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The Relationship between Information Literacy and Information Overload on TikTok among Library and Information Science Students at Padang State University

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Abstract

The rapid growth of social media has increased users' exposure to excessive volumes of digital information, making information literacy essential for evaluating, organizing, and managing information effectively. However, the extent to which information literacy is associated with information overload in the context of TikTok use remains insufficiently understood. This study examined the relationship between information literacy and information overload among Library and Information Science students at Padang State University. A quantitative correlational design was employed, involving 78 students selected through simple random sampling. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire based on the SCONUL Information Literacy Model and the information overload framework developed by Bawden and Robinson. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson product–moment correlation, and the coefficient of determination. The findings showed that both students' information literacy and information overload were at high levels. Nevertheless, information literacy was negatively but not significantly correlated with information overload ($r = -0.126$, $p = 0.272$), leading to the retention of

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the null hypothesis. Information literacy explained only 1.6% of the variance in information overload (R^2 = 0.016), indicating that students with strong information literacy competencies may still experience substantial information overload when using TikTok. The study concludes that information literacy alone is insufficient to explain students' information overload in social media environments. These findings extend the literature on digital information behavior and provide a basis for investigating additional individual, technological, and contextual factors that may contribute to information overload among university students.

Keywords: Digital Information Behavior; Information Literacy; Information Overload; TikTok; University Students

INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement of information technology has transformed the way people obtain, access, and utilize information in their daily lives. The widespread availability of internet access has enabled individuals to acquire vast amounts of information within a short period through various digital devices. As a result, individuals are no longer merely recipients of information but are also expected to possess the ability to understand, evaluate, and use information appropriately. The ability to identify information needs and utilize information ethically has become an increasingly important competency in the digital era (Tarbiyati & Riady, 2025) . Along with these developments, social media has emerged as one of the primary sources of information used across various aspects of life.

The extensive use of social media indicates the growing role of digital platforms in information seeking and consumption. Recent data show that approximately 68.7% of the global population uses social media, accounting for more than 5.66 billion active user identities worldwide. In addition, individuals use nearly seven social media platforms each month on average and spend approximately 2.5 hours per day accessing them (*We Are Social Indonesia*, 2025) . Among these platforms, TikTok has experienced remarkable growth. Through its For You Page (FYP) feature, TikTok continuously delivers personalized content and information based on users' preferences. While this feature facilitates rapid access to information, it also exposes users to large volumes of information from diverse sources within a relatively short period (O'Brien et al., 2025).

Continuous exposure to information through social media may lead to information overload, a condition in which the amount of information received exceeds an individual's capacity to process and comprehend it effectively (Bawden & Robinson, 2020). This condition may result in confusion, mental fatigue, difficulties in identifying relevant information, and impaired decision-making abilities. Previous studies have demonstrated that excessive information and communication demands on social media can contribute to user fatigue due to the burden of processing large amounts of information (Eliyana et al. 2020; Kenny, 2020). Furthermore, intensive use of social media platforms, including TikTok, may increase the risk of information overload when not accompanied by adequate information management skills (Nuralmi et al., 2023).

In addressing this issue, information literacy has become an essential competency. Information literacy extends beyond the ability to locate information, it also encompasses the ability to evaluate credibility, assess relevance, and use information critically and responsibly. Individuals with strong information literacy skills are generally better equipped to filter and manage incoming information, thereby reducing their susceptibility to excessive information exposure. Mahardhini et al. (2021) emphasized that strengthening information literacy can help individuals utilize information more effectively and efficiently. Consequently, information literacy is considered a crucial factor in mitigating the negative consequences of excessive digital information exposure.

University students represent one of the most active groups of social media users and consumers of digital information. Their academic and non-academic activities require them to engage with information intensively on a daily basis. In this context, students enrolled in Library and Information Science programs constitute an interesting population for investigation because they receive formal education related to information management and information literacy as part of their academic training. Theoretically, these competencies should enable them to identify, evaluate, and utilize information more effectively than other groups of information users.

