

## Exploring Faculty's Perceptions and Practices of Information Literacy: A Systematic Review

Rahila R. HASSAN (✉)

Department of Library and Information Science, National Open University of Nigeria  
University Village Jabi, Abuja Nigeria.

### Abstract

*This systematic review explores faculty perceptions and practices regarding information literacy (IL) in higher education. Information literacy is widely recognized as a crucial skill for academic success and lifelong learning; however, its interpretation and integration into teaching vary across disciplines and institutions. The review systematically investigates how faculty understand IL, their perceived roles and responsibilities in teaching it, the IL skills they expect students to develop, and the types of support available to students. Findings indicate that while faculty acknowledge the importance of IL, their understanding of its definition often differs, with some viewing it narrowly as research or citation skills, and others embracing broader competencies such as critical thinking and digital literacy. The review also highlights a lack of formal training and institutional support for faculty in IL instruction, resulting in limited or inconsistent integration of IL into curricula. Furthermore, although students are expected to possess IL competencies, they often enter university without adequate preparation. Effective collaboration between librarians and faculty is shown to enhance IL instruction, but such partnerships remain limited. The review concludes by recommending greater institutional investment in IL frameworks, increased faculty-librarian collaboration, and ongoing professional development to support effective IL teaching and student learning.*

### Keywords

Information literacy, systematic review, faculty staff, higher education, faculty perceptions, librarian collaboration, IL instruction, student skills

### Corresponding Author (✉)

[rtenebe@noun.edu.ng](mailto:rtenebe@noun.edu.ng)  
Department of Library and Information  
Science, National Open University of  
Nigeria University Village Jabi, Abuja  
Nigeria.

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### Introduction

Gathering knowledge on faculty's needs and expectations toward their students' IL skills is an important aspect in the context of creating or growing an IL programme (Bury, 2011). In addition to students' IL skills, this systematic review explores faculty expectations, opinions, and teaching strategies related to IL for students. This knowledge assists in creating useful IL instructional programmes that address identified needs and gaps. Perry (2017), for example, argues that understanding faculty expectations of students' IL skills, specifically concerning evaluative skills, has vital implications for IL instruction.

However, despite the recognition of IL as a vital competency, its definition and application remain contested among faculty (Cope & Sanabria, 2014). While some perceive IL primarily as the ability to locate and reference information, others view it as encompassing a broader range of skills, including critical thinking, digital literacy, ethical use of information, and communication. This lack of consensus often results in inconsistent or insufficient integration of IL into curricula. Additionally, students are frequently expected to enter higher education already equipped with IL competencies, yet many struggle to meet these expectations. Faculty themselves often receive little formal training in IL instruction,

leading to reliance on ad hoc or informal teaching practices.

The challenge is further compounded by limited collaboration between faculty and librarians, even though such partnerships have been shown to significantly enhance IL instruction (Huddleston et al., 2019). While several studies have explored faculty perceptions of IL, most have been conducted in developed countries such as the United States, United Kingdom, and Canada, leaving limited insights from developing contexts. Consequently, there is a need for a systematic review that synthesizes existing evidence on faculty perceptions and practices of IL, highlights gaps across different contexts, and underscores opportunities for stronger institutional support and librarian-faculty collaboration.

### **Aim**

To systematically review the literature on faculty perceptions and practices regarding information literacy (IL).

### **Objectives**

- To investigate the information literacy perceptions and practices of faculty.

### **Research Questions**

1. Based on the literature, what are faculty's understanding of the definition of IL and their roles and responsibilities in teaching IL?
2. What IL skills do faculty expect their students to develop?
3. What IL support is available to students?

### **Methodology**

This systematic review followed the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines to ensure a transparent and replicable process. Not all items from the PRISMA checklist were applied in this review. Specifically, items 11, 14, 15, 18, 21, and 22, which relate to risk of bias,

reporting bias, and certainty of evidence, were not included because the synthesis was qualitative and thematic rather than a quantitative meta-analysis. As such, the use of formal bias appraisal tools and statistical certainty measures was not applicable. In addition, items 25 (Funding) and 26 (Competing interests) were not reported, as the review did not receive external funding, and the authors declare no competing interests.

