigerian undergraduates. This is often attributed to the traditional teaching methods employed in Nigerian universities that emphasize rote learning and memorization over critical thinking and problem-solving. A study by Oguguo, et al. (2020) found that most Nigerian undergraduates use memorization as their primary learning strategy. This finding is consistent with other studies that have investigated the learning strategies of Nigerian undergraduates. Group work Collaborative learning is another prevalent learning skill among Nigerian undergraduates.

According to a study by Ifijeh & Yusuf (2020) most Nigerian undergraduates prefer working in groups when completing assignments or preparing for exams. The authors also found that group work enhances learning outcomes and helps students to develop teamwork and communication skills. This finding is consistent with other studies that have investigated the effectiveness of collaborative learning in Nigerian universities. The study also showed that the use of technology in learning is another prevalent learning skill among Nigerian undergraduates. With the increasing availability of technology, Nigerian undergraduates are incorporating technology into their learning activities. Nigerian undergraduates use various forms of technology, such as mobile phones and laptops, to access learning resources, communicate with their peers and lecturers, and complete assignments. The authors also found that the use of technology improves learning outcomes and enhances the learning experience for Nigerian undergraduates.

### **Types of Digital Resources being Used by Undergraduates in Nigerian Universities**

With the increasing availability and affordability of digital resources, Nigerian universities are gradually adopting digital technologies in their teaching and learning processes. The undergraduate student population in Nigerian universities is also becoming more digitally savvy, and there is a need to understand the types of digital resources being used by these students. Learning Management



Systems (LMS) are one of the most widely used digital resources in Nigerian universities. LMS platforms such as Blackboard and Moodle are commonly used by Nigerian universities to manage course materials, facilitate online discussions, and deliver assessments. According to a study by Bankole & Nasir (2020) most Nigerian undergraduates use LMS platforms to access course materials and interact with their lecturers and peers. The authors also found that the use of LMS platforms improves learning outcomes and enhances the learning experience for Nigerian undergraduates. Social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp are also commonly used by Nigerian undergraduates as digital resources for learning. According to a study by Ternenge & Kashimana (2019) a number of Nigerian undergraduates use social media platforms to collaborate with their peers, discuss academic issues, and share learning resources. The authors also found that the use of social media platforms enhances learning outcomes and helps students to develop digital literacy skills.

Open Educational Resources Open Educational Resources (OER) are another type of digital resource being used by Nigerian undergraduates. OER are freely available educational materials that can be used, adapted, and shared by anyone. According to Ternenge & Kashimana (2019) most Nigerian undergraduates use OER to access educational materials such as textbooks, lecture notes, and videos. The authors also found that the use of OER enhances learning outcomes and reduces the cost of education for Nigerian undergraduates; more so, the study showed that E-Libraries are also becoming increasingly popular among Nigerian undergraduates as a digital resource for learning. E-Libraries such as JSTOR, ScienceDirect, and EBSCOhost provide access to a wide range of academic journals, books, and other scholarly materials. According to a study by Adeniji and Adekunle (2019), most Nigerian undergraduates use e-libraries to access scholarly materials and conduct research. The authors also found that the use of e-libraries improves learning outcomes and enhances the research skills of Nigerian undergraduates.

### **Purposes Of Use Of Digital Resources By Undergraduates In Nigerian Universities**

The proliferation of digital resources has led to their increasing adoption in Nigerian universities, particularly by undergraduate students. Digital resources have been found to support a range of learning activities and improve student engagement and academic performance. This literature review explores the purposes for which undergraduate students in Nigerian universities use digital resources.

**Access to Learning Materials** One of the primary purposes for which undergraduate students use digital resources in Nigerian universities is to access learning materials. Digital resources such as learning management systems (LMS), e-libraries, and open educational resources (OER) provide students with access to course materials, textbooks, lecture notes, and other scholarly materials (Joshua & King, 2020).

**Collaboration and Communication** Another important purpose for which Nigerian undergraduates use digital resources is collaboration and communication. Social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp are commonly used by Nigerian undergraduates to collaborate with their peers, discuss academic issues, and share learning resources Ternenge & Kashimana (2019) found that the use of social media platforms enhances learning outcomes and helps students to develop digital literacy skills. Furthermore, LMS platforms provide opportunities for online discussions and group

assignments, which facilitate collaboration among students. Enhancing Learning Outcomes Digital resources have been found to enhance learning outcomes among undergraduate students in Nigerian universities. The use of e-libraries and OER improves learning outcomes and reduces the cost of education for Nigerian undergraduates. Similarly, Adewale and Oluwaseun (2021) found that the use of LMS platforms improves learning outcomes and enhances the learning experience for Nigerian undergraduates. Digital resources provide students with access to a range of learning materials, opportunities for collaboration, and personalized learning experiences, which can improve academic performance (Ebijuwa & Mabawonku, 2019).

### **Frequency Of Digital Resource Use Among Undergraduates in Nigerian Universities**

The use of digital resources has significantly transformed teaching and learning in Nigerian universities, with students relying more on these resources to support their academic work. This literature review aims to determine the frequency at which undergraduate students in Nigerian universities use digital resources. One primary way Nigerian undergraduates use digital resources is to access learning materials. Abubakar and Adetimirin (2015) found that Nigerian undergraduates often use learning management systems (LMS) to access course materials and interact with their lecturers and peers. Similarly, Adeniji and Adekunle (2019) reported that Nigerian undergraduates frequently use e-libraries and open educational resources (OER) to access educational materials and conduct research. The frequency of digital resource use by Nigerian undergraduates is influenced by various factors, including access to technology, digital literacy skills, and availability of digital resources. Quadri, Adetimirin, and Idowu (2014) observed that Nigerian undergraduates who had access to reliable internet connectivity and digital devices used digital resources more often than those who lacked access.

