

Information Literacy Skills among the Post Graduate Students and Research Scholars of the Central University of Haryana

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Abstract

The present study presents the information literacy skills of postgraduate and research scholars of the Central University of Haryana. The study highlights the users' awareness of information literacy programmes organized by the university library. Moreover, the study also describes the information search strategies of library users. The study further describes that majority of the respondents (63%) learned to access the digital resources through information literacy programmes, whereas (31%) respondents learned sometimes. Majority of the respondents have adequate computer and internet skills to access digital resources and services. The respondents have suggested that the university library should organize the information literacy programmes frequently.

KEYWORDS: Information literacy, university library, digital resources, computer literacy, Resources and Services.

Introduction:

Information Literacy is defined as a set of abilities that require individuals to recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate and use effectively the needed information. In the era of information technology information is being produced in a very rapid speed. Nowadays information is available in different media and formats. But this information is in unfiltered form, it is difficult for an individual to understand and evaluate the available information. Due to this, it is an important factor to develop information literacy skills to use information effectively and efficiently. An information literate individual is able to determine the extent of information needed, to access the needed information effectively and efficiently and to evaluate the information and its sources critically. According to Unesco, "Media and Information Literacy recognizes the primary role of information and media in our everyday lives. It lies at the core of freedom of expression and information - since it empowers citizens to understand the functions of media and other information providers, to critically evaluate their content, and to make informed decisions as users and producer of information and media content".

Information literacy forms the basis for lifelong learning. It is common to all disciplines, to all learning environments, and to all levels of education. It enables learners to master content and extend their investigations, become more self-directed, and assume greater control over their own learning. An information literate individual is able to:

- Determine the extent of information needed.
- Access the needed information effectively and efficiently.

- Evaluate information and its sources critically.
- Incorporate selected information into one's knowledge base.
- Use information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose.

Objectives of the study:

To know the awareness about information literacy programmes in central university libraries.

To know the effect of information literacy on library users for searching, locating and use of information resources and services.

To know the satisfaction level of users with information literacy programmes.

To provide suggestions to enhance the information literacy skills of the library users.

Need for the Study:

With the advent of internet and information communication technology, university libraries have various types of technologies and systems to acquire and dissemination of information. The Central Universities have been established under the Central universities act 2009 for the world-class education facilities in different states of India. The Central University of Haryana, Mahendergarh has been established under this scheme. The university is offering various types of courses at the undergraduate, postgraduate and doctoral level. The university has developed ultra-modern laboratories and library for the facilities of students, researchers and faculty members of this university. The university library has a good collection of print and digital resources. Moreover, the university library is subscribing electronic resources and databases. The university library is providing different types of services to its users. The university library has initiated the information literacy programmes to create awareness among the library users about the use, evaluate and analyze the information. The present study is focused on information literacy skills among postgraduate students and research scholars.

The scope of the Study:

The present study is limited to the Central University of Haryana. Moreover, the study population is selected from postgraduate students and research scholars only.

Research Methodology:

To complete this study a structured questionnaire was designed and distributed among 240 postgraduate students and research scholars of the Central University of Haryana. Out of 240 questionnaires, 216 complete questionnaires was received. The collected data was analyzed with the percentage method.

Central University of Haryana:

The Central University of Haryana is established in the year 2009, under the Central Universities Act 2009 of the parliament. It is one of the 12 central universities established by Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India. It is situated at Jat-Pali villages of Mahendergarh district of Haryana. The Central University of Haryana is offering various types of undergraduate, postgraduate and doctoral levels degrees in various disciplines. The Central University of Haryana has

set up state of the art laboratories, workshops and library for the best facilities of its students, researchers and faculty members. The Central University of Haryana has established the ultra modern library to cater to the various information needs of its users. The university has rich collection of printed and digital resources. Even the university library is subscribing reputed national and international research journals in all subjects. Besides this the university library is also subscribing various electronic databases.

