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Information Literacy Skills of Library Users in Utilizing Digital Information Resources at the Library of Universitas Negeri Padang in 2025

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Abstract

The increasing use of digital information resources in higher education requires students to possess adequate information literacy skills to support academic activities. This study aims to analyze the information literacy skills of library users in utilizing digital information resources at the Library of Universitas Negeri Padang. A descriptive quantitative approach was employed, involving 98 respondents selected through simple random sampling. Data were collected using a questionnaire and analyzed through descriptive statistics. The findings show that the information literacy skills of library users were in the high category, with a mean score of 3.13, equivalent to 78.24%. All measured indicators, namely identifying information needs, searching and accessing digital information, evaluating digital information, and using information effectively and ethically, were also categorized as high. The indicator of effective and ethical information use obtained the highest score, whereas searching and accessing digital information received the lowest score, although it remained within the high category. This study concludes that library users have strong information literacy skills in utilizing digital information resources to support academic activities. The

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findings contribute to the development of information literacy studies in academic library contexts and provide practical implications for university libraries in strengthening information literacy programs, particularly those related to the use of academic digital information resources.

Keywords: Academic Library; Digital Information Resources; Digital Literacy; Information Literacy; Library Users

INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement of information and communication technology has fundamentally transformed the way individuals access, manage, evaluate, and utilize information in the digital era. In contemporary higher education environments, information is no longer limited by physical boundaries because various digital resources can be accessed through internet-based platforms and academic information systems. The emergence of digital information ecosystems has significantly expanded opportunities for students to obtain scholarly resources efficiently and support academic activities. However, the abundance of information available through digital platforms has also created new challenges related to information quality, credibility, relevance, and ethical use. Consequently, information literacy has become an essential competency that enables individuals to navigate complex information environments effectively and responsibly (Putri et al., 2025).

In the twenty-first century, information literacy is widely recognized as one of the fundamental competencies required for academic success, lifelong learning, and informed decision-making. The increasing volume of information generated through digital technologies has exposed users to various forms of content with different levels of reliability and accuracy. Therefore, individuals are expected not only to access information but also to identify their information needs, locate relevant sources, evaluate the credibility of information, and apply information ethically in different contexts (Subaveerapandiyan et al., 2022). These competencies are particularly important for university students, who rely heavily on digital information resources to complete academic assignments, conduct research, and develop scholarly knowledge.

The growing dependence on digital information resources has altered the role of academic libraries. University libraries are no longer merely repositories of printed collections but have evolved into dynamic information centers that provide access to electronic journals,

electronic books, institutional repositories, online databases, and various digital services that support learning and research activities (Delliana, 2025). Through the integration of digital technologies, academic libraries contribute significantly to the development of students' information competencies and facilitate broader access to scholarly information. As a result, libraries have become strategic institutions in fostering information literacy within higher education settings (Supriati et al., 2025).

The transformation of academic libraries has also strengthened their function as learning centers that encourage critical thinking, independent learning, and effective information use. Beyond providing access to information resources, libraries are expected to support students in developing the skills necessary to navigate digital information environments successfully. Such support includes information literacy training, user education programs, and guidance in accessing and evaluating scholarly resources (Elvy et al., 2021). Therefore, the effectiveness of digital library services cannot be assessed solely by the availability of information resources but must also consider users' ability to utilize those resources appropriately.

Despite the widespread availability of digital information resources, numerous studies have indicated that access to technology does not automatically guarantee adequate information literacy competencies. Many students continue to encounter difficulties in determining information needs, formulating search strategies, evaluating information credibility, and using information ethically (Mariyani et al., 2023). These challenges suggest that technological accessibility alone is insufficient to ensure effective information utilization. Instead, students require comprehensive information literacy skills to maximize the benefits of digital information resources.

Previous research has demonstrated that the level of digital literacy among Indonesian university students is generally categorized as moderate to good. Nevertheless, several aspects of literacy competence remain underdeveloped, particularly those related to information evaluation, critical thinking, and information verification (Novelia et al., 2021). This situation indicates that while students may possess basic technological skills, they often lack the higher-order competencies required to critically assess information quality and reliability. Consequently, students may become vulnerable to misinformation, unreliable sources, and inaccurate information that could negatively affect academic performance and decision-making processes.

