Information Literacy Skills among Science Faculty Members of First Grade Colleges affiliated to University of Mysore: A Study

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Abstract - *The present reports the result of survey conducted at First Grade Colleges affiliated to University of Mysore, to measure information literacy skill of science faculty members. The findings of the study reveal that majority of faculty members i.e., 540(65.4%) and 535(64.8%) have the knowledge of evaluating information with respect to their accuracy and authority respectively and there exist less number i.e., 242(29.3%) faculty members who evaluate timeliness of information. It is also found that majority i.e., 765 (92.6%) of faculty members search catalogue / OPAC by title and standard number search was the least opted by the 127 (15.4%) faculty members. Majority of respondents i.e., 415(50.2%), are excellent in Word processing applications and 177(21.4) of the respondents are poor in database applications. The study concludes that information literacy programs are very important and should be organized according to the requirement of the faculty members in First Grade Colleges.*

Keywords: Information Literacy, Computer Literacy, Science Faculty Members, First Grade Colleges, Study.

Introduction

Today's world is information era where information plays a prominent role in every aspects of everybody's life especially in the arena of education. The term information literacy was first used in 1970's in the US. Earlier the terms like user education and library literacy, etc were used. Later with the explosion of information in the world, it became difficult to search and evaluate the right information by the users and new term 'information literacy' emerged. ALA defined it as 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 other words information literacy is a set of skills, which enables the individuals to recognize his/her information need.

The US National Commission on Library and Information Science, 2003 defined it as "It encompasses knowledge of one's information concerns and need and the ability to identify locate, evaluate, organize and effectively create, use of communicating information to address issues or problems at hand. It is perquisite for participating effectively in the information society, and its part of the basic human rights of lifelong learning."

Review of Literature

Baikady and Mudhol (2013) carried out a study on Computer Literacy and the use of Web Resources: A Survey on the Medical Faculty and Students. The study revealed that almost all the respondents possessed basic computer literacy skills. The faculty and PG students who were having above average computer literacy skills used web resources less frequently. The faculty members and postgraduate students who were having below average computer skills did not access web resources frequently. **Maharana and Mishra (2007)** conducted a study on a survey of Digital Information Literacy of Faculty at Sambalpur University and found that a majority of the university faculty members had Internet knowledge. Search engines were most frequently used for browsing and searching on the web. Other tools such as subject gateways, bibliographic databases, etc. were less used by them. **Amstutz and Whitson (1997)** analyzed that faculty of a university would have to equip with themselves information literacy skills in order to prepare their students' information and technology skills. On the other hand, university would provide current library resources and related technology to its faculty for access and for their professional development. **Hassan and Nikam (2012)** explore the attitudes of faculty members and research scholars towards information literacy in Bangalore University. The study finds that a large number were male users and the result shows that the total mean score of respondents about attitudes toward 'information literacy' is 235.97 out of 336. The total mean score of the respondent's attitudes towards 'nature and extent of information needed' is 39.12 out of 56; toward 'access to information' is 61.76 out of 88; and towards 'evaluation of information' is 70.52 out of 100. In total their mean score about attitudes toward 'information use' is 28.69 out of 40. Their total mean score about attitudes toward 'economic, legal, and social issues of information use' is 35.87 out of 52**. Santhi, Radhakrishnan and Rani (2010)** investigate the relationship between computer literacy of Academic Staff and their use of electronic information sources. The impact of other factors such as age, gender and educational background on the use of electronic information sources is also investigated. A statistically significant relationship is found between computer literacy and the use of electronic information sources and services. A significant relationship is noted between the age of academics and their use of electronic information sources.

Objectives of the Study

1. To identify the level of information literacy among faculty members in First Grade Colleges of University of Mysore.
2. To find out purpose of visit to library by science faculty members.
3. To identify information needs of faculty members.
4. To determine capabilities to search catalog/OPAC by faculty members.
5. To know the awareness about parameters of evaluation of information by faculty members.
6. To identify the various computer literacy skills by faculty members.

