INFORMATION LITERACY OF USERS FROM SELECTED COLLEGES OF NORTH GOA : A STUDY

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Abstract

Information literacy is essential in today's information-rich world, enabling individuals to effectively seek, evaluate, and utilize information. This study examines the extent of library use and the impact of information literacy programs in selected college libraries of North Goa. The research methodology involves surveys and interviews with students and librarians, followed by statistical analysis. The findings reveal the awareness and importance of information literacy among users, their information-seeking behaviour, library usage patterns, and the need for information literacy programs. The study also provides insights into librarians' practices, instruction methods, and awareness programs. The results contribute to enhancing information literacy efforts and improving library services.

KEYWORDS : *information literacy, college libraries, library use, information-seeking behaviour, user awareness, information literacy programs, library services*



1. Introduction

Information is a powerful resource in the digital age, and the ability to effectively generate, access, evaluate, and use information is crucial for individuals, organizations, and societies. Information literacy encompasses the skills and competencies required to navigate this vast information landscape. Librarians in college libraries play a pivotal role in promoting information literacy among students and faculty, helping them become critical consumers and users of information. This study aims to investigate the extent of library use by users in different colleges and examine the impact of information literacy programs organized by college libraries.

2. Definitions

The United States National Forum on Information Literacy defines information literacy as". The ability to know when there is a need for information, to be able to identify, locate, evaluate, and effectively use that information for the issue or problem at hand." Other definitions incorporate aspects of "skepticism, judgment, free thinking, questioning, and understanding..." or incorporate competencies that an informed citizen of an information society ought to possess to participate intelligently and actively in that society.

According to the American Library Association, "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.'

3. Objectives

i. To study the extent of Library use by the Users of different colleges.
ii. To study the impact of information literacy programs organized by college libraries on Users.



4. Scope of the study

The study will look at the use of information literacy in college libraries by students and the librarians, also considered to know about how they have provided information to their users that is teachers and Users and what facilities they provide in the libraries.

5. Limitation of the study

The Study is limited to only the selected colleges of North Goa. Further the study is limited to Students and librarians to find out how the librarian and library Users sensitize and create awareness among students and faculty about the services.

6. Review of Literature

The review of literature provides insights from various studies and articles related to information literacy in college libraries. Here is a summary of the key points discussed in each source:

American Library Association (2000) defines information literacy as a set of abilities that individuals need to recognize when information is required and effectively assess and utilize the information. It presents five standards, performance indicators, and outcomes that provide students with a framework for interacting with information.

Research by Bhattacharjee (2014) aimed to understand the information-seeking habits of college library users in Assam's Cachar district. The study focused on exploring users' information demands, habits, and needs, as well as their preferred search techniques. The research aimed to provide suggestions for enhancing library services and facilities based on these findings.



Study conducted by Kutner Laurie (2012) emphasizes the critical role of librarians in higher education in developing information-literate students who can succeed in the modern global society. The author suggests that existing information literacy definitions and standards should be revised to include more content-based engagement with the social, cultural, economic, and political contexts of information. The article discusses ways to address the challenges associated with this extended notion of information literacy.

Rader (1995) explores the promotion of information literacy by librarians among students. The research highlights that while librarians actively promote information literacy, students may not fully understand its impact on their academic success. The study suggests implementing various strategies, such as forming national forums like the American Library Association (ALA), to enhance information literacy initiatives in colleges.

Maughan (2001) focuses research on the development and adoption of national information literacy criteria. The research reveals that students often overestimate their proficiency in locating information and conducting library research. The study emphasizes the need for systematic and extensive testing to assess student information literacy skills nationwide. Sharing the results and promoting information literacy assessment activities within libraries and institutions can contribute to making information literacy an integral part of institutional evaluation processes.

