

# INTERNET LITERACY SKILLS AMONG RESEARCH SCHOLARS OF KARNATAKA STATE AKKAMAHADEVI WOMENS UNIVERSITY, VIJAYAPURA: A STUDY

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**Abstract** *The purpose of this paper is to discuss the findings on internet literacy skills among research scholars of Karnataka State Akkamahadevi Women's University, Vijayapura. For the purpose of data collection, 152 questionnaires were distributed, and collected response from them. 55.3% of the respondents are mentioned that they find information resources through specific URL. 29.6% of the respondents mentioned that they have learnt by themselves the electronic resources. On the basis of the findings, some suggestions have been put forwarded to improve the internet literacy skills of the researchers.*

**Keywords:** *Internet Literacy Skills, Information Resources, Electronic Resources, Research Scholars*

## INTRODUCTION

In present scenario traditional libraries are being transferred as electronic libraries. Libraries are becoming more digital based. The advancement in information communication demands the use of digital resources. In the context of library and information management, the internet has great potential for information seekers.

The Internet has provided universal access to information. Internet allows wide range of materials to be accessed by people across the globe irrespective of their location. The Internet has many user-friendly tools, which help the users to interact with the Internet and get the information they need. The Internet facility in India has grown tremendously over the years. The efficiency and capabilities in providing right information to right person at right time has grown rapidly with the use of Internet. The recent phenomenon and the emergence of information society, knowledge driven economy and the cost effectiveness of technological gadgets has made Internet an unavoidable necessity for every institutions of higher learning and research (Sharma, Singh, & Mishra, 2008). The Internet tools and services have been used by the teachers' scholars and students for variety of purposes for day to day academic and research activities. Optimum utilization of internet resources requires certain specific skills and competencies.

Internet literacy is a new aspect of literacy that is being recognized as technology expands the way people communicate and write.

Internet literacy is not just about website analysis. It includes the skills it takes to read, disseminate and evaluate online sources in order to socialize, network and collaborate with people. Katz and Macklin (2007) identified seven components of ICT literacy to include-defining, accessing, managing, integrating, evaluating, creating and communication information (Katz & Macklin, 2007). Ali et al (2010) identified information literacy skills that students need to improve upon to include efficient search strategies, evaluation of internet information and websites, and using information ethically. While the current generation of students has access to a multitude of information on the internet search (Ali, Hassan, Daud, & Jusoff, 2010).

The effort is made in the paper to measure internet literacy skills among research scholars in a University environment. But a huge amount of literature is published on the topic.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Singh, (2014) surveyed the use of e-resources by the faculty members and research scholars particularly at the Department of Computer Science and Mathematics of Jamia Millia

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Islamia University. It is found that they were frequently using internet, online databases and E-journals whereas few of them were using e-books to access the information. Aqil & Ahmad, (2011) have conducted a study on the use of the internet by research scholars and PG students of the science faculty of Aligarh Muslim University. They showed that 44.96% of the users use online journal through J-gate, while 20.15% access science direct of academic pursuits.

Thanuskodi & Ravi, (2011) accessed the internet use by research scholars of Annamalai University, Annamalaiagar. It is revealed a useful fact about the majority of the users opined that the digital resources can never replace the printed resources. Shukla & Mishra, (2011) discussed the use of e-resources by research scholars of IT, Banaras Hindu University. They showed that all the respondents were aware of e-resource and they all use it. Majority of the researcher scholar's i.e. 92% preferred department for accessing e-resources and while accessing e-resources they found a major problems of low internet connectivity. Biradar & Kumar, (2008) have examined the use of search engines by research scholars and faculty members of physics department in University of Karnataka. They found that majority of users i.e. 84.33% used search engines to retrieve information on the internet and most frequently used search engines were 72.85% and yahoo with 53.57%.

Also Thanuskodi S, (2013) found that 232 users (58%) mentioned that they use Internet for preparing class assignments, 185 users (46.25%) use it for assistance in their research projects, 153 users (38.25%) pointed out that they use it to update their knowledge, 121 users (30.25%) use it for communication purposes, 96 users (24%) mentioned that they use it for entertainment, 86 users (21.50%) use it for the examination preparation, 57 users (14.25%) use it for reading news, 45 users (11.25%) mentioned that they use it to download software, 33 users (8.25%) use it for their specific purposes such as online job searching. The results of the study also show that 353 students (88.25%) mentioned that mostly they use Google for searching, 284 (71%) use Yahoo!, 84 (21%) use Alta Vista, 65 (16.25%) mentioned that they use MSN for searching information and 48 respondents (12%) revealed that they use Info-seek.