### **Search Strategy**

A systematic search was conducted across databases including ERIC, Scopus, Emerald, and Google Scholar. Keywords and Boolean operators used included:

- "Information Literacy" OR "IL" OR "Library Skills"
- AND "Faculty Perceptions" OR "Faculty Attitudes" OR "Faculty Beliefs"
- "Faculty Views" OR "Faculty Perceptions" OR "Lecturers' Opinions" OR "Teachers' Perspectives"
- AND "IL Instruction in Higher Education" OR "Teaching Information Literacy" OR "IL Pedagogy" OR "IL Programs"
- "Faculty" OR "Lecturers" OR "Instructors"
- AND "Librarian Collaboration" OR "Library Partnership" OR "Faculty–Librarian Cooperation"
- AND "Information Literacy Skills" OR "IL Competencies" OR "Research Skills"

The search covered publications from 2005 to 2023, focusing on peer-reviewed journal articles.

**Inclusion Criteria**

- Studies focusing on faculty perceptions, practices, or expectations of IL.
- Peer-reviewed articles published in English.
- Research involving higher education institutions.
- Studies exploring collaboration between faculty and librarians.

**Exclusion Criteria**

- Studies not directly involving faculty (e.g., student-only perspectives).
- Non-peer-reviewed sources (e.g., opinion pieces, conference abstracts).

- Articles focusing solely on school-level or non-tertiary contexts.

**Screening and Selection**

The initial search yielded 150 records. After removal of duplicates and screening titles/abstracts, 50 full-text articles were assessed. Finally, 19 studies met the inclusion criteria and were included in this review.

**Data Extraction and Analysis**

Data were extracted into a table capturing: author, year, country, methodology, sample, and key findings. A thematic content analysis was conducted to synthesize recurring themes aligned with the review objectives.

**Extraction Table of Faculty Perceptions of Information Literacy Studies**

| Author(s)               | Year | Country | Methodology                | Sample                                  | Key Findings                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|-------------------------|------|---------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Boon, Johnston & Webber | 2005 | UK      | Interviews                 | English faculty                         | Conceptions of IL included accessing/retrieving textual information, using IT, basic research skills, autonomous learning, critical thinking.                                                       |
| Webber, Boon & Johnston | 2005 | UK      | Interviews                 | English & Marketing faculty             | English faculty emphasized books; Marketing faculty emphasized news, reports, datasets, websites; showed disciplinary differences in IL conception.                                                 |
| Cope & Sanabria         | 2014 | USA     | Interviews                 | 20 disciplines (in Communication)       | Defined IL as integrating basic skills, academic discourse, and library skills; Communication faculty stressed evaluating, synthesizing, producing information critically.                          |
| Bury                    | 2016 | Canada  | Semi-structured interviews | 24 faculty across disciplines (Toronto) | IL seen as linked to academic literacies; importance of cognitive skills like questioning and evaluating; faculty wanted collaboration with librarians; concerns about students' reading skills.    |
| Kaletski                | 2017 | USA     | Survey                     | Faculty at Stetson University           | Faculty rated ACRL Framework knowledge practices as very important; believed both faculty and librarians responsible; IL should be developed across 1st–4th years.                                  |
| Bury                    | 2011 | Canada  | Survey                     | Faculty across disciplines              | Faculty concerned about students' IL abilities; believed IL should be taught by both faculty and librarians; preferred delivery through lectures, tutorials, online, or course-related work.        |
| Pinto                   | 2016 | Spain   | Survey (IL HUMASS)         | Faculty from 5 subject areas            | IL perception aligned with ACRL skills (finding, analyzing, using info); communication/dissemination and searching seen as very important; evaluation and processing rated slightly less important. |