However, several studies suggest that possessing information literacy skills does not necessarily eliminate the risk of information overload. Latifah et al. (2024) found that the use of TikTok influences the information literacy of students in the library and information field. Similarly, Anggraini & Erlianti (2025) reported that students of the Library and Information Science Study Program at Universitas Negeri Padang still experience the effects of

information overload when fulfilling their academic information needs. These findings indicate that although students possess foundational knowledge of information literacy, extensive exposure to digital information may still create challenges in information management processes.

Preliminary observations involving 20 students from the Library and Information Science Study Program at Universitas Negeri Padang further support this phenomenon. Several students reported difficulties in comprehending information in depth due to the large volume of information received within a short period through social media. Others experienced confusion in identifying relevant information, loss of concentration resulting from continuous information exposure, and challenges in filtering and evaluating information effectively. These observations suggest the presence of information overload among students who use TikTok as a source of digital information. Despite this phenomenon, studies specifically examining the relationship between information literacy and information overload in the context of TikTok use among Library and Information Science students remain limited.

Based on these considerations, this study offers a novel contribution by examining the relationship between information literacy and information overload in the use of TikTok among students of the Library and Information Science Study Program at Universitas Negeri Padang. The study is grounded in the concept of information literacy as the ability to identify information needs, locate, evaluate, and effectively use information, as well as the concept of information overload as a condition in which the volume of information exceeds an individual's cognitive processing capacity (Bawden & Robinson, 2020). Therefore, this study aims to analyze and describe the relationship between information literacy and information overload in TikTok use among Library and Information Science students at Universitas Negeri Padang. The findings are expected to provide empirical contributions to the development of information literacy and information behavior studies in the digital era.

METHODS

This study employed a quantitative approach to examine the relationship between information literacy and information overload in the use of TikTok among students of the Library and Information Science Study Program at Universitas Negeri Padang. A quantitative

approach was selected because the research data were collected in numerical form and subsequently analyzed using statistical techniques to test the proposed hypothesis. In this study, the quantitative approach was used to provide empirical evidence regarding the relationship between information literacy as the independent variable (X) and information overload as the dependent variable (Y).

The research adopted an inferential research design. This design aims to draw conclusions about a population based on data obtained from a sample. According to Sugiyono (2023), inferential research is used not only to describe the characteristics of sample data but also to generalize the findings to the target population. Through this design, the collected data were statistically analyzed to examine the relationship between information literacy and information overload in the context of TikTok use.

The population consisted of 364 students enrolled in the Library and Information Science Study Program at Universitas Negeri Padang from the 2022, 2023, 2024, and 2025 cohorts, based on data obtained from the Executive Information System (*Sistem Informasi Eksekutif* [SIE]). Creswell & Creswell (2022) define a population as the entire group of individuals sharing specific characteristics relevant to the research objectives. The sample was selected using probability sampling with a simple random sampling technique, ensuring that each member of the population had an equal chance of being chosen as a respondent. The sample size was determined using Slovin's formula with a 10% margin of error, resulting in a total sample of 78 respondents.

The study utilized both primary and secondary data sources. Primary data were collected directly from respondents through a structured questionnaire, while secondary data were obtained from relevant scholarly sources, including books, journal articles, and other academic publications (Creswell & Creswell, 2022). The questionnaire was developed based on the indicators of each research variable. Information literacy was measured using the SCONUL (1999) model, which consists of seven dimensions: identify, scope, plan and gather, evaluate, manage, present, and synthesize. Information overload was measured based on the conceptual framework proposed by Bawden & Robinson (2020) , encompassing psychological, cognitive, information characteristics, and managerial and efficiency aspects.

Data were collected online using Google Forms, which were distributed to respondents through digital communication platforms such as WhatsApp. All questionnaire items employed a four-point Likert scale consisting of Strongly Disagree (SD), Disagree (D),

Agree (A), and Strongly Agree (SA). The use of a four-point scale was intended to eliminate neutral responses and encourage respondents to express clearer positions regarding each statement.

