Survey on Information Literacy skills among Librarians of Medical Colleges, Karnataka

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ABSTRACT

Information Literacy (IL) is an area of interest to librarians and information professionals and it is pivotal to the pursuit of lifelong learning process. Information Literacy is common to all disciplines to environments and to all levels of education. The present study is an attempt to know the information literacy competence of the librarians of medical colleges. This study reveals the information literacy skills of Medical College Librarians affiliated to Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences, Karnataka. It also examines the association between Librarian's information literacy skills and their knowledge of using database as well as their overall performance in their college library. A major finding of the study is that information literacy skills were positively correlated with both librarians and library user's service. The findings of this study call for well integrated library instruction programs and services to improve librarian information literacy skills and will help librarians better understand the correlation between student information literacy skills. The ultimate goal of the study was to improve information literacy instruction and library services in order to align library teaching and services more closely with the General Education goals for developing student critical thinking and written communication skills.

Keywords: **Information, Information Literacy, Information skills, Information retrieval etc.**

1. INTRODUCTION

A person's ability to know; when he/she needs information, where to find it, how to locate and get it, how to use it, and communicate it in an ethical manner. This is a real concern for the librarian! Teaching research competencies and information literacy is an integral part of the academic librarian's role. There has long been debate among librarians over what are the most effective methods of instruction for college students. Library Faculty members are Survey results show that information literacy among librarians more time with students, particularly highly-engaged students, are believed to be the most effective.

Information literacy (IL) and critical thinking are higher-order intellectual skills required for academic, professional and personal development and success. These two sets of skills share common goals and intersect in many areas. Information literacy includes the ability to locate information, evaluate and use it effectively whereas critical thinking involves the process of exploring and

evaluating ideas in order to make a decision or form an opinion on a topic or problem. Librarians have been seeking new ways to help their institution strengthen academic quality, improve access, and increase retention and graduation rates.

The librarians inspire students to explore the unknown offer guidance on how best to fulfill information needs and monitor student's progress. The medical college librarian coordinate the evaluation and selection intellectual resources for programs and services, organize and maintain collections and many points of access information and provide instruction to students and faculty who seek information. To facilitate the implementation of general education goals and the two core competencies, librarians at medical colleges began seeking ways to improve student information literacy skills and started working with teaching faculty members to assess these skills. Examining the relationship between information literacy skills and student academic performance was one of many initiatives librarians undertook.

2. WHY INFORMATION LITERACY SO IMPORTANT?

Information literacy is important owing to the amount of information that is available in contemporary society. Simply being exposed to a great deal of information will not make people informed citizens; they need to learn how to use this information effectively, ACRL (2000).

Data Smog refers to the idea that too much information can create a barrier in our lives. Especially students and the society require a special skill to handle this fast increasing information, in order to use their educational and economical purposes more effectively. Information literacy is considered as the solution for the data smog. ACRL (2006).

Information literacy allows us to cope with the data smog, by equipping us with the necessary skills to recognize when we need information, where to locate it, and how to use it effectively and efficiently. Consequently it will help decision making and productivity which is beneficial to the society. Due to the information explosion and data smog all students and the society face many difficulties to locate, evaluate, use, and communicate information.

Due to the expansion of internet services we receive a lot of information that is not evaluated, unlike the printed sources. Hence the authenticity, validity, and reliability of this information are in doubt.

Student centered, inquiry based, problem solving, and critical thinking proactive learning environment with the help of information literacy skills, will develop deep learners in the society. Furthermore, information skills are vital to the success in education, occupation, and day to day communication of all citizens. In the twenty first century, lifelong learning has become one of the main themes in the higher education sector. Therefore the students need to be educated with regard to the abilities and skills of how to learn, or learning to learn, by developing the aspects of reasoning and critical thinking. Information literacy skills will help students to achieve this target in a broader sense, in student centered learning. Traditionally, we assume that the students will gain information literacy skills automatically by themselves. But it is not. In fact, information literacy skills need to be inculcated among the students, by the teachers and librarians.

Learning mainly focuses on achieving knowledge, skills and attitudes, associated with particular subject areas. Irrespective of the disciplinary stream, each and every student should be able to access, use and communicate information in an innovative manner. The Information literacy curriculum plays a major role in order to cultivate these skills among the university and school students. The curriculum can be implemented by the library professionals with the help of academic and administrative staff.

