Information Literacy Skills of Library and Information Science Students of CSJM University, Kanpur

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Abstract

Purpose: *To explore the status of information literacy among the LIS students who will be the future librarians.*

Design/Methodology/Approach: *The study has been done using a questionnaire of ten framed questions. The 80 students were selected from the Chhatrapati Shahu ji Maharaj University, Kanpur, for it, and the questionnaire in Google Form was sent to them. Out of the 80 students, 57 responded to the questionnaire.*

Findings: *The findings of the study reflected that only a small number of students were aware of information literacy, and the majority of them were not so well aware of this area. The existing institutions related to library and information science education need to include curriculum related to information literacy.*

Research Limitation: *The present study is limited to 80 students at Chhatrapati Shahu Ji Maharaj University, Kanpur.*

Practical Implication: *Information literacy has become an essential part of the library and information science curriculum at the global level, and if the staffs are aware of it, they can provide better information services in a digital environment in libraries and information centres.*

Originality/Value: *The paper will shed some light on the areas of information literacy, which are now slowly and steadily entering the library and information science curriculum in India, and even a few institutes are giving special emphasis to this area by launching a full course on it.*

Keywords: *Information Literacy, Information Literacy and Library and Information Science, Importance of Information Literacy, Curriculum of Information Literacy, Information Literacy in Search Strategy.*

1. Introduction: The 21st century is knocking on the door of information technology in every corner of human society. Information technology has changed the entire scenario in the world. For organising society, the concept of information literacy plays an important role in retrieving, analysing, and making the information applicable. Information literacy was coined by Paul G. Zurkowaski in 1974. He stated that if a person uses plenty of information resources, he or she should have knowledge of information literacy, or how to get reliable information from millions of sources. These sources are assembled day by day in different formats, such as audio-visual and file formats. Besides this, thousands of websites with millions of web pages and thousands of printed pages come to the user's attention for the selection of his or her desired information. Information technology has also created enormous literature in every field of knowledge, so the emphasis on the concept of information literacy has also become valuable. Information literacy has modified the concept of literacy. The concept of literacy only intended to have the knowledge 'to read and write," but the concept of information literacy delivers a message of 'to have the knowledge to analyse your information, decide its scope, search from reliable sources, and find out complete information'. In the present context, many LIS organisations define information literacy. But not much stress has been given in the curriculum.

In 1989, the American Library Association's Presidential Committee on Information Literacy also wrote a definition of information literacy: "To be information literate, a person must be able to recognise when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use it effectively." The committee has emphasised the need for information literacy, showing that getting information is a fundamental right.

According to the Association of College and Research Libraries (2015), "Information literacy is the set of integrated abilities encompassing the reflective discovery of information, the understanding of how information is produced and valued, and the use of information in creating new knowledge and participating ethically in communities of learning." ACRL has focused on the ability of a person to understand the way knowledge is produced, its importance, and how that information can be used to create a new array of knowledge.

According to CILIP (2018), "information literacy incorporates a set of skills and abilities that everyone needs to undertake information-related tasks; for instance, how to discover, access, interpret, analyse, manage, create, communicate, store, and share information." CILIP also emphasises the human capability to interpret and use the information judiciously, which depends on the critical evaluation of the information in terms of ethical and political matters. The emphasis on the ethical aspect is very much necessary in the use of information.

2. Review of Literature: In 2002, Mr. Shigeru, Chief Division of Basic Education at UNESCO, wrote that information literacy is emerging as a new component of literacy policy, but it is also affecting global policies for the benefit and proper development of human society. So there is a need to focus on its importance.

Heidi and Julien conducted a survey of globally situated schools of library and information science in 2005 and discussed the need for information literacy, its design, web-based instruction, the strategy of its programme, and plans to introduce it in the syllabus of a school of LIS universally.

Scheepers, Susan, and Brassel Maureen conducted an investigation in 2007 on the inclusion of information literacy training in the curriculum. In their study, they reached the conclusion that spiral training can be most effective as used for the first-year batch of students in the dental course and got better results.