In summary, these sources highlight the importance of information literacy in college libraries and the role of librarians in fostering information literacy skills among students. They emphasize the need for revising and expanding information literacy definitions and standards, promoting effective instructional practices, and assessing students' information literacy skills to ensure their success in accessing and utilizing information effectively.



7. Methodology

The study focuses on selected colleges in North Goa and employs a mixed-methods approach. Surveys and interviews are conducted with both students and librarians to gather data on library usage, awareness of information literacy, instructional practices, and the provision of information literacy programs. The collected data are analysed using appropriate statistical techniques to derive meaningful insights.

8. Analysis

i. Users

Table 1: Responses of selected colleges

Sr. No	Name of Institutions	Number of responses rceived
1	Agnel institute of technology and design	37
2	Dnyanprassarak Mandal's College of Arts, Science, Commerce, Management Studies and Technology	50
3	Ganpat Parsekar College of Education	35
4	Narayan Zantye College of Commerce	29
5	VP's Mandre College of Commerce, Economics and Management	38
6	S. S. Dempo College of Commerce & Economics	30
7	Saraswat Vidyalaya's SridoraCaculo College of commerce and management studies	35
8	St. Xavier's College	35
9	V.M.S Salgaocar College of Law	30
10	Vidya Prabodhini College of Commerce, Education, Computer and Management	32
11	Government College of Arts and Commerce College of Arts and Commerce	29



The above table 1gives the name of the colleges and the responses taken from each college for the study. The survey was conducted with different types of institution to give depth to the project, the below pie chart (Figure 1) shows that 82% colleges were aided colleges, 9% were Private Colleges and while remaining 9% were Government colleges.



Figure 1: Type of Institution

ii. Gender

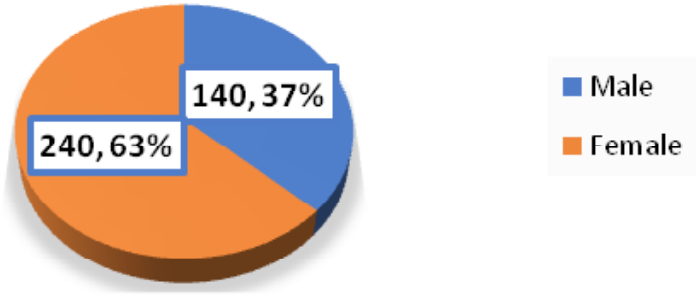


Figure 2: Respondent distribution by Gender

The above pie chart depicts that out of 380 respondent majority of 63%(240) were female and 37% (140) were male.

iii. Awareness of term 'Information Literacy'

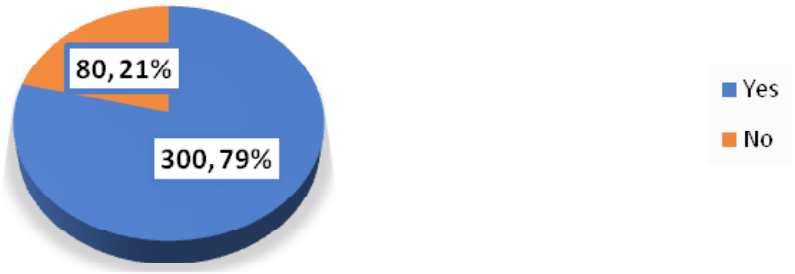


Figure 3: Awareness of the term 'Information Literacy'

The above figure 3 indicates awareness of term information literacy, 79% respondent said they are aware of term information literacy while 21% respondent said no.

