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The Information Literacy Level of Students at SMAN 1 Kubung and SMAN 1 Junjungsirih: A Comparative Study

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Abstract

The growing importance of information literacy as a twenty-first-century competency has strengthened the need for students to identify information needs, search for relevant information, evaluate information credibility, and use information effectively and responsibly. However, information literacy skills among senior high school students remain varied, particularly across schools with different library management conditions. This study aims to analyze and compare the information literacy levels of eleventh-grade students at SMAN 1 Kubung and SMAN 1 Junjungsirih based on The Big6 framework. A quantitative approach with a descriptive-comparative research design was employed. The study population consisted of 401 students, from which 80 respondents were selected using proportionate stratified random sampling. Data were collected using a closed-ended questionnaire developed based on six indicators of The Big6 model: task definition, information-seeking strategies, location and access, use of information, synthesis, and evaluation. The validity test showed that all instrument items were valid, with correlation coefficients exceeding the r-table value of 0.361, while the reliability test produced a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.971, indicating excellent reliability. The findings revealed that students' overall information literacy level was

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categorized as high, with a grand mean score of 3.45. SMAN 1 Kubung obtained a higher average score of 3.58 than SMAN 1 Junjungsirih, which obtained a score of 3.36. The highest score was found in the task definition indicator, whereas the lowest score was identified in the synthesis indicator. The study concludes that differences exist in students' information literacy levels between the two schools, influenced by learning environments, information resource management, and school library support systems. These findings contribute to the literature on school-based information literacy and provide practical implications for strengthening information literacy programs, optimizing the role of school librarians, and developing literacy-based learning strategies to enhance students' critical and analytical thinking skills.

Keywords: Information Literacy; The Big6 Model; School Library; Senior High School Students; Digital Literacy

INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of information and communication technology has brought significant changes to the educational sector, particularly in the ways students obtain, access, and utilize information. Information is now widely available through various printed and digital media, enabling students to access learning resources beyond traditional textbooks. This condition requires students to possess adequate information literacy skills in order to identify information needs, evaluate the credibility of information sources, and use information effectively and ethically. Information literacy has become one of the essential competencies of the twenty-first century because it supports learning processes, decision-making, and critical thinking skills among students (American Library Association [ALA], 2016). Internationally, information literacy is increasingly recognized as a fundamental educational competence needed to navigate the complexity of digital information environments.

Despite the growing importance of information literacy, many students still experience difficulties in critically evaluating and utilizing information. Head and Eisenberg (2010) explain that although current students belong to the digital generation, they do not automatically possess strong information literacy skills. Many students tend to rely on instant information obtained from internet sources without conducting deeper evaluations of the credibility, relevance, and accuracy of the information. Consequently, the information used in academic assignments is often inaccurate, irrelevant, or even

misleading. International studies also indicate that weak information literacy skills contribute to students' inability to identify misinformation and hoaxes circulating through digital media (Zimmerman & Rose, 2024). These issues demonstrate that information literacy has become an important concern within educational institutions worldwide.

In the Indonesian context, the condition of students' information literacy also remains a significant issue. Several national studies reveal that the information literacy levels of senior high school students in Indonesia are still varied and tend to be less than optimal (Juliswara, 2017; Prasetyo, 2019). Many students are still unable to critically select information sources and frequently depend on a single source of information, especially internet-based materials. Lubis and Batubara (2023) found that students' information literacy abilities strongly influence their capacity to recognize and avoid false information or hoaxes found online. These findings indicate the necessity of more structured information literacy education within Indonesian schools to improve students' abilities to search, evaluate, and utilize information appropriately in academic activities.

Researchers and educational experts argue that the development of information literacy cannot be separated from the educational environment and institutional support available in schools. According to Ramayanti and Iranda (2023), school libraries play an important role as learning resource centers that provide access to various information sources that support students' academic activities. Furthermore, Taqwina and Adji (2024) state that information literacy development requires collaboration between teachers, librarians, and schools in order to create learning environments that encourage students to search, evaluate, and use information critically and responsibly. The existence of librarians is considered important because librarians can guide students in locating credible information sources, utilizing library resources, and developing systematic information-searching strategies. Therefore, differences in school facilities, library management, and the availability of librarians may influence students' information literacy levels.

