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DIGITAL LITERACY COMPETENCIES AND EMPLOYABILITY READINESS OF OFFICE & INFORMATION MANAGEMENT (OIM) UNDERGRADUATES IN SELECTED UNIVERSITIES, SOUTH-WEST, NIGERIA

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Abstract

Digital literacy is a requirement in the modern technology-based work environment for university graduates' employability. This study investigated the influence of digital literacy competencies on the employability readiness of Office and Information Management (OIM) undergraduates in selected universities, South-West, Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The population was 256 comprised of 200 and 300 levels OIM undergraduates and total enumeration was used as the sample size of the study. A validated e-questionnaire was used to obtain data from the targeted OIM undergraduates. A reliability test was carried out on digital literacy competencies and employability readiness and both produced Cronbach's Alpha values of 0.816 and 0.782 respectively. Out of the expected 256 responses, the researchers successfully obtained 195, and the obtained data were analysed using both descriptive statistics and inferential statistics (multiple regression analysis at the 0.05 level of significance). The result of the study [$R^2 = 0.491$, $F(1,193) = 53.668$, $p < .05$] revealed that OIM undergraduates' digital literacy competencies significantly influence their employability readiness; the study recognized that digitally competent OIM undergraduates were more ready and confident in meeting work demands. The study also recognized the deficiency in basic digital skills in areas such as collaboration and database management needed in the modern office environment. OIM programme is to be regularly updated to meet changing digital skill needs, including applied training at all levels of programme. This will enhance graduate employability and their performance in fast-paced, digitized workplaces.

Keywords: *Digital Literacy, Employability Readiness, Office Administration, Information Management, Workplace Competence*

Introduction

Employability readiness can be described as the possession, demonstration, and measurement of individuals' skills, knowledge, attitudes, and attributes to successfully secure, sustain, and progress in employment. It goes beyond academic qualifications to include a blend of transferable soft skills, technical competence, problem-solving abilities, communication, teamwork, adaptability, and a professional mindset that aligns with workplace expectations. Employers often emphasize employability readiness as a measure of how prepared a graduate or job seeker is to transition seamlessly into the labour market (Hoque et. al., 2023). It includes the ability to present oneself effectively through a well-crafted résumé, job interviews, and networking, while also demonstrating workplace etiquette, self-confidence, and a willingness to learn. This readiness bridges the gap between theoretical knowledge gained in education and the practical realities of workplace demands.

For undergraduates in university, employability readiness is particularly

significant because it represents the transition point between academic study and entry into the labor market. While universities primarily provide theoretical and disciplinary knowledge, employers increasingly expect graduates to demonstrate practical skills, problem-solving abilities, and adaptability to diverse work settings. Undergraduates who consciously develop employability readiness during their studies gain a competitive edge, as they are better positioned to secure internships, part-time jobs, or graduate roles upon completion (Adewolu-Ogwo, 2024). This readiness is reflected not only in academic excellence but also in participation in extracurricular activities, leadership roles in student organizations, volunteering, and practical exposure to industry. For example, group projects, presentations, and research assignments help students build communication, teamwork, and analytical skills, qualities that employers highly value.

In this study, employability readiness is measured by subject knowledge, efficacy beliefs, and reflective thinking of the undergraduates. The first measure (subject knowledge) is described as the undergraduates' academic and technical knowledge gained during the course of study. In this study, employability readiness is measured by subject knowledge, efficacy beliefs, and reflective thinking of the undergraduates. It is regarded as the foundation of every professional competence which is used to measure the application of the theoretical concepts in the practical workplace situations. Employers expect undergraduates to demonstrate mastery of their discipline and use their subject knowledge to address real-world problems effectively (Karimi & Pina, 2021). The second measure is efficacy beliefs, which refer to the confidence, motivation, and self-belief individuals have in their ability to achieve career success. Undergraduates with strong efficacy beliefs are often more proactive in seeking opportunities, resilient in facing challenges, and confident during interviews and networking activities (Wu et. al., 2024). This belief system empowers them to take initiative and thrive in competitive labour markets.