iv. Usefulness of Information Literacy

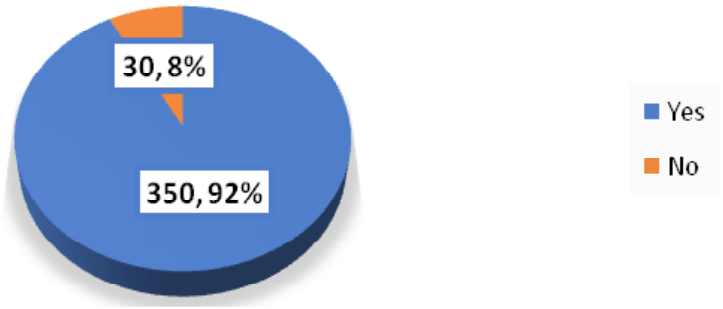


Figure 4: Usefulness of Information Literacy

The respondents were asked whether they feel information literacy is useful or not, from the above figure 4 it is seen that 92% respondent feels it is useful and rest 8% respondent says it is not.

v. Importance of Information Literacy

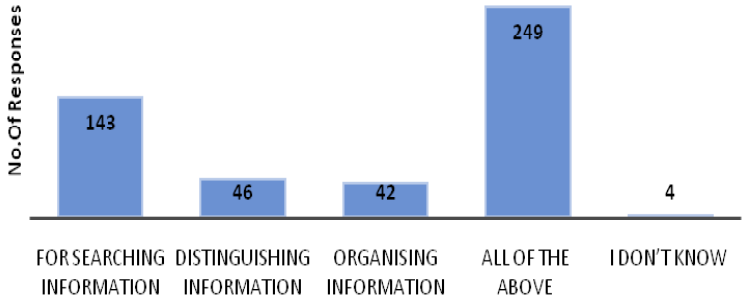


Figure 5: Importance of Information Literacy

The above figure 5 indicates how information literacy is useful, 143 respondents say it is useful for searching information, 46 says for distinguishing information, 42 says for organising information, while 249 respondent says all above 3 options are important and 4 respondent says it is not useful.

vi. Information source

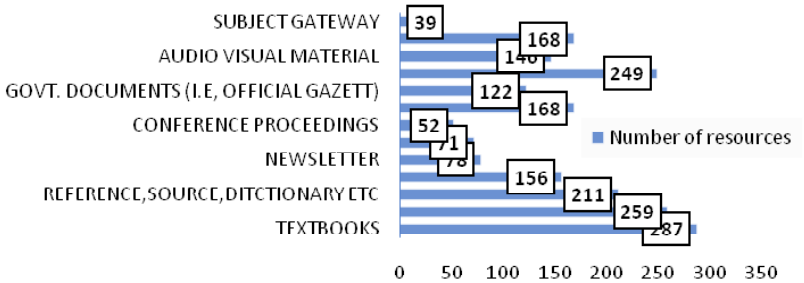


Figure 6: Information source

The above figure 6 indicates the information sources used by respondents, 287 respondent uses textbooks, 259 uses newspaper magazine, 249 uses online databases, 211 uses reference sources dictionaries etc., e- journals and project reports are used by 168, journals are used by 156, audio visual materials are used by 146, 122 uses government documents, 78 uses newsletter, 71 uses thesis and dissertation, 52 uses conference proceedings, and 39 respondents uses subject gateway.

vii. Purpose to visit library

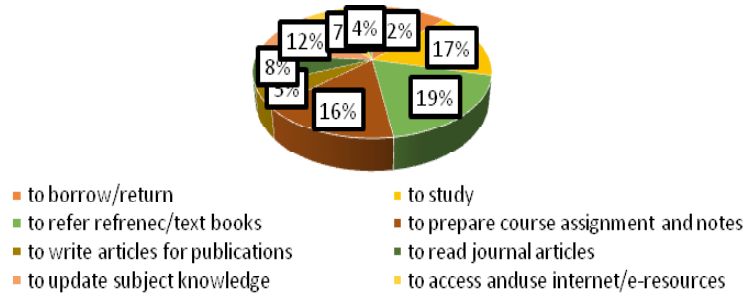


Figure 7: Purpose to visit library

The above figure 7 depicts the purpose of library visit, 19% respondent refer reference /textbooks,17% refer to study,16% visit to prepare for course assignment and notes,12% visit to update subject knowledge, while other 12% visit to borrow/return,8% visit to read journal articles,7% visit to access and use internet / e-resources,5% visit to write articles for publications, while rest 4% visit to refer thesis and dissertations in the library.