The review of literature indicates the fact that there are not many studies on Internet literacy among research scholars necessity such study.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The broad aim of the study is to examine the internet literacy skills among research scholars. The specific objectives are:

- To examine the Level of internet literacy skills and
- To find out the abilities of using internet among research scholars of Karnataka State Akkamahadevi Women's University, Vijayapura.

## METHODOLOGY

In order to satisfy the objective of the study, experimental design was adopted. The study was restricted to Karnataka State Akkamahadevi Women's University, Vijayapura. The study population comprises of 152 research scholars pursuing Ph.D. (Full time) in 15 P.G. Departments. Data were collected in 2 level one before experiment pre-test assessment and another after experiment post-test assessment has been done. The data analysis has been done with the help of SPSS version 20.0.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Table 1: Faculty of the Respondents**

| Faculty                | Frequency | Percent |
|------------------------|-----------|---------|
| Humanities             | 27        | 17.8    |
| Social Science         | 52        | 34.2    |
| Science and Technology | 12        | 7.9     |
| Management Studies     | 18        | 11.8    |
| Education              | 21        | 13.8    |
| Physical Education     | 22        | 14.5    |
| Total                  | 152       | 100.0   |

Table 1 represents the respondent's faculty. Result shows that 34.2% of the respondent's belong to social science faculty, 17.8% of the respondents are from humanities, and 14.5% of the respondents are from the faculty of physical education. 13.8%, 11.8% and 7.9% of the research scholars belong to the faculties of Education, Management studies and Science and technology. This is because; faculty of social science has Ph.D programs in six disciplines.

**Table 2: Age of the Respondents**

| Age   | Frequency | Percent |
|-------|-----------|---------|
| 20-25 | 35        | 23.0    |
| 26-30 | 82        | 53.9    |
| 31-35 | 33        | 21.7    |
| 36-40 | 2         | 1.3     |
| Total | 152       | 100.0   |

Table 2 explains the age wise distribution of the research scholars. More than half of the research scholars are aged between 26-30 years, 23.0% of the research scholars are aged between 20-25 years age and 21.7% of the research scholars are between 31-35 years old and only 1.3% of the research scholars are between 36-40 years old. It indicates that very young Post-graduates are showing keen interest in research.

**Table 3: Search Engine for Collecting Information Resources**

| Search engine                     | Frequency  | Percent      |
|-----------------------------------|------------|--------------|
| Through specific URL              | 84         | 55.3         |
| Through search engine like Google | 36         | 23.7         |
| Through subject gateways/portals  | 32         | 21.1         |
| <b>Total</b>                      | <b>152</b> | <b>100.0</b> |

Table 3 shows the results of search engine used by research scholars for collecting information resources. It shows that more than half of the research scholars find information resources through specific URL's, 23.7% of the researchers find information through Google and only 21.1% of the researchers find information through specific subject

gateways/portals. The results indicate that research scholar's know specific URL's, and subject gateways/portals.

**Table 4: Learning to Use Electronic Information Resources**

| Learning ways               | Frequency  | Percent      |
|-----------------------------|------------|--------------|
| Guidance from parents       | 5          | 3.3          |
| Guidance from teachers      | 36         | 23.7         |
| Guidance from other friends | 30         | 19.7         |
| Guidance from library       | 14         | 9.2          |
| Self learning (Guided)      | 45         | 29.6         |
| Trial and Error             | 22         | 14.5         |
| <b>Total</b>                | <b>152</b> | <b>100.0</b> |

From Table 4 it can be found how research scholars learnt using electronic information resources. The result shows that 29.6% of the respondents mentioned that they have learnt by themselves and 23.7% of the respondents have taken guidance from teachers in the use of electronic resources. 19.7% of the respondents have taken guidance from other friends while 14.5% of the research scholars learnt using e-resources by trial and error method.

