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ASSESSMENT OF LEARNER-CENTERED TECHNIQUES FOR ACADEMIC LIBRARY INSTRUCTION: A COMPARATIVE STUDY

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ABSTRACT. *Academic library instruction in Nigeria increasingly requires learner-centered approaches that promote engagement, ownership of learning, and effective research skills, yet the extent to which librarians apply such techniques across tertiary institutions remains uneven. This study assessed learner-centered techniques used by academic librarians teaching Media and Information Literacy (MIL) in Federal Colleges of Education and a Federal University in North-West Nigeria. A descriptive comparative survey design was adopted, with total enumeration of 314 librarians. The Assessment of Learner-Centered Techniques Questionnaire (ALTQ) was used; 289 copies (92.0%) were correctly completed and analyzed using mean, standard deviation, and independent-samples t-test at the 0.05 level. Librarians generally applied learner-centered guiding principles, addressed classroom power dynamics, used Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) Framework language, built rapport, and applied motivational and metacognitive techniques; classroom-management and prior-knowledge-activation techniques were comparatively less used. University librarians scored significantly higher on philosophy, rapport, and motivation-related techniques, while no significant difference emerged for classroom management and prior-knowledge activation. Learner-centered instruction is emerging but unevenly embedded. Continuing professional development, institutional support, and faculty-librarian collaboration are recommended.*

Keywords: *Academic Library Instruction, ACRL Framework, ARCS Model, Learner-Centered Teaching, Media And Information Literacy, Nigeria*

ABSTRAK. Pemberian instruksi di perpustakaan akademik di Nigeria semakin menuntut pendekatan yang berpusat pada peserta didikpendekatan yang mendorong keterlibatan, rasa memiliki terhadap proses pembelajaran, dan keterampilan riset yang efektif. Namun, penerapan teknik-teknik semacam itu oleh pustakawan di berbagai perguruan tinggi masih belum merata. Studi ini mengevaluasi teknik-teknik yang berpusat pada peserta didik yang digunakan oleh pustakawan akademik dalam mengajarkan Literasi Media dan Informasi (MIL) di sejumlah perguruan tinggi pendidikan (Federal Colleges of Education) dan sebuah universitas negeri (Federal University) di wilayah Barat Laut Nigeria. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain survei komparatif deskriptif dengan metode enumerasi total yang mencakup 314 pustakawan. Instrumen yang digunakan adalah *Assessment of Learner-Centered Techniques Questionnaire* (ALTQ); sebanyak 289 kuesioner (92,0%) berhasil diisi dengan lengkap dan dianalisis menggunakan nilai rata-rata, standar deviasi, serta uji-t untuk sampel independen (*independent-samples t-test*) pada tingkat signifikansi 0,05. Secara umum, para pustakawan telah menerapkan prinsip-prinsip dasar yang berpusat pada peserta didik, memperhatikan dinamika kekuasaan di dalam kelas, menggunakan terminologi dari kerangka kerja *Association of College and Research Libraries* (ACRL), membangun hubungan baik (*rapport*), serta menerapkan teknik-teknik motivasi dan metakognitif. Sebaliknya, teknik pengelolaan kelas dan aktivasi pengetahuan awal (*prior-knowledge activation*) relatif lebih jarang digunakan. Pustakawan di universitas menunjukkan skor yang jauh lebih tinggi dalam aspek filosofi, pembangunan hubungan baik, dan teknik-teknik yang berkaitan dengan motivasi, sementara tidak ditemukan perbedaan yang signifikan terkait pengelolaan kelas maupun aktivasi pengetahuan awal. Meskipun instruksi yang berpusat pada peserta didik mulai diterapkan, penerapannya masih belum merata. Oleh karena itu, pengembangan profesional berkelanjutan, dukungan institusional, serta kolaborasi antara dosen dan pustakawan sangat disarankan.

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Kata Kunci: Instruksi Perpustakaan Akademik, Kerangka Kerja ACRL, Model ARCS, Pengajaran yang Berpusat pada Peserta Didik, Literasi Media dan Informasi, Nigeria

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INTRODUCTION

The academic library has, over the last two decades, repositioned itself from a passive repository of information resources to an active partner in teaching and learning. Central to this repositioning is the instructional role of the academic librarian, who is increasingly required to design and deliver Media and Information Literacy (MIL) courses that equip students with the competencies to locate, evaluate, and ethically use information across formats. In Nigeria, MIL and related information literacy courses are commonly delivered as General Studies courses in universities and as components of the General Studies Education programme in Colleges of Education, and academic librarians are frequently assigned responsibility for their delivery (Baro & Eze, 2015; Dada *et al*., 2025). The latter setting is especially consequential because teacher trainees are expected to become multipliers of MIL competencies in the classrooms they will later lead (Wilson *et al*., 2011).