| Author(s)                      | Year | Country     | Methodology                               | Sample                                                                    | Key Findings                                                                                                                                                                  |
|--------------------------------|------|-------------|-------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Dubicki                        | 2013 | USA         | Online survey                             | Faculty in communication, journalism, and 18 other fields                 | IL seen as essential for research; included in learning objectives; students expected to have IL skills by graduation; quantitative only.                                     |
| Kousar & Mahmood               | 2015 | Pakistan    | Survey (questionnaire)                    | Engineering educators                                                     | PhD students' IL skills higher than master's; used subject-specific standards; recommended more robust standards for assessment.                                              |
| Singh                          | 2005 | India       | Survey                                    | Journalism & Communication faculty and students                           | Graduate students met ACRL IL standards; undergraduates weaker but improved after library instruction.                                                                        |
| Breland                        | 2022 | USA         | Semi-structured interviews                | 6 faculty teaching undergraduate general courses                          | Faculty saw IL role distinct from librarians; taught IL via coursework; librarians handled research process; direct modeling of IL skills by faculty.                         |
| Huddleston et al.              | 2019 | USA         | Survey + comparison                       | Faculty & undergraduate students                                          | Faculty expected 9 research skills; varied views on who should teach IL; thought librarians should focus on search but not other skills.                                      |
| Giangrande, Cassigoli & Giusti | 2021 | Italy       | Interviews                                | Faculty at Florence University                                            | Initially unfamiliar with IL; later acknowledged its importance; undergraduates lacked IL skills; librarians still seen traditionally as book experts.                        |
| Perry                          | 2017 | UK          | Semi-structured interviews                | Science faculty                                                           | Wanted students to use peer-reviewed journals; ran classes to support research skills; saw IL teaching as librarian's role.                                                   |
| Saunders                       | 2012 | USA         | Survey + interviews                       | Faculty in 6 disciplines                                                  | Faculty agreed IL is important, critical, and essential.                                                                                                                      |
| Sandercock                     | 2016 | Middle East | Survey                                    | Faculty at technical college (IT, engineering, business, health sciences) | Mismatch between expected IL skills and student achievement; poor in evaluating sources and search strategies; recommended IL resources.                                      |
| Stebbing et al.                | 2018 | UK          | Survey                                    | Nursing & business faculty (Anglia Ruskin University)                     | Explored faculty views of IL; identified understanding of an information-literate student; did not link IL to course-specific activities.                                     |
| Shorsher & Bronstein           | 2018 | Israel      | Interviews (faculty & students)           | Faculty & students                                                        | Faculty expected IL training to be subject-specific and progressive; students lacked IL skills and were unaware of library services.                                          |
| Foster                         | 2020 | USA         | Survey + focus groups + document analysis | Faculty across 8 schools in California State University                   | Faculty delivered most IL activities; emphasized evaluation, authoritative sources, and ethical use; recommended subject-specific analysis of syllabi for better integration. |

*Source: Author*

### Results and Literature Review

It is noted in the literature that there have been studies on faculties' perceptions of information literacy (IL) in developed countries, such as the United Kingdom and

the United States of America. For example, these include studies by Bury (2011, 2016), Kaletski (2017), and Pinto (2016). However, few studies on faculty's perceptions have been conducted in developing countries (Diep & Nahl, 2011), and no study has investigated

faculty perceptions in Nigeria specifically. This part of the literature review therefore mainly explores existing studies conducted in developed countries (e.g., Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States) to identify gaps in this area.

A study by Boon, Johnston, and Webber (2005) explored United Kingdom English faculty's conceptions of IL via interviews and compared the conceptions with the current IL standards and frameworks at that time. The findings showed that their conceptions of IL were both similar to and different from IL conceptions recorded in previous research, ACRL standards, and frameworks of IL. The conceptions identified were accessing and retrieving textual information, using IT to access and retrieve information, possessing basic research skills and knowing how and when to use them, and becoming confident autonomous learners and critical thinkers.

Another related study by Webber, Boon, and Johnston (2005) compared United Kingdom faculty's conceptions of IL in two disciplines: English and Marketing. Marketing faculty's conceptions of IL were accessing information quickly and easily, using IT to work with information, possessing a set of information skills and applying them to the task at hand, using IL to solve real-world problems, becoming critical thinkers, and becoming confident independent practitioners. The results of the comparison showed that there are differences in terms of what both disciplines refer to as "information source." For English faculty, it is their texts, particularly books; in contrast, for Marketing faculty, sources mean news, market reports, journals, numerical datasets, company websites, organisations, and people.