Methodology

Survey method was adopted questionnaire tool was employed to collect data. The data was collected through questionnaire from the science faculty members of First Grade Colleges affiliated to University of Mysore, The present study intense to measure the information literacy skills among the Science faculty to draw accurate information for data analysis 1000 questionnaires were distributed 826 filled questionnaires were received accounting for 82.6%.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Age Wise Distribution of Faculty Members

Table 1: Age Wise Distribution by Faculty Members

Sl. No.	Age (in years)	No of Respondents	Percentage
1	21-30	209	25.3
2	31-40	179	21.7
3	41-50	264	32.0
4	50 and above	174	21.1
	Total	**826**	**100.0**

Table 1 shows out of 826 respondents, majority i.e., 264 **(**32.0%) are in the age group of 41-50 years, followed by 209 (25.3%) faculty members are in the age group of 21-30, further 179 (21.7%) faculty members are between 31-40 of age group and 174(21.1%) faculty members are in the age group of 50 years and above.

Purpose of Library Visit by Faculty Members

Table 2: Purpose of Library Visit by Faculty Members

Sl.No	Purpose of Library Visit	No of Respondents (N=826)	Percentage
1	To borrow /return books	727	88.0
2	To read magazine/newspaper	684	82.8
3	To use reference materials	639	77.4
4	To browse Internet	535	64.8
5	To prepare class notes	506	61.3
6	To update subject knowledge	468	56.7
7	To obtain photocopy	353	42.7

Table 2 shows the response for purpose of visit to the library. It is evident that out of 826 faculty members, 727 faculty members visit library to borrow/returns books representing 88.0% of the total sample. About 684 (82.8%) faculty members visit library to read magazines/newspapers, followed by 639 (77.4%) faculty members visit library to use reference materials, 535 (64.8%) faculty members visit library to browse internet, 506 (61.3%) visit library to prepare class notes, 468 (56.7%) visit library to update subject knowledge and 353 (42.7%) faculty members visit library to obtain photocopy facility.

Purpose of Information Needed by Faculty members

Table 3: Purpose of Information Needed by Faculty members

Sl.No	Purpose of Information Need	No of Respondents (N=826)	Percentage
1	Preparing for regular classes	801	97.0
2	To update general knowledge	706	85.5
3	Preparing for class room discussion	620	75.1
4	Research Work	585	70.8
5	For writing articles/books	553	66.9

Table 3 shows the purpose of seeking information by the science faculty members. Out of 826 faculty members, majority i.e., 801 faculty members require information to prepare for regular classes accounting (97.0%) of total sample, followed by 706 (85.5%) need information to update general knowledge, 620 (75.1%) faculty members need information to prepare for class room discussion, 585 (70.8%) faculty members seek information for research purpose and 553 (66.9%) faculty members need for writing articles/books.

Consultation of Faculty members while Accessing Information

Table 4: Consultation of Faculty members while Accessing Information

Sl. No.	Consultation while Accessing Information	No of Respondents (N=826)	Percentage
1	Library Staff	715	86.6
2	Colleagues	583	70.6
3	Subject experts	532	64.4
4	Friends	394	47.7

The table 4 shows the consultation of faculty members while accessing Information. 715(86.6%) faculty members consult library staff, followed by 583(70.6%) faculty members consult their colleagues, 532(64.4%) faculty members consult subject experts and 394(47.75%) faculty members consult friends while accessing information.

Search capabilities Used by faculty members in Accessing Catalogue/OPAC

Table 5: Search Capabilities Used by Faculty Members in Accessing Catalogue/OPAC

Sl. No.	Search Options	No of Respondents (N=826)	Percentage
1	Title Approach	765	92.6
2	Author Approach	671	81.2
3	Keyword Approach	631	76.4
4	Subject Approach	488	59.1
5	Publishers Approach	205	24.8
6	Standard Number	127	15.4

Table 5 discusses the use of catalogue/OPAC by Science faculty members. It is shown in the table that out of total 826 faculty members, 765 (92.6%) faculty members search library catalogue/OPAC by title approach. Whereas 671(81.2%) faculty members opted search by author approach, followed by 631(76.4%) faculty members opted keyword approach. About 205(24.8%) faculty members opted publishers search approach and 127 (15.4%) faculty members opted standard number search.