Previous studies have examined information literacy from various perspectives. Nelita et al. (2024) investigated the development of the Search, Solve, Create, and Share (SSCS) learning model integrated with information literacy reinforcement for senior high school students. The study emphasized the importance of instructional strategies in improving students' literacy skills. Rijal (2024) explored the relationship between digital literacy and students' critical thinking skills and found that literacy competencies

significantly contribute to academic learning processes. Meanwhile, Zimmerman and Rose (2024) examined the role of school librarians in teaching students how to detect and avoid misinformation, highlighting the importance of librarians in strengthening information literacy education. Lopez and Carter (2024) also conducted a systematic review regarding information literacy development and assessment at the school level, emphasizing that educational support systems strongly affect students' literacy competencies.

Although previous studies have contributed significantly to the discussion of information literacy, several research gaps remain evident. Most previous studies focused on instructional models, digital literacy, or the general role of librarians in education. Limited studies specifically compare students' information literacy levels between schools that have librarians and schools that do not have librarians, especially at the Indonesian senior high school level. Furthermore, many previous studies focused on higher education institutions or broader educational contexts rather than comparative studies between schools with different library management conditions. Therefore, this study seeks to fill the gap by comparing the information literacy levels of students at SMAN 1 Kubung and SMAN 1 Junjungsirih, two senior high schools located in Solok Regency with different educational and library management conditions.

This study is theoretically supported by The Big6 model developed by Eisenberg and Berkowitz, which conceptualizes information literacy as a systematic process consisting of six stages: task definition, information seeking strategies, location and access, use of information, synthesis, and evaluation (Eisenberg et al., 2021). The Big6 theory is considered relevant because it provides measurable indicators that can be used to assess students' information literacy competencies systematically. Through this framework, students' abilities to identify information needs, search for information, evaluate information sources, and utilize information effectively can be analyzed comprehensively. The novelty of this study lies in its comparative focus on students' information literacy levels in schools with and without librarians by applying The Big6 framework within the Indonesian senior high school context.

Based on the issues and research gaps described above, this study focuses on analyzing and comparing the information literacy levels of eleventh-grade students at SMAN 1 Kubung and SMAN 1 Junjungsirih. Specifically, the study examines students' abilities in recognizing information needs, searching and accessing information, evaluating

information credibility, and using information effectively and ethically in learning activities. The study aims to determine whether significant differences exist between the information literacy levels of students in schools with librarians and those without librarians, as well as to provide empirical contributions for the development of information literacy programs and school library management in Indonesian senior high schools.

METHODS

This study employed a quantitative approach using a comparative research design to examine differences in information literacy levels among eleventh-grade students at SMAN 1 Kubung and SMAN 1 Junjungsirih. A quantitative approach was selected because the study focused on numerical data measurement and statistical analysis to obtain empirical evidence regarding students' information literacy competencies in two different school contexts. Comparative research was considered appropriate since the study did not involve experimental treatment but instead compared naturally existing conditions, namely schools with librarians and schools without librarians. This approach enabled the researcher to identify measurable and objective differences in students' information literacy levels across the two educational settings.

The research employed a descriptive-comparative survey design. This design was chosen because the study aimed not only to describe students' information literacy levels but also to compare the results between two groups of students from different schools. Data were collected using a structured closed-ended questionnaire developed based on the The Big6 Skills model proposed by Michael B. Eisenberg and Robert E. Berkowitz. The Big6 model was adopted as the theoretical framework because it systematically conceptualizes information literacy as a sequence of problem-solving and information-processing stages. The study consisted of one dependent variable, namely students' information literacy. This variable was operationalized into six indicators: task definition, information seeking strategies, location and access, use of information, synthesis, and evaluation. The task definition indicator measured students' ability to identify information needs and formulate information-related problems. Information seeking strategies referred to students' ability to determine effective search strategies and select appropriate information sources. Location and access assessed students' competencies in locating and accessing information resources through libraries and digital platforms. Use of information

measured students' abilities to comprehend and utilize information effectively. Synthesis referred to students' capability to integrate information from multiple sources into coherent understanding, while evaluation assessed students' ability to critically evaluate the relevance and credibility of information. These indicators served as the foundation for questionnaire development, ensuring that the measurement of information literacy was theoretically grounded and systematically organized.