Cope and Sanabria (2014) examined faculty perceptions of IL from 20 different disciplines to investigate two factors: how a particular discipline impacts faculty conceptions of IL and how faculty perceptions of IL differ from those of librarians. Communication faculty was among the 20 disciplines interviewed.

The study's results showed that faculty defined IL as integrating basic skills, academic discourse, and library skills. Specifically, communication faculty defined IL as "the ability to find, evaluate, and synthesize relevant information, the ability to produce information critically, [and] being able to know where information comes from and how valid the source is". Faculty expected students to be able to find, evaluate, and synthesize reliable information from academic resources and held a similar view to LIS professionals regarding the importance of IL skills and behaviours.

Bury (2016) investigated faculty perceptions of IL in a digital landscape by examining faculty definitions of IL in the context of undergraduate education and their expectations of undergraduate students' IL knowledge and abilities. Data were collected via semi-structured interviews with 24 faculty members from different disciplines at a research university in Toronto, Ontario. It was found that faculty viewed IL as closely connected to other academic literacies and necessary for successfully completing undergraduate research work. They emphasised the importance of developing students' cognitive skills, such as questioning and evaluating information. Faculty saw opportunities to improve undergraduates' IL abilities and expressed a willingness to collaborate with librarians. Additionally, faculty were concerned about students' lack of academic reading skills, and they stated that they were teaching students how to read scholarly materials through reading quizzes on assigned readings.

In all the above studies, the authors explored the conceptions of IL from faculty in various disciplines such as English, Marketing, Economics, and Biology, with only one study focusing specifically on Journalism and Communication.

Several studies used a quantitative method to investigate faculty perceptions of IL. However, more studies with interviews, not

only surveys, are required to better understand faculty perceptions of IL. For example, Kaletski (2017) investigated how the *ACRL Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education* (Framework) can meet students' IL needs. The study surveyed faculty at Stetson University to discover what role they believed the importance of each knowledge practice (KP) documented in the framework should play in students' learning. They were asked to rate IL based on its importance, timing, and responsibility. The study discovered that faculty rated each KP in the IL framework for higher education as very important. It was concluded that faculty saw both themselves and librarians as responsible for fostering IL in universities. Regarding timing, most respondents indicated that students should develop all KPs between the 1st and 4th years of university. However, knowledge of the demographics of the faculty particularly their disciplines was not included in the study. In addition, in-depth research around the views of faculty in relation to IL frameworks was not conducted.

Bury (2011) also conducted a study on faculty perceptions, attitudes, and experiences, highlighting faculty views of IL. Through a questionnaire survey, faculty were asked about students' IL competencies, their perceptions of the value of IL, their roles in IL education, and their views on the best IL delivery method. It was found that faculty were strongly concerned about students' IL abilities and expressed a need for improvement. Most faculty indicated that librarians and faculty should be jointly responsible for teaching IL, and the preferred IL delivery methods included lectures, tutorials, outside class time, course-related assignments, library-led instruction, and customised sessions. However, it was found that most faculty did not include IL instruction in their courses.

Pinto (2016) explored, via a survey, faculty members' conceptions of IL and their perceptions of a defined set of core IL

competencies grouped into four categories: searching, evaluation, processing and communication, and dissemination, through the HUMASS survey. Data correlation analysis and non-parametric testing were used with the goal of finding significant differences in faculty perceptions between five subject areas (arts and humanities, sciences, social and legal sciences, health sciences, and technical disciplines). It was found that faculty held an academic perception of IL, which involved skills for finding, analysing, and using information based on ACRL approaches. Communication, dissemination, and searching were rated as "very important," while evaluation and processing were assigned slightly lesser ratings of "important." The results showed that IL awareness was differentiated by subject area.

Dubicki (2013) conducted an online survey of faculty to examine their perspectives on IL in communication and journalism programs, as well as in 18 other fields. The study explored faculty knowledge of IL concepts, their application in teaching, and students' abilities in IL. Faculty considered IL necessary for college research and made it a part of students' learning objectives. They also expected students to have these skills by graduation. Similar to other studies reviewed, this was a purely quantitative study, whereas the use of interviews would have provided a more in-depth understanding of faculty perceptions of IL.

