INFORMATION LITERACY IN HIGHER EDUCATION: A STUDY OF CCS HARYANA AGRICULTURAL UNIVERSITY, HISAR, INDIA

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to review and critique the current status of information literacy paradigm at CCS Haryana Agricultural University, Hisar (India). Due to the technological emergence, developing information literacy competency in agriculture researchers for life-long learning should be the vital element of agriculture education and research. In the study, an attempt has been made to know the information literacy paradigm among the research scholars at CCS Haryana Agricultural University, Hisar (India). A structured questionnaire was used for data collection and results are tabulated and analysed. Outcome of the study has been discussed and necessary suggestions have been made on the basis of the results for implementing proper literacy paradigm in this University.

Keywords   *Information, Literacy, Information Literacy, Agriculture, Higher Education*

Introduction

Information literacy is no longer just a library issue. It is the critical issue for the twenty-first century, of keen importance to all educational stakeholders, including faculty in all branches of knowledge, information scientists, information officers, information Managers and administrators. Higher education institutes are the hub of research and integrating more and more courses with IT courses and are requiring their students to use a variety of computer based technology effectively. Information literacy also aims to teach students and researchers how to find information and research based information and prepare them for life-long learning because they can always find information needed for any task or decision at hand (ACRL, 2000). The online environment is a relatively new phenomenon, which continues to evolve. The internet had a major impact on modern society life by facilitating direct interaction between the individual and government, business and other

people. New business model capitalise on the ability to interact directly with the customer. According to Bong and Skaalvik (2003) self efficiency represents individuals' expectations and convictions of what they can accomplish in particular situations. Higher education institutes are the hub of research and integrating more and more courses with IT courses and are requiring their students to use a variety of computer based technology effectively.

Information is available in different form like, multiple media, including graphical, oral and textual and these pose new of information pose large challenges for society. The sheer abundance of information will not in itself create a more informed citizenry without a complementary cluster of abilities necessary to use information necessary. Information literacy enables to learner to master contend and their investigations, become more self directed, and assume greater control over their own learning. Information literacy plays an important role in higher education. College, university and higher education institutes provide the foundation for continued growth throughout their careers, as well as in their roles as informed citizens and members of communities. It also helps to extends learning beyond formal classroom settings and provides practice with self directed investigations and increasing responsibilities in all areas of life.

American Library Association Presidential Committee on Information Literacy (January 10, 1989, Washington, D.C.) says "Ultimately, information literate people are those who have learned how to learn. They know how to learn because they know how knowledge is organized, how to find information and how to use information in such a way that others can learn from them. They are people prepared for lifelong learning, because they can always find the information needed for any task or decision at hand."

Lloyed (2004) felt that "Information literate people have a deep awareness, connection and fluency with the information environment. Information literate people are engaged, enabled, enriched and embodied by social, procedural and physical information that constitutes an information universe. IL is a way of knowing that universe"

Review of literature

Murali and Babu (2014) studied the ICT literacy among the library professionals of polytechnic college libraries in Tamil Nadu. The study indicated that 51.22 % of library professionals were Information Communication Technology literate in Vellore district in the comparison to 34.15 % Dharmapuri district and only 14.63 % in Krishnagiri districts. The study revealed that the majority of the user's i.e 52.48 % used Google search engine followed by 31.70 % yahoo and 15.87 % Rediff search engine for finding information.

Rafique (2014) studied the level of information literacy skills of faculty members of the university of Lahore. The study indicated that 61 % of the sample was male and 38% were female. The study showed that 46.4 % of the faculty members frequently used library. The study shows that the purpose of use of the library i.e. 79.8 % of the users used the library for study purpose, 52.4 % for research, 16.7 % for official purpose and 4.8 % for recreational

purpose. The study also indicated that 64.3 % of the users required information in print format while 34.4 % required online format.

Derakhshan and Singh, (2011) analyzed the integration of information literacy into the curriculum. The result showed that most of the items 58.4% included in the meta-synthesis w and 16.6% percent were written by academics. 61.5% percent of the items were published in journals for librarians and 39.5% percent were written by academics. 56.2% items in this meta-synthesis were studies, 20.8% were guides, 10.4% were descriptive works and 8.3% were case studies. 57.1% of the data in this meta-synthesis used quantitative methods to collect and analyze data.

Baro, (2010) conducted a survey of more than 60 library schools in Africa to investigate the state of information literacy education. The results showed that a majority of the schools did not offer information literacy as a stand-alone course in their curriculum; it is briefly discussed as a topic in related courses. The researcher concluded with the suggestion that all library schools in Africa review their school curriculum to include information literacy course and the university authorities in Africa should employ qualified staff with technological experience to teach information literacy and also provide the required technological tools in the departments.

Sharma, (2010) examined the information literacy in Punjab Agricultural University. The results showed that majority of users were able to access, use and organize the information efficiently. Result further shows 76% needed information for the purpose of publication of research papers, 43% for assignments, 28% for general awareness, 24% for teaching and 19% for their course work. Furthermore 85% responses showing awareness of the source of information to be consulted for acquiring desired information, 96% responses showing that the respondents are knowledgeable enough to help themselves further by refining the keyword. 96% responses save it in the computer in proper folders and files form and 9% responses prefer to keep photocopy of the information.