The participants of this study were eleventh-grade students from SMAN 1 Kubung and SMAN 1 Junjungsirih. Eleventh-grade students were selected because they were considered to have relatively stable learning experiences, more advanced analytical thinking skills, and higher exposure to academic information sources compared to students at other grade levels. The total population consisted of 401 students, including 231 students from SMAN 1 Kubung and 170 students from SMAN 1 Junjungsirih. The sampling process employed proportionate stratified random sampling because the population was divided into two distinct school groups while still sharing comparable educational characteristics. This technique ensured proportional representation of each school according to its population size. The sample size was determined using the Slovin formula with a 10% margin of error, resulting in 80 respondents. The final sample consisted of 46 students from SMAN 1 Kubung and 34 students from SMAN 1 Junjungsirih. Respondents were selected randomly to ensure that all members of the population had equal opportunities to participate in the study, thereby minimizing sampling bias and improving data representativeness.

The primary research instrument was a closed-ended questionnaire constructed based on The Big6 information literacy indicators. The questionnaire consisted of 30 statement items distributed across the six research indicators. Responses were measured using a four-point Likert scale consisting of strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree categories. The neutral option was intentionally omitted to reduce ambiguous responses and encourage respondents to provide more decisive answers. Prior to the main data collection, the instrument underwent validity and reliability testing. The validity test was conducted with 30 respondents outside the main research sample using product-moment correlation analysis. The results indicated that all questionnaire items had correlation coefficients higher than the critical r-table value of 0.361, meaning that all items were statistically valid. Reliability testing was subsequently conducted using Cronbach's

Alpha coefficient and yielded a value of 0.971, indicating excellent internal consistency and confirming that the instrument was highly reliable for research purposes.

Data collection was conducted through several systematic stages. The initial stage involved identifying the research population and coordinating with school administrators to obtain official data regarding the number of eleventh-grade students at each school. After determining the sample size, respondents were selected randomly from the student lists of each school. The next stage involved distributing the questionnaires directly to the selected respondents within the school environment. During questionnaire administration, the researcher and assigned teachers supervised the process to ensure that respondents clearly understood the instructions and completed the questionnaire independently and honestly. After all questionnaires had been collected, the researcher examined the completeness of responses, coded the data, and entered them into statistical software for further analysis. The research was conducted during the academic research period, encompassing stages of instrument preparation, data collection, instrument testing, and statistical analysis over the course of the study.

The data analysis procedures consisted of data verification, tabulation, descriptive statistical analysis, and conclusion drawing. Data verification was conducted to ensure that all collected questionnaires were complete and suitable for analysis. The verified data were then tabulated into frequency distribution tables to facilitate interpretation and statistical processing. Descriptive statistical analysis was used to describe students' information literacy levels based on mean scores, percentages, and categorical interpretations for each indicator. In addition to descriptive analysis, inferential statistical analysis was also employed to determine differences in information literacy levels between students at SMAN 1 Kubung and SMAN 1 Junjungsirih. The independent samples t-test was used because the study compared two distinct groups of respondents. This statistical procedure was intended to determine whether significant differences existed between the two groups based on significance values obtained from the analysis. The findings were subsequently interpreted to address the research objectives and formulate conclusions regarding the influence of school librarians on students' information literacy levels. Through these systematic analytical procedures, the study was expected to generate objective, valid, and academically meaningful findings that contribute to the development of information literacy studies in secondary education contexts.

RESULTS

1. Validity Test

Table 1. Validity Test Result

Item	Pearson Correlation	R table	Description
P01	0,702	0,361	Valid
P02	0,821	0,361	Valid
P03	0,684	0,361	Valid
P04	0,812	0,361	Valid
P05	0,793	0,361	Valid
P06	0,724	0,361	Valid
P07	0,772	0,361	Valid
P08	0,798	0,361	Valid
P09	0,782	0,361	Valid
P10	0,735	0,361	Valid
P11	0,696	0,361	Valid
P12	0,776	0,361	Valid
P13	0,808	0,361	Valid
P14	0,730	0,361	Valid
P15	0,690	0,361	Valid
P16	0,687	0,361	Valid
P17	0,758	0,361	Valid
P18	0,709	0,361	Valid
P19	0,813	0,361	Valid
P20	0,719	0,361	Valid
P21	0,793	0,361	Valid
P22	0,778	0,361	Valid
P23	0,747	0,361	Valid
P24	0,735	0,361	Valid
P25	0,698	0,361	Valid
P26	0,762	0,361	Valid
P27	0,662	0,361	Valid
P28	0,740	0,361	Valid
P29	0,648	0,361	Valid
P30	0,672	0,361	Valid

source: Compiled by the researcher (2026)

Table 1 validity test results show that all statement items in each research variable obtained correlation coefficient (r-count) values exceeding the r-table value of 0.361. This indicates that all instrument items meet the validity requirements and are capable of measuring the research indicators accurately. Therefore, the entire research instrument is considered valid and suitable for use in this study.