3. WHY LIBRARIANS NEED INFORMATION LITERACY?

The needs of information literacy among librarians of medical colleges are: -

- To empower students to learn for themselves.
- To enable decision-making among users.
- To create knowledgeable students
- To promote students to self-empowering, self-motivated and self-directed.
- To equip students for success in their careers.
- To meet needs of faculty to reach teaching learning process.
- To promote self-sufficient researchers.
- To help students/faculty deal with explosion of information.
- To create awareness about Information Communication Technology (ICT)
- To achieve the objective of right information to the right people at the right time.
- To help students deal with information overload,
- To encourage the careful evaluation of information sources to avoid bias and in accuracy.

4. COMPONENT OF INFORMATION LITERACY:

Information Literacy can be divided into five separate components. i.e., Identify, find, evaluate, apply, acknowledge. This component applies to success in college and in our real life. The information literate person can identify, find, evaluate, apply and acknowledge information.

4.1 Identify

The first component is about identifying the nature and extent of the information you need. Academic examples include writing a thesis statement, creating timeline and plan to complete a research paper and differentiating between primary sources of information like findings from research and se   condary sources of information like a book about the results in the real world. The identify component shows itself as devising a search strategy to find information on buying a new home. Identifying the difference between a published court decision and an article about that decision and deciding to search for the most current information about a medical issue so you're well informed.

4.2 Find

The second component means you can find the needed information effectively and efficiently. In academia and this means you can use Boolean terms AND, OR and NOT when searching online, locate a book on the library shelves by its call number and choose the best keywords and phrases when searching online or in library databases. Outside of colleges you are able to search the public archives for information on local history. Request gynecological records through interlibrary loan and access a government website to find out your local crime statistics.

4.3 Evaluate

The third component is the ability to evaluate the information you find and its sources critically is the next component. Academic examples include reviewing multiple points of view to construct your own opinion exploring different sources of information like the books, databases, periodicals and the internet to understand a topic and the ability to analyze the structure and logic of arguments made in lectures and speeches. In the real world, you can research the claims made in political ads on television, scrutinize a Wikipedia article for accuracy and check a website to make sure it is update regularly and has current information.

4.4 Apply

The fourth component is about applying that information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose. In an educational environment, you can paraphrase an expert to support a position in a persuasive speech, integrate a direct quotation from an article into a research paper, and download an image from a database and then incorporate it into a visual presentation.

4.5 Acknowledge

The final component I   s to acknowledge the sources of information you use. To do this well, you must understand the ethical, legal and socio economic issues surrounding information. In the college or university, you can show your understanding by creating a work cited, bibliography or reference list. Understanding what constitutes plagiarism and utilizing copyright, creative commons, public domain and fair use guidelines. Outside the college or university you will give the attribution or

credit to a reposted image on your website recognize the limits and protections of free speech and censorship.

5. CONCEPT OF INFORMATION LITERACY IN MEDICAL LIBRARIES

Information has become a vital source for world technology, economies, scientific change and for basic component of educations. In today's world libraries act like knowledge management centres. In this Information Communication Technology (ICT) era, to fulfill information needs of users, librarians an information provider acts as a bridge between information users. Librarian should understand the developments in ICT to provide right information to the right people at the right time. Awareness of ICT among users as well as information provider is important. In this digital age, the introductions of electronic digital format have increased the challenge of information providers.

6. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the Information Literacy skills among librarian's of Medical Colleges affiliated to RGUHS to knowledge about the sources of information are to analyze the correlation between Librarian information literacy skills and their performance.

The main objectives are: -

- To understand the ability of librarians are expertise in searching the databases available under HELINET Consortium.
- To know whether librarians are searching in "Boolean Logic".
- To know the librarians publishing a research reports.
- To know what style of manual that librarians prefer.

7. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The scope of this study is to examine the association between Librarian information literacy skills and their service as well as their overall performance in a library. The present study has been designed for librarians of medical colleges affiliated to Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences, Karnataka. In this connection to understand the ability of the librarians is an expertise in searching databases and to knowledge about the sources of information among the respondents.

8. METHODOLOGY

The survey was used to collect the data from the selected Librarians of Medical Colleges affiliated to RGUHS. The tools used for collection of data are online survey, which followed by online through google form method was designed and used. Survey questionnaires were sent through email to each librarian to fill the data through online method. The Librarians email collected through HELINET Consortium.

9. DATA ANALYSIS & FINDINGS

Analysis of data is the ultimate step in research process. In the survey 50 medical college librarian invited for filling up the online survey, out of 50 medical colleges only 44 librarians were responded and completed the information literacy skills.

