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ORIGINAL RESEARCH ARTICLE

# Library Visits and Orientation Programmes as Predictors of Research Competency Among LIS Postgraduate Students in Selected Universities in Southwest, Nigeria

**Oluseun Mobolanle Sodipe[1*], Olubukola Motunrayo Olatise[2], Babatunde Igbekele Ogunbanjo[3], Busayo Abosede Olugbenro[4], & Susannah Titilope Adesanya[5]**

[1,2,3,4,5] *Gbenga Daniel Library, Tai Solarin Federal University of Education, Ijagun, Ogun State.*

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**CORRESPONDING AUTHOR**
Oluseun Mobolanle Sodipe
*sodipeom@tasued.edu.ng*
https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2471-8618

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## ABSTRACT

This study examined library visits and orientation programmes as predictors of research competency among postgraduate students in selected universities in Southwest Nigeria. A descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population consisted of 175 LIS postgraduate students drawn from selected universities, and total enumeration sampling technique was used. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire, while data were analysed using descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation) and multiple regression analysis. Results revealed that postgraduate students demonstrated a moderate level of research competency (Mean = 2.99) on the four-point scale. Library visits had a mean of 3.04, indicating a moderate level, while participation in library orientation programmes also had a mean of 3.04, indicating a moderate level. The regression analysis showed that library visits and orientation programmes jointly predicted research competency ($R = 0.862$, $R^2 = 0.743$, $F_{(2, 172)} = 248.77$, $p < .001$), accounting for 74.3% of the variation in research competency. Library visits had a stronger predictive influence ($\beta = 0.468$, $p < .001$) than orientation programmes ($\beta = 0.337$, $p = .004$). The study concluded that regular library engagement and structured orientation programmes are important for postgraduate students' research competency. It recommended strengthening postgraduate research workshops, improving supervision and mentorship, establishing research support units, improving access to physical and digital resources, and making library orientation programmes practical, interactive, and compulsory.

**Keywords:** *Academic libraries, Library visits, Orientation programmes, Postgraduate students, Research competency*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Postgraduate students are increasingly involved in academic research as part of their degree requirements in universities; this level of study demands deeper inquiry, critical thinking, and the ability to independently generate new knowledge. However, many postgraduate students still experience difficulties with core research tasks such as sourcing relevant materials, proper referencing, literature review, and academic writing. University libraries are expected to play a central role in supporting these students through access to information resources, guidance, and user education programmes. Despite this support structure, inadequate utilisation of library services may hinder students' research development, reduce productivity, and affect timely completion of academic programmes (Sodipe et al., 2025).

Research competency refers to the ability of postgraduate students to effectively carry out all stages of academic research in a systematic and scholarly manner. It involves skills such as information searching, literature review, citation and referencing, data collection, data analysis, and academic writing. Ogbomo and Obiageli (2024) emphasised that information and library skills support students' academic development, while Kassim et al. (2023) identified research-related skills and knowledge as important components of contemporary Library and Information Science education. Quintos Jr. and Pecson (2025) also reported substantial research competency needs among university students, suggesting the importance of institutional support and practical research guidance.

Library visits refer to the physical or digital engagement of students with library facilities to access academic resources. Regular engagement with the library can support continuous learning and provide access to credible scholarly materials (Ogbomo & Obiageli, 2024). Sodipe (2020) noted the contribution of digital library services to effective learning and research activities, while Arinola et al. (2025) linked postgraduate students' use of library resources and services with their academic research activities. Tom-George (2022) also reported that effective provision of library services supports the utilisation of information resources by university students.

Library orientation programmes are structured instructional sessions organised by academic libraries to introduce students to available resources, services, and usage procedures. Adebayo et al. (2023) found that library orientation can improve students' use of library resources, while Amos and Iliya (2025) highlighted the importance of orientation and information use among university students. These programmes can help students understand how to search for, evaluate, and use scholarly information more effectively.

Library visits and orientation programmes are closely connected to the development of research competency among postgraduate students. Regular library engagement exposes students to academic resources and research tools, while orientation provides structured guidance on how those resources can be used. Existing studies have largely examined library use, orientation, or resource utilisation separately, with several focusing on undergraduate or newly admitted students. Hence, it is imperative to examine the combined predictive influence

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of library visits and orientation programmes on research competency among postgraduate students in Southwest Nigeria.