Prior to data collection, the instrument was subjected to validity and reliability testing. Validity was assessed using Pearson's Product Moment correlation with the assistance of SPSS. The results of the validity test showed that all items for both the information literacy and information overload variables produced correlation coefficients higher than the critical value ($r = 0.361$), indicating that all questionnaire items met the validity criteria. Reliability testing was conducted using Cronbach's Alpha, yielding coefficients of 0.901 for the information literacy variable and 0.850 for the information overload variable. Since both values exceeded the minimum acceptable threshold of 0.60, the instrument was considered reliable.

Data analysis was conducted through several stages. The initial stage involved data editing and tabulation to ensure the completeness and consistency of respondents' answers. Descriptive statistical analysis was then performed to summarize the characteristics of the data using mean scores and response percentages. Before hypothesis testing, prerequisite analyses were conducted, including the Kolmogorov–Smirnov normality test and the linearity test, to ensure that the assumptions for parametric analysis were satisfied. The research hypothesis was tested using Pearson's Product Moment correlation analysis because the data were treated as interval data and met the assumption of normality. In addition, the coefficient of determination was calculated to assess the extent to which information literacy contributed to information overload. All statistical analyses were performed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

RESULTS

1. Information Literacy

The information literacy variable was measured using seven indicators derived from the SCONUL (1999) model: identify, scope, plan and gather, evaluate, manage, present, and synthesize. Each indicator was assessed through three questionnaire items, resulting in a total of 21 items. Figure 1 presents the frequency distribution of respondents' scores on the information literacy variable.

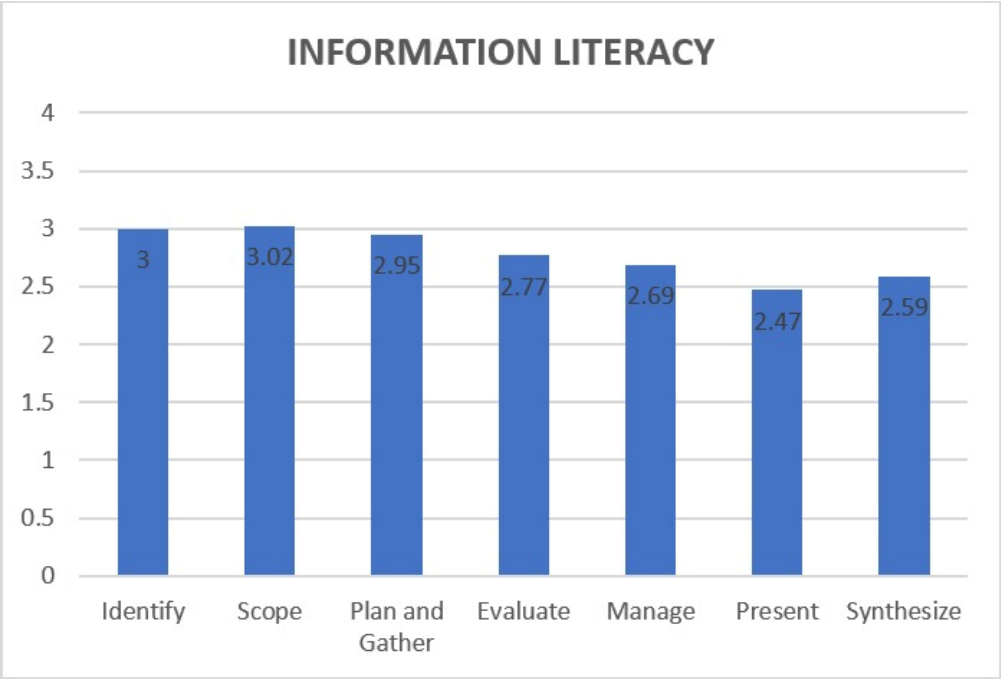


Figure 1. Recapitulation Variable Information Literacy

Figure 1 shows a recapitulation of information literacy variables based on a Likert scale. The research results show that the scope dimension obtained the highest average value of 3.02, followed by identify at 3.00 and plan and gather at 2.95. Furthermore, the evaluate dimension obtained an average value of 2.77, followed by manage at 2.69 and synthesize at 2.59. The lowest average value is in the present dimension at 2.47. Overall, the average value of the information literacy dimension is in the range of 2.47 to 3.02. Based on the established criteria, six dimensions (identify, scope, plan and gather, evaluate, manage, and synthesize) are included in the high category, while the present dimension is included in the low category.