Choudhary and Sethi, (2009) conducted a study on computer literacy of library professionals in the universities libraries of Orissa. The results of the study clearly indicated that 77.7% of library professionals were computer literate in Prof. B.B. central library, Sambalpur University, in comparison to 75% in R.P. Padhy library, Behrampur University, and 44.4% in Parija Library, Utkal University. It also indicated that 55.55% of respondents were provided training by the library of PBBCL, S.U.

Korobili, Malliari and Christodoulou, (2009) conducted a study on assessing information literacy skills in technological education institutes of Thessaloniki, Greece. The study indicated that 41.8% of the sample was male and 52.2% were female. The majority of the respondents belonged to the schools of health & medical care and technological applications. The largest number of students belonged to the department of informatics and plan production. The findings reveal that the students of some departments were asked to produce 50% more assignments. Only 6.7% never used the internet or World Wide Web

(www), 23.3% attended information literacy courses integrated in curriculum. 11.7% received information literacy principles integrated in to course and only 7.3% attended a library seminar. The results indicated that most professors do not oblige their students to conduct research.

Rehman and Alfaresi, (2009) investigated the information literacy skills among female students in Kuwaiti high schools. The result showed that majority of the students did not have the basic skills of catalogue searching, use of information sources, develop search strategy and subject terminology. It was suggested that if the teachers are convinced about the significance of their skills, they may become willing partners in the process.

Karisiddappa and Rajgoli, (2008) studied the Information Literacy programmes and practices in selected institutions at Bangalore. The study showed that 43.48% of respondents conduct Information Literacy programmes only for the new users of library, 26.10% of respondents conduct the programme upon request on annually basis. Only 17.40% respondents conduct information literacy programme at a regular interval. In majority (78.26%) of libraries, the librarian conducts Information Literacy programmes by inviting guest professionals and other library staff. Only 8.70% of respondents arrange demonstrations and presentations of the resources procured for the user from publications, representatives and agents. The author concluded with the suggestion that information literacy programmes should be undertaken in a democratic country like India.

Need and Limitations of the Study

Information literacy has become a most important terms since the arrival of the information age. The ability to search, evaluate and use information effectively is more commonly known as information literacy. Research in this field in Asian countries such as India is still in its preliminary stages. The present study is an attempt to know the information literacy competency of the research scholars of Chaudhary Charan Singh Haryana Agricultural University, Hisar.

- Data is collected using the structured questionnaire from the research scholar of CCS Haryana Agriculture University, Hisar.
- Data collection is confined to CCS Haryana Agriculture University, Hisar.
- The study is mainly qualitative, using a small number of samples.
- Data analysis and interpretation are based on the feedback received from the respondents.

Research Methodology

The study is a descriptive survey. The study covers the research scholars at CCS Haryana University, Hisar. Questionnaire method was used for data collection. Total of 75 questionnaires were distributed, out of which 60 questionnaires were received back and used for the present study.

The table 1 shows the area wise distribution of the respondents. The result depicts that 43 (71.67 %) respondents were from Urban area and whereas 17 (28.33 %) were from Rural area.

Table-1: Area wise distribution of respondents

Status	Research Scholar	Percentage (%)
Urban	43	71.67
Rural	17	28.33
TOTAL	60	100

Table 2 shows the gender wise distribution of respondents, which shows that 34 (i.e., 56%) respondents were male and 26 (i.e., 43.33%) respondents were female respondents, who formed the sample of the survey.

Table2: Gender wise distribution of respondents

Gender	Research Scholar	Percentage (%)
Male	34	56.67
Female	26	43.33
TOTAL	60	100

Table 3 presents the data related to the age of respondents. It shows that 22 respondents (i.e., 36.66%) of respondents fall between the age group of 20-25 years. 37 respondents (61.67%) respondents fall in the age group of 26-30 years, whereas one respondents (i.e., 1.67%) was in the age group of 31-35 years. The table clearly indicate that there are no research scholars in the age group of 36 and above years.

Table 3: Age wise Distribution of Respondents

Age Group	Research Scholar	Percentage (%)
20-25 years	22	36.66
26-30 years	37	61.67
31-35	1	1.67
36 and years and above	--	--
Total	60	100

Table 4 reveals the frequency of respondents to visit the library. The results shows that the majority of the respondents 45 (i.e., 75%) visited the library daily, 8 (i.e., 13.33%) visited more than once in a week, 6 (i.e., 10) visited once in a week and only 1.67% visited the library occasionally.

Table-4: Frequency of visit the library

Sr. No.	Purpose	Research Scholar	Percentage (%)
1	Daily	45	75
2	More than once in a week	8	13.33
3	Weekly	6	10
4	Monthly	1	1.67
5	Occasionally	--	--
6	Total	60	100

Respondents were asked their preference for format of information which has been depicted in table no.5. Majority of the respondents 47 (i.e, 78.33%) prefer both formats of information followed by 09 (i.e., 15%) of respondents who prefer the electronic format of information and 04 (i.e., 6.67%) respondents prefer the print format of information.