Table 1: Online Questionnaire sent and Response Rate

Online Questionnaire sent and Response Rate		
Response Category	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Total No. of Respondents	44	88%
Total no. of Non-Respondents	6	12%
Total	**50**	**100%**

In the survey result as indicate in Table 1 shows out of 50 emails was used to select 44 respondents representing 88% of the Data collected. Analysis was conducted using excel sheet and output was translated into charts, graphs, lines, frequencies and percentages. The age-wise distribution of 50 respondents of Librarians of Medical Colleges affiliated to RGUHS, which reveals that 15 respondents (34%) are belongs to 30-40 and 40-50 years age groups . 11 respondents (25%) belong to 25-30 years age group, whereas 3 respondents (7%) belongs to 40-50 years age group.
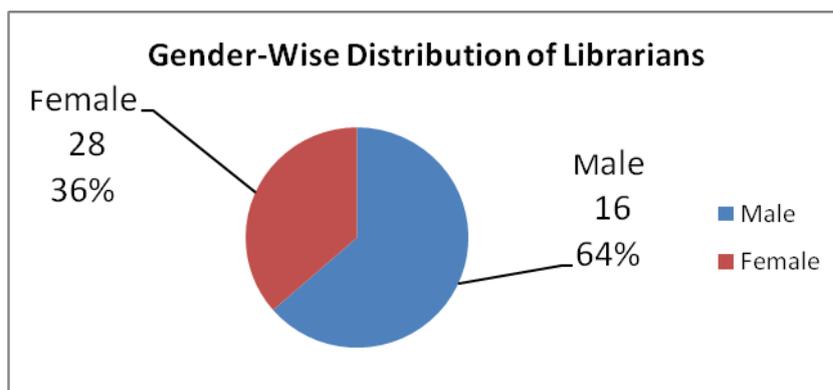
Figure 1: Gender-Wise Distribution of Librarians

In the figure shows presents the sex-wise distribution of 44 respondents, which reveals that out of 50respodents, 28 respondents (64%) are male members and 16 respondents (36%) are female members of Information Literacy skills among librarians of Medical Colleges affiliated to RGUHS. the qualification–wise distribution of respondents which reveals that out of 44 respondents, about 30 respondents (70%) are MLISc. Qualification, Mphil (8=18%), Ph.D. (5 = 12%)

searched databases for specific documents and 3 (7%) is not searched databases in specific documents. On an average 95% the most success rate while searching the above databases. 91% knew the Boolean Logic in searching and 9% do not know the searching of Boolean logic.

Tables 2: Knowledge about Sources of Information

Qualification	Yes	No	Total
Are you using Databases from HELINET	42 (95%)	2 (5%)	44
Expertizing in searching Databases	42 (95%)	2 (5%)	44
Have you searched databases for specific documents	41 (93%)	3 (7%)	44
Do you know the "Boolean Logic" in searching	40 (91%)	4 (9%)	44

In this survey most of the 42 (95%) librarians were know the using databases from HELINET and expertizing in searching the databases and 5% were not aware of the database as well as searching databases. The 95%% were using most of the databases from HELINET. The frequently used databases from HELINET are LWW, Science Direct, proquest, ovid, bentham, BMJ, Pubmed, Wiley Online and Nature. The 41 (93%) Librarians were
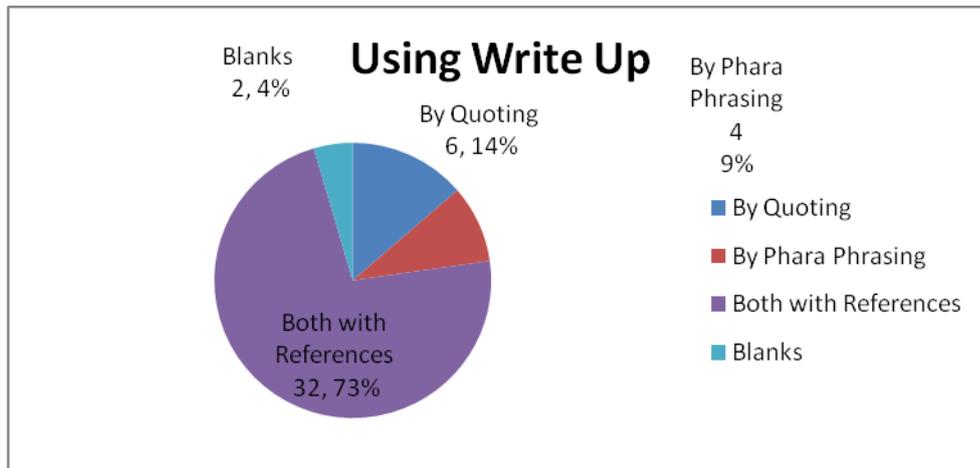
Figure 2: If you find useful content in one article, how will you use it in a write up