Historically, library instruction in Nigerian tertiary institutions has relied heavily on teacher-centered approaches such as the traditional lecture method, in which the librarian transmits content to a largely passive audience (Dada *et al*., 2025). Globally, however, the field of library and information science has undergone a decisive pedagogical shift toward learner-centered teaching, an approach in which the student, rather than the content or the instructor, is placed at the center of the instructional process (Klipfel & Cook, 2017; Weimer, 2013). This shift has been reinforced by the Association of College and Research Libraries' (ACRL) *Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education*, which reconceptualizes information literacy as a set of interconnected threshold concepts, or "frames," that require students to actively construct understanding rather than passively receive a checklist of skills (Association of College & Research Libraries [ACRL], 2016).

Practical guidance for enacting this shift in library instruction has been synthesized by Oehrli (2022) in *Practical Academic Library Instruction: Learner-Centered Techniques*, which distills classroom-tested strategies for developing a personal teaching philosophy, addressing

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uneven power dynamics in the classroom, communicating in the language of the ACRL Framework, building rapport with students, applying Keller's (1987) ARCS theory of motivation, fostering metacognition and student ownership of learning, asking effective discussion questions, defusing classroom distraction through proximity, pivoting, and pausing, and uncovering students' prior research knowledge through interactive methods. These nine practice areas, several of which are grounded in established educational-psychology research, provide a coherent framework for assessing the extent to which learner-centered instruction has been adopted by practicing academic librarians. Whether and how these techniques are being applied by librarians who teach MIL courses in Nigerian tertiary institutions, and whether their application differs across institutional types such as universities and colleges of education, remains an empirical question that this study sought to address, using North-West Nigeria as a case context.

Despite the global shift toward learner-centered pedagogy in academic library instruction, empirical evidence from Nigeria suggests that library instruction, including the teaching of MIL courses, remains predominantly lecture-based and teacher-centered. Dada *et al*. (2025), in an assessment of information literacy instruction among academic librarians in Federal Colleges of Education in North-West Nigeria, found that traditional lecture instruction and curriculum course modules were the dominant methods used, with limited faculty-librarian collaboration in instructional delivery. Similarly, Baro and Eze (2015) reported that librarians in Nigerian Colleges of Education rated their information literacy and related instructional skills as average, with important gaps in areas requiring more interactive and technology-mediated engagement with students. An analysis of 44 information literacy course materials and 20 university library websites in Nigeria further showed that content was weighted toward online bibliographic databases (56.8%) and comparatively little toward evaluating information (11.4%) (Anyaoku & Osuchukwu, 2022), which points to a content-and-tool emphasis rather than a learner-centered one.

Where librarians are unable to shape a coherent personal teaching philosophy, manage classroom power dynamics, communicate information-literacy concepts in ways that resonate with students, sustain motivation, foster metacognitive ownership of learning, and manage classroom distraction, the quality and impact of MIL instruction is likely to be diminished, undermining the broader goal of producing information-literate graduates and teacher trainees. Moreover, while several Nigerian studies have examined information

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literacy practices and skills among academic librarians (Baro & Eze, 2015; Dada *et al*., 2025), comparatively little empirical attention has been paid specifically to the extent and comparative pattern of learner-centered instructional techniques, as distilled in current library-pedagogy scholarship (Klipfel & Cook, 2017; Oehrli, 2022), across different institutional types such as Federal Universities and Federal Colleges of Education. It is this gap that the present study sought to fill.

The overall purpose of this study was to assess learner-centered techniques for academic library instruction among academic librarians teaching MIL courses in Federal Colleges of Education and a Federal University in North-West Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to examine how academic librarians use guiding principles to shape their personal philosophy of teaching and address uneven power dynamics in the MIL classroom; assess how they communicate with students using the language of the ACRL Framework and build rapport with students; determine the extent to which they apply Keller's ARCS theory of motivation, metacognitive techniques, and effective discussion questioning to foster student ownership of learning; and evaluate the techniques they use to defuse classroom distraction through proximity, pivoting, and pausing, as well as interactive approaches for uncovering students' prior knowledge of research.

The findings are expected to benefit academic librarians by providing evidence-based insight into practical, classroom-tested learner-centered techniques that can strengthen the delivery of MIL courses. Library and institutional administrators may use them in designing continuing professional development programmes for instruction librarians, and curriculum planning bodies such as the National Universities Commission (NUC) and the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) may draw on them when reviewing General Studies and General Studies Education curricula. The study also contributes to the relatively sparse empirical literature comparing learner-centered library instruction across institutional types in Nigeria and provides a baseline for future researchers. The study was delimited to academic librarians who teach MIL courses in Federal Colleges of Education and a Federal University in the North-West geo-political zone of Nigeria, and its content was limited to four thematic areas of learner-centered technique: teaching philosophy and classroom power dynamics; communication and rapport-building; motivation and metacognition; and classroom management and prior-knowledge activation.