2. Information Overload

The information overload variable was measured using four indicators: psychological, cognitive, information characteristics, and managerial and efficiency. Each indicator was assessed through three questionnaire items, resulting in a total of 12 items. Figure 2 presents the frequency distribution of respondents' scores on the information overload variable.

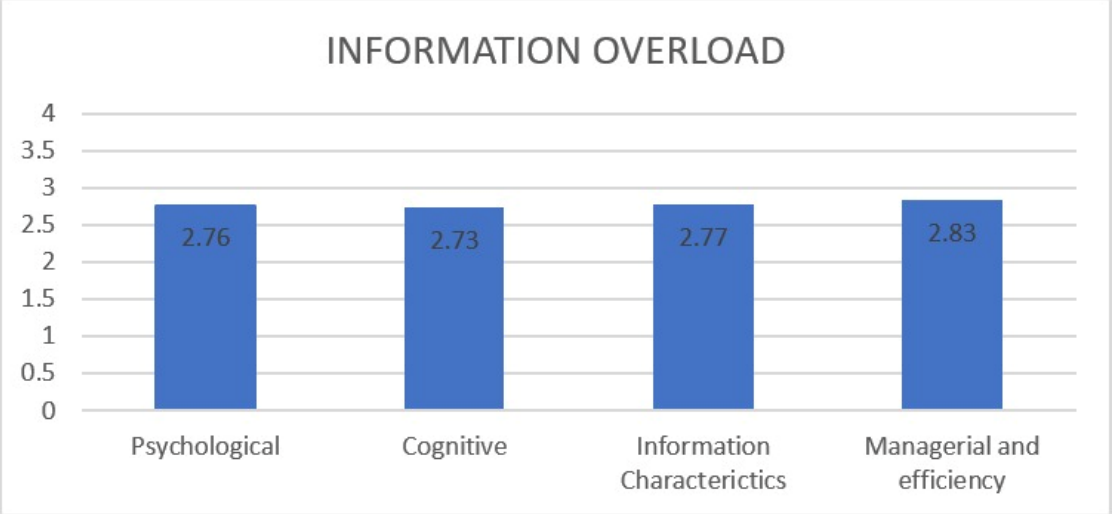


Figure 2. Recapitulation Variable Information Overload

Figure 2 shows a recapitulation of the information overload variable based on a Likert scale. The research results showed that the managerial and efficiency dimensions obtained the highest average value of 2.83, followed by information characteristics at 2.77, psychological at 2.76, and cognitive at 2.73. Overall, the average value of all information overflow dimensions is in the range of 2.73 to 2.83, which indicates that all dimensions are included in the high category.

3. Normality Test

Table 1. Normality Test

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

			Unstandardized Residual
N			78
Normal Parameters[a,b]	Mean		.0000000
	Std. Deviation		5.92847295
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute		.071
	Positive		.055
	Negative		-.071
Test Statistic			.071
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)[c]			.200[d]
Monte Carlo Sig. (2-tailed)[e]	Sig.		.418
	99% Confidence Interval	Lower Bound	.406
		Upper Bound	.431

a. Test distribution is Normal.
b. Calculated from data.
c. Lilliefors Significance Correction.
d. This is a lower bound of the true significance.
e. Lilliefors' method based on 10000 Monte Carlo samples with starting seed 2000000.

Table 1 shows the results of the normality test using the One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test with Asymp values. Sig. (2-tailed) of 0.200. This value is greater than the significance level of 0.05, so it can be stated that the research residual data is normally distributed. By fulfilling the normality assumption, the data is suitable for use in parametric statistical analysis to test the relationship between research variables.

4. Linearity Test

Table 2. Linearity Test

ANOVA Table

			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Information Overload * Literasi Informasi	Between Groups	(Combined)	1231.196	28	43.971	1.419	.140
		Linearity	43.646	1	43.646	1.408	.241
		Deviation from Linearity	1187.551	27	43.983	1.419	.142
	Within Groups		1518.752	49	30.995		
	Total		2749.949	77			

Table 2 shows that the significance value of Deviation from Linearity is 0.142, greater than 0.05. These results indicate that the relationship between information literacy and information overload is linear. Thus, the assumption of linearity was met and the data met the prerequisites for further statistical analysis.