Research has further shown that information literacy development is influenced by both technological and personal factors. Internal characteristics such as curiosity, motivation, persistence, and self-directed learning significantly contribute to students' ability to search for, evaluate, and utilize digital information effectively (Rini et al., 2022). These findings highlight that information literacy is not merely a technical skill but also involves cognitive, behavioral, and attitudinal dimensions that shape how individuals interact with information resources.

Within higher education institutions, the increasing utilization of digital resources has intensified the need for effective information literacy competencies. The availability of digital collections such as electronic journals, electronic books, and institutional repositories has expanded considerably, enabling students to access scholarly information more efficiently than ever before (Himawan et al., 2024). However, several studies have reported that students often experience difficulties in locating relevant information, selecting appropriate search strategies, and distinguishing credible sources from unreliable content (Mahardhini et al., 2021). Such challenges may reduce the effectiveness of digital resource utilization and hinder academic achievement.

The importance of information literacy becomes even more evident when considering the growing prevalence of misinformation and information overload in digital environments. Students are frequently exposed to vast amounts of information from multiple online platforms, including websites, social media, blogs, and digital repositories. Without adequate literacy skills, users may struggle to identify trustworthy information and may inadvertently rely on inaccurate or misleading sources (Mercado-Sierra et al., 2023). Therefore, strengthening information literacy competencies has become a critical priority for higher education institutions seeking to enhance academic quality and research productivity.

In the context of university libraries, information literacy is generally conceptualized as an integrated set of abilities that enables individuals to recognize information needs, access information effectively, evaluate information critically, and use information ethically and responsibly. This conceptualization aligns with the standards developed by the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL), which emphasize the importance of information competency as a foundation for academic learning and lifelong education (Diana et al., 2022). The ACRL framework provides a comprehensive theoretical basis for understanding

information literacy as a multidimensional construct encompassing cognitive, technical, and ethical dimensions.

Several studies have examined information literacy among university students using different theoretical perspectives and measurement frameworks. Research conducted by Azaki (2023) revealed that students generally demonstrate adequate information literacy skills but still encounter difficulties in evaluating information sources critically. Similarly, Gusriani et al. (2023) found that information literacy competencies vary across different dimensions, with students showing stronger performance in information access than in information evaluation and synthesis. These findings indicate the need for further investigation into specific aspects of information literacy that may require improvement.

Other studies have emphasized the significance of information literacy training programs in enhancing students' competencies. Asaniyah (2024) reported that information literacy initiatives implemented by academic libraries can improve users' abilities to identify information needs, conduct effective searches, and utilize information resources more efficiently. Likewise, Mahardhini et al. (2021) concluded that structured information literacy education positively influences students' capacity to navigate digital information environments. These studies underscore the strategic role of libraries in fostering information literacy development.

Although information literacy has attracted considerable scholarly attention, several limitations remain evident within existing research. First, many previous studies have focused primarily on digital literacy or general information behavior rather than specifically examining information literacy skills in the context of utilizing digital information resources provided by academic libraries (Kamilah et al., 2026). Second, numerous investigations have concentrated on particular student groups or academic disciplines, limiting the generalizability of findings across broader university populations (Azaki, 2023). Third, existing studies frequently emphasize access and usage patterns while providing limited attention to the comprehensive assessment of information literacy competencies encompassing information identification, information retrieval, information evaluation, and ethical information utilization.

Based on the review of previous studies, a clear research gap can be identified. Existing literature has extensively discussed digital literacy, information-seeking behavior, and the utilization of digital resources among students. However, empirical evidence

regarding the actual level of information literacy skills among library users in utilizing institutional digital information resources remains limited, particularly within the context of Universitas Negeri Padang. Furthermore, previous studies have not comprehensively examined information literacy competencies using the ACRL framework across multiple dimensions, including information need identification, digital information retrieval, information evaluation, and ethical information utilization. Therefore, further investigation is necessary to provide a more holistic understanding of students' information literacy competencies in academic library environments.

The need for such investigation is reinforced by findings indicating that increased access to digital resources does not necessarily correspond to enhanced information literacy competencies. Students may frequently use digital information resources while still experiencing difficulties in evaluating information quality, selecting appropriate sources, and applying information ethically (Putri et al., 2025). Consequently, a comprehensive assessment of information literacy skills is required to identify strengths and weaknesses in students' competencies and inform the development of targeted educational interventions.