Table 5 Prefer the format of information

Sr. No.	Format	Research Scholar	Percentage (%)
1	Print	04	6.67
2	Electronic	09	15
3	Both	47	78.33
4	Total	60	100

Table 6 presents the respondents search strategy for finding required information in an electronic format. The table demonstrate that 41 (68.33%) respondents 'type the search statement in searching box,' followed by 13 (i.e., 21.67%) respondents 'type the keywords in searching box. Only 10% respondents are familiar with Boolean operators search strategy technique.

Table 6: Search Strategy used for searching information

Sr. No.	Search strategy	Research Scholar	Percentage %
1	Type the search statement in searching box	41	68.33
2	Type the keywords in searching box	13	21.67
3	Type the key words using Boolean operators	6	10
4	Don't know	--	--
5	Total	60	100

The respondents were asked about the disposal of information they get after searching. The results of the table 7 depicts that 47 (i.e., 78.33%) respondents save the information in computer in the form of files and folders, 10 (i.e., 16.67%) respondents keep a photocopy/printout and only 3 (5%) respondents dispose it off after used it.

Table 7: Disposal of information accessed and used once

Sr. No.	Frequency	Research Scholar	Percentage %
1	Dispose it of	3	05
2	Save it in computer in form of files and folders	47	78.33
3	Keep a photocopy/printout	10	16.67
4	Total	60	100

The respondents were asked about legal aspects including copy right act surrounding the use of information. Table 8 shows that 57 (95%) of respondents were aware of legal aspects while using the information, followed by 3 (5%) respondents who were not familiar with the legal aspects of using information.

Table 8: Awareness of legal aspects while using information

Sr. No.	Awareness	Research Scholar	Percentage %
1	Yes	57	95
2	No	3	5
	Total	60	100

The researchers were asked about citation of sources and fair use of copyright material. Table 9 reveals that majority of researchers always cite the original citations, followed by 20% respondents mostly cited the original source of information

Table 9: Cite the source of information

Sr. No.	Cite the Source	Research Scholar	Percentage %
1	Always	48	80
2	Mostly	12	20
3	Sometimes	--	--
4	Never	--	--
	Total	60	100

Table 10 presents the data about respondents understanding of intellectual property right, copyright laws and fair use of information. The results shows that 9 (i.e., 15%) respondents seek permission from the copyright holder while using information and 51 (i.e., 85%) respondents make fair use of information.

Table 10: Awareness regarding intellectual property right

Sr. No.	Cite the author/source	Research Scholar	Percentage %
1	Seek permission from the copyright holder	9	15
2	Make fair use of information	51	85
3	Copy the whole text without informing the copyright holder	--	--
4	Don't know	--	--
5	Total	60	100

Table 11 shows that majority of respondents (i.e., 88.33%) have the knowledge to identification the citations, followed by 11.67% of respondents do not have the ability to identify the citations.

Table 11: Awareness of identification of citations

Sr. No.	Identification of citations	Research Scholar	Percentage %
1	Yes	53	88.33
2	No	07	11.67
3	Dont' know	--	
4	Total	60	100

Findings of the study

- It was found that 71.67% respondents were from urban area and 28.33% respondents' rural area.
- It was found that 42 (i.e., 70%) respondents were male and 18 (i.e., 30%) respondents were female.
- The studies found that majority of the respondents (i.e., 61.67%) were between the age group of 26-30 years.
- It was found that majority of the respondents (i.e., 75%) visit the library 'Daily'.
- Majority of the respondents prefer both the print and non print format of information (i.e., 78.33%).
- 68.33% respondents 'Type the search statement in searching box' for finding information on the web followed by 'type the keywords in searching box' and 'type the keywords using Boolean operator.'

- It was found that 47 (i.e., 78.33%) respondents save information in computer after using it once followed by keep a photocopy/printout of information.
- Majority (i.e., 80%) respondents are aware of the legal aspects of information and cite the sources of information.
- Majority of the respondents (i.e., 85%) make fair use of information.
- Majority of the respondents (i.e., 88.33%) have the ability to identify the citations.

Conclusion

In the information technology era, the information literacy is most useful for a students, researchers and teachers to find the right information at the right time and right place. Information literacy helps the researchers how to find the research based information and enhance them for lifelong learning. Today, Information literacy programmes are running at school education system and in Higher education in India to develop the absorbing, analysing and integrating abilities of the people and to able how to use information to bring real value to everything they undertake. This research paper is addressing many issues relating to information technology skills for the research scholars, professionals and even for personal. The Findings of this study show that 80% of researchers are aware of the legal aspects of information and cite the source of information. The users of the special library must not only be aware of the nature of information in their discipline but they must be able to analyse the information. Such skills will helps to engage in lifelong learning. All type of education institutes makes all possible efforts to start the information literacy movement at their campus time to time.

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