The third measure is reflective thinking which is also referred to metacognition or self-awareness. It is an ability of individuals to understand and recognise who they are and being able to evaluate their strengths, weaknesses, and learning needs (Nilson & Zimmerman, 2023; Dondi et. al., 2021). In the academic world, undergraduates who have reflective thinking can easily identify their areas of strength and how well to improve on them; they can as well adapt to new workplace demands, embrace new changes from time to time and will be able to continuously engage in personal and professional development. By reflecting on their academic, social, and professional experiences, they become more intentional and strategic about their career growth. Meanwhile, in today's business environment, a strong digital literacy competence is a tool to enhance subject knowledge, efficacy beliefs, and reflective thinking of the undergraduates.

Digital literacy competence is the ability of individuals to effectively and efficiently utilise digital technologies and tools to access, create, evaluate, manage, and communicate information (Nikou et. al., 2022; Martínez-Bravo et. al., 2022). It goes beyond basic computer skills to include understanding digital tools, online platforms, and emerging technologies in ways that support problem-solving, collaboration, and innovation. In today's knowledge economy, digital literacy competence is essential for education, employability, and active participation in society. It equips individuals with the skills needed to navigate the internet responsibly, evaluate the credibility of digital content, and use productivity software, social media, and online learning platforms for personal and professional growth.

Moreover, digital literacy competence is dynamic and individuals are required to adapt continuously to technological changes and

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advancements (Martínez-Bravo et. al., 2022). For undergraduates, it provides a critical foundation for academic success and future workplace readiness, as employers increasingly demand graduates who can leverage digital tools for efficiency and innovation. Competence in this area also includes ethical considerations, such as online safety, data privacy, and responsible digital citizenship (Gbore et. al., 2025). By developing digital literacy competence, individuals not only strengthen their employability but also enhance their ability to learn independently, collaborate globally, and contribute meaningfully to digital-driven economies and communities. In this study, digital literacy competence is measured by information management skills, technical and software skills, and digital communication and collaboration skills.

Information management skills involve the ability of an individual to effectively locate, evaluate, organise, and share digital information or content be it for personal and professional purposes (Digital Skills Library, 2023). In academic context, undergraduates who possess these skills can strengthen their subject knowledge by drawing from credible sources and applying them meaningfully, while also handling data responsibly to make informed decisions and solve problems effectively. Technical and software skills, on the other hand, refer to proficiency in using productivity tools such as word processors, spreadsheets, presentations, and specialized applications relevant to one's field (Digital Skills Library, 2023). These skills enhance efficacy beliefs by boosting confidence in performing academic and workplace tasks efficiently, while also preparing students to adapt quickly to new technologies and demonstrate competence in professional settings. Finally, digital communication and collaboration skills relate to the effective use of online platforms for teamwork, networking, and knowledge sharing economy (Australian Public Service Academy, 2025). Communication and collaboration are key components of digital literacy. In the digital world, communication refers to the capacity to express oneself, communicate information, and share ideas in an efficient and responsible manner (Michael, 2024). It entails communicating with others and conveying messages electronically utilising a variety of digital tools and platforms such as email, instant messaging, video conferencing, and social media.

Digital literacy competence has become one of the most critical factors influencing the employability readiness of undergraduates in today's digital-driven economy (Australian Public Service Academy, 2025). Beyond acquiring academic qualifications, students are expected to demonstrate the ability to navigate digital platforms, manage online information, use productivity tools, and collaborate effectively through technology. These competencies directly enhance employability readiness measures such as subject knowledge, transferable skills, efficacy beliefs, and reflective thinking. For example, effective information management strengthens subject knowledge by allowing students to access credible digital resources, while technical and software skills boost confidence and task performance, thereby improving efficacy beliefs. Similarly, digital communication and collaboration skills enhance reflective learning and adaptability, enabling undergraduates to engage productively in diverse workplace environments (Australian Public Service Academy, 2025; Michael, 2024). Hence, digital literacy competence not only equips students with the tools to thrive academically but also empowers them to transition smoothly into the labor market, where technological proficiency is increasingly a prerequisite.