Knowledge about Parameters used to Evaluate Information by Faculty Members

Table 6: Parameters to Evaluation of Information by Faculty Members

Sl.No	Parameters	No of Respondents (N=826)	Percentage
1	Authority	535	64.8
2	Accuracy	540	65.4
3	Reliability	399	48.3
4	Point of view	382	46.2
5	Timeliness	242	29.3

Table 6 shows the knowledge of evaluation of information sources by faculty members. Out of 826 faculty members, 540(65.4%) faculty members have knowledge about aaccuracy of information, followed by 535(64.8%) faculty members comprise knowledge about authority of the information. Further it is found that 399(48.3%) faculty members posses knowledge about reliability of information, followed by 382(46.2%) faculty members comprise point of view of information and only 242(29.3%) faculty members have knowledge about timeliness of information.

Computer Literacy Skills among Faculty Members

Table 7: Computer Literacy Skills among Faculty Members

Sl.No.	Computer Skills	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
1	Word processing applications	**415 (50.2)**	181 (21.9)	91 (11.0%)	139 16.8
2	Spreadsheet applications	241 (29.2%)	**318 (38.5%)**	(170 20.6%)	97 (11.7%)
3	Database applications	187 (22.6%)	217 (26.3%)	**245 (29.7%)**	**177 (21.4%)**
4	Presentation applications	**361 (43.7)**	203 (24.6)	174 (21.1)	88 (10.7)
5	Multimedia applications	218 (26.4)	**308 (37.3)**	132 (16.0)	**168 (20.3)**
6	Communication applications	**267 (32.3)**	254 (30.8)	**255 (30.9)**	50 (6.1)

Table 7 depicts the level of computer skill among faculty members. After analysis it resolved that 415 (50.2%), 361 (43.7%) and 267 (32.3%) respondents rated their skills as "excellent" in word processing applications, presentation applications and communication applications respectively. Further, the respondents who rated their skills as "good" in spreadsheet applications and multimedia applications are 318 (38.5%) and 308 (37.3%) respectively, "fair" in communication applications and database applications are 255 (30.9%) and 245 (29.7%) respectively and "poor" in database applications and multimedia applications are 177 (21.4%) and 168 (20.3%) respectively.

Findings

1. It is observed from the study that majority i.e., 264 (32.0%) Science faculty members belong to the age group between 41-50 years and it can be found that 174(21.1%) faculty members 50 and above age group.
2. Majority of faculty members i.e., 801 (97.0%) required information for classroom teaching and to update general knowledge706 (85.5%).
3. It is found that majority of faculty members i.e., 540(65.4%) and 535(64.8%) can evaluate information with regard to their accuracy and authority respectively and less number of faculty members i.e., 242(29.3%) can evaluate timeliness of information.
4. Majority i.e., 765 (92.6%) of faculty members search catalogue / OPAC by title and standard number search was the least opted by the 127 (15.4%) faculty members.
5. Majority of respondents 415 (50.2%), are excellent in word processing applications and 177(21.4%) of the respondents are poor in database applications.

Conclusion

The study concludes that majority i.e., 765 (92.6%) of faculty members search catalogue / OPAC by title and standard number search was the least opted by the 127 (15.4%) faculty members and majority of faculty members i.e., 801 (97.0%) required information for classroom teaching and to update general knowledge706 (85.5%). The inferences reveal that majority of faculty members are not capable of searching catalogue/OPAC. Training programs for improving the information literacy skills of faculty has to be organised. The learning of faculty members will be more effective and meaningful if integrated (theoretical as well as practical) approach employed in organizing the training programs in the institution and ultimately it will enhance the teaching experiences.

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