The novelty of this study lies in its comprehensive examination of information literacy skills among users of digital information resources at the Library of Universitas Negeri Padang using the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) framework as the primary analytical foundation. Unlike previous studies that predominantly focused on digital literacy or information-seeking behavior, this research specifically evaluates information literacy competencies across four integrated dimensions: identification of information needs, digital information retrieval and access, information evaluation, and effective and ethical information utilization.

Another innovative aspect of this study is its focus on library users from diverse academic disciplines within Universitas Negeri Padang. By involving respondents from various study programs and academic cohorts, the research provides a broader representation of information literacy competencies within the university community. This approach enables a more comprehensive understanding of how students utilize institutional digital information resources and contributes empirical evidence to support information literacy development initiatives in higher education libraries.

The theoretical foundation of this study is grounded in the information literacy standards established by the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL).

According to the ACRL framework, information literacy encompasses the ability to recognize information needs, locate and access information effectively, evaluate information critically, and use information ethically and responsibly. These competencies are essential for academic achievement, independent learning, and lifelong education in contemporary information societies (Diana et al., 2022). The framework provides a robust conceptual basis for assessing students' information literacy skills within digital academic environments.

The adoption of the ACRL framework is particularly relevant because it offers a multidimensional perspective that extends beyond technological proficiency. Information literacy involves not only technical abilities related to information access but also critical thinking, analytical reasoning, and ethical decision-making. Consequently, the framework enables a comprehensive evaluation of students' competencies in utilizing digital information resources for academic purposes.

Given the strategic role of academic libraries in supporting learning and research, understanding students' information literacy competencies is crucial for improving library services and educational programs. Information literacy assessments can provide valuable insights into users' strengths and weaknesses, thereby informing the development of training initiatives, user education programs, and digital resource promotion strategies. Such efforts are essential for maximizing the educational value of digital information resources and enhancing students' academic performance.

Based on the issues, research gaps, and theoretical considerations discussed above, this study focuses on examining the information literacy skills of users in utilizing digital information resources at the Library of Universitas Negeri Padang. Specifically, the research investigates students' abilities to identify information needs, retrieve and access digital information, evaluate information credibility and relevance, and utilize information effectively and ethically. Through this investigation, the study aims to provide an empirical description of students' information literacy competencies and contribute to the enhancement of information literacy programs within academic library environments.

The findings of this study are expected to enrich the body of knowledge in library and information science, particularly regarding information literacy in higher education contexts. In addition, the results may serve as a practical reference for library administrators, educators, and policymakers in designing strategies to strengthen students' information literacy competencies and optimize the utilization of digital information resources.

Ultimately, improving information literacy is essential for fostering academic excellence, promoting responsible information use, and preparing students to navigate increasingly complex digital information landscapes.

METHODS

This study employed a quantitative approach with a descriptive research design to examine the information literacy skills of library users in utilizing digital information resources at the Universitas Negeri Padang Library. The descriptive approach was selected to provide an objective overview of users' information literacy skills without investigating causal relationships among variables.

The study was conducted at the Universitas Negeri Padang Library in 2025. The research focused on a single variable, namely users' information literacy skills, which were measured based on the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) framework. The indicators included information need identification, digital information searching and access, information evaluation, and the effective and ethical use of information. These indicators were used to assess users' abilities in utilizing digital information resources available through the library. The population consisted of 5,824 users who accessed digital information resources at the Universitas Negeri Padang Library from January to December 2025. The sample size was determined using the Slovin formula with a 10% margin of error, resulting in 98 respondents. Participants were selected through probability sampling using the simple random sampling technique, ensuring that each member of the population had an equal opportunity to be included in the study.

Data were collected using a closed-ended questionnaire comprising 30 statements measured on a four-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. The instrument was developed based on the ACRL information literacy indicators and was tested for validity using Pearson Product Moment correlation and for reliability using Cronbach's Alpha through SPSS version 23. Documentation was also employed as supporting data to verify the research process. Data analysis was conducted using descriptive statistical techniques. The process included data editing, tabulation, scoring, and the calculation of mean scores and percentages. The findings were then interpreted according to predetermined categories to describe the level of information literacy skills among library users in utilizing digital information resources at the Universitas Negeri Padang Library.