The empirical gaps identified in this study stem from the limited research that directly links digital literacy competence, measured through information management skills, technical and software skills, and digital communication and collaboration skills, to the employability readiness measures namely

subject knowledge, efficacy beliefs, and reflective thinking of the undergraduates, particularly within the Nigerian higher education context. While previous studies have examined employability factors such as soft skills, subject knowledge, and work experience, few have investigated how digital literacy specifically enhances subject knowledge, efficacy beliefs, and reflective thinking. In practice also, this gap translates into pressing problems: many undergraduates, graduate with academic qualifications but lack the digital competence required to meet employers' expectations in technology-driven workplaces; universities often focus more on theoretical instruction than on embedding practical digital skills into curricula; and employers report difficulty in recruiting graduates who can adapt quickly to digital tools and collaborative online work environments. These gaps and practical challenges underscore the need for targeted research and interventions that position digital literacy as a core driver of employability readiness. The need to carry out this study lies in the growing global and national demand for a workforce that is digitally skilled, innovative, and adaptable. The implications of this study are significant: policymakers can use its findings to shape educational policies that promote digital competence, employers can align recruitment with digital skill indicators, and undergraduates themselves can become more intentional in developing digital competencies to secure meaningful employment.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The study aims at investigating the influence of digital literacy competence on employability readiness of OIM undergraduates in selected universities, south-west, Nigeria; the objectives seek to:

i. identify the level of employability readiness of OIM undergraduates in selected universities, south-west, Nigeria;
ii. identify the level of digital literacy competence of OIM undergraduates in selected universities, south-west, Nigeria;
iii. establish the significant influence of digital literacy competence digital literacy competence on employability readiness of OIM undergraduates in selected universities, south-west, Nigeria

Research Questions

i. What is the level of employability readiness of OIM undergraduates in selected universities, south-west, Nigeria?
ii. What is the level of digital literacy competence of OIM undergraduates in selected universities, south-west, Nigeria?
iii. What is the significant influence of digital literacy competence digital literacy competence on employability readiness of OIM undergraduates in selected universities, south-west, Nigeria?

Hypothesis

The below null hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance:

i. There is no significant influence of digital literacy competence digital literacy competence on employability readiness of OIM undergraduates in selected universities, south-west, Nigeria

Theoretical Review

USEM Model

The USEM Model was propounded by Yorke and Knight in 2004 (Bennett & Ananthram, 2022). The two scholars structured employability into four interrelated elements namely Understanding (U), Skills (S), Efficacy beliefs (E), and Metacognition (M) (Gyepi-Garbrah & Preko, 2024). They described understanding as an individual's subject-specific knowledge gained during the course of study. Skills is defined as an individual demonstrating the ability to do something effectively and efficient within the shortest period of time. It views the core and transferable skills like ICT, teamwork,

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communication, teamwork, and problem-solving. The third measure, efficacy beliefs (E), is described as an individual's conviction about their competencies in accomplishing a task irrespective of the challenges that may surface. The last measure is reflective thinking (self-awareness/metacognition) which illustrate the ability of individuals to recognise themselves and evaluate their strengths, weaknesses, and learning needs. These four components emphasise that undergraduates are not only need to earn certificate after their programme but being able to effectively utilise the knowledge gained, their personal abilities and self-belief to solve identified problems.

The USEM Model is relevant to employability readiness of undergraduates as its components are mainly requirements, expectations, and assessment metrics of employers of labour (Al-Shehab et. al., 2021). Every employer of labour expects individuals to exhibit and demonstrate strong subject knowledge (U) and digital or transferable skills (S) which are the prerequisite needs at workplace. Also, individuals who develop their self-belief and confidence (E), will perform excellently during the interview processes, and may likely secure the job. Lastly, the reflective thinking (M) shows that undergraduates who must have understood themselves are well positioned to have learnt from their past and present experiences and could adapt to evolving technologies and changes. Thus, they will be able to strive a competitive and changing world of labour market.

Digital Literacy Theory

The theory was propounded by Eshet-Alkalai in 2004 (Luić & Švelec-Juričić, 2021). After a careful look of the future workplace demands, Eshet-Alkalai emphasised the essential and set of skills that employers of labour would likely require for effective functionality in the digital environments. The theory goes beyond the notion of basic ICT proficiency and emphasizes higher-order cognitive, social, and ethical dimensions of digital competence. Digital literacy, according to Eshet-Alkalai, is the ability to acquire, assess, and arrange information, use digital tools for problem-solving and creativity, and engage in meaningful interactions with digital platforms (Anh, 2024). Since all three of the measures, information management skills, technical and software skills, and digital communication and collaboration skills, emphasize learners' capacity to responsibly process digital information, adjust to evolving technologies, and engage in productive digital interactions, these dimensions are closely related to each other.

