

INFORMATION LITERACY AMONG LIBRARY USERS OF UNIVERSITY OF RAJASTHAN IN DIGITAL ENVIRONMENT: A CASE STUDY

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Abstract

Libraries are transforming themselves with the changing phase of information and communication technology. Now a day's information literacy is influenced by the use of information technologies, all the resources and services in the libraries are digital therefore the library users should be digitally literate also. The present study attempts to examine the information literacy skills of the library users of University of Rajasthan in digital environment of library where instructional needs of teaching and learning methods are changed.

Keywords: Information Literacy, Digital Information Literacy, Information literacy skills, user education, Information and Communication Technology Skills etc.

1 Introduction

Information plays an important role in order to keep oneself abreast in present knowledge-based society. Individuals need information in chores of routine and specialized works of their everyday life. To have access and to make use of needed information, an individual need to be literate enough in acquiring information. The concept of information literacy which has been defined by the ACRL on the basis of the ALA Presidential Committee on Information Literacy's Final Report as "information literacy is a set of abilities requiring individuals to recognize the information is needs and have the ability to locate, evaluate and use effectively the information acquired from various resources. Every individual knows the importance of information literacy. Information literacy makes them equipped with the most up- to-date competencies that would enable them to be effective users and dynamic knowledge workers in the modern information environment.

A framework of digital literacy in libraries is a prerequisite to implement effective information literacy program in the universities. Today most of the information in libraries and information centres is in traditional print and digital format, therefore the library users must have the additional ICT skills to overcome the escalating complexity of this modern digital information environment having diverse information resources and services available in the academic libraries. Information literacy framework will be of great help for the greater utilization of library resources and to make the library users community lifelong self-motivated learner and knowledge worker in their workplace.

2 Statement of the Problem:

Today we are living in the age of information society whose biggest disadvantage is information explosion i.e. presence of information in various forms and formats. This explosion of information creates hurdles in searching, locating, accessing, managing, evaluating, and using the exact information timely.

3 Objective:

To identify the Information Literacy awareness among the research scholars

4 Methodology:

The primary data for the study was collected by a semi-structured questionnaire prepared and distributed among the PG Students of science, social science and Arts & Humanities departments of the University of Rajasthan, after a comprehensive review of literature and discussion with the university library authorities. The questionnaire assess the library users information literacy skills, it covers areas like demographic data, frequency of visiting the libraries, awareness about the services provided by the library, awareness about the use of printed and electronic resources, frequently used search engines etc. The data obtained from the responses were tabulated and analysis were drawn.

5 Data Analysis:

1) Demographic Information

a) Gender wise distribution of respondents

SNo	Gender	No of Respondent (%)
1	Male	125 (53%)
2	Female	111 (47%)
3	Total	236 (100%)

Table 1: Gender wise distribution of respondents

The analysis of the data reveals that male students dominates the post-graduation courses at the university. The male students are 125(53%) and female student are 111(47%).

b) Faculty wise distribution of respondents

SNo	Faculty	No of Respondent (%)
1	Science	61 (26%)
2	Social Science	85 (36%)
3	Arts & Humanities	90 (38%)
4	Total	236 (100%)

Table 2: Faculty wise distribution of respondents

The analysis of the data reveals the majority of the students 90(38%) belong to arts and humanities, 85(36%) belongs to social science and 61(26%) belongs to science.

2) Frequency of Visiting the Library

SNo	Frequency	No of Respondent (%)
1	Daily	88 (37%)
2	2-3 times in a week	59 (25%)

3	Once in a week	28 (12%)
4	Monthly	47 (20%)
5	Rarely	14 (6%)
	Total	236 (100%)

Table 2: Frequency of Visiting the Library

The students visits the library according to their information needs. Most of the users 88 (37%) visits the library daily for the information related to their course, 59(25%) visits the library 2-3 times in a week, 47(20%) visits the library in a month, 28(12%) visits the library once in a week and 14(6%) students visits the library rarely.

3) Awareness about the services provided by library (More than one)

SNo	Awareness about the services	No of Respondent (%)
1	OPAC	114 (48%)
2	Virtual Library	75 (32%)
3	Online databases	67 (28%)
4	e-resources	211 (89%)
5	Electronic document delivery services	27 (11%)
6	Inter Library Loan	61 (26%)
7	Selective Dissemination of Information	55 (24%)
8	Current Awareness Services	156 (66%)
9	Photocopy	52 (22%)
10	Computer Print	70 (30%)

Table 3: Awareness about the services provided by library

Regarding the awareness about the services most of the students 211(89%) are aware about the e-resources in the library and 156(66%) access the Current Awareness Services of the library and also uses OPAC 114(48%) during the searching of information.

The students uses other services also but less in numbers.

4) Methods in searching the resources in the library (More than one)

SNo	Methods in Searching	No of Respondent (%)
1	OPAC	114 (48%)
2	Random search the Book Racks	75 (32%)
3	Ask the Library Staff For Help	67 (28%)
4	Locate the resources by classification number	16 (7%)
5	Identify the resource from card catalogue	27 (11%)
6	Internet	220 (93%)
7	Offline digital databases	140 (59%)

Table 4: Method in searching the resources in the library

To search the information resource in the library is a major problem, most of the users 220 (93%) uses internet to search the information, 140 (59%) uses offline digital data base to find the information related to their subjects,

114(48%) mentioned that they used OPAC for finding the required information in the library, 75 (32%) access the book racks themselves and 67 (28%) asks the library staff for help.

The students uses other searching method also but less in numbers. The respondents need to be more aware of the use of OPAC in searching document from the Library.

5 Frequently used Search Engine (More than one)

SNo	Search Engine	No of Respondent (%)
1	Google	231 (98%)
2	Yahoo	28 (12%)
3	Microsoft	66 (28%)
4	AltaVista	14 (6%)
5	Opera	26 (11%)
6	Any other	35 (15)

Table 5: Frequently used search engine

Majority of the students 232 (98%) uses the Google, 66 (28%) uses Microsoft, 35(15%) uses any other search engine according to their individual needs, 28(12%) uses yahoo, 26(11%) uses opera and the AltaVista is used 14(6%).

6 Search techniques and strategies used (More than one)

SNo	Search techniques and strategies	No of Respondent (%)
1	Boolean operator (AND, OR, NOT)	16 (6%)
2	Wildcard/truncations key	75 (32%)
3	Proximity of terms	67 (28%)
4	Simple search	114 (48%)
5	Advance search	27 (11%)
6	Phrases	35(15%)

Most of the students 114(48%) uses simple search techniques, 75(32%) Wildcard/truncations key, 67(28%) uses proximity of terms, 35(15%) uses phrases, 27(11%) uses advanced search and 16(6)% uses Boolean operators (AND, OR, NOT).

7 Familiarity with Copyright act

SNo	Familiarity with Copyright act	No of Respondent (%)
1	Yes	85 (36%)
2	No	151 (64%)
3	Total	236 (100%)

The majority of the users 151 (64%) are unaware of the legal aspects of using the information while only 85 (36%) of the students are aware about the legal aspects of using the information.

8 Conclusion

Information Literacy empowers people in all walks of life to seek, evaluate, use and create information effectively to achieve their personal, social, occupational and educational goal. The result of the study reflects that information literacy program should be incorporated in the course curriculum and more awareness is required among students on online databases and digital resources that will make the students more literate.

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