viii. Time spent for reading and searching information

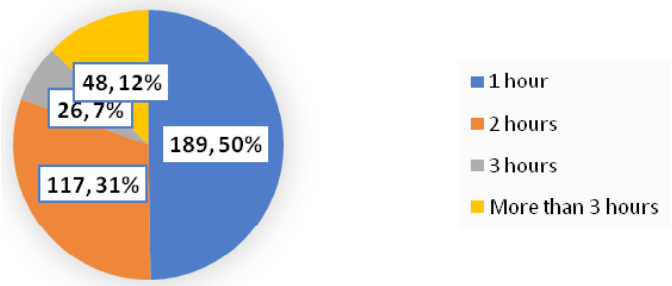


Figure 8: Time spent for reading and searching information

The above pie chart (fig. 8) indicates that 50% respondent spend 1 hour on reading and searching information, 31% spend 2 hours, 7% spend 3 hours and rest 12% spend more than 3 hours on reading and searching information.

ix Use of different search technology

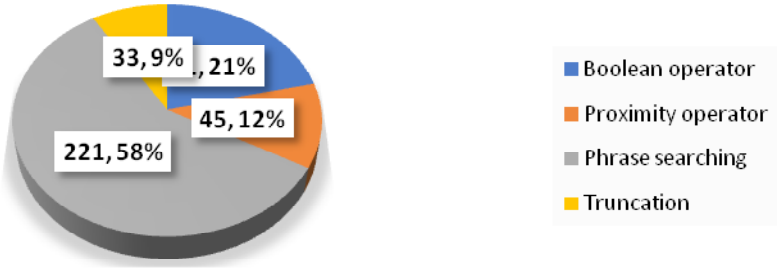


Figure 9: Use of different search technology

When the respondents were asked which searching techniques does, they use, 58% respondents use phrase searching, 21% use Boolean operator, 12% use proximity operator while rest 9% use truncation techniques for searching information.

x. Use of information services and facilities offered by the library

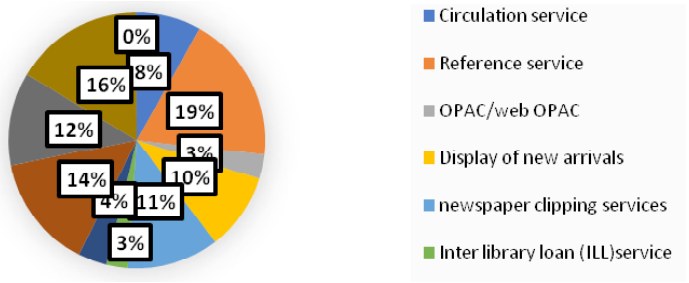


Figure 10: Use of information services and facilities offered by the library

The respondents were asked about services and facilities offered by the library, the above figure 10 indicates, 19% respondents use reference services,16% uses internet services, 14% uses digital library services 12% uses photocopy services, other 12% uses newspaper clipping services, display of new arrivals are used by 10% respondents,8% respondents uses circulation service, 4% uses current awareness services, 3% respondents use OPAC/ web OPAC services and 3% respondents use inter library loan services which are offered by the library.

xi. Criteria used for evaluating information in different format

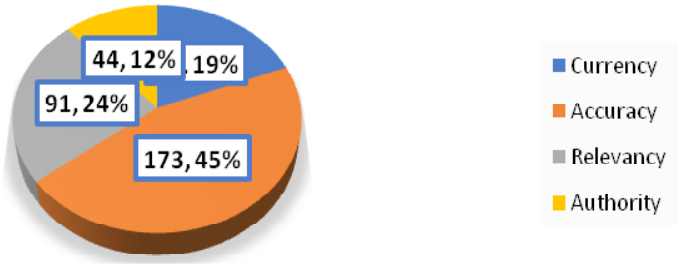


Figure 11: Criteria used for evaluating information in different format



The different searching criteria used by responded for evaluating information are 45% respondent use accuracy, 24% relevancy, 19% currency and 12 % use authority while searching information.