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Accordingly, four research questions guided the study: RQ1, to what extent do academic librarians teaching MIL courses in Federal Colleges of Education and a Federal University in North-West Nigeria use guiding principles to shape their personal philosophy of teaching and address the uneven power dynamics of the classroom; RQ2, to what extent do they use pointers for communicating with students in the language of the ACRL Framework and simple and subtle ways to build rapport; RQ3, to what extent do they apply real-world applications of Keller's ARCS theory of motivation, metacognitive techniques that foster student ownership of learning, and tips for asking good discussion questions; and RQ4, to what extent do they apply techniques for defusing distraction through proximity, pivoting, and pausing, and interactive methods to uncover students' prior knowledge in research. Two null hypotheses were tested at the 0.05 level of significance: Ho1, there is no statistically significant difference between the mean ratings of academic librarians in the Federal University and Federal Colleges of Education on the use of teaching-philosophy, power-dynamics, communication, rapport-building, and motivation/metacognition techniques for MIL instruction in North-West Nigeria; and Ho2, there is no statistically significant difference between the mean ratings of the two groups on the use of classroom-management (proximity, pivoting, pausing) and prior-knowledge-activation techniques.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptual Review

Concept of Learner-Centered Teaching

Learner-centered teaching is an educational philosophy in which learners' needs, prior knowledge, and active participation, rather than the transmission of content, drive instructional decisions. Weimer (2013) characterizes it through five key changes to practice: a rebalancing of power between teacher and learner, a change in the function of content from something to be covered to a resource for building learning skills, a shift in the teacher's role from sole source of knowledge to facilitator, a transfer of responsibility for learning to the learner, and a rethinking of the purposes and processes of evaluation. Within library and information science, this philosophy fits the profession's service orientation and its humanist, constructivist approach to meeting users' needs. Klipfel and Cook (2017) frame learner-centered pedagogy as an approach concerned with helping learners connect authentically with research, moving beyond uninspiring, formulaic assignments toward

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tactics that kindle learners' motivation and autonomy. Oehrli (2022) operationalizes this philosophy into practical, classroom-ready techniques spanning teaching philosophy, classroom power dynamics, communication, rapport, motivation, metacognition, discussion facilitation, classroom management, and activation of prior knowledge.

Academic Library Instruction and Media and Information Literacy in Nigeria

Academic library instruction in Nigeria has traditionally been delivered as part of General Studies (GST) programmes in universities and General Studies Education (GSE) programmes in Colleges of Education, with academic librarians assigned responsibility for teaching users' education, library-use, and, increasingly, MIL content (Baro & Eze, 2015). Baro and Zuokemefa (2011) surveyed information literacy programmes in 36 Nigerian university libraries, while a more recent analysis of GST 121 course materials found that the content leaned toward bibliographic databases, with limited attention to evaluating information, fact-checking, and countering misinformation (Anyaoku & Osuchukwu, 2022). For colleges of education, the stakes are higher still: the UNESCO MIL curriculum for teachers positions MIL as a core professional competence for teacher trainees who will shape the information and media habits of future generations of learners (Wilson *et al*., 2011).

The ACRL Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education

The *Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education*, adopted by the ACRL Board in 2016 as a replacement for the 2000 *Information Literacy Competency Standards*, reconceptualizes information literacy around six interconnected "frames" or threshold concepts rather than a checklist of discrete skills (ACRL, 2016). The Framework emphasizes that information possesses several dimensions of value, that research is iterative, and that authority is constructed and contextual, among other core ideas, and it explicitly invites librarians, faculty, and curriculum designers to redesign instruction sessions and assignments around these concepts (ACRL, 2016). Because the Framework's language is conceptual and can appear abstract to undergraduate and pre-service teacher audiences, translating its frames into accessible, discipline-relevant language is a core communication competency for instruction librarians (Oehrli, 2022).

*Theoretical Framework*Social Constructivist Theory

This study draws first on social constructivist theory, which holds that learners actively construct knowledge through social interaction, dialogue, and engagement with more

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knowledgeable others within a supportive learning environment, rather than passively absorbing transmitted content (Vygotsky, 1978). Social constructivism underpins the shift from teacher-centered to learner-centered library instruction and explains the rationale for techniques such as rapport-building, discussion facilitation, and collaborative activation of prior knowledge. The synthesis of learning research in *How People Learn* reinforces this position: learners arrive with preconceptions that must be engaged if new understanding is to take hold, and effective learning environments are learner-centered, knowledge-centered, assessment-centered, and community-centered (Bransford *et al*., 2000). Metacognition, the learner's monitoring and regulation of their own thinking (Flavell, 1979), is likewise central to the ownership of learning that Oehrli's (2022) techniques seek to cultivate. Critical perspectives add a further dimension: Elmborg (2006) argues that information literacy instruction should attend to the relationship between teacher and learner, which is the concern behind the power-dynamics techniques assessed in this study.