5. Correlation Test

Table 3. Correlation Test

Correlations

		Literasi Informasi	Information Overload
Literasi Informasi	Pearson Correlation	1	-.126
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.272
	N	78	78
Information Overload	Pearson Correlation	-.126	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.272	
	N	78	78

Table 3 shows that the Pearson correlation coefficient value between information literacy and information overload is -0.126 with a significance value of 0.272. Because the significance value is greater than 0.05, there is no significant relationship between the information literacy variable (X) and the information overload variable (Y). A negative correlation value indicates the opposite direction of the relationship, but with a very weak level of relationship.

6. Coefficient Determination Test

Table 4. Coeffiecient Determination Test

Model Summary[b]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.126[a]	.016	.003	5.96735

a. Predictors: (Constant), Literasi Informasi

b. Dependent Variable: Information Overload

Table 4 shows the results of the coefficient of determination test between the variables information literacy and information overload. Based on the analysis results, an R Square value of 0.016 was obtained. This shows that the information literacy variable is able to explain variations in the information overload variable of 1.6%, while the remaining 98.4% is influenced by other factors outside the research model. Thus, the contribution of information literacy to information overload is very small.

DISCUSSION

The results of the study indicate that the level of information literacy of students in the Library and Information Science Study Program, Padang State University, is in the high category. Students have good abilities in identifying information needs, determining the scope of information needed, planning search strategies, evaluating information credibility, managing, utilizing, and integrating various information before making decisions. This reflects that students not only act as recipients of information, but are also able to process information critically in accordance with the seven pillars of information literacy developed by SCONUL (1999).

In the identify and scope indicators, students are able to identify information needs and define the boundaries of the information needed before conducting a search. This demonstrates that the search process is conducted in a focused manner, not simply following the flow of information appearing on social media. This capability aligns with the SCONUL (1999), which places identifying information needs as the primary foundation of the information literacy process because it determines the effectiveness of subsequent stages. Rizkyantha et al. (2024) also explained that determining the scope of information and using various sources helps individuals obtain more comprehensive information that meets their needs.

This ability is then reinforced through the planning and gathering indicator, where students tend to develop search strategies and compare information from various sources before trusting the information obtained through TikTok. This pattern indicates that students do not rely on a single source of information but instead seek to obtain supporting information to increase the accuracy of the information received. This practice reflects the systematic application of the information-seeking process as described in the SCONUL (1999).

In the indicators of evaluating, managing, presenting and synthesizing, students also show relatively good abilities in evaluating, managing, utilizing and integrating information. However, some students still experience difficulties in organizing stored information or connecting information from several sources comprehensively. These conditions show that the management and synthesis stages are a complex part of information literacy because they require not only the ability to assess the credibility of sources, but also process, relate and integrate various information before forming a conclusion. These results are in line with Wahyuni et al. (2025) who explained that the ability to integrate various information is one of the most complex stages because it requires the ability to analyze various perspectives before forming a conclusion.

Overall, students have developed sufficient information literacy skills to cope with the rapid flow of digital information. These skills are essential to ensure that the information obtained is not simply received, but processed through the stages of identification, search, evaluation, management, and synthesis. Thus, information literacy serves not only as a technical skill in searching for information but also as a critical thinking skill that enables individuals to understand, evaluate, and manage the increasingly diverse information. This finding aligns with Ningsih & Sayekti (2023), who asserted that information literacy plays a strategic role in enhancing individuals' ability to understand and interpret information, particularly amidst the rapid development of technology and digital media.

On the other hand, students' information overload levels were also high. They tended to feel overwhelmed when receiving large amounts of information, confused by the multitude of sources covering similar topics, and continued searching for additional information even though their information needs had already been met. This phenomenon suggests that the ease of accessing information through TikTok does not always provide optimal benefits but can also increase the burden of processing information. These results

support the opinion of Bawden & Robinson (2020), who explained that information overload occurs when the amount of information received exceeds an individual's capacity to process it effectively.