Kousar and Mahmood (2015) analysed the perceptions of engineering educators regarding students' IL skills. They used the ACRL standard to gauge how faculty viewed IL for engineering students through a structured questionnaire. The findings showed that faculty viewed their PhD students' IL skills as higher than their master's students' IL skills. The authors effectively used subject-specific IL standards, not generic ones, to assess faculty perceptions of IL. However, the study would have been more robust if subject-

specific IL standards had been consistently applied.

Singh (2005) investigated how faculty evaluated students' IL abilities, more specifically with journalism and communication students, based on the 2000 ACRL standard. Most of the graduate students met the ACRL criteria for being information literate, but some of the undergraduate students did not. Faculty also noticed that students improved their research skills after library instruction.

In these studies, interviewing faculty would have provided deeper insights into subject-specific notions of IL and a more nuanced exploration of faculty perceptions of students' IL skills. However, there has been a preference toward quantitative approaches rather than qualitative explorations that capture perspectives and challenges more richly.

Available studies adopting a more qualitative perspective uncover interesting views of faculty around their role in IL and their expectations regarding students' IL skills. For example, Breland (2022) investigated faculty perceptions of librarian-led instruction via semi-structured interviews with six members of faculty who taught undergraduate general courses. The study found that faculty believed their role in teaching IL differs from that of librarians. Faculty were responsible for teaching IL through coursework and direct instruction, while librarians were responsible for teaching the research process. The study further revealed how faculty taught students specific IL skills, such as finding information in databases, by providing direct instruction through modelling and practice.

Huddleston et al. (2019) similarly sought to understand faculty expectations and perceptions of undergraduate students' research skills. They discovered that faculty expected students to possess nine core research skills, including topic selection, search strategy, finding resources,

differentiating source types, evaluating sources, synthesizing information, summarizing information, citing sources, and reading and understanding citations. The study compared faculty expectations with students' actual ability for each skill. Interestingly, opinions varied about who should teach students these skills. Faculty thought librarians should teach search strategy and resource discovery, but not other skills, revealing a lack of understanding of how libraries can support holistic IL development.

Giangrande, Cassigoli, and Giusti (2021) investigated faculty opinions on their students' IL skills at Florence University. Initially, faculty appeared unfamiliar with IL concepts but later acknowledged their importance during interviews. Faculty believed that undergraduate IL skills were lacking, while master's and postgraduate students possessed more advanced IL skills. Although faculty appreciated the contribution of the library based on IL training, librarians were viewed in a traditional role as book experts and not as competent instructors.

Perry (2017) investigated science faculty attitudes toward undergraduate students' research skills through semi-structured interviews. Faculty discussed what they expected from students when searching for research articles, including reliable sources such as peer-reviewed journals. Faculty used diverse methods to assist students with research, such as classes to improve research skills and activities to engage students with the literature. However, they viewed teaching information literacy as primarily a librarian's role, with limited understanding of the links between research skills and IL.

On the other hand, Saunders (2012) surveyed and interviewed faculty in six different disciplines to explore their perceptions of IL competencies expected of their students. She found that faculty agreed that IL is important, critical, and essential.

However, studies investigating faculty perceptions of IL have mostly been generic without focusing on the need for discipline-specific IL skill development. For example, Sandercock (2016), using SCONUL's Seven Pillars of Information Literacy model, explored how faculty at a Middle Eastern technical college perceived their students' IL skills across subject areas including IT, engineering, business, and health science. The study found a lack of compatibility between the IL skills faculty expected their students to achieve and what was actually achieved by the end of their programmes. Overall, students' IL skills were considered poor, particularly in evaluating sources and using search strategies. The study recommended the provision of IL resources that would assist students in achieving these skills. However, faculty did not connect these general IL skills with the specific requirements of students' individual courses.

A similar study by Stebbing et al. (2018) examined the perceptions of IL among nursing and business faculty at Anglia Ruskin University. Although the research explored faculty views on IL across different subject areas and their understanding of an information-literate student, the study did not discuss the impact of IL skills on course-specific activities.