Eshet-Alkalai's thesis is pertinent to students since it acknowledges the importance of digital literacy for both academic achievement and preparedness for the workforce (Anh, 2024). Information management skills, for instance, enable students in enhancing their subject knowledge by echoing the theory's focus on critical assessment and ethical usage of online resources. The theory's dimension of digital problem-solving and tool usage is aligned with technical and software abilities, giving students the ability to adjust to workplace technology and function well in professional jobs (De-Wever, et. al., 2023). Lastly, Eshet-Alkalai's model's social and cultural components are reflected in digital communication and collaboration abilities, which demonstrate how students may form networks, collaborate with others, and make significant contributions to online communities (Boakye, 2022). The theory illustrates how these abilities together improve undergraduates' readiness for the demands of the contemporary job market by placing digital literacy within a larger theoretical framework.

Empirical Review

Several studies have investigated digital literacy competence of undergraduates as well as employability skills required by the employers. Some of these studies are empirically discussed as follows: a study in Malaysia systematically reviewed employer

expectations for digital skills among graduates, as well as initiatives and measures made by higher education institutions to educate students and harness motivation among students for competitiveness and marketability in the fourth industrial revolution age (Khuraisah et. al., 2020). In the end, three main issues emerged from the review: (1) Employers' opinions on what they expect from recent graduates. (2) Institutions' opinions on how to get students ready for the 4IR age. (3) The opinions of students on self-motivation. The systematic research offers valuable insights about industry player expectations, the digital literacy abilities that new graduates must possess, and how institutions may foster digital literacy.

Another research examined the employability competences of university students in connection to their preparedness for the digital workplace (Potgieter et al., 2023). The researchers discovered that pupils with more proficiency in digital literacy had excellent employability traits including communication, problem-solving, and flexibility. The study came to the conclusion that employability preparedness depends on digital literacy and suggested that universities incorporate formal training in digital skills into their courses to better prepare graduates for the demands of the workforce. In the framework of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR), a study examined how digital literacy enhances labor preparation (Rahmat et al., 2024). The scholars found that students' readiness for the workforce was greatly enhanced by digital abilities such information management, software application, and digital communication. In their conclusion, they suggested more cooperation between the public, corporate, and institutional sectors to enable thorough digital training as they believed that digital literacy was a determining factor for the survival of potential job seekers in the 4IR economy.

The researchers found that digital literacy improves important employability traits like creativity, teamwork, and adaptability, especially in technology-driven professions, in another study that examined the role of digital literacy in education as a means of preparing students for the future workforce (Thelma et al., 2024). In addition to recommending institutional reforms and policy actions that position digital literacy as a fundamental prerequisite for employability ready, the study came to the conclusion that educational institutions must incorporate digital competence across disciplines. One research looked at how self-efficacy and digital literacy affected office administration education students' preparedness for the workforce (Winarno et al., 2024). The results demonstrated that self-efficacy and digital literacy both had a major impact on work preparedness, with self-efficacy fostering motivation and resilience and digital literacy improving technical ability. The study found that both skill-based and psychological aspects influence employability preparation, and it suggested that educational institutions integrate digital training with programs that help students develop their confidence.

Researchers also looked into how recent college graduates' career adaption was impacted by their academic digital literacy (Anwar et al., 2025). The results showed that graduates with high levels of digital literacy were better equipped to adjust to changes in the workplace and in their careers. The study found that digital literacy promotes adaptability, which is essential in dynamic labor markets, and suggested that academic institutions improve their digital literacy curricula to better prepare graduates for resilience and career flexibility. The results demonstrated that although the institution offers academic instruction, employability skills and practical digital literacy were insufficient to fulfill the expectations of the labor market. In order to improve digital skill development and employability preparation, the study suggested deeper institutional relationships and found that a consistent practice-based approach utilizing the Triple Helix model of innovation (university, industry, and government engagement) is

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crucial. An investigation of the impact of digital literacy development among Nigerian graduates from the viewpoints of employers, lecturers, professional statutory and regulatory bodies (PSRB), and graduates was conducted by Nwosu (2023). Employability issues were highlighted by the findings, which showed a notable discrepancy between the digital skills taught at Nigerian colleges and those that companies want. In order to boost graduate digital literacy, the research suggested curricular changes, employer participation, and policy frameworks. It also stated that stakeholder collaboration is necessary to overcome the digital skills gap. Using the University of Lagos, Nigeria as a case study, Adewolu-Ogwo (2024), another Nigerian researcher, examined higher education, skill development, and students' employability readiness. The results demonstrated that although the institution offers academic instruction, employability skills and practical digital literacy were insufficient to fulfill the expectations of the labor market. In order to improve digital skill development and employability preparation, the study suggested deeper institutional relationships and found that a consistent practice-based approach utilizing the Triple Helix model of innovation (university, industry, and government engagement) is crucial.

