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Information Seeking Behavior of Final Year Students of Petroleum Engineering in Government Owned Universities in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated the information seeking behavior of final year students of Petroleum Engineering in Government owned University in Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive survey using questionnaire to collect data. The population of the study consists of 200 final year students of Petroleum Engineering in Government owned University in Nigeria which was sampled to that size. A total of the 200 questionnaires were distributed only 172 were retrieved. Descriptive statistics, (mean and percentage) were used for analysis. A mean score of 2.5 and above and a percentage score of 50% were considered for decision making. The study revealed that Information seeking behavior of final year students of Petroleum Engineering in Government owned University in Nigeria as Oil and gas E and P information, Seismic prospecting information, Geological lab analysis information, Geochemical prospecting information and Training/development information. The study further shows the purpose of seeking information by final year petroleum engineering in Government owned University in Nigeria as Updating knowledge, Writing articles / papers, Petrochemical refining/extraction information Project work and Academic activities. It recommends that instructors and senior colleagues/expatriates in charge of giving information should aim to give reliable and credible information that does not impede access to required information and Final year engineering students should ensure that the purpose of seeking information to solve their problem should not be taken for granted.

1. INTRODUCTION

Initially, petroleum engineering concentrated largely on upstream tasks such as drilling and completions. The pioneers of petroleum engineering focused on pressure controls and rig operations. Around the same time, well pumping began, and researchers began to examine and maximize output using artificial lift, packers, and chokes. Students in their final year of petroleum engineering work on capstone projects, seminars, and technical research to integrate basic disciplines such as reservoir, drilling, and production. Reservoir modeling, well integrity, enhanced oil recovery (EOR), and the rehabilitation of aged field assets are all key focal areas. Final year engineering students examine a variety of employment options outside of the oil industry, such as petrochemicals, data analysis, and academics. Some Nigerian universities are

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noted for their wide educational offerings and research output. Petroleum engineering programs have achieved international prominence, making them an excellent alternative for anyone interested in the oil and gas business. When it comes to earning a degree in petroleum engineering, selecting the correct university is critical. Several notable colleges in Nigeria provide high-quality engineering programs that are recognized both locally and worldwide.

The entry requirements into petroleum engineering department in Nigerian Universities are WAEC and JAMB subjects which includes the following: English, Mathematics, Physics, and Chemistry. Language, Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry and other acceptable science subjects at not more than two sittings. Top universities which offers petroleum engineering in Nigeria include the Federal University of Petroleum Resources Effurun (FUPRE), University of Port Harcourt (UNIPORT), and University of Benin (UNIBEN), others are University of Lagos (UNILAG), Lagos State**,** Federal University of Technology, Owerri (FUTO), Imo State**,** Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU), Osun State**:,** Ahmadu Bello University (ABU), Zaria, Kaduna State**,** Federal University of Technology, Minna (FUTMINNA), Niger State**,** Afe Babalola University (ABUAD), Ekiti State**:** and University of Ibadan (UI), Oyo State respectively. For the final students to strive academically and to contribute to national building, their information seeking behavior is crucial.

Information seeking behavior refers to how individuals identify, search for, evaluate, and use information to satisfy needs arising from knowledge gaps, decision-making, or problem-solving. Information seeking behavior is a broad term that refers to the actions that an individual, such as an undergraduate take to express information needs, seek information, evaluate and select information, and then use this information to satisfy his or her information needs (Fatima and Ahmad, 2022). Uche-Emeka and Eruvwe (2025) believe that anyone's information needs and seeking behavior are critical for decision making. Petroleum engineering students primarily seek information for academic coursework, projects, and career development, relying heavily on search engines (Google), lecture notes, friends, and digital libraries. They prefer quick, accessible, and up-to-date data, regularly employing mobile devices for academic research and social media, while encountering constraints such as inadequate internet connectivity and limited time. Every action and decision that governs the operations of petroleum engineers is entrenched in policy papers that include a wealth of professional knowledge. Oil and gas companies are extremely information intensive operations that rely on massive amounts of data, such as seismic data, geological models, reservoir models, simulations, drilling logs, production measurements, intervention reports, and process parameters for their daily operations (Hjelle and Monteiro, 2011).

Petroleum engineering students seeks to offer other professionals bodies with as much information as possible so that they may make informed choices (Hjelle and Monteiro, 2011). They also require information on oil and gas exploration and production (EandP), seismic prospecting, geological lab analysis, geochemical prospecting, petrochemical refining/extraction, O and G project supervision, health and safety, welfare/promotion, and training/development. It is in light of the above that this topic on information seeking behavior of final year students of Petroleum

Engineering in Government owned University in Nigeria is imperative.