Review of Literature

Malanga(2018)investigated the information literacy skills of the undergraduate students of the University of Livingstonia. The study shows that (86%) of the respondents were aware of the information resources and only (14%)were not aware of the available information resources. Moreover, (80%) respondents were familiar with the Americal Psychological Association (APA) style of referencing, whereas(13%) respondents were aware of the Modern Language Association(MLA) style of referencing. It was found that majority of the respondents were not aware of the plagiarism detection software. It was suggested by the respondents that the library should organize information literacy programmes for the better use of library material.

Algu and Shanmugam (2018) found that majority of the respondents(72%) used electronic journals, while (65%) respondents prefer to use books for study. Moreover, the respondents use information resources for writing research articles. The study further reveals that majority of the respondents found the library orientation programme very useful. It was found that information literacy programme has enhanced the skills of library users.

Chanchinmavian and Verma(2017) carried out a study to assess the information literacy skills among students of Academy of Integrated Christian studies, Aizawl. The study reveals that majority of the respondents (57%) use the information for preparing assignments, whereas (40%) respondents use information form project work. Moreover, (70%) respondents have adequate computer skills for searching, transferring information, while(60%) respondents have average knowledge of computer and internet skills. It was found that(60%) respondents were satisfied with information literacy programmes, whereas(30%)were fully satisfied.

Swapna and Biradar(2017) conducted a study to assess information literacy skills among science-post graduate students. The study shows that majority of the respondents(97%) were aware of the searching, locating and proper utilization of information. Moreover,(75%) respondents were aware of the different information search and retrieval tools. It was suggested by the respondents that the information literacy training programmes should be organized for the library staff for better organization of knowledge.

Issa et al(2015) found that majority of the respondents have not adequate knowledge about information literacy programmes. It was found that a large number of respondents were dissatisfied with information literacy programmes of the university library. It was suggested that information literacy should be part of the curriculum at the undergraduate level.

Balasubramanian and Vijay(2014) carried out a study to know the attitude of library users about information literacy. The study describes that the majority of the users

were aware of information literacy programmes. It was found that the majority of users were satisfied with the information literacy activities. It was suggested by the library users that information literacy programmes should be organized frequently.

Data Analysis and Findings.

To complete this study, the data was collected with the help of a structured questionnaire. The questionnaires were distributed among the 240 postgraduate and research scholars of The Central University of Haryana. Out of 240 questionnaires, 216 completed questionnaires were received back. The data were analyzed with the percentage method.

Table-I

Gender -wise distribution of respondents.

| Sr.No. | Respondents | No of Respondents | Percentage |
|--------|-------------|-------------------|------------|
| 1. | Male | 95 | 44 |
| 2. | Female | 121 | 56 |
| 3. | Total | 216 | 100 |

Table-I shows that out of 216 respondents 95(44%) were male and 121(56%) were female respondents. It shows the adequate strength of female respondents.

Table-II

Awareness of information literacy programmes organized by the university library.

| Sr.No. | Responses | Number | Percentage |
|--------|-----------------|--------|------------|
| 1. | Fully Aware | 115 | 54 |
| 2. | Partially Aware | 74 | 34 |
| 3. | Not Aware | 27 | 12 |
| 4. | Total | 216 | 100 |

Table-II describes that majority of the respondents (54%) were fully aware of the information literacy programmes organized by the university library, whereas (34%) respondents were partially aware of these programmes. Only (12%) respondents were not aware of the information literacy programmes of the university library.

Table-III

Which method do you use to find documents from the library?

| Sr.No. | Method | Response | Percentage |
|--------|--------------|----------|------------|
| 1. | Through OPAC | 97 | 46 |

| | | | |
|----|--------------------------------|-----|-----|
| 2. | Direct from selves | 42 | 19 |
| 3. | With the help of library staff | 38 | 17 |
| 4. | With the help of friends | 28 | 13 |
| 5. | Any other | 11 | 05 |
| 6. | Total | 216 | 100 |

Table-III indicates that most of the respondents (46%) find the needed documents through OPAC, while (19%) respondents search the documents directly from the selves. Moreover,(17%) respondents search the documents with the help of library staff and (13%) respondents take the help of friends to locate the documents.