Keller's ARCS Model of Motivation

The study also draws on Keller's (1987) Attention, Relevance, Confidence, and Satisfaction (ARCS) model of motivational design, developed to provide systematic ways of identifying and solving problems associated with learners' motivation. The model proposes that sustained learning motivation depends on capturing and holding learners' attention, demonstrating the relevance of instructional content to learners' goals, building learners' confidence through appropriately scaffolded challenges, and generating satisfaction through feedback and reinforcement (Keller, 1987). Reynolds, Roberts, and Hauck (2017), in a case-study application of the ARCS model among instruction librarians, found the model valuable for improving student engagement during information literacy sessions, while a meta-analysis by Goksu and Bolat (2021) and a literature review by Li and Keller (2018) report a generally positive relationship between application of the ARCS model and learners' motivation and academic achievement across diverse educational settings.

Oehrli's Learner-Centered Techniques Framework

Finally, the study adopts Oehrli's (2022) practice-based framework of learner-centered techniques for academic library instruction as its organizing framework. Distilled from classroom practice and current educational research, the framework groups techniques under guiding principles for a personal teaching philosophy, strategies for addressing uneven

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classroom power dynamics, communication in the language of the ACRL Framework, rapport-building, motivational and metacognitive strategies including the ARCS model and think-pair-share discussion techniques, and classroom-management strategies such as proximity, pivoting, pausing, and interactive activation of students' prior knowledge (Oehrli, 2022). The four research questions of the present study map directly onto this framework.

Empirical Review

Several Nigerian studies provide empirical context for the present study. Baro and Eze (2015), investigating the self-perceived ICT-related information literacy skills of librarians in Nigerian Colleges of Education, found that librarians rated their skills as average and identified a need for substantial investment to improve and update the knowledge and skills of library and information personnel in the region. Most directly relevant, Dada, Ajayi, and Muhammad (2025) assessed information literacy instruction among academic librarians in Federal Colleges of Education in North-West Nigeria and found that traditional lecture instruction in subject classes and curriculum course modules were the main methods employed, recommending greater faculty-librarian engagement and collaboration as a critical component of instructional delivery. Beyond Nigeria, Tewell (2018), surveying and interviewing librarians practicing critical information literacy, illustrated how discussion framed around issues of power, privilege, and inequality is a popular device for critical and learner-centered library instruction, echoing Oehrli's (2022) guidance on addressing classroom power dynamics. More broadly, a meta-analysis of 225 studies in science, engineering, and mathematics found that active learning improved student performance and reduced failure rates relative to traditional lecturing (Freeman *et al*., 2014); although drawn from a different disciplinary context, this evidence supports the pedagogical premise behind learner-centered library instruction. Reynolds *et al*. (2017), Li and Keller (2018), and Goksu and Bolat (2021) provide empirical support for the effectiveness of Keller's ARCS model when applied to instructional design, including within library-instruction contexts.

Gap in Literature

While existing Nigerian studies have examined general information literacy practices, skills, programmes, and instructional methods among academic librarians (Anyaoku & Osuchukwu, 2022; Baro & Eze, 2015; Baro & Zuokemefa, 2011; Dada *et al*., 2025), none that the author could identify has specifically assessed the adoption of the discrete, practice-

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based learner-centered techniques articulated in current library-pedagogy scholarship (Klipfel & Cook, 2017; Oehrli, 2022) or compared their use between academic librarians in a Federal University and Federal Colleges of Education. This study addresses that gap by empirically assessing four thematic clusters of learner-centered technique and testing for institutional differences in their application.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design of the comparative type. The design was considered appropriate because the study sought to describe the extent of use of learner-centered techniques among academic librarians and to compare the mean ratings of two institutional groups, Federal University and Federal Colleges of Education, without manipulating any variable.

Operational Definition of Terms

Learner-centered technique refers to an instructional strategy that places the student's engagement, agency, and understanding at the center of the teaching process, as opposed to a teacher- or content-centered approach. *Academic library instruction* refers to the teaching role performed by academic librarians in developing students' information literacy and research competencies, including the delivery of MIL courses. *Media and Information Literacy (MIL)* refers to a composite set of competencies encompassing the ability to access, critically evaluate, and ethically use information and media content.

Population of the Study

The population of the study comprised all 314 academic librarians teaching MIL courses in Federal Colleges of Education and a Federal University in North-West Nigeria. The population was distributed across the institutions as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. *Population Distribution of Academic Librarians Teaching MIL Courses by Institution*

Institution	Institution Type	Number of Librarians	Percentage (%)
Federal University in North-West Nigeria	University	108	34.4

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Institution	Institution Type	Number of Librarians	Percentage (%)
Federal Colleges of Education (combined)	College of Education	206	65.6
Total		**314**	**100.0**

Note. Data represent the total population of academic librarians teaching MIL courses in the study institutions.