Shorsher and Bronstein (2018) also investigated faculty perceptions of IL skills and found that faculty expected effective IL training to be subject specific, taught step by step, and aligned with the different stages of a degree. However, after interviewing students, they found that students lacked IL skills, received insufficient support from faculty, and were often unaware of the IL services offered by libraries.

Foster (2020) investigated IL instruction, learning, and development within eight different schools in California State University by means of a survey and focus groups with faculty. Additionally, the study examined students' learning outcomes, annual

assessment reports, and documents describing teaching and assessment methods across the university. The results revealed that faculty provided most IL learning activities and placed high importance on IL competency. Several IL skills were identified in the assessment documents analysed, including information evaluation, the use of authoritative sources, and the ethical use of information (e.g., avoiding plagiarism). However, a more robust subject-specific analysis of program syllabi and course descriptors would have provided additional insights into discipline-specific IL skills.

Several studies exploring faculty conceptions and perceptions of IL share common themes. For instance, Boon, Johnston, and Webber (2005) found that English faculty in the United Kingdom viewed IL as the ability to access and retrieve textual information, use IT tools, apply basic research skills, and develop into confident, critical thinkers. These views were echoed in the findings of Webber, Boon, and Johnston (2005), who compared IL conceptions across English and Marketing. Despite disciplinary differences, both groups emphasised IT use, information access, and critical thinking. Similarly, Cope and Sanabria (2014), who examined faculty across 20 disciplines, reported that faculty often define IL as a combination of basic skills, academic skills, and the ability to critically produce and evaluate information. These overlapping conceptions suggest a shared understanding that IL involves more than technical searching; it includes higher-order thinking and independent learning.

Another commonality is the belief that both faculty and librarians play important roles in IL education. Kaletski (2017), in a survey of faculty at Stetson University, noted that faculty saw themselves and librarians as jointly responsible for students' IL development. This view is echoed in Bury's (2011) study, where faculty reported that IL should be taught by both faculty and librarians using methods such as lectures,

tutorials, online sessions, and course-related assignments. Similarly, Foster (2020), who investigated IL instruction across eight schools in California State University, observed that faculty often took the lead in teaching IL but still recognised the value of librarian involvement, especially in areas such as source evaluation and ethical information use. These findings highlight ongoing interest in faculty-librarian collaboration, although the precise division of roles varies.

At the same time, the studies reveal notable differences. A clear distinction emerges in how faculty across disciplines understand and apply IL concepts. Webber, Boon, and Johnston (2005) found that English faculty viewed books as their main information source, while Marketing faculty preferred reports, datasets, websites, and industry-specific materials. Pinto's (2016) survey further confirmed disciplinary variation, showing that faculty from technical and health sciences emphasised information searching and dissemination more than those from humanities and social sciences, who rated evaluation and processing slightly less important. Perry (2017), examining science faculty, found that they valued reliable peer-reviewed sources and ran sessions to support student engagement with research literature. These differences suggest that each discipline prioritises specific IL competencies according to its academic culture and research practices.

Differences also appear in how IL instruction is implemented and assessed. While some faculty, as reported in Bury (2016), actively included IL elements in their teaching and even assessed academic reading through quizzes, other studies such as those of Bury (2011) and Shorsher and Bronstein (2018) found that many faculty did not integrate IL instruction into their courses. Shorsher and Bronstein also highlighted a disconnect between faculty expectations and students' experiences, students were often unaware of library support and felt they lacked sufficient IL training from faculty. This contrast between

expectations and practice was also observed in Sandercock's (2016) study in a Middle Eastern technical college, where students' IL skills, especially in evaluating sources, fell short of faculty expectations, leading to calls for better support and resources.

Lastly, perceptions of students' IL competencies vary by academic level. Kousar and Mahmood (2015), studying engineering educators, found that faculty believed PhD students had stronger IL skills than master's students. Singh (2005) reported similar findings, noting that most graduate students in journalism and communication met the ACRL IL standards, while undergraduate students often did not, though their skills improved after library instruction. These results suggest that IL development is progressive and that faculty often expect more advanced skills as students move through academic levels.