xii. Workshop conducted by library

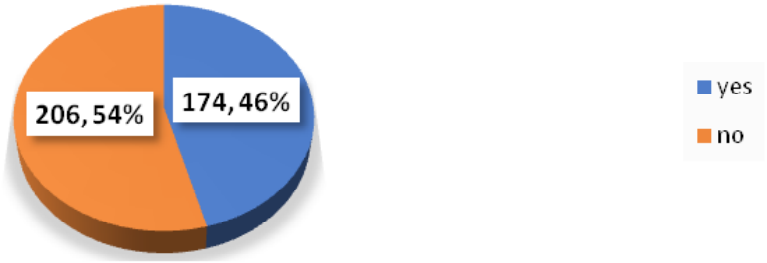


Figure 12: Workshop conducted by library

When responded were asked whether information literacy workshop isconducted by the library 46% respondent said yes and while 54% respondent said no.

xiii. Need for IL programme

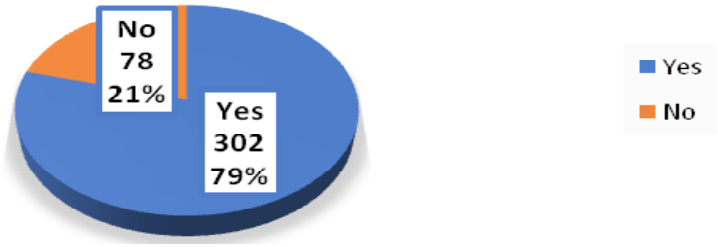


Figure 13: Need for IL programme

The above figure 13 indicates the need of information literacy program, where 79% respondents said that they need information literacy program while 21% said they don't need IL programmes

xiv: Form of library instruction provided in your library

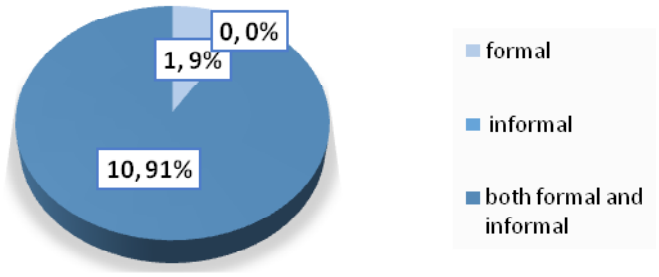


Figure 14: Form of library instruction provided in your library

The above figure (14) indicates, 91% librarian responded that they provide both formal and informal instructions in the library, while only 9% librarian responded to formal instruction.

xv. Awareness programmes conducted during the last 5 years on "information literacy"

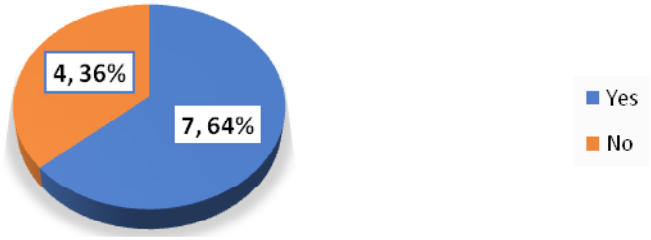


Figure 15: Awareness programmes conducted during the last 5 years on "information literacy"

The above pie chart (figure 15)shows the data, whether seminars/ workshop/ awareness programs conducted on Information Literacy, wherein 7 librarians responded said yes while rest 4 said No they did not conduct any programmes on information literacy.