Sample and Sampling Technique

Because the population of 314 was of a manageable size, a total enumeration (census) technique was adopted, and the questionnaire was administered to all 314 academic librarians. This approach eliminated the sampling error associated with probability sampling and ensured that every academic librarian teaching MIL courses in the study area had the opportunity to participate.

Instrument for Data Collection

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire titled "Assessment of Learner-Centered Techniques Questionnaire" (ALTQ), developed by the researcher based on the learner-centered techniques framework of Oehrli (2022) and the ARCS model of Keller (1987). The instrument had two sections. Section A elicited respondents' demographic information (institution type, gender, highest qualification, and years of teaching experience). Section B contained 24 items organized into four clusters of six items each, corresponding to the four research questions, and was structured on a four-point Likert-type scale of Strongly Agree (4), Agree (3), Disagree (2), and Strongly Disagree (1).

Validity of the Instrument

The face and content validity of the ALTQ was established through review by three experts in library and information science and educational measurement, who assessed the instrument for clarity, relevance, and alignment with the research questions. Their observations and corrections were incorporated into the final version of the instrument.

Reliability of the Instrument

The reliability of the ALTQ was established through a pilot test administered to 20 academic librarians teaching MIL-related courses in the North-Central geo-political zone of Nigeria, who were not part of the main study. Data from the pilot test were analyzed using Cronbach's

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alpha, yielding coefficients of .81 for the teaching-philosophy/power-dynamics cluster, .84 for the communication/rapport-building cluster, .85 for the motivation/metacognition cluster, and .78 for the classroom-management/prior-knowledge cluster, with an overall coefficient of .87, which was considered sufficiently high for the instrument to be adopted for the study.

Method of Data Collection

Copies of the ALTQ were administered to the 314 academic librarians with the assistance of trained research assistants and were retrieved on the spot where possible or within two weeks of administration.

Method of Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), version 26. Research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation, with a criterion mean of 2.50 (the midpoint of the four-point scale) used as the benchmark for decision-making: item or cluster means of 2.50 and above were interpreted as "Agreed," while means below 2.50 were interpreted as "Disagreed." The two null hypotheses were tested using the independent-samples t-test at the 0.05 level of significance, comparing the mean ratings of Federal University and Federal College of Education respondents. To indicate practical significance, Cohen's *d* was calculated from the reported group means and pooled standard deviations and interpreted as small (0.20), medium (0.50), or large (0.80).

RESULTS

Response Rate

Out of the 314 copies of the questionnaire administered, 289 copies (92.0%) were correctly completed, retrieved, and found usable for analysis, while 25 copies (8.0%) were either not returned or improperly completed and were discarded. This response rate was considered adequate for the analysis.

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Table 2. *Demographic Characteristics of Respondents (N = 289)*

Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Institution	Federal University	96	33.2

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Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
	Federal College of Education	193	66.8
Gender	Male	172	59.5
	Female	117	40.5
Highest qualification	BLS/BA (LS)	88	30.4
	MLS/MSc (LS)	165	57.1
	PhD	36	12.5
Teaching experience	1–5 years	79	27.3
	6–10 years	112	38.8
	11–15 years	63	21.8
	16 years and above	35	12.1
Total		**289**	**100.0**

Note. LS = Library Science. Percentages are computed within each variable.

Research Question One: Guiding Principles, Personal Teaching Philosophy, and Classroom Power Dynamics

Table 3. *Mean Ratings on Use of Guiding Principles for Teaching Philosophy and Classroom Power Dynamics (N = 289)*

S/N	Item	Mean	SD	Decision
1	I reflect on core values (student agency, active learning, real-world relevance) to shape my philosophy of MIL instruction.	3.21	0.58	Agreed
2	I position myself as a facilitator of learning rather than the sole authority during library instruction sessions.	3.05	0.61	Agreed
3	I involve students in co-creating classroom norms and ground rules for MIL sessions.	2.74	0.72	Agreed
4	I use inclusive, non-hierarchical room/seating arrangements when facilitating instruction.	2.68	0.75	Agreed
5	I acknowledge and address disparities in students' prior digital/library exposure to reduce classroom power imbalance.	3.02	0.64	Agreed
6	I create opportunities for students to question or critique library-provided information sources.	2.96	0.69	Agreed
	Cluster mean	**2.94**	**0.67**	**Agreed**

Note. Criterion mean = 2.50. SD = standard deviation. Scale: Strongly Agree = 4, Agree = 3, Disagree = 2, Strongly Disagree = 1.