2. Reliability Test

Table 2. Reliability Test Result

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0,971	30

source: Compiled by the researcher (2026)

Table 2 reliability test results show that the Cronbach's Alpha values for all variables are greater than 0.60. Based on the reliability test criteria, an instrument is considered reliable if the Cronbach's Alpha value is equal to or higher than 0.60. Therefore, all research instruments used in this study are categorized as reliable

3. Descriptive Statistical Analysis

Table 3. Comparative Results of SMAN 1 Kubung and SMAN 1 Junjungsirih

No	School	Number of Respondents	Mean	Category	Description
1	SMAN 1 Kubung	46	3.58	High	Higher
2	SMAN 1 Junjungsirih	34	3.36	High	Lower
	Average	80	3.45	High	

source: Compiled by the researcher (2026)

Table 3 comparative results show that the number of respondents from SMAN 1 Kubung was 46 students, while SMAN 1 Junjung Sirih consisted of 34 students. The average score of students' information literacy at SMAN 1 Kubung was 3.58, which was higher than the average score obtained by students at SMAN 1 Junjung Sirih, namely 3.36. The comparison of the mean scores indicates a difference of 0.22 points. Based on these findings, it can be concluded that students at SMAN 1 Kubung demonstrated higher information literacy abilities than those at SMAN 1 Junjung Sirih.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study reveal that the overall level of students' information literacy at SMAN 1 Kubung and SMAN 1 Junjungsirih falls within the high category, with a grand mean score of 3.45. This indicates that students in both schools generally possess adequate competencies in identifying information needs, searching for information, accessing information, utilizing information, synthesizing information, and evaluating information based on The Big6 framework. However, the comparative analysis demonstrates a noticeable difference between the two schools, with SMAN 1 Kubung achieving a higher average score than SMAN 1 Junjungsirih. This disparity suggests that

students' information literacy competencies are influenced by variations in learning environments, access to information resources, school facilities, and literacy-oriented instructional support. These findings reinforce the argument that information literacy does not develop automatically but requires continuous educational support and conducive learning environments (Eisenberg & Berkowitz, 1990).

In the task definition dimension, students from both schools demonstrated strong abilities in identifying information needs, determining search topics, and formulating information-related problems. The average score for this indicator was categorized as high, with students from SMAN 1 Kubung outperforming those from SMAN 1 Junjungsirih. This finding suggests that most students already possess the foundational ability to recognize information needs before initiating the information search process. Within The Big6 framework, defining information needs is considered a fundamental stage because it determines the direction and effectiveness of subsequent information-seeking activities (Association of College and Research Libraries [ACRL], 2020). The relatively high scores in this dimension indicate that students are aware of the importance of understanding academic tasks before searching for information. Nevertheless, the differences between the two schools imply that instructional quality, teacher guidance, and academic culture significantly affect students' ability to formulate information problems systematically.

The information seeking strategies dimension also demonstrated meaningful differences between the two schools. Students from SMAN 1 Kubung exhibited stronger competencies in planning information searches, selecting relevant keywords, and identifying credible sources compared to students from SMAN 1 Junjungsirih. This finding suggests that effective information-seeking strategies are influenced not only by technical digital skills but also by critical thinking abilities in evaluating the quality and relevance of information sources. The result is consistent with UNESCO (2021), which emphasizes that information literacy in the digital era requires evaluative competencies to filter reliable information amid the rapid expansion of digital content. Consequently, information-seeking strategies represent a crucial competency that directly affects the quality and relevance of information obtained by students.

In the location and access dimension, students from both schools demonstrated strong abilities to locate and access information through books, libraries, and internet-based resources. The high scores indicate that students are relatively familiar with utilizing

both digital technologies and conventional information resources in supporting their academic activities. Nevertheless, students from SMAN 1 Kubung consistently achieved higher scores, which may be associated with differences in library facilities, internet accessibility, and literacy-supportive school cultures. Theoretically, access and retrieval skills are essential prerequisites for information literacy because effective use of information cannot occur without the ability to locate relevant and reliable sources (Eisenberg & Berkowitz, 1990). The findings further suggest that students do not solely rely on internet-based information but still perceive books and libraries as structured and credible learning resources.