1. Findings

The following findings are reported after due analysis of the data collected from the users of selected colleges of north Goa on the topic related to information literacy.

i. Majority of the 79% students are aware of the term information literacy, while remaining 21% user are not aware of term information literacy.

ii. From the study it was found that information literacy is important to the users for searching information, distinguishing information and organizing information. Majority of 249 respondent responded to all three options.

iii. The study reveals that Majority of 19% respondent visit the library for the purpose to refer reference services.

iv. The finding shows that higher number of respondents i.e.58% use phrase search techniques to retrieve information, followed by other 21% respondent who uses Boolean operators, and other 12% and 9% use proximity operators and truncation techniques to retrieve information.

v. The study shows that library provide many library facilities and services to their users, from which. 200 respondents use reference services.

vi. Majority of the respondents i.e., 45% use accuracy for evaluating information, 24% use relevancy, 19% use currency, and remaining 12 % use authority while searching information.

vii. Majority 54% respondents says that the libraries are not conducting information literacy workshops to their users, while 46% says that the workshops are conducted by the library.

viii. The study revealed that 79% respondents feels that information literacy programs need to be conducted by the libraries and remaining 21% don't feel it is important to conduct Information literacy programs.

ix. The study revealed that according to the librarians 100% information literacy instructions programs are provided by the library.

x. Majority 10 libraries say they provide information literacy programs in formal and informal ways while only 1 library depicts that they provide information literacy training in formal that is traditional way.

xi. The study showed whether libraries have conducted any seminars, workshops, awareness programs for last 5 years, from which out of 11 libraries, 7 libraries said they are conducting the programs and rest 4 libraries said they have not conducted any seminars, workshops, awareness programs for last 5 years.

2. Suggestions

i. According to the findings, holding orientation programs twice a year is very beneficial to the users in making the greatest use of library resources.

ii. A video recording of the library orientation should be uploaded on the library website, which will help the students, since they can view it whenever they want.

iii. It is necessary to add or integrate information literacy skills into the curriculum of all education courses for faculty members on how to efficiently use various sources and resources at regular intervals

iv. Faculty members should be educated on information and computer literacy skills via courses, seminars, conferences, and workshops.



v. Different types of users need specific information literacy programs due to the changing nature of information seeking behavior from user to user.

vi. When it comes to citing information, students should be taught to use appropriate reference styles. This is a task that cannot be performed in a single session; instead, librarians in partnership with faculty members must conduct many sessions with students.

vii. Librarians needs to interact with the students to find out the loopholes in the library services which they are providing to the users, so that librarians can improve the library facilities.

viii. The librarian has a statutory duty to teach students and faculty members about information ethics and intellectual property rights

ix. According to the users suggestions librarians need to provide automation services which are provided by them.

3. Conclusion

Information plays a vital role in research and the development of a population. Globally, information literacy is now becoming increasingly essential. Information literacy is one of the most crucial roles of any institution in order for its users to be successful lifelong learners.

Every individual has a fundamental right to be information literate. Information and communication technology has a huge impact on libraries and information centers. Today's technological society reshaped the way data or information is collected, stored, processed, and retrieved, as well as assisting library employees in performing their responsibilities effectively and properly.

From the above study we can see that information programs are conducted in the colleges, but some of the users are not aware of the

programs as well as the term information literacy. To avoid such problem the users shall be thought information literacy and its skills from H.S.S.C level so that it will be easy to retrieve and to search information, even to such extend that librarians can explain the services and facilities that they are providing rather than traditional method, they can use modern methods like showing demo.

With current trends in educational sectors librarians can adapt new technologies like recording videos, making online tutorials and that can be uploaded on the library website so it will be easy to learn new concept or services which library are providing.

Librarians need to update their users about the new databases or resources which they are subscribing, frequent interaction shall be made with the users if they are facing any difficulty or problems so that their difficulties can be addressed.

Librarians need to cope up with the modern environment and shall keep track current information trends and conduct the information literacy program accordingly.

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