C. Sasikala and V. Dhanraju wrote a paper in 2011. They tried to find out the level of information literacy among the students in the science field, how well they use library resources, how well they know about the services rendered by the libraries, both print and electronic, and also their knowledge about copyright issues concerning writing articles.

Prasanna Ranveera, in January 2008, wrote an article describing the importance of information literacy (5). He focused on a born-literate society, where information literacy is essential. The study also relates information literacy to critical thinking and lifelong learning.

Cox, Andrew M., and Correll Sheilla (2013) have written a review, focusing on the role of librarianship in the changing context of using libraries. According to them, the word specialties involves system librarians, electronic resource librarians, teaching librarians, information literacy educators, digital librarians, etc.

Julie E. Ilogho and Chriatopher Nkiku (2014) made a study including students of 57 universities in Nigeria and found out that students have a low level of IL and that there is a need to increase their level by including IL in the secondary school syllabus.

Maria Henkel (2016) (8) "Educators of the Information Society" investigated the fact that information literacy plays an important role not only in academic libraries but also in public libraries. Now the librarian also has to play the role of instructor. This study was done in the libraries of major Canadian cities. The paper also compares the results of the study between public and academic libraries.

Hani, Norden, Kiran K, and Chaudhury G (2018) revealed in their study that the information literacy tool that is being used in the western world should be translated into other languages and used in other countries as well so that the difficulty level of students can be recognised globally and it can be used, with modification, to teach information literacy.

N. Parvathamma and Danappa Pattar (2013) investigated the fact that information resources are available on the web, but students are not aware of them due to a lack of digital literacy and do not know how to evaluate resources before going through them. So there is a need for a curriculum on information literacy for the students of management. So many studies have been done in this regard, but future librarians knowledge has not been taken into consideration in the study so far. Today's students, tomorrow's librarians or information scientists in society, will have the great responsibility of providing assistance in searching for reading material or information to the user, so there is a need to peep out their knowledge in this regard.

3. Objectives of the Study: The objectives of the study are:
a) To study the level of LIS students' understanding of the concept of IL, i.e., whether they are able to interpret and define the word IL or not.
b) To study whether the students are in a position to explain their information needs.
c) What search strategies are being used by the students to search for material in the library catalogue or OPAC?
d) To study whether students are aware of the shelf arrangement. and
e) To find out the knowledge of the students regarding different databases.

4. Methodology: The aim of the study is to find out the perception of M.Lib.I.Sc. students at CSJM University Kanpur towards information literacy and their knowledge of it. The questionnaire has been prepared with 10 different types of questions to assess the basic and advanced knowledge of students, and it has been sent to 80 students. Out of the 80 students, 57 (71.25%) responded to the questionnaire.

5. Results of the Data Interpretation: Among the respondents, there were 12 boys (21.1%) and 45 girls (78.9%). The data obtained from students in the form of their responses has been analysed and gives the following result:

a) Perception Related to Information Literacy: Knowing the level at which LIS students understand the concept of information literacy is very necessary so that they can facilitate better library services. The number of students who are able to perceive it is 40 (70.2%). All other respondents were not aware of this concept, as they had selected some random options that were intentionally given in the questionnaire only to divert them and were not true.

What is Information Literacy	No. of Students	Percentage of Students
The ability to locate, evaluate, and effectively use the needed information	40	70.2
The ability to read and write	14	24.6
The ability to pass an examination	1	1. 8
Don't know	2	3.5
Total	**57**	**100%**

Table 1: Perceptions of Information Literacy

b) Interpretation of Information Need: The information need is the backbone of any library service, so a better understanding of what information is needed, its scope, and its depth will lay the foundation for a successful search strategy in the right direction. The

explanation of a query has a unique place in search strategy and is the foundation of information literacy. The study shows that 38% of students know very well what information they need and clearly define their information needs. Another 38% are good at explaining information needs, 19% are at a satisfactory level, and 3% are not able to explain it.