In the above pie chart, the useful content in one article, the medical librarians were using in the write up by quoting and para phrasing, 14% were using only quoting and 9% librarians using only para phrasing. 73% Librarians are using the article for both with references by quoting and para phrasing.
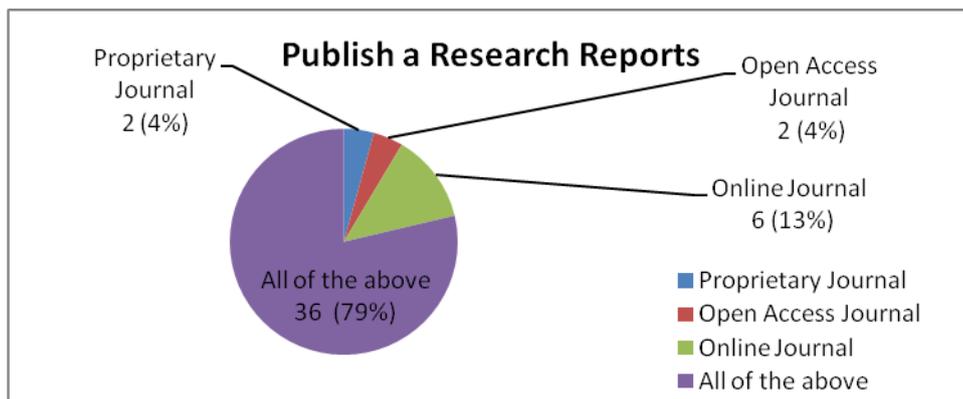

Figure 3: Where do publish a research reports?

In this chart 4% librarians were publishing a research reports in proprietary journal, 4% open access journal and 13% online journal. The 79% librarians were publishing all of the proprietary, open access and online journals in research reports.
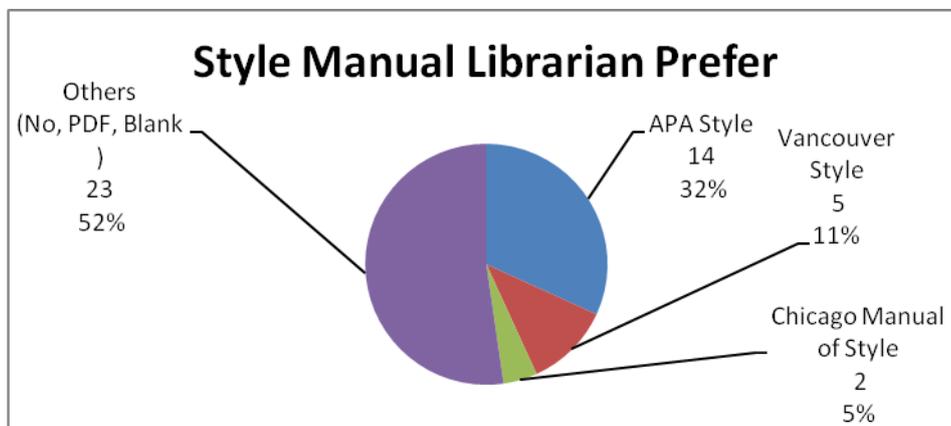

Figure 4: Name a style manual that you prefer?

In this figure 32% librarians will prefer APA style of manual, 5% are Chicago Style, 11% in Vancouver style and 52% librarian themselves do not know which style they prefer.

10. CONCLUSION

Information literacy is an ongoing journey; it should not be a destination. It is found essential to make information literacy programme a regular activity in the higher learning and research and development institutions. Library professionals are slowly and steadily acquainting with the technological gadgets and showing interest in guiding the users in the information search and accessing the information. Information literacy programmes need to be implemented mainly by the library staff in schools, universities, public and other libraries in order to achieve library goals and to convert their users to lifelong learners and critical thinkers. However it is very important to note here that these programmes would be more successful, if the library staff is able to enlist the co-operation of the teaching and administrative staff too. In addition to this, information literacy programmes will enable librarians to play a more prominent and meaningful role among their clients.

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