At the University of Ibadan in Nigeria, a study investigated the knowledge, preparedness, and attitude of prospective graduates toward employability skills for the twenty-first century (Omoniyi, 2024). The results showed that although students were aware of employability skills, they lacked critical thinking, cooperation, and digital competency. The study found that digital literacy is still a key factor in determining students' preparation for the workforce in Nigerian colleges. It suggested that these institutions increase their digital training, offer internships, and fortify their employability-focused curricula. In all these studies, none actually investigated the influence of digital literacy competence on the employability readiness of undergraduates in university; thus, the empirical gaps are identified, and the need to carry out this study becomes necessary.

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The population was 261 comprised of 200 and 300 levels OIM undergraduates and total enumeration was used as the sample size of the study. A validated e-questionnaire was used to obtain data from the targeted OIM undergraduates. A reliability test was carried out on digital literacy competencies and employability readiness and both produced Cronbach's Alpha values of 0.816 and 0.782 respectively. Out of the expected 261 responses, the researchers successfully obtained 199 representing 76.2% of the sample size. Meanwhile, the obtained data were analysed using both descriptive statistics and inferential statistics (multiple regression analysis at the 0.05 level of significance).

Table 1: Population Analysis

S/N	Institutions	300 Level	400 Level	Total	Response Rate	%
1	Lead City University (LCU), Ibadan, Oyo State	68	33	101	78	40
2	Lagos State University of Science and Technology (LASUSTECH), Ikorodu, Lagos State	59	56	115	89	45.6
3	Bamidele Olumilua University of Education Science and Technology (BOUEST), Ikere Ekiti, Ekiti State	31	9	40	28	14.4
	Total	**158**	**98**	**256**	**195**	**100.0**

Source: Fieldwork, 2025

Table 1 presents the population of two public universities and one private university with LASUSTECH having the largest number of OIM undergraduates (115; representing 44.9%) while the least was Bamidele Olumilua University, Ekiti State (40; representing 15.6%). However, the population was 256, out of which 195 responses were received, yielding a 76.3% response distribution across the schools.

Table 2: Demographic Data Analysis

Characteristics		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	47	15.9
	Female	161	84.1
Age	Less than 25 years	154	76.4
	25 - 30 years	49	21.5
	Above 30 years	5	2.1

Source: Fieldwork, 2025

Table 2 presents the demographic data of the respondents, revealing that the majority were female (161; 84.1%), while males accounted for only 47 respondents (15.9%), indicating a gender imbalance in favor of females. In terms of age distribution, most of the respondents were less than 25 years old (154; 76.4%), showing that the study population is largely composed of young undergraduates. Those within the 25–30 years range constituted 49 respondents (21.5%), while only a small proportion of 5 respondents (2.1%) were above 30 years, suggesting that older students were minimally represented in the study. This demographic profile highlights a youthful, predominantly female respondent population.

Results

Table 3 – RQ1: What is the level of employability readiness of OIM undergraduates in selected universities, south-west, Nigeria?

S/N	The Level of Employability Readiness of OIM Undergraduates	Mean	St. Dev.	Remarks
	Subject Knowledge			
1	I have a strong understanding of concepts taught in my core courses.	3.41	0.79	Accepted
2	I find it difficult to relate classroom knowledge to real-life applications.	2.08	0.91	Rejected
	Self-Belief (Efficacy Beliefs)			
3	I am confident in my ability to perform well in future job roles.	3.36	0.83	Accepted
4	I doubt my ability to compete with peers in the job market.	1.92	0.97	Rejected
	Reflective Thinking / Self-Awareness			
5	I reflect on my academic strengths and weaknesses to improve myself.	3.22	0.81	Accepted
6	I evaluate my mistakes or experiences for personal growth.	2.01	0.86	Rejected
	Average Mean and Standard Deviation (St. Dev.)	**2.67**	**0.86**	

Source: Field study, 2025

The analysis of the table on the employability readiness of OIM undergraduates reveals a moderate overall readiness level with an average mean of 2.67 and a standard deviation of 0.86. Under subject knowledge, students generally demonstrated a strong understanding of concepts taught in their core courses (Mean = 3.41), though many found it difficult to relate classroom knowledge to real-life applications (Mean = 2.08, Rejected).