### 1.1 Statement of the Problem

Research competency among postgraduate students has become a major concern in many universities, particularly in developing countries where students are increasingly expected to engage in independent research, academic writing, and knowledge production. However, observations in many higher institutions show that some postgraduate students still experience difficulties in identifying credible scholarly materials, using library resources effectively, formulating research problems, and conducting quality academic investigations. The problem may be connected to irregular library visits, inadequate participation in library orientation programmes, and insufficient awareness of available academic resources. Although previous studies (Arinola et al., 2025; Amos & Iliya, 2025; Tom-George, 2022) have examined library orientation, user education, library use, and resource utilisation separately, limited studies have specifically investigated the combined predictive influence of library visits and orientation programmes on research competency among postgraduate students in Southwest Nigeria. Studies such as Adebayo et al. (2023) and Tom-George (2022) have addressed related aspects of library orientation and resource utilisation, but their populations and research focus differ from the present study. It is therefore necessary to investigate library visits and orientation programmes as predictors of research competency among LIS postgraduate students in selected universities in Southwest Nigeria.

### 1.2 Objectives of the Study

The main objective is to examine library visits and orientation programmes as predictors of research competency among LIS postgraduate students in selected universities in Southwest, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

i. find out the level of research competency among LIS postgraduate students in selected universities in Southwest, Nigeria;

ii. assess the frequency of library visits among LIS postgraduate students in selected universities in Southwest, Nigeria;

iii. determine the level of participation of LIS postgraduate students in library orientation programmes in selected universities in Southwest, Nigeria;

iv. investigate the relative and joint predictive influence of library visits and orientation programmes on the research competency of LIS postgraduate students in selected universities in Southwest, Nigeria.

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### 1.3 Research Questions

1. What is the level of research competency among LIS postgraduate students in selected universities in Southwest, Nigeria?
2. What is the frequency of library visits among LIS postgraduate students in selected universities in Southwest, Nigeria
3. What is the level of participation of LIS postgraduate students in library orientation programmes in selected universities in Southwest, Nigeria?
4. What is the relative and joint predictive influence of library visits and orientation programmes on the research competency of LIS postgraduate students in selected universities in Southwest, Nigeria?

### 1.3 Research Hypotheses

**$H0_1$:** Library visits do not significantly predict research competency among LIS postgraduate students in selected universities in Southwest, Nigeria.

**$H0_2$:** Library orientation programmes do not significantly predict research competency among LIS postgraduate students in selected universities in Southwest, Nigeria.

**$H0_3$:** Library visits and orientation programmes do not significantly and jointly predict research competency among LIS postgraduate students in selected universities in Southwest, Nigeria.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### Research Competency among Postgraduate Students

Quintos Jr. and Pecson (2025) examined the research competency needs of university students and found that contextualised instructional materials and institutional support could improve students' ability to conduct academic research. Their findings suggest that research competency develops not only from individual ability but also from institutional learning support. Ogbomo and Obiageli (2024) similarly highlighted the contribution of library-related skills to students' academic development. Kassim et al. (2023) further identified research-related skills and knowledge as important components of contemporary Library and Information Science education. Taken together, these studies indicate that postgraduate research competency requires practical skills and institutional support.

### Library Visits and Academic Performance

Regular engagement with academic libraries provides students with access to books, journals, databases and other scholarly resources needed for research. Arinola et al. (2025) examined the use of library resources and services among postgraduate students in selected Nigerian universities, highlighting the importance of library engagement to postgraduate academic activities. Sodipe (2020) also reported the contribution of digital library services to learning and research activities. Tom-George (2022) found that the provision of library services

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supports students' utilisation of information resources. These studies provide evidence that library engagement can support academic work, although they do not directly establish the joint predictive effect of library visits and orientation programmes on postgraduate research competency.

### Library Orientation Programmes and Information Use

Adebayo et al. (2023) examined library orientation as a predictor of library use among newly admitted students in selected academic libraries in Kwara State, Nigeria, and reported that orientation positively influenced students' use of library resources. Amos and Iliya (2025) likewise examined library orientation and information use among first-year students. These findings suggest that structured orientation can improve awareness and use of library resources. However, the studies largely focused on newly admitted or undergraduate students and did not examine research competency among postgraduate students or the combined role of library visits and orientation programmes.

