

IMPACT OF INFORMATION LITERACY ON COLLEGE STUDENTS

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Abstract *“Information literacy has become a part of our life. Hence the present study is to identify the role played by college libraries to make literate society” (Deepak, 2013). In recent years Information Literacy has become an important issue and many Information Literacy initiatives have been taken throughout the world particularly in the field of Higher Education. Under graduate students often lack the skills necessary to succeed in this rapidly changing environment, and faculty need training and support to make use of new technologies for effective teaching and learning. This paper discusses the meaning of information literacy and the role of college librarians in developing information literacy skills in college libraries” (Syamalamba, n.d.).*

Keywords: *Information Skills, Higher Education, Information Literacy, Undergraduate Students, College Libraries*

INTRODUCTION

“Developing lifelong learners is central to the mission of higher education institutions. By ensuring that individuals have the intellectual abilities of reasoning and critical thinking, and by helping them construct a framework for learning, colleges and universities should provide the foundation for continued growth throughout their careers, as well as in their roles as informed citizens and members of communities” (Amudhavalli, 2008). “As libraries are involved in a number of ways in supporting teaching and research in terms of resourcing reading material, facilitating use of these materials, and providing collaborative focus for partnership with other institutions, they play an important role in promoting information literacy of the students and staff members”(N. Singh & Klingenberg, 2012).

“The phrase information literacy first appeared in print in a 1974 report by Paul G. Zurkowski written on behalf of the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science. Zurkowski used the phrase to describe the “techniques and skills” learned by the information literate “for utilizing the wide range of information tools as well as primary sources in molding information solutions to their problems” and drew a relatively firm line between the “literate” and “information illiterates” (Wikipedia, 2017c). “Information literacy is required because of the ongoing proliferation of information resources and the variable methods of access. Information is available in different format1 textual, graphical etc” (Pant & Negi, 2015). “Libraries are an important instrument in disseminating information and teaching literacy skills, in collaboration with academic departments and colleges” (Pant & Negi, 2015).

DEFINITION

“Information literacy is a crucial skill in the pursuit of knowledge. It involves recognizing when information is needed and being able to efficiently locate, accurately evaluate, effectively use, and clearly communicate information in various formats” (INFORMATION LITERACY, 2017). “The American Library Association defines “information literacy” as a set of abilities requiring individuals to “recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information”(Wikipedia, 2017c).

LITERATURE REVIEW

K. P. Singh, (2010) in his study “Information Literacy skills in digital environment: an over view’ suggested that information literacy must become a key focus of educational institutes at all levels. Kaushik, (2013) says that Information Literacy equips students with the critical skills necessary to become independent lifelong learners. Ashapura & Nayak (2013) made a study on “Role of information Literacy for the use of information resources.” and said that information literacy programs will enable librarians to play a more prominent and pivotal role among their client. Choudhary, R K; Kumar, (2015) made a study on “Digital information Literacy among post Graduate students and research scholars of BHU: a Study” and found that majority of the respondent were using the Google search engine which is more popular

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rather than other search engine. Pant & Negi (2015) stated that legal skills and legal literacy requires close association between faculty and library. Das (2015) in his study found that after attending the information literacy skills, in collaboration with academic departments and colleges.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

- Ability to assess his/her information needs.
- Awareness of different source of information.
- To highlight the various factors related to the enhancement of use of college library resources.
- To determine the relationship between the information literacy and use of library resources.
- To determine direct and indirect impact of information literacy in enhancement of use of library resources among the college students.
- To understand about the advantage and disadvantage of internet from user point of view.

METHODOLOGY

“General survey of literature has been used for this study. Study is mainly based on secondary sources of data like books, journals, e-journals, magazines, published and unpublished research works in their discipline in both electronic and printed forms” (S. N. Singh, 2015).

INFORMATION LITERACY AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Information literacy, while showing significant overlap with information technology skills, is a distinct and broader area of competence. Increasingly, information technology skills are interwoven with, and support, information literacy. A 1999 report from the National Research Council promotes the concept of “fluency” with information technology and delineates several distinctions useful in understanding relationships among information literacy, computer literacy, and broader technological competence. The report notes that “computer literacy” is concerned with rote learning of specific hardware and software applications, while “fluency with technology” focuses on understanding the underlying concepts of technology and applying problem-solving and critical thinking to using technology. The report also discusses differences between information technology fluency and information literacy as it is understood in K-12 and higher education. Among these are information literacy’s focus on content, communication, analysis, information searching, and evaluation; whereas information technology

“fluency” focuses on a deep understanding of technology and graduated increasingly skilled use of it (ACRL, 2000).