The success of petroleum engineering final students is heavily reliant on petroleum engineers' expertise and availability to important information for good exploration and production. Final-year petroleum engineering students require information on almost every aspect of oil and natural gas exploration, production, and delivery. They rely on massive volumes of information for their daily operations, including seismic data, geological models, reservoir models, simulations, drilling logs, production measurements, intervention reports, and process parameters. They also require information on basic areas such as basin geosciences, surveys/seismic prospecting, geochemical prospecting, prospect evaluation, geological laboratory analysis, reservoir and production, drilling equipment/technology, and engineering aspects applied to various drilling production operations, petroleum engineering/geology, etc. Petroleum engineering final students require health and safety education owing to the significant risk involved in oil and gas exploration/production. They must have access to accessible safety information in order to be safe and healthy while undergoing industrial training in the oil and gas industries. The value of knowledge to petroleum engineering final students and professionals is undeniable. New advancements in exploration and production are made virtually every day. The majority of improvements and development are attributed to research activities conducted by oil and gas research scientists/institutions, which result in the multiplication of oil and gas knowledge.

It has been observed that research topics on information seeking behavior of final year students of Petroleum Engineering exist, but no study has been carried on the information seeking behavior of final year students of Petroleum Engineering in Government owned University in Nigeria, hence the need for this research.

The research questions formulated in this study includes:

1. What is the information seeking behavior of final year students of Petroleum Engineering in Government owned University in Nigeria?
2. What is the purpose of seeking information by final year petroleum engineering students in Government owned University in Nigeria?

Final-year petroleum engineering students operate in extremely information-intensive environments, relying on massive amounts of data such as seismic data, geological models, reservoir models, simulations, drilling logs, production measurements, intervention reports, and process parameters for their daily operations (Hjelle and Monteiro, 2011). The value of information to Petroleum Engineers is highly debatable. As a result, information has become a key tool for final-year petroleum engineering students at a government-owned university in Nigeria to help with operational decision making and policy execution. In today's competitive free market economy, information is critical to contemporary exploration and production (Mahapatra, 2021). Petroleum engineers must have access to oil and gas information in order to respond promptly and effectively to the upstream sector's difficulties. This demonstrates how important knowledge is for petroleum engineers to excel in their many responsibilities.

According to Srivastava (2021), petroleum industry workers require

information on basic topics such as basin geosciences, surveys/seismic prospecting, geochemical prospecting, prospect evaluation, geological laboratory analysis, reservoir and production, drilling equipment/technology, and engineering aspects applied to various drilling production operations, petroleum engineering/geology, and so on. Oil and gas personnel require health and safety knowledge owing to the significant risk involved in oil and gas exploration/production. They must have access to accessible safety information in order to be safe and healthy while at work. Hjelle and Montereo (2011) presented a study on Tactics for Generating Actionable Information. A total of 30,000 Production and Reservoir Engineers from Eastern Europe were polled. The respondents' data was collected using a survey approach that included observation, interviews, and a questionnaire. The study discovered that Production and Reservoir Engineers rely extensively on massive volumes of information, such as seismic data, geological models, reservoir models, simulations, drilling logs, production measurements, intervention reports, and process parameters, for their everyday operations. Swain and

Panda (2019) explore the information demands and seeking behavior of students at the KIIT School of Computer engineering in general, and e-information access in particular. According to the report, 100% of respondents used Google to search for information, with Yahoo coming in second (81.61). Dalzell (2019) correctly recognized that employees must have access to enough information to conduct their jobs safely, stating that knowledge is the most effective risk reduction. These are just a few of the topics that oil and gas personnel must understand about.Students were expected to be up to date on current events and knowledge. Joseph (2022) investigated the information and communication practices of petroleum geologists in the contiguous United States. The research looked into how technology advancements have affected the methods petroleum geologists seek and share information as it relates to their operations in the petroleum business. The study discovered that the digital 7 environment has contributed to significant changes in the petroleum business, influencing how petroleum geologists seek and exchange information in all aspects of their job. As a result, information has become a crucial tool for oil and gas operations decision making and policy execution. In today's competitive free market economy, information is critical to contemporary exploration and production (Mahapatra, 2021).

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study adopted a descriptive survey using questionnaire to collect data. The population of the study consists of 200 final year students of Petroleum Engineering in Government owned University in Nigeria which was sampled to that size. A total of 200 questionnaires were distributed only 172 were retrieved. Descriptive statistics, (mean and percentage) were used for analysis. A mean score of 2.5 and above and a percentage score of 50% were considered for decision making.

