# Information literacy : a key attribute for students of higher education

**Archana Suroothiya[*], Rochna Srivastava[@]**

**[*]Research Scholar, Department of Library & Information Science,Bundelkhand University,Jhansi (U.P.)-284128**
**[@] Professor (Retired) Department of Library & Information Science,Bundelkhand University,Jhansi (U.P.)-284128**

Email:archanagoswami500@gmail.com

## Abstract :

The paper discusses about Information literacy and its importance for the students of higher education. It has been shown in this paper that Information Literacy is not one term actually it includes lots of skills , which are essential for each and  every learner. In higher studies student is self thinker , critical  thinker  and responsible for their own task. Knowledge of Information literacy provides them to cope up with all in this vital changing world. Some suggestions are also listed for betterment of higher education to implement information literacy programmers .

## Keywords:

Information Literacy, Higher education , digital literacy, Literacy.

## Introduction:

Developing lifelong learning is the main aim of higher education institutions. Higher education institutions provide intellectual abilities and critical thinking to learners .Colleges and universities provide the foundation for continuing growth throughout the life. It helps them to make informed citizens and informed members of community. Information literacy is a key attribute and contributed to lifelong learning .Information literacy is the vital process in the modern changing world, which is mostly used for higher education particularly at the university level education .In our information centric world information literacy enables process to interpret and make informed judgments and become producers of information in their own right.

## Information literacy constitutes

Information literacy explores the nature of the phenomenon from socio cultural prospective, which offers more holistic approach to understanding information literacy as a essential quality for learning. An information literate person should know all type of literacy and their importance .All the skills are the connecting part of information literacy. Literacy has traditionally been defined as the ability to read and write. However, there appear to be different types of literacy such as audio visual literacy, print literacy, computer literacy, media literacy, web literacy, technical literacy, functional literacy, library literacy, and information literacy are just a few examples. Nominal and active literacy are also concerned with making people aware of the importance of reading and writing in their daily lives. Information literacy is not the same as the preceding. It is a synthesis of all of these ideas, but it goes beyond them.

According to the American Library Association -"Information literacy is 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."

The following type of literacy and  skills are the important component of information literate persons specially  students of higher education should be aware of the following type of literacy. Information literacy constitutes the following type of literacy:

## Computer literacy-

This is the ability to know all about general and basic knowledge and fundamentals of computers and its different uses in different ways .Basic use of computer is known as computer literacy.

## Media literacy-

Media literacy and skills essential to complete the medium and format in what data information in knowledge are created ,stored ,communicated ,and presented like print, newspapers, journals, magazines ,radio ,television ,cable, CD ROM, DVD, mobile phone, PDF, text format, graphics etc.

## Library literacy –

This is  to be known to its user to maximize the utility of the resources and also to apply in their daily life every students needs to know how to effectively use reference books and periodicals both print and online. Students should use indexes and Library catalogue and web OPAC also. All this knowledge is very essential in a student life for carrying more and more information.

## ICT literacy-

 Information and communication technology including hardware and software ,system networks and all other components of computer and telecommunication systems information and networking etc are the main component of ICT literacy.

## Tool literacy –

The ability to understand and use the practical and conceptual tools of current information technology relevant to education and the ideas of work in professional life.

## Research literacy –

The ability to understand the use of the IT based tools relevant to the work of present research and related to researcher and scholar is called as research literacy all the authentic tools techniques for the research the way of presentation the methods of techniques are the main part of research literacy.

## Digital literacy –

In the present time of digital India we all are bound to be digital literate from phone to TV to network, computers ,digital money transfer all is the work of one window and this is the must known literacy for all , specially                                                        to                                                        students.

## Legal literacy –

From home to school ,college ,university, workplace, social life everything is running with some rules and laws. For presenting and use of information legal issues should be known to all. all the students living in the country should be known with the ethical legal rules regulations for the right use of it in all the aspects of life.

## Financial literacy –

In day to day life all the aspects are concerned with financial issues every student should be aware of the finance access,  how to use , what to pay , tax knowledge, banks transitions and legal use of finance of cash and digital transaction also.

