

Online Information Literacy among Research Scholars of the University of Mysore – A Study

Dr. Khaisar Muneebulla Khan

Professor & Chairman

Dept. of Lib & Information Science

Mangalore University

Mangalagangothri-574 199

E-mail: khaisarmk@yahoo.com

Mr. Raju C

Library Project Assistant

Mysore University Library

Manasagangothri

Mysore-570 006

E-mail: rajumlisc@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

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. In this paper the authors tried to find out the research scholar ability to identify required online information for their study and for day to day purpose. The paper highlights the ways and means the researcher search the information from different online information sources. Further, the study finds the online information resources used by the research scholar to get information relating to their own areas. The paper focuses on whether the researcher is identify related document for this research topic and subject. The researcher familiarity about his research information for their research work. Finally, it concludes by giving some fruitful suggestions to improve the online information literacy programmes for research scholars in the university level.

Keywords: Information Literacy; Online Information Literacy; Research Scholar; University of Mysore

Introduction:

In the recent years due to the development of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) i.e. computers and communication the ability to access, interpret and create online information has been increased its level of importance in the continuum of literacy. The computer and Internet has become integral part of information access, communication, and knowledge. There are four core competencies of online information literacy. They are knowledge assembly, Internet searching, hyper textual navigation, and content evaluation. Now all any information seekers have to imbibe these core competencies with them.

The present study has been conducted to identify the level of online information literacy of the Research Scholar of various departments of the University of Mysore with a view to provide recommendations for planning and implementing the appropriate online information literacy programmes. The research reveals that majority of the research scholars are able to identify, locate, evaluate and use the required information through Internet. An important point noted down is that, the researchers are not much aware about online information resources and their use. The study also reveals that online information literacy programme is inevitable for the research scholar in the University to make them more online information literate. The library and information professionals can do a lot to attain this goal.

Online Information Literacy

The online information searching is an important role in teaching, learning and research processes. The usefulness of search, the online information lies in its ability to provide access to online information resources of library everywhere and at all times. It removes the constraints of time and space and also the dependence on conventional sources for learning. Faculty members, research scholars of university increasingly depend on the online information for their teaching / research activities. Especially researcher search recent / current developments in their study areas depend online than on conventional sources.

A trend that has also gained popularity in the UK is an interactive Web-based information literacy tutorial, which is designed to introduce researcher to information literacy concepts and information resources. However; the University of Leeds briefly experimented with computerized library introduction as early as the end of the 1970 (Fjallbrant & Malley, 1984).

Information Literacy is defined as the lifelong ability to recognize the need for, to locate, evaluate and effectively use information (American Library Association, 2006). Digital information literacy is one aspect of this and very relevant for the 21st Century. Another term used in this context is fluency and this is where the following definition sits:

Digital Information Literacy is also called as Digital Information Fluency. "Digital Information Fluency (DIF) is the ability to find, evaluate and use digital information effectively, efficiently and ethically. DIF involves knowing how digital information is different from print information; having the skills to use specialized tools for finding digital information; and developing the dispositions needed in the digital information environment." (21st Century Digital Information Fluency (DIF) project and model, 2011)

The ability to access, interpret and create digital information has increased its level of importance in recent years. This is because the use of computers, the Internet and the World Wide Web has become integral to many forms of information access, communication, and knowledge generally. This change is having an impact on common

understandings about information, communication and knowledge. (http://wikieducator.org/Digital_information_literacy, 2009).

Digital Information Literacy is the ability to identify, use, acknowledge, create and evaluate information sources from an electronic device such as a computer, a cell phone or Internet. Here the access (find), interpret (evaluate), and create (use) terms denotes a broader context for digital information literacy.

Focused on library programs in schools and the situation in libraries where children have access to Internet resources and electronic content in Texas. The author notes that librarians are responsible for training students to become better readers, critical thinkers, more skillful researchers, and ethical users of information. It also provides online links on reading lists for students and information on standards for 21 century learners. (LaBoon. 2010)

Conducted study of the impact of electronic journals on the information behavior of academic researchers at Catalan universities shows that academic researchers now read more, and more widely. However, their reading is becoming more superficial; they are compelled to improve their discrimination skills in order to decide what to read in depth. The electronic accessibility of journals means that researchers now make reduce the number of library visits. Web browsing and table of contents (TOC) e-mail alerts are replacing physical browsing, and searching is a very popular option for keeping up to date with developments. Internet search engines, especially Google and Google Scholar, are becoming important sources of information for researchers. However, they face problems in managing their personal scientific information. (Ollé and Borrego.2010)

Objectives of the Study

1. To find out the online information literacy of the Research Scholar
2. To know the purpose and use of online information
3. To know the frequency of use of online information
4. To know the familiarity of the online information sources
5. To evaluate the features of online information

Methodology

Keeping in view the above objectives in mind, a structured questionnaire was administered to collect the details about the attitude of respondents towards the online information literacy by the Research scholar of the University of Mysore Campus, Manasagangotri. Totally 200 questionnaires were distributed among research scholar, out of which 180 filled in questionnaires were received back. This constitutes 90% of the total response and same was used for analysis purpose.