From a psychological perspective, students tend to experience feelings of overwhelm, confusion, and doubt when faced with an abundance of information from various sources. This suggests that the greater the exposure to information received, the greater the emotional stress felt in determining accurate and reliable information. This finding aligns with Arnold et al. (2023), who stated that information overload can reduce decision-making quality, disrupt concentration, and increase psychological stress. Furthermore, these findings are supported by Charpentier et al. (2022), who explain that excessive exposure to information can increase anxiety and encourage individuals to continuously seek additional information, thus reinforcing the cycle of information overload.

In the cognitive dimension, students still experience difficulty focusing, concluding information, and stopping the search process even though they already have sufficient information. This suggests that information overload is not only related to the amount of information received but also affects an individual's ability to process it effectively. This finding supports the opinion of Shahrzadi et al. (2024) who stated that information overload can reduce thinking efficiency, disrupt focus, and complicate decision-making.

Besides being influenced by limited cognitive capacity, information overload is also related to the characteristics of the information received. The high volume of information and the complex presentation of information pose challenges for students in understanding the information obtained through TikTok. Furthermore, students also need a relatively long time to sort through the information before using it as a reference, making the task completion process less efficient. This condition supports the view of Bawden & Robinson (2009) that information volume and complexity are the main characteristics that trigger information overload, and is reinforced by Pang et al. (2025) who explain that a high information load can impact individual productivity.

Although both information literacy and information overload were in the high category, the correlation test results showed no significant relationship between the two variables. The correlation coefficient value of -0.126 with a significance level of 0.272 (>0.05) indicates a negative, very weak, and insignificant relationship. Therefore, the tendency that

students with higher information literacy experience lower levels of information overload cannot be statistically proven.

These findings indicate that students' information literacy skills were not significantly related to the level of information overload experienced when using TikTok. Although students were able to identify information needs, evaluate sources, manage, and integrate information, these skills were not directly related to lower levels of information overload. This suggests that information overload is a more complex phenomenon than simply an individual's ability to manage information. This view aligns with Bawden & Robinson (2020), who stated that information overload arises through the interaction between an individual's capacity to process information and the characteristics of the information received.

This research contributes to the development of information literacy and information overload studies, particularly in the context of TikTok social media use among university students. The results confirm that information literacy remains a crucial competency in navigating the flow of digital information. However, this ability is not always directly related to the level of information overload experienced by users. Therefore, this study enriches the study of the relationship between these two variables and opens up opportunities for further research to examine this relationship across different contexts, respondent characteristics, and social media platforms.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the relationship between information literacy and information overload among Library and Information Science students at Padang State University in the context of TikTok use. Findings indicate that students exhibit high levels of information literacy, reflected in their ability to identify information needs, search for relevant information, evaluate source credibility, manage information, and integrate information from multiple sources. At the same time, students also experienced high levels of information overload, characterized by feelings of being overwhelmed by the amount of information, difficulty processing complex information, and reduced efficiency in managing information for academic purposes. However, a Pearson correlation analysis revealed no statistically significant relationship between information literacy and information overload. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_0) was accepted, while the alternative hypothesis (H_1) was rejected, indicating that information literacy was not significantly associated with information

overload among respondents. These findings suggest that higher levels of information literacy do not necessarily correspond to lower levels of information overload in the context of TikTok use.

This study contributes to the growing body of research on information literacy and information overload, particularly in the context of social media use among college students. These findings highlight that information literacy remains a crucial competency for navigating the digital information environment. However, it does not automatically reduce the likelihood of experiencing information overload. Consequently, this study provides additional empirical evidence that the relationship between information literacy and information overload is not always linear and may vary across digital environments.

This study was limited to students from a single program and focused exclusively on TikTok as a context for information use. Because this research was only conducted on students of the Library and Information Science Study Program at Padang State University and only in the context of TikTok usage, the results cannot be directly considered applicable to all students or all social media platforms. Future studies are recommended to involve participants from different disciplines or educational institutions, investigate other social media platforms, and employ broader research designs to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between information literacy and information overload across various digital contexts.

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