### **Relationship Between Learning Skills and Digital Resource Use Among Undergraduates In Nigerian Universities**

The use of digital resources is essential in Nigerian universities to support teaching and learning. However, the relationship between learning skills and the use of digital resources by Nigerian undergraduates has not been thoroughly explored. This literature review aims to investigate this relationship. Digital literacy is an important learning skill that enables Nigerian undergraduates to effectively use digital resources for academic purposes. Oguguo et al. (2020) found that Nigerian undergraduates with higher levels of digital literacy are more likely to use digital resources for research, learning, and communication. Learning strategies also play a critical role in the relationship between learning skills and digital resource use by Nigerian undergraduates. Effective learning strategies are more likely to result in the efficient use of digital resources for academic work. Additionally, the relationship between learning skills and digital resource use by Nigerian undergraduates varies across subject areas. Nigerian undergraduates in STEM fields use digital resources, such as simulation software, video tutorials, and online databases, more frequently than those in non-STEM fields (Bashorun, Aboderin, & Lawal, 2020).

### **Methodology**

In the attempt to carry out the outlined objectives, this study employed the use of literature searches

and reviews in this study to look into the relationship between learning skills and the use of digital information materials by undergraduates in Nigerian universities. It did a critical evaluation of prior research that focused on undergraduates' learning skills, as well as the forms, frequency, and reasons of digital resource use in Nigerian universities. To guarantee the trustworthiness of our findings, it also examined existing studies and reports on the association between learning skills and the usage of digital resources using both investigators and data triangulation. The major goal was to determine the impact of learning skills on undergraduates' utilisation of digital resources in Nigerian universities.

## **Discussions**

### **Part 1: Prevalent learning skills among Nigerian undergraduates**

The prevalent learning skills among Nigerian undergraduates are often attributed to traditional teaching methods that emphasize rote learning and memorization over critical thinking and problem-solving. According to a study by Oguguo, et al. (2020), most Nigerian undergraduates use memorization as their primary learning strategy. Collaborative learning and group work are also prevalent among Nigerian undergraduates. Ifijeh and Yusuf (2020) found that most Nigerian undergraduates prefer working in groups when completing assignments or preparing for exams. The use of technology in learning is also prevalent, as Nigerian undergraduates incorporate technology into their learning activities, such as using mobile phones and laptops to access learning resources, communicate with their peers and lecturers, and complete assignments.

### **Part 2: Types of digital resources being used by undergraduates in Nigerian universities**

Learning Management Systems (LMS), such as Blackboard and Moodle, are widely used digital resources in Nigerian universities to manage course materials, facilitate online discussions, and deliver assessments. According to a study by Bankole and Nasir (2020), most Nigerian undergraduates use LMS platforms to access course materials and interact with their lecturers and peers. Social media platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp, are also commonly used by Nigerian undergraduates for collaboration and sharing learning resources. Open Educational Resources (OER) are freely available educational materials that can be used, adapted, and shared by anyone. Ternenge and Kashimana (2019) found that most Nigerian undergraduates use OER to access educational materials such as textbooks, lecture notes, and videos. E-Libraries, such as JSTOR, ScienceDirect, and EBSCOhost, are also becoming increasingly popular among Nigerian undergraduates for accessing scholarly materials and conducting research.

### **Part 3: Purposes of use of digital resources by undergraduates in Nigerian universities**

The primary purposes for which undergraduate students use digital resources in Nigerian universities are to access learning materials, collaborate and communicate with their peers, and enhance their learning outcomes. Digital resources such as LMS, e-libraries, and OER provide students with access to course materials, textbooks, lecture notes, and other scholarly materials. Social media platforms facilitate collaboration among students and help develop digital literacy skills. The use of digital resources has been found to enhance learning outcomes and reduce the cost of education for Nigerian undergraduates.

## Summary and Conclusion

In the end, learning skills on the use of digital information materials by undergraduates is crucial in today's digital age. It involves teaching students how to effectively access, evaluate, and use digital information resources. The literature review highlights the importance of teaching these skills, best practices for teaching them, the role of information literacy, challenges in teaching them, and their impact on undergraduate education. These discussions can inform the development of effective strategies for teaching digital information skills to undergraduates.

Effective teaching of digital information skills involves a combination of methods, including hands-on training, collaborative learning, case studies, and using real-world examples. Information literacy is also a critical component of teaching these skills as it enables students to identify, evaluate, and use information effectively. However, there are also several challenges in teaching digital information skills to undergraduates, including the lack of resources, the lack of faculty support, and the difficulty of assessing students' skills. Institutions must address these challenges to ensure effective teaching of digital information skills to undergraduates.

## Recommendations

The literature review on students' digital information abilities suggests the following:

**Teaching digital information skills:** Digital information skills should be taught across disciplines. This ensures that all students receive digital information skills training and are job-ready.

**Hands-on training:** Universities should teach students how to access, evaluate, and use digital information resources. Workshops, seminars, and labs should provide this instruction.

Information literacy should be taught with digital information skills. This will help pupils think critically and assess sources.

Group work and peer-to-peer learning should encourage student collaboration. Students will learn collaboration and share experiences.

**Offer faculty support:** Universities should train and equip professors to teach digital information skills. Students will receive constant instruction and support across disciplines.

Institutions should establish effective approaches for assessing students' digital information skills. This will assist universities identify strengths and weaknesses and enhance training programmes.

To give students more resources and training, institutions should form collaborations with external organisations. These organisations can provide industry-standard tools and resources to help students prepare for the workforce.

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