RESULTS

Descriptive Statistical Analysis

Table 1Summary of Average Values for Each Indicator

Indikator	Mean	Percentage	Category
Identifying Information Needs	3.09	77.25%	Tall
Digital Information Search and Access	3.06	76.46%	Tall
Digital Information Evaluation	3.11	77.73%	Tall
Effective and Ethical Use of Information	3.22	80.43%	Tall
Total Variables	3.13	78.24%	Tall

source: Compiled by the researcher (2026)

Table 2Summary of Average Values for Each Indicator indicated the results of the calculation of the average score for each indicator, it is known that all indicators of the Information Literacy Skills variable are in the high category. The indicator with the highest average value is the Effective and Ethical Use of Information with a mean value of 3.22 (80.43%), while the indicator with the lowest average value is Digital Information Search and Access with a mean value of 3.06 (76.46%). Overall, the Information Literacy Skills variable obtained a mean value of 3.13 with a percentage of 78.24% so it is included in the high category .

Overall, the Effective and Ethical Use of Information indicator had an average score of 3.22, which is considered high. This result indicates that students have the ability to use the information provided effectively to support academic activities and understand the importance of using information ethically. A high average score on this indicator indicates that students are able to use information clearly, pay attention to the ethical aspects of information, and use the information provided according to their academic needs.

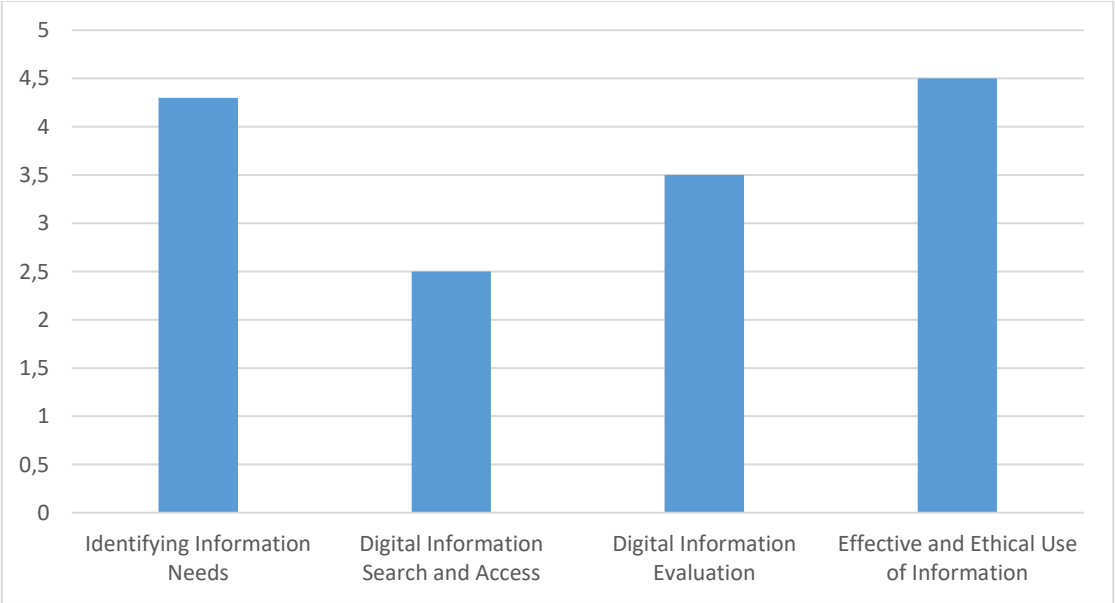

Figure 1Average Value of Information Literacy Skills Indicators

Figure 2Average Value of Information Literacy Skills Indicators is presented to clarify the comparison of average scores for each information literacy skill indicator. The graph visualization shows that the indicator for effective and ethical information utilization has the highest achievement compared to other indicators, while the indicator for searching and accessing digital information has the lowest average score, although it is still in the high category. Therefore, this graph reinforces the analysis results, which indicate that students' information literacy skills in utilizing digital information sources are overall in the high category.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study indicate that the information literacy skills of library users in utilizing digital information resources at the Universitas Negeri Padang Library are categorized as high, with an overall mean score of 3.13 (78.24%). This result suggests that students generally possess adequate competencies in identifying information needs, accessing and retrieving digital information, evaluating information critically, and utilizing information effectively and ethically for academic purposes. These findings reflect the growing role of academic libraries as information centers that facilitate students' access to digital resources while simultaneously supporting the development of information literacy competencies in higher education environments.