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Table 3 shows that all six items had mean scores above the criterion mean of 2.50, with a cluster mean of 2.94, indicating that academic librarians in North-West Nigeria generally agreed that they draw on guiding principles to shape a personal teaching philosophy and to address uneven power dynamics in the MIL classroom. The highest-rated item was reflecting on core values such as student agency and real-world relevance (M = 3.21, SD = 0.58), while the item on inclusive, non-hierarchical seating arrangements recorded the lowest, though still agreed, mean (M = 2.68, SD = 0.75). This pattern suggests that while librarians embrace the conceptual and relational dimensions of a learner-centered philosophy, translating it into concrete physical or structural classroom arrangements remains comparatively underdeveloped. The result is consistent with Oehrli's (2022) view that shaping a personal teaching philosophy and addressing classroom power dynamics are foundational guiding principles, and with Weimer's (2013) argument that rebalancing power is among the changes to practice that are hardest to enact.

Research Question Two: Communication in the Language of the ACRL Framework and Rapport-Building

Table 4. *Mean Ratings on Communication in ACRL Framework Language and Rapport-Building (N = 289)*

S/N	Item	Mean	SD	Decision
1	I translate ACRL Framework concepts (e.g., "Authority Is Constructed and Contextual") into everyday language for students.	2.89	0.70	Agreed
2	I connect information literacy concepts to students' disciplines and courses of study.	3.18	0.55	Agreed
3	I learn and use students' names during instruction to build rapport.	3.09	0.63	Agreed
4	I arrive early or stay after sessions to interact informally with students.	2.77	0.71	Agreed
5	I share brief personal anecdotes or appropriate humor to humanize instruction sessions.	3.02	0.66	Agreed
6	I use welcoming, jargon-free language when introducing new MIL concepts.	3.24	0.57	Agreed
	Cluster mean	**3.03**	**0.64**	**Agreed**

Note. Criterion mean = 2.50. SD = standard deviation.

As shown in Table 4, all items were rated above the criterion mean, with a cluster mean of 3.03, the highest of the four clusters. Librarians most strongly agreed that they use

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welcoming, jargon-free language when introducing MIL concepts (M = 3.24, SD = 0.57) and connect information literacy concepts to students' disciplines (M = 3.18, SD = 0.55), while arriving early or staying back to interact informally with students recorded the lowest mean (M = 2.77, SD = 0.71). This suggests that the librarians are relatively confident communicators of information-literacy content and attentive to relational rapport-building, consistent with Oehrli's (2022) guidance that simple, subtle rapport-building gestures and accessible translation of ACRL Framework language are central to learner-centered instruction, and with the ACRL's (2016) framing of the Framework as a flexible tool for connecting information literacy to disciplinary and student needs.

Research Question Three: Keller's ARCS Model, Metacognition, and Discussion Questioning

Table 5. *Mean Ratings on Application of Keller's ARCS Model, Metacognition, and Discussion Questioning (N = 289)*

S/N	Item	Mean	SD	Decision
1	I open MIL sessions with an attention-grabbing question, scenario, or media clip (Attention).	2.85	0.73	Agreed
2	I explain how research/library skills are relevant to students' coursework and future careers (Relevance).	3.11	0.60	Agreed
3	I scaffold tasks from simple to complex to build students' confidence in research (Confidence).	2.93	0.66	Agreed
4	I provide feedback and acknowledge small successes to reinforce students' satisfaction (Satisfaction).	2.88	0.69	Agreed
5	I use reflective prompts (e.g., "What was confusing about this search?") to build students' metacognitive awareness.	2.61	0.78	Agreed
6	I ask open-ended discussion questions that require students to justify their reasoning.	2.79	0.74	Agreed
	Cluster mean	**2.86**	**0.70**	**Agreed**

Note. Criterion mean = 2.50. SD = standard deviation.

Table 5 indicates that all six items were rated above the criterion mean, with a cluster mean of 2.86. Explaining the relevance of research and library skills to students' coursework and careers recorded the highest mean (M = 3.11, SD = 0.60), consistent with the "Relevance" component of Keller's (1987) ARCS model, while the use of reflective, metacognitive

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prompts recorded the lowest, though still agreed, mean (M = 2.61, SD = 0.78). This suggests that although the librarians agree that they attend broadly to students' motivation, strategies that require students to reflect explicitly on their own research process (Flavell, 1979) are comparatively less embedded in practice. The finding aligns with Reynolds *et al*. (2017), who found the ARCS model valuable for improving student engagement during information literacy sessions, and with Goksu and Bolat's (2021) meta-analytic evidence that ARCS-based strategies are associated with improved motivation across educational contexts.

Research Question Four: Classroom Management (Proximity, Pivoting, Pausing) and Prior-Knowledge Activation

Table 6. *Mean Ratings on Classroom-Management and Prior-Knowledge-Activation Techniques (N = 289)*

S/N	Item	Mean	SD	Decision
1	I move around the classroom (proximity) to minimize distraction during hands-on searching.	2.69	0.77	Agreed
2	I pause instruction briefly to regain students' attention when they are distracted.	2.83	0.71	Agreed
3	I pivot activities (e.g., switch from lecture to group task) when I notice student disengagement.	2.58	0.80	Agreed
4	I use warm-up polls or quick quizzes to uncover students' prior research knowledge.	2.47	0.82	Disagreed
5	I use KWL (Know-Want-Learn) charts to activate students' prior knowledge before instruction.	2.31	0.84	Disagreed
6	I incorporate think-pair-share activities to surface students' existing knowledge.	2.79	0.73	Agreed
	Cluster mean	**2.61**	**0.78**	**Agreed**

Note. Criterion mean = 2.50. SD = standard deviation.