**Table 5: Purposes of Use of Internet**

| Purposes               |       | Yes   | No   | Total  | $\chi^2$ | df | Asymp. Sig. (2-sided) |
|------------------------|-------|-------|------|--------|----------|----|-----------------------|
| Access course wares    | Yes   | 149   | 2    | 151    | 49.996   | 1  | 0.000                 |
|                        |       | 98.0% | 1.3% | 99.3%  |          |    |                       |
|                        | No    | 0     | 1    | 1      |          |    |                       |
|                        |       | 0.0%  | 0.7% | 0.7%   |          |    |                       |
|                        | Total | 149   | 3    | 152    |          |    |                       |
|                        |       | 98.0% | 2.0% | 100.0% |          |    |                       |
| Prepare projects       | Yes   | 144   | 1    | 145    | 9.506    | 1  | 0.002                 |
|                        |       | 94.7% | 0.7% | 95.4%  |          |    |                       |
|                        | No    | 6     | 1    | 7      |          |    |                       |
|                        |       | 3.9%  | 0.7% | 4.6%   |          |    |                       |
|                        | Total | 150   | 2    | 152    |          |    |                       |
|                        |       | 98.7% | 1.3% | 100.0% |          |    |                       |
| Supplement class notes | Yes   | 149   | 0    | 149    | 100.658  | 1  | 0.000                 |
|                        |       | 98.0% | 0.0% | 98.0%  |          |    |                       |
|                        | No    | 1     | 2    | 3      |          |    |                       |
|                        |       | 0.7%  | 1.3% | 2.0%   |          |    |                       |
|                        | Total | 150   | 2    | 152    |          |    |                       |
|                        |       | 98.7% | 1.3% | 100.0% |          |    |                       |

| Purposes                                       |       | Yes   | No   | Total  | $\chi^2$ | df | Asymp. Sig. (2-sided) |
|------------------------------------------------|-------|-------|------|--------|----------|----|-----------------------|
| For entertainment                              | Yes   | 148   | 0    | 148    | 37.245   | 1  | 0.026                 |
|                                                |       | 97.4% | 0.0% | 97.4%  |          |    |                       |
|                                                | No    | 3     | 1    | 4      |          |    |                       |
|                                                |       | 2.0%  | 0.7% | 2.6%   |          |    |                       |
|                                                | Total | 151   | 1    | 152    |          |    |                       |
| Solve question paper from online question bank | Yes   | 136   | 6    | 142    | 0.709    | 1  | 0.400                 |
|                                                |       | 89.5% | 3.9% | 93.4%  |          |    |                       |
|                                                | No    | 9     | 1    | 10     |          |    |                       |
|                                                |       | 5.9%  | 0.7% | 6.6%   |          |    |                       |
|                                                | Total | 145   | 7    | 152    |          |    |                       |
|                                                |       | 95.4% | 4.6% | 100.0% |          |    |                       |

Table 5 explains the purpose of use of internet among respondents. The result shows that 98.0% of the research scholars are using internet for accessing course wares. There is a significant association between the variables. 94.7% of the respondents use the internet for preparing projects. There is a significant association between pre and post test. Same way 98.7% of the respondents mentioned that they use internet for preparing supplementary class notes. There is a

significant association between the variable. 99.3% of the respondents mentioned that they use internet for the purpose of entertainment and there is significant association between the pre and post test. Finally 89.5% of the respondents said that they use internet for the purpose of solving question paper from online and also there is a significant association between the pre and post test result.

**Table 6: Ability to Use Electronic Information Resources**

|           | Preferences  | Frequency  | Percent      | Chi -Square | df | Asymp. Sig. (2-sided) |
|-----------|--------------|------------|--------------|-------------|----|-----------------------|
| Pre-test  | Very Good    | 1          | .7           | 456.022     | 16 | 0.000                 |
|           | Good         | 37         | 24.3         |             |    |                       |
|           | Fair         | 30         | 19.7         |             |    |                       |
|           | Bad          | 1          | .7           |             |    |                       |
|           | Very Bad     | 83         | 54.6         |             |    |                       |
|           | <b>Total</b> | <b>152</b> | <b>100.0</b> |             |    |                       |
| Post-test | Very Good    | 83         | 54.6         |             |    |                       |
|           | Good         | 37         | 24.3         |             |    |                       |
|           | Fair         | 30         | 19.7         |             |    |                       |
|           | Bad          | 1          | .7           |             |    |                       |
|           | Very Bad     | 1          | .7           |             |    |                       |
|           | <b>Total</b> | <b>152</b> | <b>100.0</b> |             |    |                       |

Table 6 describes the respondent's ability to use electronic information resources. Before intervention result shows that 54.6% of the respondents accepted that they are very bad in using electronic information resources. Only 24.3% and 19.7% of the respondents said they are good and fair in using electronic information resources. After intervention

results shows that 54.6% of the respondents said that they are very good in electronic information resources. Also 24.3 and 19.7% of the respondents are accepted that they are good and fair in the using electronic information resources. The chi-square test also proved that there is a significant difference in pre and post test results.