Define Information Need	No. of Students	Percentage of Students
Very well	22	38.6
Good	22	38.6
Satisfactory	11	19.3
Can't say	2	3.5
Total	**57**	**100%**

Table 2: Interpretation of Information Need

c) Use of Library Catalogue / OPAC: Though the libraries are moving from card catalogues to the Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC), most of the libraries are still maintaining their card catalogues and catalogue cabinets. The study confirms that 42% of people are convergent on using card catalogues in libraries, and the remaining 57% are not using or have used card catalogues.

Use of Catalogue	Respondents	Percentage of Students
Using the Card Catalogue	33	42.1
Not Used Card Catalogue	24	57.9
Total	**57**	**100%**

Table 3: Users of Card Catalogue

In the case of the OPAC, which has become a necessity for better and timely information service, the user study reveals that 23 users search the OPAC by author, 17 users by title, and 5 users by subject. The remaining users did not use the OPAC.

Search Strategy in OPAC	No. of Students	Percentage of Students
By Author	23	40.4
By Title	17	29.8
By Subject	5	8.8
Not Using OPAC	12	21.1
Total	**57**	**100%**

Table 4: Searching of OPAC by User

d) Awareness about Book Spine: The emphasis in library classification is that students should have practical knowledge of library classification or book classification. The survey reflects the situation otherwise, i.e., 11 (19.30%) respondents still have some difficulty understanding what is on the spine label of a book, while the other 46 (80.7%) people are aware of it.

Book Spine Contains	No. of Student	Percentage of Students
Only Class Number	5	8.8
Only Book Number	3	5.3
Class No. & Book No.	46	80.7
Can't say	3	5.3
Total	**57**	**100%**

Table 5: Awareness on Book Spine

e) User of Databases: The use of computers has become an essential activity in offices, schools, and other administrative departments. The libraries have also been using computers for a long time. In providing information, databases play an important role. A user study reveals that most of the users prefer to search or look into the institutional repositories, i.e., 24 (42%), 16 (28.1%) mostly looked into the DELNET database, and Web of Science and Scopus were used by 8 (14%) and 7 (12.3%), respectively. The other 10 users (17.5%) are not using any database to meet their information needs.

Modern information retrieval techniques have become commonplace in libraries. These include boolean search, truncation search, field search (like ISBN), etc. The study shows that boolean search is used by 26 students (45.6%), field search is used by 18 students (31.6%), truncation search is used by only 3 students (5.3%), and the rest of 10 students (17.5%) didn't use any such search technique.

f) Use of the Information Resources: The library is organising and distributing the information available in different formats and types. The study determining the students knowledge of such resources where they were given the option to select more than one resource shows that 75% of students totally depend on the use of the Internet for their information needs, 12% use newspapers to find information, and 5% each use encyclopaedias and books.

The study of difficulty in transforming a user query into a successful search result shows that 11 users (19.3%) are unable to know even if there is any mistake in their search query, and 14 (24.6%) users, if they are unable to find a relevant resource in the search result, used to think that it was a mistake of the system that they are using rather than a mistake on their part in formulating the search query. In another interesting fact, it came to light that even though the users used the wrong search query in 16 (28.1%) cases, they accepted the retrieved result. In the case of physical libraries, in 16 (28.1%) cases, the user found that the document they were looking for had already been borrowed by another user from the library.

6. Conclusion: Information technology has become an essential element of present information services, and that is also a basic ground of information literacy in the present global scenario. For the purpose of effectively using library resources, both basic knowledge of ICT and information literacy are essential. The present study reveals that there is a need for change management in libraries to provide library services in the modern ICT environment. By analysing the students' responses, it has come to be known that 70% of students know about the concept of information literacy, and the remaining are still in the dark. So there is a need to place emphasis on the perception of information literacy. In the present IT-oriented environment, some libraries are still using card catalogues that are neither helpful to express the document nor able to fulfil the information needs of the user. While considering the use of the internet, it needs to be mentioned that, though 75% of students used the internet for their information needs, the use of specific databases is quite low. Therefore, in the information literacy curriculum of different library and information science schools, there is a need to incorporate more information related to different databases. After

analysing the students' responses, it was also evident that there is a need for a special course on information literacy that will be very helpful to students in different departments of library and information sciences.

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