INFORMATION LITERACY AND HIGHER EDUCATION

In the institutions of higher learning in India, user education, library instruction and bibliographic instruction programmes are provided. In universities and colleges for research degree programmes, a course on research methodology is included where library research techniques are also included. Some autonomous colleges and research institutions subscribe to the electronic resources, on consortium basis or individual basis. The producers or vendors of these electronic resources conduct user training programmes for use of those resources. (Ghosh, 2006) “The review of the literature indicates that the majority of the publications address information literacy in higher education. During the twentieth century and at the beginning of the twenty-first century, academic and school librarians developed the concept of information skills instruction from library orientation to library instruction to course-integrated user instruction. Librarians developed teaching materials, guides, teaching methods, library skills tests, Web based tutorials and other online teaching modules. Although the information skills teaching units were often separate from the academic curriculum and not integrated into total instructional programs for students, librarians have continually tried to integrate the teaching of information skills modules into the curriculum” (Rader, 2002).

INFORMATION LITERACY FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS (NATTAR, 2012)

- Students take responsibility for their learning and they retain more of the information they have gathered for themselves.
- Information literate students are more effective consumers of information resources.
- Teachers encourage students to do their own research.
- Use information to solve problem and to make decisions.

COMPONENTS OF INFORMATION LITERACY

Following are the components of information literacy:

Traditional Literacy: It is the ability to read and write.

Numerical Literacy: it is a user ability to use and understand Mathematical problems.

Oral Literacy: to understand information presented verbally and orally.

Visual Literacy: “Visual literacy is the ability to interpret, negotiate, and make meaning from information presented in the form of an image extending the meaning of literacy, which commonly signifies interpretation of a written or printed text. Visual literacy is based on the idea that pictures can be «read» and that meaning can be through a process of reading” (Wikipedia, 2017).

Library Literacy: User should have the ability to locate, retrieve and use the information provided by library.

Resource Library: In this literacy user should know the format, location and access method of information resources both print and digital.

Computer Literacy: Computer literacy included Internet literacy, network literacy, Digital literacy, technological literacy.

Media Literacy: “The terms ‘media literacy’ and ‘media education’ are used synonymously in most English-speaking nations. Many scholars and educators consider media literacy to be an expanded conceptualization of literacy. In 1993, a gathering of the media literacy community in the United States developed a definition of media literacy as the ability to access, analyze, evaluate and create messages in a wide variety of forms” (Wikipedia, 2017).

“All the aspects of information literacy are summarized in this definition of information Literacy given by ODLIS- ‘Skills in finding the information one needs, including an understanding of how libraries are organized, familiarity with the resources they provide (including information formats and automated search tools), and knowledge of commonly used research techniques. The concept also includes the skill required to critically evaluate information content and employ it effectively, as well as an understanding of the technological infrastructure on which information transmission is based, including its social, political, and cultural context and impact” (Thapa, 2015).

INFORMATION LITERACY AND COLLEGE LIBRARY

The role of college libraries has been limited to orientation and library instructions. College libraries focusing on teaching information literacy to students. “The library is the place where information is stored, indexed and disseminate. Library is the place where user can find their information. Many users do not know how to access and use appropriate information. The libraries have been conducting library and information use programmes such as library orientation programmes” (Gupta, 2013).

- Library can offers online information literacy course

for their users.

- Library provides facilities and resources for college learning environment.
- Library delivers a range of information literacy programme which are student centered and cater for different learning styles.
- Library can provides how to select, evaluate and retrieve information.

“Librarian’s self-growth (Goldfarb, E. K., as cited in Stripling, 1999). Professional growth of librarians depends on self-learning processes and actions” (Section, Ver, & July, 2006). They need to:

- Develop their own information literacy skill.
- Develop the ability to facilitate learning and to teach critical thinking and inquiry.
- Be responsible for their own learning, and their own technological skills.
- Receive constant library training, a crucial form of learning new skills and concepts.
- Participate in professional organizations, attend conferences, and purchase technical literature.

IMPACT OF INFORMATION LITERACY

Information literate students are able to determine the extent of information and access the needed information effectively and efficiently. “Students who know how to use information resources and who recognize the essential characteristics and purposes of published materials have a critical advantage when adding to their knowledge base in any discipline; they also have a firm foundation for future course work. Further, because information literacy skills are transferable to other disciplines and to everyday life, students’ futures learning both in and out of the classroom are positively impacted” (Quarton, 2003). Information literacy is the only medium to address the underlying gap and is becoming an increasingly essential part of university library user education” (Singson, Science, Pradesh, & Literacy, 2003). Library authority should incorporate information literacy programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels.

CONCLUSION

“Information Literacy forms the basis for lifelong learning. It is common to all level of education. Through information Literacy student search their required information themselves. College library should take the initiative to train the students for retrieving the proper information. College library should provide orientation programme how to search the library resources. It is the duty of librarian or library staff to collect

the current information and make it available to the needy user” (Rao, 2013). “Information literacy guidelines can be help in maximizing the utilization of information resources. Libraries specially college libraries and information centers should introduce user education programme to educate users about the features of information retrieval system, information resources, search techniques, search strategies” (Naik, 2013). “Libraries are well equipped to teach such skills, but need the support of the entire college community specially that of faculty” (Nattar, 2012).

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