Table 6 shows the lowest cluster mean among the four research questions (M = 2.61, SD = 0.78), and it is the only cluster in which individual items fell below the criterion mean. Pausing instruction to regain attention was the most agreed classroom-management item (M = 2.83, SD = 0.71), whereas the use of KWL charts (M = 2.31, SD = 0.84) and warm-up polls or quizzes (M = 2.47, SD = 0.82) to activate prior knowledge were rated below the criterion mean, indicating disagreement or inconsistent use. This suggests that while librarians employ basic, low-preparation classroom-management moves such as pausing, more structured interactive techniques for uncovering students' prior research knowledge

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remain underused. Because learners' preconceptions strongly shape what they take from instruction (Bransford *et al*., 2000), this gap matters pedagogically. It also resonates with Dada *et al*. (2025), who found that traditional lecture instruction and curriculum course modules dominated information literacy delivery in Federal Colleges of Education in North-West Nigeria, leaving less room for the interactive, formative techniques recommended by Oehrli (2022).

Test of Hypothesis One

Ho1 stated that there is no statistically significant difference between the mean ratings of academic librarians in the Federal University and Federal Colleges of Education on the use of teaching-philosophy, power-dynamics, communication, rapport-building, and motivation/metacognition learner-centered techniques (Research Questions 1–3 combined). An independent-samples t-test was conducted to test this hypothesis (Table 7).

Table 7. *Independent-Samples t-Test on Teaching-Philosophy, Communication, and Motivation/Metacognition Techniques by Institution Type*

Institution	n	Mean	SD	df	t	p	d	Decision
Federal University	96	3.10	0.42	287	3.99	< .001	0.50	Rejected
Federal College of Education	193	2.86	0.51					

Note. Significance at p < .05. The null hypothesis was rejected because the p-value was less than the 0.05 level of significance. *d* = Cohen's *d*, calculated from the means and pooled standard deviation. Each group mean is the average of that group's ratings on the 18 items in Tables 3–5; weighted by group size, the two means give the overall mean of 2.94 (the average of the cluster means 2.94, 3.03, and 2.86).

As shown in Table 7, the mean rating of Federal University librarians (M = 3.10, SD = 0.42) was significantly higher than that of Federal College of Education librarians (M = 2.86, SD = 0.51), t(287) = 3.99, p < .001, with a medium effect size (d = 0.50). Since the p-value was less than the 0.05 level of significance, Ho1 was rejected, indicating a statistically significant difference between the two institutional groups in their use of teaching-philosophy, communication/rapport, and motivation/metacognition learner-centered techniques, in favor of the Federal University.

Test of Hypothesis Two

Ho2 stated that there is no statistically significant difference between the mean ratings of academic librarians in the Federal University and Federal Colleges of Education on the use

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of classroom-management (proximity, pivoting, pausing) and prior-knowledge-activation techniques (Research Question 4). An independent-samples t-test was conducted to test this hypothesis (Table 8).

Table 8. *Independent-Samples t-Test on Classroom-Management and Prior-Knowledge-Activation Techniques by Institution Type*

Institution	n	Mean	SD	df	t	p	d	Decision
Federal University	96	2.66	0.58	287	0.93	.351	0.12	Retained
Federal College of Education	193	2.59	0.61					

Note. Significance at $p < .05$. The null hypothesis was retained because the p-value was greater than the 0.05 level of significance. *d* = Cohen's *d*, calculated from the means and pooled standard deviation. Weighted by group size, the two means give the overall mean of 2.61 reported in Table 6.

As shown in Table 8, the mean rating of Federal University librarians (M = 2.66, SD = 0.58) was not significantly different from that of Federal College of Education librarians (M = 2.59, SD = 0.61), $t(287) = 0.93$, $p = .351$, with a negligible effect size (d = 0.12). Since the p-value was greater than the 0.05 level of significance, Ho2 was retained, indicating no statistically significant difference between the two institutional groups in their use of classroom-management and prior-knowledge-activation techniques.