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In terms of self-belief, respondents expressed confidence in their ability to perform well in future job roles (Mean = 3.36), but a considerable proportion doubted their competitiveness in the job market (Mean = 1.92, Rejected). Similarly, for reflective thinking/self-awareness, students acknowledged reflecting on their strengths and weaknesses (Mean = 3.22), yet their ability to evaluate mistakes and experiences for personal growth was weak (Mean = 2.01, Rejected). These findings suggest that while OIM undergraduates show good knowledge acquisition and confidence in future roles, gaps remain in applying knowledge practically and leveraging reflective practices for continuous improvement.

Table 4 – RQ2: What is the level of digital literacy competence of OIM undergraduates in selected universities, south-west, Nigeria?

S/N	The Level of Digital Literacy Competence of OIM Undergraduates	Mean	St. Dev.	Remarks
	Information Management Skills			
1	I search, retrieve, and evaluate relevant academic information online.	3.34	0.68	Accepted
2	I struggle to organise and manage digital files for my academic work.	2.02	0.93	Rejected
	Technical and Software Skills			
3	I can use Microsoft Office packages (Word, Excel, PowerPoint) for assignments and projects.	3.41	0.74	Accepted
4	I find it difficult to use advanced digital tools (e.g., SPSS, Canva, CorelDraw, or database software).	2.11	0.88	Rejected
	Digital Communication and Collaboration Skills			
5	I collaborate with classmates through online platforms such as WhatsApp, Telegram, or Google Meet.	3.27	0.72	Accepted
6	I engage in online academic discussions or group projects using digital platforms.	2.03	0.91	Rejected
	Average Mean and Standard Deviation (St. Dev.)	**2.70**	**0.81**	

Source: Field survey, 2025

The analysis of Table 4 shows a moderate overall competence with an average mean of 2.70 and a standard deviation of 0.81. In the area of information management skills, students reported proficiency in searching, retrieving, and evaluating academic information online (Mean = 3.34, Accepted), but struggled with organising and managing digital files effectively (Mean = 2.02, Rejected). Regarding technical and software skills, most respondents demonstrated competence in using basic applications such as Microsoft Office packages (Mean = 3.41, Accepted), yet found it difficult to operate advanced digital tools like SPSS, Canva, CorelDraw, or databases (Mean = 2.11, Rejected).

For digital communication and collaboration skills, students showed strength in collaborating with peers via platforms such as WhatsApp, Telegram, or Google Meet (Mean = 3.27, Accepted), though they were weak in engaging in more formal online academic discussions and group projects (Mean = 2.03, Rejected). These results indicate that while undergraduates possess foundational digital literacy skills, significant gaps remain in advanced software use, effective digital file management, and active academic engagement in digital spaces.

Hypothesis Testing

$H_0$1: There is no significant combined influence of digital literacy competence digital literacy competence on employability readiness of OIM undergraduates in selected universities, south-west, Nigeria

Table 5: Model Summary[a]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.701	0.491	0.485	0.287

a. Predictors: (Constant), *Digital Literacy Competence*

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	37.9066	1	37.907	53.668	.000b
	Residual	93.233	193	0.483		
	Total	131.140	194			

a. Dependent Variable: *Employability Readiness*

b. Predictors: (Constant), *Digital Literacy Competence*

Table 5 presents the regression analysis of digital literacy competence significantly predicts employability readiness among OIM undergraduates in selected universities in South-West Nigeria ($R = 0.701$, $R^2 = 0.491$, $F(1,193) = 53.668$, $p < .05$). This indicates that about 49.1% of the variation in employability readiness can be explained by digital literacy competence. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Discussion of Findings

The results *[$R = 0.701$, $R^2 = 0.491$, $F(1,193) = 53.668$, $p < .05$).]* of the hypothesis test demonstrated the crucial role that digital literacy competence play in employability readiness of OIM undergraduates in selected universities, south west, Nigeria. The correlation coefficient R = 0.701 (70.1%) suggests a strong positive relationship between digital literacy competence and employability readiness of undergraduates. This means that as undergraduates develop stronger digital literacy skills, such as information management, technical and software skills, and digital communication, their employability readiness (measured by subject knowledge, efficacy beliefs, and reflective thinking) also improves significantly. This aligns with the findings of Potgieter et al. (2023), who noted that higher digital literacy among students translated into stronger employability traits such as communication, adaptability, and problem-solving, thereby enhancing their overall career readiness.