The first indicator, information need identification, obtained a mean score of 3.09 and was classified within the high category. This finding demonstrates that students are capable of recognizing their information needs, determining the objectives of information seeking, formulating search topics, and selecting appropriate keywords before conducting information searches. Such competencies represent a fundamental stage in the information literacy process because effective information retrieval depends largely on the ability to clearly define information needs. According to the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL), recognizing information needs constitutes the initial step in information literacy and significantly influences the effectiveness of subsequent stages, including information retrieval, evaluation, and utilization. Therefore, the high score achieved in this indicator suggests that students have developed a sufficient awareness of their academic information requirements before engaging in information-seeking activities.

The results also support Wilson's Information Behavior Theory, which explains that information-seeking behavior originates from the recognition of an information gap that motivates individuals to search for relevant information. Students who can clearly identify what information they require are more likely to conduct focused and efficient searches. This finding aligns with the study conducted by Putri et al. (2024), which reported that clearly defined information needs contribute to more effective information-seeking behavior among university students. Similarly, Diana et al. (2022) emphasized that the ability to identify information needs significantly affects the efficiency and relevance of information retrieval processes. Therefore, the present study confirms that information need identification remains a critical foundation for successful engagement with digital information resources.

The second indicator, digital information searching and access, achieved a mean score of 3.06, which was the lowest among all indicators despite remaining within the high category. This finding indicates that students generally possess adequate skills in using online public access catalogs (OPACs), digital collections, electronic journals, search engines, and advanced search features. Nevertheless, several questionnaire items related to database utilization and electronic journal access obtained relatively lower scores compared to other aspects. This suggests that while students are familiar with general search tools such as Google, they may still encounter challenges when navigating specialized academic databases and scholarly information platforms.

The relatively lower performance in this indicator highlights an important issue in higher education information literacy development. Access to digital resources alone does not automatically guarantee effective utilization of scholarly information. Students require specific competencies in database searching, keyword formulation, search strategy development, and the use of advanced retrieval techniques. This finding supports the conclusions of Rahmi et al. (2022), who found that students often require additional training to maximize the use of electronic information resources. Similarly, Iqbal et al. (2021) reported that despite the availability of electronic journals, many students continue to rely on easily accessible internet sources rather than utilizing scholarly databases effectively. Therefore, academic libraries need to strengthen information literacy programs that focus specifically on advanced search techniques and database navigation skills.

The third indicator, digital information evaluation, obtained a mean score of 3.11 and was categorized as high. This finding demonstrates that students are capable of assessing the credibility, relevance, accuracy, and reliability of information obtained from digital sources. In contemporary digital environments characterized by information abundance and the widespread circulation of misinformation, the ability to evaluate information critically has become increasingly important. The results suggest that students do not simply accept information at face value but are capable of examining authorship, publication dates, source credibility, and content relevance before utilizing information for academic purposes.

This finding is consistent with the argument proposed by Mercado-Sierra et al. (2023), who emphasized that information literacy extends beyond information retrieval and includes the ability to critically evaluate information quality. Likewise, Gusriani et al. (2023) highlighted that information evaluation is one of the most significant dimensions of information literacy in the digital era because it enables individuals to distinguish reliable information from inaccurate or misleading content. The ability demonstrated by students in this study reflects a relatively mature approach toward information consumption and indicates that they possess critical thinking skills necessary for academic learning and research activities.

Among all indicators, the highest mean score was recorded for the effective and ethical use of information, which achieved a mean score of 3.22. This result indicates that students have a strong understanding of how information should be used responsibly within academic contexts. They demonstrate awareness of citation practices, plagiarism prevention,

ethical information use, and the integration of information from multiple sources. The high performance in this dimension suggests that students recognize the importance of academic integrity and responsible information behavior.

The prominence of ethical information use is particularly significant because ethical considerations have become increasingly important in digital learning environments. The ease of accessing and reproducing information through digital technologies creates potential risks related to plagiarism and copyright violations. Therefore, students' strong awareness of ethical information practices reflects a positive academic culture and an understanding of scholarly responsibilities. This finding supports the study by Tachie-Donkor et al. (2023), which concluded that information literacy contributes to lifelong learning and responsible information use. Similarly, Tarbiyati et al. (2025) emphasized that information literacy plays a crucial role in improving students' academic competencies and their ability to engage responsibly with digital information.