Table 1 depict the population of the study of year students of Petroleum Engineering in Government owned University in Nigeria who responded in the following order: Federal University of Petroleum Resources Effurun (FUPRE), (19), University of Port Harcourt (UNIPORT), (16), University of Benin (UNIBEN), (18), University of Lagos (UNILAG), Lagos State, (17), Federal University of Technology, Owerri (FUTO, (19), Imo State, Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU), Osun State (17), Federal University of Technology, Minna

(FUTMINNA) (14), Afe Babalola University (ABUAD (15) and University of Ibadan (UI), Oyo State (19) respectively which amounts to 172 valid respondents.

Table 1: Students of Petroleum Engineering in Government Owned University in Nigeria

S/N	Names of Universities	Population of final year petroleum engineering students sampled	Number of the Population of final petroleum engineering students who responded
1	Federal University of Petroleum Resources Effurun (FUPRE),	20	19
2	University of Port Harcourt (UNIPORT),	20	16
3	University of Benin (UNIBEN	20	18
4	University of Lagos (UNILAG), Lagos State	20	17
5	Federal University of Technology, Owerri (FUTO)	20	19
6	Imo State, Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU), Osun State	20	17
7	Ahmadu Bello University (ABU), Zaria, Kaduna State	20	18
8	Federal University of Technology, Minna (FUTMINNA)	20	14
9	Afe Babalola University (ABUAD)	20	15
10	University of Ibadan (UI), Oyo State	20	19
	Total	200	172

Table 2: Information Seeking Behavior of Final Year Students of Petroleum Engineering in Government owned University in Nigeria

Information seeking behavior	SA	A	D	SD	-X	Decision
Oil and gas E and P information	76	85	11	-	3.3	Accepted
Seismic prospecting information	65	91	9	7	3.2	Accepted
Geological lab analysis information	84	79	9	-	3.4	Accepted
Geochemical prospecting information	90	67	15	-	3.4	Accepted
Training/development information	68	87	16	1	3.2	Accepted

Table 2 indicate the Information seeking behavior of final year students of Petroleum Engineering in Government owned University in Nigeria in the following order: Oil and gas E and P information (3.3), Seismic prospecting information (3.2), Geological lab analysis information (3.4) Geochemical prospecting information (3.4) and Training/development information (3.2) respectively.

Table 3: The information seeking by final year petroleum engineering in Government owned University in Nigeria in Ranking Order

Purpose of seeking information by final year petroleum engineering	SA	A	D	SD	-X	Decision
Updating knowledge	69	73	19	11	3.2	Accepted
Writing articles / papers	76	77	16	3	3.3	Accepted
Petrochemical refining/extraction information	89	73	9	1	3.5	Accepted
Project work	78	86	16	8	3.5	Accepted
Academic activities	95	56	21	-	3.4	Accepted

Table 3 shows the purpose of seeking information by final year petroleum engineering in Government owned University in Nigeria in the following order: Updating knowledge (3.2), writing articles / papers (3.3), petrochemical refining/extraction information (3.5) project work (3.5) and academic activities (3.4) respectively.

3. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The study focuses on the information-seeking behavior of final-year petroleum engineering students at a government-owned university in Nigeria. Two research questions were developed to lead the investigation. The study found that final-year Petroleum Engineering students at a government-owned university in Nigeria seek information on oil

and gas exploration and production, seismic prospecting, geological lab analysis, geochemical prospecting, and training/development. The study goes on to indicate that the objective of obtaining information by final year petroleum engineering students at a government-owned university in Nigeria is to update their knowledge, write articles/papers, learn about petrochemical refining/extraction, do project work, and pursue academic activities.

4. CONCLUSION

The information demands and seeking behavior of final-year Petroleum Engineering students at a government-owned university in Nigeria refer to a collection of important facts and information that they require to carry out their academic activities, as well as how they go about finding this information. Searching for the proper information is crucial to their academic success. As a result, final-year petroleum students should visit any lending institution to acquire suitable information resources that will assist them in meeting their urgent demands. It may also be determined that the most common way petroleum engineers obtain knowledge is to question direct colleagues/expatriates about it via 13 face-to-face communication, telephone talk, videoconferences, e-mail, or social media. They also access the internet and check the workplace intranet/IS for information. These also established their source choices while looking for necessary information. However, the biggest obstacles petroleum engineers have when obtaining needed information are how reputable and dependable the source of information, they consult in making key decisions.

Recommendations

- Instructors and senior colleagues/expatriates in charge of giving information should aim to give reliable and credible information that does not impede access to required information.
- Final year engineering students should ensure that the purpose of seeking information to solve their problem should not be taken for granted

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