The coefficient of determination, $R^2 = 0.491$, indicates that approximately 49.1% of the variance in employability readiness is explained by digital literacy competence. This is a substantial proportion, showing that digital skills are not just supplementary but a core determinant of workplace readiness. This aligns with Rahmat et al. (2024), who argued that digital literacy accounts for a large share of employability preparedness in the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) era, particularly as industries are becoming increasingly digitized. Thus, the result underscores the growing necessity for universities to embed digital training into curricula as a way to prepare students for future employment.

The $F(1,193) = 53.668$, $p < .05$ indicates that the regression model is statistically significant, meaning digital literacy competence is a reliable predictor of

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employability readiness among undergraduates. This supports the argument that beyond academic qualifications, digital proficiency contributes meaningfully to employability outcomes. Thelma et al. (2024) similarly highlighted that digital literacy significantly improves critical employability dimensions such as creativity, teamwork, and adaptability, traits highly demanded in technology-driven professions. The significant F-test here demonstrates that the relationship is not due to chance but is consistent with global trends in employability research.

The result suggests that undergraduates with higher levels of digital literacy competence are more likely to develop strong efficacy beliefs, reflective thinking, and subject knowledge. For instance, technical and software proficiency can boost confidence and task performance, while digital communication and collaboration skills enhance reflective practices through teamwork and knowledge sharing. This resonates with Wu et al. (2024), who emphasized that students with higher efficacy beliefs and digital competence are better at navigating job interviews, networking, and adapting to labor market demands. In practice, digital competence empowers undergraduates to stand out in competitive job markets. This result also aligns strongly with Eshet-Alkalai's (2004) Digital Literacy Theory, which highlights that digital literacy goes beyond ICT proficiency and includes critical thinking, problem-solving, and collaborative skills, all of which are central to employability readiness. The model underscores that digital literacy enhances academic and career outcomes by enabling individuals to adapt to evolving technologies and function productively in digital environments. The strong R and R^2 values in this study reinforce the theory's assertion that digital literacy is not optional but fundamental in shaping modern employability.

In the Nigerian context, this result provides evidence that digital literacy plays a pivotal role in employability readiness, addressing the gap identified by Nwosu (2023) and Adewolu-Ogwo (2024). Both scholars highlighted that while Nigerian universities provide academic knowledge, they fall short in equipping students with practical digital skills that employers demand. The strong positive relationship (R = 0.701) here demonstrates that when students are digitally competent, their employability readiness significantly increases, implying that curricular reforms and stakeholder collaborations are necessary to reduce the digital skill gap.

Overall, the results demonstrate that digital literacy competence is a critical driver of employability readiness, explaining nearly half of the variation in students' preparedness for work. This finding echoes Anwar et al. (2025), who found that graduates with strong digital competence adapt better to workplace changes and career transitions. By embedding digital literacy into higher education, universities can directly influence graduates' employability outcomes. The strong and significant relationship confirmed in this study provides empirical support for positioning digital literacy at the center of employability frameworks in Nigeria and beyond.

Conclusion

The study concluded that digital literacy competence significantly enhances the employability readiness of OIM undergraduates in selected universities in South-West Nigeria. This study shows that digital literacy is not only a technical skillset but also a crucial enabler for students to translate academic knowledge into workplace relevance, build confidence in future job roles, and strengthen collaborative abilities. To ensure that graduates remain competitive and adaptable in the rapidly changing labour market, it is imperative that institutions prioritise the development of advanced digital skills, effective information management, and

reflective learning practices. Strengthening these areas will foster a workforce that is not only academically grounded but also digitally empowered for sustainable career success.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion of this study, it was recommended among others that university management should:

1. strengthen internship and involve the industries in the world of work for practical presence which will further aim the employability skills of OIM undergraduates
2. consistently reviewing the OIM curricula and ensure they are aligned with the market demands and standards
3. ensure there is a provision of digital literacy training that will cover several areas e.g. office technology, cybersecurity, data management, and so on and improve ICT infrastructure and internet access in their institutions.

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