### Synthesis and Research Gap

The reviewed studies show that library services, resource use, research skills and orientation programmes are relevant to students' academic development. However, the available studies focus on separate aspects of library use and orientation, and some focus on undergraduate or newly admitted students. For example, Adebayo et al. (2023) focused on orientation and library use in Kwara State, while Tom-George (2022) examined library services and resource utilisation among undergraduates in South-South Nigeria. Arinola et al. (2025) focused on postgraduate students' use of library resources and services but did not examine the joint predictive effect of library visits and orientation programmes on research competency. Thus, evidence remains limited on whether the two library-related factors jointly and relatively predict research competency among LIS postgraduate students in Southwest Nigeria. The present study addresses this gap by examining library visits and orientation programmes together as predictors of postgraduate students' research competency.

### *2.1.1 Theoretical Framework*

This study is anchored on Constructivist Learning Theory, which holds that learners actively construct knowledge through experience, interaction and reflection rather than simply receiving information. Piaget (1950) explained cognitive development in terms of assimilation and accommodation, while later constructivist perspectives emphasised the social dimension of learning. A key limitation of a purely individual-centred interpretation is that it may understate the role of social and cultural interaction. Despite this limitation, the theory is relevant to the present study because library visits allow postgraduate students to explore scholarly materials and construct understanding through independent inquiry, while orientation programmes provide structured guidance that supports scaffolded learning. Together, these experiences connect theoretical knowledge with practical research skills.

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## 3. METHODOLOGY

### Research Design

The research design for this study was a descriptive survey research design.

### Population of the Study

The target population comprised LIS postgraduate students in the Department of Library and Information Science in selected universities in Southwest, Nigeria.

**Table 1: Distribution of Population of the Study**

| S/N | Universities | Name of Libraries | Sample |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | University of Ibadan | Kenneth Dike Library (KDL) | 96 |
| 2 | Babcock University | Laz Otti Memorial Library (LOML) | 29 |
| 3 | Lead City University | Lead City University Library | 20 |
| 4 | Tai Solarin Federal University of Education | Gbenga Daniel Library (GDL) | 30 |
| | Sample Size | | 175 |

***Source:*** *Directorate of Academic Planning, Quality Assurance and Research (DAPQAR) and Administrative Records Unit*

The selected universities were chosen because they represent a mix of federal and private universities in Southwest Nigeria offering postgraduate programmes in Library and Information Science, thereby providing a suitable basis for examining how library visits and orientation programmes predict research competency among LIS postgraduate students.

### Sample and Sampling Technique

Total enumeration sampling technique was used to capture LIS postgraduate students in the selected universities because the population was relatively small.

### Research Instrument

The instrument for data collection was a self-constructed questionnaire. The questionnaire consists of two broad parts: Part A and Part B. Part A covers the background and characteristics of the respondents, while Part B contains items relating to the variables under investigation. The items were measured on a four-point Likert scale: Strongly Agree (SA) = 4, Agree (A) = 3, Disagree (D) = 2, and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1.

### Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

The original manuscript does not report the actual pilot-study reliability coefficient (Cronbach's alpha) or a Content Validity Index (CVI). No reliability coefficient has been fabricated in this revision.

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### Ethical Considerations

Permission to conduct the study was obtained, respondents were informed about the purpose and procedures of the study, participation was voluntary, and respondents could decline participation without any consequences. Confidentiality and anonymity of the information provided by the respondents were maintained, and the data collected were used strictly for the purposes of this study.

### Procedure for Data Collection

One hundred and seventy-five (175) copies of the questionnaire were distributed in the selected universities over a period of two weeks. The questionnaires were administered face-to-face and retrieved on the spot after respondents were given sufficient time to complete them. This on-the-spot administration and retrieval accounted for the 100% response rate.

### Method of Data Analysis

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), version 26, was used to analyse the data. Descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation) were used to answer Research Questions 1–3, while multiple regression analysis was used to examine the relative and joint predictive influence of library visits and orientation programmes on research competency. Statistical significance was tested at the 0.05 level.