From a theoretical perspective, this study reinforces the ACRL information literacy framework, which conceptualizes information literacy as a multidimensional construct involving information need recognition, information access, information evaluation, and ethical information use. The consistently high scores across all four dimensions indicate that the framework effectively captures the competencies required for successful engagement with digital information resources in higher education settings. The findings also extend previous research conducted by Azaki (2023) by demonstrating that students' information literacy competencies are not limited to information retrieval activities but encompass evaluation and ethical utilization processes as well.

The study also contributes to the broader literature on information literacy by providing empirical evidence from the context of Universitas Negeri Padang. Previous studies have primarily focused on digital literacy, technology adoption, or information-seeking behavior. In contrast, this research offers a comprehensive assessment of information literacy based on the ACRL framework, thereby providing a more holistic understanding of students' competencies in interacting with digital information resources. Consequently, the study contributes to the growing body of knowledge concerning information literacy development in higher education institutions, particularly within Indonesian academic library settings.

From a practical standpoint, the findings have important implications for library management and information literacy education. Although students' information literacy skills were generally categorized as high, the relatively lower score in digital information searching and access suggests the need for continuous improvement initiatives. Academic libraries should develop structured information literacy programs focusing on advanced database searching, electronic resource utilization, and academic information retrieval strategies. Librarians can play a more proactive role as educators and facilitators by conducting workshops, training sessions, and user education programs aimed at enhancing students' abilities to navigate digital scholarly resources effectively.

Furthermore, collaboration between librarians and faculty members could strengthen the integration of information literacy into the curriculum. Embedding information literacy instruction within academic courses would provide students with more opportunities to practice critical information skills in authentic learning contexts. Such efforts would not only improve students' academic performance but also prepare them for lifelong learning in increasingly complex information environments.

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the research employed a descriptive quantitative design, which limits the ability to identify causal relationships or factors influencing information literacy skills. Second, the data were collected through self-reported questionnaires, making the findings dependent on respondents' perceptions and potentially subject to response bias. Third, the study was conducted exclusively among users of digital information resources at the Universitas Negeri Padang Library, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other higher education institutions. Future studies may benefit from adopting mixed-methods approaches, incorporating interviews or observations, and expanding the scope of participants to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of information literacy development among university students.

Overall, this study demonstrates that students at Universitas Negeri Padang possess relatively strong information literacy skills in utilizing digital information resources. The findings underscore the importance of academic libraries in fostering information literacy competencies and highlight the need for continuous efforts to strengthen students' abilities in accessing, evaluating, and utilizing information effectively within digital learning environments.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to examine library users' information literacy skills in utilizing digital information resources at the Universitas Negeri Padang Library. The findings revealed that students' overall information literacy skills were categorized as high, with a mean score of 3.13. All measured dimensions, including information need identification, digital information searching and access, information evaluation, and the effective and ethical use of information, were also classified within the high category. These results indicate that students possess adequate competencies in recognizing information needs, locating and accessing digital information resources, evaluating information quality and relevance, and utilizing information responsibly to support academic activities.

The findings successfully address the research objective by demonstrating that users of the Universitas Negeri Padang Library exhibit a high level of information literacy in utilizing digital information resources. Among the assessed dimensions, the effective and ethical use of information achieved the highest score, whereas digital information searching and access obtained the lowest score, although it remained within the high category. This result suggests that students have developed strong awareness of ethical information practices but still require further enhancement in accessing and utilizing specialized academic information resources, such as scholarly databases and electronic journals.

This study contributes theoretically by reinforcing the applicability of the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) information literacy framework within the context of higher education libraries in Indonesia. Practically, the findings provide valuable insights for academic libraries in designing more targeted information literacy programs, particularly those focusing on digital academic resource retrieval. Furthermore, the study highlights the strategic role of academic libraries in fostering students' information literacy competencies in the digital era.

Based on the findings, academic libraries are encouraged to strengthen training programs related to electronic databases, e-journal utilization, and advanced information retrieval strategies. Future research is recommended to employ analytical or mixed-methods approaches to explore factors influencing information literacy skills and to involve broader participant groups in order to generate a more comprehensive understanding of information literacy development among university students.

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