DISCUSSIONS

The findings show that academic librarians teaching MIL courses in North-West Nigeria generally agree that they apply learner-centered techniques across all four thematic clusters examined, with communication in ACRL Framework language and rapport-building recording the highest cluster mean and classroom-management/prior-knowledge activation the lowest. This pattern is broadly consistent with Oehrli's (2022) observation that relational, communication-oriented techniques tend to feel more intuitive to instruction librarians than structured, formative classroom routines. The comparatively low ratings for KWL charts and warm-up quizzes corroborate Dada *et al.*'s (2025) finding that traditional lecture instruction and curriculum course modules dominate information literacy delivery in Federal Colleges of Education in North-West Nigeria, and echo Baro and Eze's (2015) finding that Colleges of Education librarians rate several interactive instructional skills as only average. Given evidence that active, learner-engaging instruction improves student performance (Freeman

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et al., 2014), the underuse of formative techniques is a practical concern for MIL outcomes, not merely a matter of teaching style.

The significant, medium-sized difference found for Hypothesis One, favoring the Federal University, suggests that institutional context shapes the extent to which librarians internalize a learner-centered teaching philosophy, communicate fluently in ACRL Framework language, and apply motivational strategies such as Keller's (1987) ARCS model. Possible explanations, which this study did not test, include differences in access to continuing professional development, exposure to current professional literature, and opportunities for collaboration with teaching faculty. By contrast, the non-significant and negligible difference found for Hypothesis Two suggests that classroom-management and prior-knowledge-activation techniques are comparably, and only moderately, applied across both institutional types, pointing to a sector-wide rather than institution-specific capacity gap that would benefit from targeted training. Because the findings rest on self-reported ratings, they describe librarians' perceived practice and should be corroborated through observation or student-reported evidence.

CONCLUSIONS

This study assessed learner-centered techniques for academic library instruction among academic librarians teaching MIL courses in Federal Colleges of Education and a Federal University in North-West Nigeria, guided by four research questions and two hypotheses. It concludes that the librarians have generally embraced a learner-centered orientation to MIL instruction, particularly in shaping a personal teaching philosophy, communicating in accessible ACRL Framework language, building rapport, and attending to student motivation, but that structured classroom-management routines and interactive techniques for activating students' prior research knowledge remain comparatively underdeveloped across both institutional types. It further concludes that institutional context is associated with the degree to which philosophy-, communication-, and motivation-related techniques are applied, with Federal University librarians reporting significantly higher use than their Federal College of Education counterparts, while classroom-management and prior-knowledge-activation techniques are applied at similarly moderate levels in both groups, suggesting a shared, sector-wide capacity gap.

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Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made:

1. Library management and institutional authorities in Federal Colleges of Education should invest in sustained, structured continuing professional development programmes that expose academic librarians to current learner-centered pedagogical techniques, including guiding principles for teaching philosophy, ACRL Framework communication, and Keller's ARCS model of motivation.
2. Academic librarians across both institutional types should be deliberately trained in structured, formative techniques for activating students' prior research knowledge, such as KWL charts, warm-up polls, and think-pair-share activities, given that these were among the least applied techniques across the sector.
3. Institutional management should formalize faculty-librarian collaboration in the delivery of MIL and General Studies/General Studies Education courses, in line with the recommendation of Dada *et al*. (2025), to support more consistent, learner-centered instructional delivery.
4. Professional bodies such as the Nigerian Library Association, in collaboration with curriculum agencies such as the NUC and the NCCE, should incorporate learner-centered instructional competencies into standards and accreditation guidelines for library and information science personnel who teach MIL and related courses.
5. Individual librarians should engage in reflective practice, including periodic self-assessment against frameworks such as Oehrli's (2022) learner-centered techniques, to identify and strengthen underused areas of their instructional practice, particularly classroom management and prior-knowledge activation.

5.3 Suggestions for Further Studies

Further studies could extend this assessment to other geo-political zones of Nigeria, include state-owned and private universities and colleges of education for broader comparison, adopt qualitative or mixed-methods designs (including classroom observation and student-reported outcomes) to explore the reasons behind observed institutional differences, and examine the relationship between librarians' application of learner-centered techniques and measurable student information-literacy learning outcomes.

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5.4 Limitations of the Study

The study relied on academic librarians' self-reported ratings of their own instructional practice, which may be subject to social desirability bias. The instrument was researcher-developed and its reliability was established on a small pilot sample. Because the Federal University group represents a single institution, observed differences may reflect institution-specific factors as well as institutional type. Finally, the findings are delimited to Federal Colleges of Education and a Federal University in North-West Nigeria and may not generalize to state-owned or private tertiary institutions or to other geo-political zones.

DECLARATIONS

AI Usage Declaration

During the preparation of this work the author used ChatGPT 4.0 and Grammarly to perform copyediting and language corrections on this manuscript. After using these tools, the author reviewed, verified, and edited the content as needed, and maintains full accountability for the final text and the accuracy of the publication.

Author contributions

KSJD conceptualized the study, developed the instrument, supervised data collection, analyzed the data, and wrote and revised the manuscript.

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Conflict of Interest

The author declares no competing interests. Ethics and location: informed consent was obtained from all participants, who took part voluntarily and anonymously; the research was conducted in Federal Colleges of Education (FCEs) and a Federal University (FU) in North-West (NW) Nigeria.

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