Results and Discussions

Knowing Knowledge of Online

The investigator asked the question among the Research Scholar about the awareness of online. It is found that all of them are using the Internet but not familiar the online information.

Library Visit for Research Purpose

The investigator asked this question for researcher where can get the information and usage of library

Table 1. Frequency of visit library in research Purpose

| Sl. No. | Library visit | Number of students No=180 | Frequency |
|---------|---------------|---------------------------|-------------|
| 1. | Yes | 173 | 96.11% |
| 2. | No | 7 | 3.89% |
| | Total | 180 | 100% |

Above table 1 shows majority 173(96.11%) of the responds are visiting Mysore University Library for their research purpose.

Use of Internet

Internet facility is the backbone to access online information. So the investigator asked the question about the use of Internet. It is found from the study that all the respondents are using Internet.

Table 2. Frequency of use of Internet

| Sl.No. | Frequency | No of respondents | Percentage |
|--------|------------------|-------------------|-------------|
| 1 | Daily | 95 | 52.78% |
| 2 | Once in two days | 46 | 25.56% |
| 3 | Thrice a week | 18 | 10% |
| 4 | Once in a week | 13 | 7.22% |
| 5 | Occasionally | 08 | 4.44% |
| | Total | 180 | 100% |

The table 2 clearly shows that 95 (52.78%) respondents are using Internet daily, and 46(25.56%) respondents using Internet once in two days; 18 (10%) respondents using Internet once in a week, 13 (7.22%) of the respondents using Internet thrice a week and 8 (4.44%) respondents are using it occasionally.

Table 3. Formal training obtained in the use of Internet

| Formal training | No of respondents No=180 | Percentage |
|------------------|-----------------------------|------------|
| Obtained | 86 | 47.78% |
| Not obtained | 94 | 52.22% |
| Total 180 | 100% | |

The table 3 shows that majority 86(47.78%) of the respondents are of the opinion that they got training in the use of computers and Internet. The remaining 94(52.22%) respondents did not get training in use of computers and Internet.

Use of online Information Sources

Digital information sources such as e-books, e-journals, e-databases, and University websites, and news groups/ mailing lists, E-newspaper and read blogs are important to the researcher in order to get the information according to their respective fields. So the investigators posed few questions to find out the literacy of the online information. The first question was posed to the respondents was "Which type of online information sources do you use?" The responses are analyzed and are presented in table - 3.

Table 4. Use of different types of online information sources

| Sl. No. | Types of information sources | No. of respondents N=180 | Ranking |
|---------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------|
| 1. | E-books | 142 | 94.66% |
| 2. | E-journals | 141 | 87.33% |
| 3. | E-databases | 115 | 76.66% |
| 4. | University Websites | 97 | 61.33% |
| 5. | General e-articles | 51 | 34.00% |
| 6. | News groups/ Mailing lists | 36 | 24.00% |
| 7. | E-Newspapers | 29 | 9.33% |
| 8. | Blogs | 02 | 1.33% |

Table - 4 reveals that the demand for E-boos is greatest, i.e. 94.66 percent. The next place is for E-journals available on the Internet i.e. 87.33 percent. The E-database, University website, General articles, and newsgroups/ mailing lists placed next order. They accounting 76.66 percent, 61.33 percent, 34 percent and 24 percent respectively. The researcher also the uses of other type of resources such as E-newspaper, blogs were 9.33 percent and 1.33 percent respectively.

Further the investigators were asked the questions with the researcher as "For what purpose do you use online information?"

Table 5. Purpose and use of online information sources

| Sl. No. | Purpose | No. of respondents N=180 | Ranking |
|---------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------|
| 1 | Research activity | 112 | 74.66% |
| 2 | About subject knowledge | 50 | 27.77% |
| 3 | Write Research report | 48 | 26.66% |
| 5 | Prepare Journal Articles | 28 | 15.55% |
| 6 | To prepare for competitive exams | 19 | 10.55% |

The above table - 5 shows that, among the 180 respondents 112 (74.67%) respondents stated that they need online resources to keep their research activity. Followed by this, 50 (27.77%) each respondents stated that they use online information to Write research report. 48(26.66%) respondents use online information to prepare journals and articles, 28(15.55%) to and 19(10.55%) to prepare for competitive examinations.

Table 6. Familiarity with the use of online information sources

| Response | No of respondents | Percentage |
|--------------|-------------------|-------------|
| Familiar | 92 | 51.11% |
| Not familiar | 88 | 48.89% |
| Total | 180 | 100% |

The table 6 shows that among the 180 respondents, 92(51.11%) of them are familiar with the use of digital information sources and the remaining 88(48.89%) of them are not familiar. So they need more orientation on online information sources.