## Social literacy –

It is the knowledge of how information is socially situated and produced and communicated to each other and                                                    one                                                    another.

## Resource literacy-

The ability to understand the form, format location and areas of access methods , different information resources          whether          print          or          online          named          as          resource          literacy.

## Publishing literacy-

This ability is to know the format and publish ideas on paper and electronically way in textual and multimedia          forms          like          electronic          network          etc.

## Technology literacy-

This is the ability to use media such as the internet to effectively access and communicate information . Student should be trained in both the ethics and adequate of technology uses. This is to have frequent opportunities to use technology tools to create their own information assets on print or online.

## Critical literacy

- This is the ability to evaluate critically the intellectual , human and social strengths and weakness its benefits, losses, cost and other effects also. It evolves the questioning and examination of ideas and requires to synthesize , analyze , interpret and respond.

## Transliteracy

-This is the ability to read , write an interact access a range of platforms, tools and media through handwriting, print , T V , radio and films to digital social networks. This is how we human being communicate from original to medium of written text and apply it as a term that can refer to any kind of medium.

## Information literacy and Higher Education

Information literacy competencies extends learning beyond formal classroom environment and provides practical growth with self directed investigation because information literacy develops is students competency in evaluating, managing and using information in every possible area of life. Students need to be educated with regards to abilities and skills, how to learn learning by developing the aspects of reasoning and critical thinking information literacy have students to achieve the target in their college life and for whole life. Whatever the technology and tools techniques are today it will be updated in the coming time .New technology tools and techniques will take arise to process information ,that is wise students should be information literate to take maximum use of it . We are continuously growing in our personal knowledge weather it is for education or personal reason.  Information literacy  skills are helpful to everyone specially to students in order to succeed academically and in future information literacy is helpful in demonstrating awareness of issues related to rights of other including ethics ,data protection ,copyright,  plagiarism and intellectual property rights..

## Suggestions

It is clear from the study that all the sectors are concentrating  on importance of information literacy in higher education learning. Various Institutions and professional bodies are active in organizing seminars and lectures in Information literacy; UNESCO has been very kind for promotion of IL movement in all over the world. But still a lot of work yet to be done by different level like Universities, Colleges and research institutions for enhancing IL movement and its awareness. For keeping in mind all this some efforts should be done:

- Periodical orientation or training has to be conducted in order to get the awareness on information resources available in the library.

- There should be suitable regular classroom programs to teach the uses , to find access and to evaluate the appropriate information source for required information.

- Library users to be known with OPAC, use of library websites, internet , search e resource , access database, access new information technology etc.

- Information and communication technology knowledge is pretty crucial to search refine electronic information resources therefore respondent have to get informed with latest technology time to time.

- Awareness should be provided to students on information and communication skills through courses seminars conferences workshop training extra.

- Social networking sites are main attractions for students nowadays therefore the study suggest the conducting regular orientation program for the maximizing use of e resources and the utilization of social media for academic purposes.

- There is requirement to introduce ,to integrate information literacy skills into the curriculum of higher education courses.

- It is the bound duty of the library professionals and academic community to teach the students on the ethical uses of information and intellectual rights.

- There is need for training the uses in the use of referencing standards and citation styles.

- There is very big need training the students for retrieval of information search to enhance their search skills.

- Technical infrastructure needs to be implemented to enable better utilization of the online resources being subscribed by library.

- It has been seen that information literacy program is very important for students but students are not taking full benefit of it so this is very needed that information literacy programs should be organized by university level at regular interval for the students , who wish to participate in it.

## Conclusion

If a student "*learned how to learn* " on graduation level, they are much more attractive and efficient and has the strong analytical critical thinking and problem solving skills . Students need to be educated with regards to abilities and skills how to learn and learning to learn by developing the aspects of reasoning and critical thinking information literacy skills will help students to achieve the target in a broader ways. Information literacy is basically" *know what you don't know"* for learners. Information literacy is recognized as an essential aspect of higher education. It enables peoples in preparing for the information jobs such as seeking information, information retrieval, discovering information . Higher education standers involve students to posses these is skills more. The information in this paper will serve as a plan to improve, evaluate and implement information literacy in higher education system.

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