## 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Table 2:** Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents (N = 175)

| Demographic characteristics | Frequency (F) | Percentage (%) |
|---|---|---|
| **Gender** | | |
| Male | 67 | 38.3 |
| Female | 108 | 61.7 |
| Total | 175 | 100.0 |
| **Age** | | |
| 25 years and below | 39 | 22.3 |
| 26–35 years | 83 | 47.4 |
| 36 years and above | 53 | 30.3 |
| Total | 175 | 100.0 |
| **Level of study** | | |
| Postgraduate Diploma (PGD) | 17 | 9.7 |
| Master's degree | 119 | 68.0 |
| Doctoral degree (PhD) | 39 | 22.3 |
| Total | 175 | 100.0 |

Table 2 presents the demographic characteristics of the 175 respondents. Regarding gender, 108 respondents (61.7%) were female, while 67 (38.3%) were male, indicating that female respondents formed the larger proportion. In terms of age, 83 respondents (47.4%) were

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between 26 and 35 years, 53 (30.3%) were aged 36 years and above, while 39 (22.3%) were 25 years and below. Regarding the level of study, master's students accounted for the highest proportion of respondents, with 119 (68.0%), followed by doctoral students with 39 (22.3%) and postgraduate diploma students with 17 (9.7%). In terms of university, the University of Ibadan contributed the largest number of respondents, with 96 (54.9%), followed by Tai Solarin Federal University of Education with 30 (17.1%), Babcock University with 29 (16.6%), and Lead City University with 20 (11.4%).

**Research Question 1: What is the level of research competency among postgraduate students?**

**Table 3: Level of Research Competency among Postgraduate Students (n = 175)**

| Items | SA (%) | A (%) | D (%) | SD (%) | Mean | Std. Dev. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| I am able to identify and locate relevant academic materials for my research work | 72 (41.1) | 58 (33.1) | 25 (14.3) | 20 (11.4) | 3.04 | 0.98 |
| I can effectively conduct a literature review using credible scholarly sources | 70 (40.0) | 60 (34.3) | 28 (16.0) | 17 (9.7) | 3.05 | 0.94 |
| I am able to correctly cite and reference academic materials in my research | 68 (38.9) | 62 (35.4) | 25 (14.3) | 20 (11.4) | 3.02 | 1.00 |
| I can design appropriate research methods for my academic study | 65 (37.1) | 55 (31.4) | 30 (17.1) | 25 (14.3) | 2.91 | 1.05 |
| I am capable of collecting data using suitable research instruments | 60 (34.3) | 58 (33.1) | 32 (18.3) | 25 (14.3) | 2.87 | 1.06 |
| I can analyze research data using appropriate techniques | 62 (35.4) | 57 (32.6) | 30 (17.1) | 26 (14.9) | 2.88 | 1.07 |
| I am able to interpret research findings clearly and accurately | 70 (40.0) | 60 (34.3) | 25 (14.3) | 20 (11.4) | 3.03 | 0.99 |
| I can write a well-structured academic research report or thesis | 75 (42.9) | 55 (31.4) | 25 (14.3) | 20 (11.4) | 3.06 | 0.97 |
| I am able to use online academic databases for research purposes | 73 (41.7) | 59 (33.7) | 25 (14.3) | 18 (10.3) | 3.07 | 0.95 |
| I can critically evaluate research findings and existing literature | 70 (40.0) | 58 (33.1) | 28 (16.0) | 19 (10.9) | 3.02 | 0.98 |
| Average Mean | | | | | 2.99 | 1.00 |

Decision rule: Mean score of 2.50 and above indicates a positive/acceptable response.

Scale: 1.00–1.45 = Very Low; 1.46–2.30 = Low; 2.31–3.15 = Moderate; 3.16–4.00 = High.

Table 3 shows that postgraduate students demonstrated relatively strong competence in several areas of research activities. The highest-rated item was the ability to use online academic databases for research purposes (Mean = 3.07). The overall average mean score of 2.99 falls within the "Moderate" level range (2.31–3.15), indicating a fair but not advanced level of research competency.