Table 7. Use of different search database to get information through online information

| Sl. No. | Search engine No. information sources | No. of respondents N=180 | Ranking/ Percentage |
|---------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. | Google scholar | 78 | 43.33% |
| 2. | JCCC | 42 | 23.33% |
| 3. | Jstor | 32 | 17.78% |
| 4. | E-databases | 28 | 15.56% |
| | Total | 180 | 100% |

The table 7 shows that among 180 respondents, 78 (43.33%) respondents use Google scholar, 42 (23.33%) use JCCC, 32(17.78%) use Jstor, 28(15.56%) of then use Web of science 28 (15.56%) respondents use search database.

Users' preference on use of combination of words to find information on the topic "The impact of television on the academic result of researcher" in a database was asked by the investigators. The responses received are presented in the table-7.

Table 8. Users opinion on use of combination of words to find information

| Sl.No | Databases | No of Responds | Percentage |
|-------|---|----------------|-------------|
| 1 | Television, Academic result, College students | 58 | 33.22% |
| 2 | Impact, Television, Academic result, College students | 48 | 26.67% |
| 3 | Television, Academic result | 40 | 22.22% |
| 4 | Impact, Television, Academic result | 34 | 18.89% |
| | Total | 180 | 100% |

The above table shows that among 180 respondents 58 (33.33%) respondents replied that they use 'television, academic result, college students' combination of words to search for the above said title in the Psychology database. Another set of 48 (26.67%) of respondents replied that they use 'impact, television, academic result, college students' combination of words for search information, where as 40 (22.22%) users use 'television', and 'academic results' as combination of words, following 34(17.78%) users use 'impact, Television, academic result' to identify the 'impact of television on the academic results of college students'.

To find out the rating of the features of online information, the investigators posed a question with the students as "How would you rate online information on each of following features as far your study?"

Table 9. Rating of the features of online information sources

| Feature | Poor | Fair | Good | Very good | Excellent | Total |
|---------------|------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|----------|
| Accuracy | 18(10 %) | 18(10%) | 41(22.78 %) | 27(29.44%) | 25(27.78%) | 180100% |
| Authority | 25(13.89%) | 24 (13.33%) | 47(26.11%) | 27(27.78%) | 34(18.89%) | 180100% |
| Accessibility | 19(10.56%) | 13(13.33%) | 54(25.56%) | 46(25.56%) | 37(20.56%) | 180100% |
| Coverage | 16(8.89%) | 22(12.22 %) | 56(31.11 %) | 48(26.67%) | 38 (21.11%) | 180100% |
| Usefulness | 18 (10%) | 23(12.78%) | 57 (31.67%) | 48 (26.67%) | 34(18.89%) | 180100%7 |
| Currency | 16(8.89%) | 24(13.33%) | 56(31.11%) | 46 (25.56%) | 38 (21.11%) | 180100% |
| Consistency | 14(7.78%) | 26(14.44%) | 42(23.33 %) | 52 (28.89%) | 46(25.56%) | 180100% |
| Easy to use | 18(10%) | 29(16.11%) | 38(21.11%) | 52 (28.89%) | 46(25.56%) | 180100% |
| Timeliness | 23(12.78%) | 30(16.67%) | 56(31.11%) | 38 (21.11%) | 33(18.33%) | 180100% |

The above table shows that out of the many features given in the table for only few features such as accessibility, accuracy, authority and coverage the respondents rated as excellent and very good. Remaining all other features was rated as good. It is also found from the table that majority of the respondents good and very good rated the different features of online information

Table 10. User opinion about the criteria used to evaluate the quality of the Internet site

| Sl. No | Criteria | No of RespondentsNo=180 | Percentage |
|--------|------------------------|-------------------------|--------------|
| 1. | Known author | 45 | 25.00% |
| 2. | Web locations | 44 | 24.44% |
| 3. | Date of publication | 22 | 12.22% |
| 4. | Publisher | 18 | 10% |
| 5. | Content | 18 | 10% |
| 6. | Authorized site | 12 | 6.67% |
| 7. | Speed of accessibility | 11 | 6.11% |
| 8. | Up-to- datedness | 10 | 5.56% |
| | Total | 180 | 100 % |

The table-10 shows that among 180 respondents, 45(25%) respondents have chosen that if author is known then the quality of the Internet site is good. Further, 44(24.44%) respondents opine that the web locations in this site, 22(12.22%) respondents opine that the date of publication provided in the site, 18.(10%) name of the publisher, 18(10%) base on content, 12(6.67%) based on authoritative site for example if a website is government or institution are the criteria to evaluate the quality of a Internet site. It is also found that the other criteria such as speed of accessibility 11(6.11%) and up-to-datedness are used to evaluate the quality of the Internet site.

Conclusion:

Online information literacy it is need to any researcher because online information compare to print media faster to access any time in anywhere. Due to the technological advancement, most of the information sources today are available in the form of online. The research scholars must know to access online information in the net world. They should be Online literate. There should be lot of studies should be conducted in this level to provide effective services to the users community in the libraries. These types of studies also help to organization while taking important decisions such as procuring the online information resources to their library or organization of online resources.

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