In summary, while faculty across disciplines generally agree on the core components of IL and the need for shared responsibility with librarians, their interpretations, expectations, and teaching practices vary significantly. These differences are shaped by disciplinary contexts, institutional culture, and individual experiences with IL instruction and collaboration. Overall, the above studies sought to evaluate IL in diverse fields, assess student proficiency, and determine faculty expectations. These studies were conducted to promote IL within a discipline or assess existing IL instruction. However, they required more emphasis on the IL skills required within each subject area. In addition, none of these studies conducted an in-depth exploration of students' courses regarding IL skill requirements, an area that presents a considerable research gap that should be addressed.

### **Discussion of Findings**

The findings of this review are consistent with earlier literature but also reveal discipline-

specific and institutional nuances that help to explain existing gaps in IL integration.

Faculty definitions of IL often reflect their disciplinary backgrounds (Boon, Johnston & Webber, 2005; Pinto, 2016; Cope & Sanabria, 2014). Science faculty emphasized data analysis and peer-reviewed sources (Perry, 2017), while humanities faculty stressed critical reading and synthesis (Webber, Boon & Johnston, 2005). This disciplinary variation explains why no unified definition of IL has emerged across higher education. The absence of shared institutional frameworks further contributes to inconsistency in IL instruction (Sandercock, 2016). Policies promoting adaptable IL frameworks contextualized by discipline are necessary to strengthen integration into curricula.

The review found that while faculty generally acknowledge IL as essential, they remain divided on who should teach it. Many see IL as a shared responsibility between faculty and librarians but lack clarity on role division (Bury, 2011, 2016; Dubicki, 2013). In some contexts, librarians are still perceived narrowly as book experts (Giangrande, Cassigoli & Giusti, 2021), limiting collaboration. Policy initiatives that embed librarian involvement in course design could shift practice toward more collaborative and sustainable IL instruction.

Faculty expect students to master skills such as critical evaluation, independent research, referencing, and synthesis (Huddleston et al., 2019; Saunders, 2012; Singh, 2005). Yet, undergraduates often fall short of these expectations (Shorsher & Bronstein, 2018). Progressive IL integration across curricula, beginning with entry-level courses, is recommended.

Support remains inconsistent, often limited to orientation sessions or optional workshops (Foster, 2020; Shorsher & Bronstein, 2018). A disconnect between library services and faculty awareness prevents students from fully benefiting.

Institutions should embed IL training into course assessments and strengthen faculty-library communication. Doing so would ensure IL support is not peripheral but central to student learning.

Overall, the findings emphasize that IL development requires a systemic approach. Universities should:

- Establish institutional IL frameworks adaptable across disciplines.
- Promote structured faculty-librarian collaboration through co-teaching and curriculum integration.
- Provide professional development for academics to improve IL pedagogy.
- Embed IL instruction progressively within academic programs, ensuring consistent student exposure.

By aligning institutional policies with these findings, higher education can bridge the gap between academics' expectations and students' skills, ultimately enhancing both teaching quality and student learning outcomes.

## Conclusion

In summary, the findings indicate that while faculty recognize the importance of IL, significant gaps remain in understanding, instructional practices, and institutional support. Enhancing IL instruction in higher education requires clearer definitions and shared understanding of IL, institutional support for faculty development in IL, stronger collaboration between librarians and faculty, and integration of IL into curriculum and assessment.

## Recommendations

To strengthen information literacy (IL) in higher education, the following recommendations are proposed:

- University leadership/administration should create clear, institution-wide frameworks that guide how IL is

defined and taught, while allowing flexibility for discipline-specific needs.

- University management, academic departments, and library leadership should establish policies and opportunities for faculty and librarians to jointly design and deliver IL instruction to ensure shared responsibility.
- Faculty/lecturers, in collaboration with librarians and curriculum committees, should integrate IL progressively into course syllabi and assessments across all levels, rather than relying only on one-off workshops or orientations.
- Staff development units, teaching and learning centres, and the library's professional development team should provide training and workshops to build faculty confidence and capacity to teach and integrate IL into their subject areas.
- University management and finance and planning units should allocate resources, funding, and strategic support for IL programs, librarian-led initiatives, and digital learning tools.
- Student affairs units, library staff, academic advisors, and orientation coordinators should actively promote IL support and library services through orientation, first-year programs, and academic advising to ensure students use available resources.

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