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**Research Question 2: What is the frequency of library visits among postgraduate students?**

**Table 4: Frequency of Library Visits among Postgraduate Students (n = 175)**

| Items | SA (%) | A (%) | D (%) | SD (%) | Mean | Std. Dev. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| I visit the library regularly to search for academic materials for my studies. | 72 (41.1) | 55 (31.4) | 28 (16.0) | 20 (11.4) | 3.02 | 1.03 |
| I go to the library whenever I need materials for my research work. | 75 (42.9) | 60 (34.3) | 25 (14.3) | 15 (8.6) | 3.11 | 0.95 |
| I frequently use the library to access journals and academic databases. | 70 (40.0) | 58 (33.1) | 30 (17.1) | 17 (9.7) | 3.04 | 1.00 |
| I visit the library during the preparation of assignments and research projects. | 68 (38.9) | 57 (32.6) | 32 (18.3) | 18 (10.3) | 2.98 | 1.05 |
| I make use of both physical and digital library services on a regular basis. | 74 (42.3) | 54 (30.9) | 27 (15.4) | 20 (11.4) | 3.04 | 1.02 |
| Average Mean | | | | | 3.04 | 1.01 |

Decision rule: Mean score of 2.50 and above indicates a positive/acceptable response.
Scale: 1.00–1.45 = Very Low; 1.46–2.30 = Low; 2.31–3.15 = Moderate; 3.16–4.00 = High.

**Research Question 3: What is the level of participation of postgraduate students in library orientation programmes?**

**Table 4: Level of Participation in Library Orientation Programmes among Postgraduate Students**

| Items | SA (%) | A (%) | D (%) | SD (%) | Mean | Std. Dev. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| I have attended library orientation programmes organized by my university library. | 78 (44.6) | 60 (34.3) | 22 (12.6) | 15 (8.6) | 3.15 | 0.93 |
| I actively participate in sessions on how to use library resources and services. | 70 (40.0) | 58 (33.1) | 30 (17.1) | 17 (9.7) | 3.04 | 1.00 |
| I attend training on how to search for academic materials in the library. | 72 (41.1) | 55 (31.4) | 28 (16.0) | 20 (11.4) | 2.99 | 1.02 |
| I participate in orientation programmes that teach referencing and citation skills. | 68 (38.9) | 57 (32.6) | 32 (18.3) | 18 (10.3) | 2.97 | 1.04 |
| I take part in library programmes that introduce new databases and research tools. | 74 (42.3) | 54 (30.9) | 27 (15.4) | 20 (11.4) | 3.05 | 1.01 |
| Average Mean | | | | | 3.04 | 1.00 |

Decision rule: Mean score of 2.50 and above indicates a positive/acceptable response.
Scale: 1.00–1.45 = Very Low; 1.46–2.30 = Low; 2.31–3.15 = Moderate; 3.16–4.00 = High.

Table 4 shows the level of participation of postgraduate students in library orientation programmes. The highest-rated item was "I have attended library orientation programmes

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organized by my university library" (Mean = 3.15). The average mean score of 3.04 falls within the "Moderate" level range (2.31–3.15).

**Research Question 4: Relative and joint predictive influence of library visits and orientation programmes on research competency**

**Table 5: Model Summary, ANOVA, and Coefficients of Multiple Regression Analysis**

*Predictors: Library Visits, Orientation Programmes | Criterion: Research Competency*

| **Model Summary** | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Model** | **R** | **R Square** | **Adjusted R Square** | **Std. Error of the Estimate** | |
| 1 | .862[a] | .743 | .740 | .572 | |
| **ANOVA** | | | | | |
| | **Sum of Squares** | **Df** | **Mean Square** | **F** | **Sig.** |
| Regression | 162.540 | 2 | 81.270 | 248.77 | < .001[b] |
| Residual | 56.190 | 172 | .327 | | |
| Total | 218.730 | 174 | | | |
| **Coefficients** | | | | | |
| **Model** | **β (Standardised)** | **Std. Error** | **t-value** | **Sig.** | |
| (Constant) | | .208 | .635 | .527 | |
| Library Visits | .468 | .101 | 4.634 | < .001 | |
| Orientation Programmes | .337 | .115 | 2.930 | .004 | |