**Table 7: Educational Qualification \* Ability to Use Electronic Information Resources**

|                           | Discipline | Ability to use electronic information resources? |       |      |       |          | Total | Chi -Square | df | Asymp. Sig. (2-sided) |
|---------------------------|------------|--------------------------------------------------|-------|------|-------|----------|-------|-------------|----|-----------------------|
|                           |            | Very Good                                        | Good  | Fair | Bad   | Very Bad |       |             |    |                       |
| Educational Qualification | MA         | 1                                                | 21    | 13   | 1     | 29       | 65    | 16.992      | 28 | 0.949                 |
|                           |            | 0.7%                                             | 13.8% | 8.6% | 0.7%  | 19.1%    | 42.8% |             |    |                       |
|                           | MSc        | 0                                                | 2     | 3    | 0     | 6        | 11    |             |    |                       |
|                           |            | 0.0%                                             | 1.3%  | 2.0% | 0.0%  | 3.9%     | 7.2%  |             |    |                       |
|                           | MCom       | 0                                                | 1     | 1    | 0     | 2        | 4     |             |    |                       |
|                           |            | 0.0%                                             | 0.7%  | 0.7% | 0.0%  | 1.3%     | 2.6%  |             |    |                       |
|                           | Med        | 0                                                | 2     | 4    | 0     | 15       | 21    |             |    |                       |
|                           |            | 0.0%                                             | 1.3%  | 2.6% | 0.0%  | 9.9%     | 13.8% |             |    |                       |
|                           | MBA        | 0                                                | 3     | 3    | 0     | 13       | 19    |             |    |                       |
|                           |            | 0.0%                                             | 2.0%  | 2.0% | 0.0%  | 8.6%     | 12.5% |             |    |                       |
|                           | MPed       | 0                                                | 6     | 1    | 0     | 13       | 20    |             |    |                       |
|                           |            | 0.0%                                             | 3.9%  | 0.7% | 0.0%  | 8.6%     | 13.2% |             |    |                       |
|                           | MLISc      | 0                                                | 1     | 3    | 0     | 3        | 7     |             |    |                       |
|                           |            | 0.0%                                             | 0.7%  | 2.0% | 0.0%  | 2.0%     | 4.6%  |             |    |                       |
|                           | MSW        | 0                                                | 1     | 2    | 0     | 2        | 5     |             |    |                       |
|                           |            | 0.0%                                             | 0.7%  | 1.3% | 0.0%  | 1.3%     | 3.3%  |             |    |                       |
| Total                     |            | 1                                                | 37    | 30   | 1     | 83       | 152   |             |    |                       |
| 0.7%                      |            | 24.3%                                            | 19.7% | 0.7% | 54.6% | 100.0%   |       |             |    |                       |

Table 7 describes significance of the educational qualification and ability to use electronic information resources among research scholars. Result shows that 19.1% of the MA background research scholars, 9.9% of the Med background research scholars, 8.6% of MBA and MPed background research scholars, and 3.9% of the MSc background research scholars are mentioned that they are very bad in using electronic information resources. The chi-square result shows that there is no significant association between educational qualification and ability to use electronic information resources.

## SUGGESTIONS

On the basis of findings following suggestions are made:

- Internet literacy programme should be conducted at regular intervals regarding the effective use of Internet by the experts.
- Online services are also to be improved, individual computer terminal with Internet connection is to be provided for research scholars.
- Campus networking should be strengthened.

## CONCLUSION

The concerned stake holders should make overall attempts to provide the necessary infrastructure facilities such as high speed network connection to access the e-resources and to conduct some training programmes for the library professionals and user orientation programmes for users for the effective use of internet facilities, and also to conduct seminars and conferences on latest trend sin library and information science. Also study proved that before experiment research scholars are very poor in using internet services; but after experiment they become experts in using internet services. In addition to that, research scholars and find Internet-based information services easy to use. It is clear from the present study that most use the Internet for searching for subject oriented information.

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