Table-IV

Have you learned to access digital resources through information literacy programmes?

| Sr.No. | Response | Number | Percentage |
|--------|------------|--------|------------|
| 1. | Always | 136 | 63 |
| 2. | Some times | 66 | 31 |
| 3. | Never | 14 | 06 |
| 4. | Total | 216 | 100 |

Table-IV describes that majority of the respondents (63%) learned to access the digital resources through information literacy programmes, whereas (31%) respondents learned sometimes. Only (14%) respondents never learned to access digital resources through information literacy programme.

Table-V

Is an adequate computer lab facility available in the library?

| Sr.No. | Response | Number | Percentage |
|--------|------------|--------|------------|
| 1. | Yes | 166 | 77 |
| 2. | No | 36 | 17 |
| 3. | Don't know | 14 | 06 |
| 4. | Total | 216 | 100 |

Table-V shows that the status of the computer lab in the library. Majority of the respondents (77%) stated that the library has adequate computer lab facility; whereas (17%) respondents have stated that there is less number of computers in the library. Only (5%) respondents don't know about this facility.

Table-VI

Is the information literacy programmes enhance your ability to search, locate and use of information?

| Sr.No. | Response | Number | Percentage |
|--------|----------|--------|------------|
| 1. | Yes | 158 | 74 |
| 2. | No | 46 | 21 |

| | | | |
|----|------------|-----|-----|
| 3. | Don't know | 12 | 05 |
| 4. | Total | 216 | 100 |

Table-VI indicates that majority of the respondents(74%) have stated that information literacy programmes have enhanced their ability to search, locate and use of information, whereas (21%) respondents do not have got any change.

Table-VII

Is the information literacy programmes should be conducted frequently by the library?

| Sr.No. | Response | Number | Percentage |
|--------|--------------|--------|------------|
| 1. | Frequently | 170 | 79 |
| 2. | occasionally | 36 | 17 |
| 3. | Don't know | 10 | 04 |
| 4. | Total | 216 | 100 |

Table-VII describes that majority of the respondents (79%) are in favor of the frequent organization of information literacy programmes by the university library, while (17%) respondents have said that these programmes should organize occasionally.

Table-VIII

Are you satisfied with the information literacy programmes of the library?

| Sr.No. | Response | Number | Percentage |
|--------|---------------------|--------|------------|
| 1. | Fully Satisfied | 136 | 63 |
| 2. | Partially Satisfied | 69 | 32 |
| 3. | Dissatisfied | 11 | 05 |
| 4. | Total | 216 | 100 |

Table-VIII indicates that majority of the respondents (63%) were fully satisfied with the facility of information literacy programmes, while (32%) respondents were partially satisfied with the information literacy programmes. Only (5%) respondents were dissatisfied with the information literacy programmes of the university library.

Findings and Suggestions:

- The study shows that majority of the respondents (54%) were fully aware of the information literacy programmes organized by the university library, whereas (34%) respondents were partially aware of these programmes.
- The study indicates that most of the respondents (46%) find the needed documents through OPAC, while (19%) respondents search the documents directly from the selves.
- The study describes that majority of the respondents (63%) learned to access the digital resources through information literacy programmes, whereas (31%) respondents learned sometimes.

- Majority of the respondents (77%) stated that the library has adequate computer lab facility; whereas (17%) respondents have stated that there is less number of computers in the library.
- The study indicates that majority of the respondents (74%) have stated that information literacy programmes have enhanced their ability to search, locate and use of information.
- Majority of the respondents (79%) are in favor of the frequent organization of information literacy programmes by the university library.
- Majority of the respondents (63%) were fully satisfied with the facility of information literacy programmes, while (32%) respondents were partially satisfied with the information literacy programmes.

Suggestions:

It was suggested by the majority of the respondents that the university should organize information literacy programmes frequently. Moreover, the university library should be given training to the library staff to update their information literacy skills.

Conclusion

In the era of information communication and technology, the scenario of libraries has changed. Due to the information overload and variation in information resources and services, information literacy programmes have become an integral part of university libraries. With the proper information literacy skills the library staff can develop their ability to access, locate and evaluation of information. Information literacy skills have enhanced the use of library resources and services. In future, .libraries should develop more programmes on information literacy.

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