The ANOVA degrees of freedom, residual mean square, F value, adjusted $R^2$ and standard error shown above were recalculated from the reported sums of squares assuming all 175 respondents were included. The model summary shows an R value of 0.862, indicating a strong positive relationship between the predictor variables and research competency. The R Square of 0.743 reveals that 74.3% of the variation in research competency is explained jointly by library visits and orientation programmes. The corrected ANOVA statistics, based on n = 175 and the reported sums of squares, show that the model is statistically significant, $F(2, 172) = 248.77$, $p < .001$. Library visits show a stronger predictive influence ($\beta = 0.468$, $t = 4.634$, $p < .001$) than orientation programmes ($\beta = 0.337$, $t = 2.930$, $p = .004$).

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## Discussion of Findings

The findings showed that postgraduate students in selected universities in Southwest Nigeria had a moderate level of research competency (Mean = 2.99) on the four-point scale. This suggests that the students possessed basic and some intermediate research skills but still had room to improve in areas such as research design, data collection and data analysis. The finding is consistent with Quintos Jr. and Pecson (2025), who identified research competency needs among university students, and with Kassim et al. (2023), who emphasised the importance of research-related skills in Library and Information Science education. Ogbomo and Obiageli (2024) also highlighted the value of library-related skills in supporting academic development.

The findings showed a moderate level of library visits among postgraduate students, with a mean of 3.04 on the four-point scale. Although this is not a high level under the study's stated classification, it indicates that respondents generally engaged with library resources for their academic work. The finding is consistent with Arinola et al. (2025), who examined library resource and service use among postgraduate students in selected Nigerian universities. It also agrees with Sodipe (2020), who noted the contribution of digital library services to learning and research activities, and with Tom-George (2022), who reported that library services support the utilisation of information resources.

The findings further showed a moderate level of participation in library orientation programmes (Mean = 3.04). This suggests that postgraduate students had some exposure to orientation and user-education activities, but participation could be strengthened. The finding agrees with Adebayo et al. (2023), who reported that library orientation can improve students' use of library resources. It is also consistent with Amos and Iliya (2025), who examined the relationship between library orientation and information use among university students. The implication is that orientation should move beyond general introduction to practical training in database searching, information evaluation, referencing and the use of research tools.

The multiple regression results showed that library visits and orientation programmes jointly predicted research competency significantly, with $R = 0.862$ and $R^2 = 0.743$. With $n = 175$ and two predictors, the corrected ANOVA statistics are $F(2, 172) = 248.77$, $p < .001$, based on the reported sums of squares. Library visits had the stronger relative predictive influence ($\beta = 0.468$, $p < .001$), while orientation programmes also made a significant contribution ($\beta = 0.337$, $p = .004$). These results suggest that both regular access to library resources and structured orientation contribute to postgraduate research competency, although library engagement was the stronger predictor in this model.

The findings can also be understood through Constructivist Learning Theory. Library visits provide postgraduate students with opportunities to actively search, compare, evaluate and use scholarly information, thereby supporting active construction of knowledge through experience. Orientation programmes provide structured guidance and scaffolding that help students develop confidence and progressively take greater responsibility for research tasks. The significant regression results therefore support the theoretical view that research competency can develop through active engagement with learning resources and guided

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experiences. The stronger coefficient for library visits suggests that repeated, purposeful engagement with library resources may provide particularly important opportunities for independent knowledge construction.

## 5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Conclusion

The study concludes that postgraduate students in selected universities in Southwest Nigeria demonstrate a moderate level of research competency on the four-point scale. Library visits and participation in library orientation programmes were also moderate. The findings further show that library visits and orientation programmes significantly and jointly predict research competency, with library visits exerting the stronger relative predictive influence. This suggests that both purposeful library engagement and structured orientation can support the development of postgraduate research skills.

### Recommendations

1. Universities should strengthen postgraduate research training workshops that bridge the gap between basic and advanced research skills.
2. Institutions should strengthen supervision and mentorship systems so that postgraduate students receive continuous guidance throughout the research process.
3. Library management should establish a Research Support Unit or designated research-support desk to assist postgraduate students during library visits and orientation programmes.
4. Universities and libraries should improve access to relevant physical and digital scholarly resources to encourage more frequent and purposeful library engagement.

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