The use of information dimension revealed that students generally possess adequate abilities to understand, select, and utilize relevant information for completing academic assignments. Most students reported that they read and comprehend information before applying it and are capable of transforming information into their own written work. These findings indicate that students are not merely engaging in mechanical information retrieval but are also developing basic interpretative competencies. However, the differences between the two schools suggest that the quality of information use remains associated with students' critical thinking skills and academic habits. In the context of twenty-first-century education, the effective use of information represents an important component of higher-order thinking skills because students are expected not only to consume information but also to interpret and apply it critically and reflectively (OECD, 2021).

The synthesis dimension emerged as one of the relatively weaker aspects of students' information literacy competencies. Although most students reported being able to organize information into reports or presentations, their ability to integrate multiple sources into comprehensive understanding remained limited. This finding suggests that synthesis skills are cognitively more demanding than information retrieval or basic information use. Within information literacy theory, synthesis is closely associated with higher-order thinking because it requires students to analyze, interpret, and integrate information critically (ACRL, 2020). The results indicate that students are generally more proficient in searching for information than in processing information reflectively and comprehensively.

In the evaluation dimension, students demonstrated relatively strong abilities in reviewing the relevance and credibility of information before using it. Most students also reported comparing information from multiple sources and evaluating the quality of their academic tasks. This finding reflects students' growing awareness of the importance of information validity in the digital age. However, variations in reflective and evaluative competencies remain evident, particularly in students' ability to critically assess information accuracy and consistency in depth. Theoretically, evaluation constitutes a central component of information literacy because it relates directly to critical thinking and evidence-based decision-making (UNESCO, 2021). Therefore, the findings indicate that while students possess foundational evaluative competencies, further reinforcement of reflective and analytical skills remains necessary.

This study contributes theoretically by reinforcing the relevance of The Big6 framework as a multidimensional model for assessing information literacy among secondary school students. The findings demonstrate that information literacy extends beyond the ability to locate information and includes analytical, critical, and reflective thinking skills required for effective information use. Furthermore, the study highlights that each component of The Big6 framework involves different levels of cognitive complexity, suggesting that information literacy development requires gradual and sustained instructional approaches.

From a practical perspective, the findings provide important implications for schools, teachers, and librarians in designing information literacy enhancement strategies. Schools should establish supportive learning environments by improving access to information resources, optimizing library services, and integrating information literacy into classroom instruction. Teachers are encouraged to implement learning approaches that promote critical thinking, information evaluation, and synthesis skills. In addition, school librarians can play a more active role in conducting information literacy training programs, particularly in digital source evaluation and effective search strategies.

Several limitations should be acknowledged in this study. First, the research was limited to two senior high schools in Kabupaten Solok, which restricts the generalizability of the findings to broader educational contexts. Second, the study employed a descriptive quantitative approach using questionnaires, meaning that the data primarily reflect students' perceptions rather than direct observation of their actual information literacy practices.

Third, the study did not examine additional external variables such as socioeconomic background, intensity of digital technology use, or family support, all of which may influence students' information literacy development. Future studies are therefore recommended to adopt mixed-methods approaches or direct observational techniques to provide a more comprehensive understanding of students' information literacy practices within educational settings.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study indicate significant differences in students' information literacy levels between SMAN 1 Kubung and SMAN 1 Junjung Sirih. Students from SMAN 1 Kubung achieved higher average scores, suggesting that learning environments, access to information resources, and instructional support influence students' information literacy competencies. However, the overall grand mean remained within the high category, indicating that students in both schools generally possess adequate information literacy skills to support academic activities in the digital era. These findings address the research objective of analyzing students' information literacy based on The Big6 framework. The results also reveal variations across all indicators of The Big6 model. The task definition indicator obtained the highest score, showing that students were relatively capable of identifying and defining their information needs. In contrast, the synthesis indicator recorded the lowest score, indicating that students still experience difficulties in integrating and organizing information comprehensively. This pattern suggests that students perform better in the initial stages of information literacy than in advanced stages requiring higher-order thinking skills such as critical analysis, evaluation, and synthesis. Theoretically, this study strengthens the application of The Big6 framework in assessing information literacy among secondary school students. The findings emphasize that information literacy involves not only locating information but also critical and analytical thinking skills in managing information effectively. Practically, the results may serve as a reference for schools and educators in developing learning strategies that encourage critical thinking and effective information use. This study highlights the importance of strengthening information literacy through structured learning activities that promote analysis, evaluation, and synthesis skills. Schools are expected to provide supportive learning environments and improve access to quality information resources, while teachers should encourage more active and critical learning practices. Future research is recommended to involve broader

educational contexts and examine additional factors, such as technology use, instructional methods, and family support, that may influence students' information literacy development.

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