Role of Information Literacy Skills on the Use of Information Resources by the Future Teachers: A Case Study of Uttarayan College of Education, Cooch Behar (WB)

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Abstract

The aim of the present paper is to find out the role of information literacy skills on use of information resources by the future teachers. For this, a study was planned at Uttarayan College of Education, Cooch Behar (West Bengal) to know the level of information literacy among the future teachers, who were studying in Bachelor of Education (B. Ed.) program and also tried to explore the effect of information literacy skills on use of information resources. Findings show that 69.86% of the respondents had Internet literacy, whereas, 65.75% had media literacy and 64.38% had computer literacy skills. More than 45% of the respondents were agreed upon that there is a relation between information literacy skills and use of information resources as it enhances information use skills among them, while 21.92% said that it enhances success rate in their career. In the last, the researchers have also recommended that various training programs of short duration, orientation programs, workshops, seminars or similar type of other programs according to the needs of the future teachers should be conducted on regular basis.

Keywords: Education College, Information and Communication Technology, Information Literacy, Teacher Training Institution, Use of Information

1. Introduction

Due to fast growth in the amount of contents or we can say that the rapid growth in the amount of information in every field of knowledge, it has become very difficult to anyone to decide which piece of information is relevant to their field of interest and have some importance. It is all because of rapid innovations in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and it incorporation in every walk of human life. Teacher training institutions (Colleges of Education) are also not exception to this scenario. Today, the information is available in print as well as in electronic forms, hence, it is required that everyone must be information literate so that required information may be get accessed and used properly. Alkhezzia and Hendalc (2017) have discussed that "the world is witnessing rapid growth in amount of available and accessible information, which accordingly raises the importance of information literacy in all fields, especially in the academic community. It is not the information per se that matters, but rather the skill in handling the enormous amount of information. Exposure to information does not make us informed unless we know how to deal with it effectively".

Teachers are considered as the strong pillar for society as well as for nation. If teachers are literate,

the students and every member of society can be making as informed citizens, who can play a very much important role in the progress of society and their country. Similarly, to prepare a good teacher, teacher training institutions (Colleges of Education) will have to be very rich in holding of information resources, and providing better access management to their pin pointed information and prepare them fully information literate for future endeavour as well. The students of Bachelor of Education and Diploma in Education being future teachers, they are the nation builders so they must be information literate. Therefore, a study was planned to know the information literacy skills of future teachers of Uttarayan College of Education, Cooch Behar, West Bengal.

2. Literature Review

A comprehensive review of past studies is necessary in any research endeavour. Review of literature is not only helpful for researcher in obtain the ideas of particular research in question but also helps to provide base for developing a framework, insight into the methodology and suggest operational limitation of the concepts and finally to work out a basis for interpretation of findings. It is not possible to review all the published work; however, some of the studies have been reviewed as follows:

Munshi, and Nagar (2016) conducted a study to know the information literacy skills among the postgraduate students at Aligarh Muslim University and observed that most of the students were aware of the information sources which were available in the library, while "Google" was the most popular search engine for the students. On the other hand, Hajam, Manzoor Ahmad (2017) tried to know the information literacy competencies among scholarly

community of Kashmir University and observed that about 64% of the respondents were aware about the legal aspects of using information and 45.4% users make fair use of information, whereas, 79.7% had knowledge about identification of citations. In an another study conducted by Swapna and Biradar (2017) to assess the information literacy skills among science-post graduate students in universities of Karnataka state and found that more than 74% of the respondents were able to use the different information search and retrieval tools, while on an average 63% of the respondents were able to determine the cost and benefit of acquiring information sources and evaluate the information sources effectively. On the other hand, Alagu and Thanuskodi (2018) had tried to assess the information literacy skills among the students of Alagappa University, India and observed that the majority of the students were accessing Internet in University Central Library and the maximum number of students were using various information resources to enhance their knowledge and prepare themselves for participating in the seminar or conference and writing a article for a journal, whereas, the researchers also analysed that the lack of electricity was the prime barriers in the use of computers by the university library users. Ran Vijay Pratap and Singh (2018) conducted a study to know the digital literacy skills among students and research scholars of the Law School, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi and noticed that majority of the students and research scholars (86.67%) used digital resources daily to update their subject knowledge in the concerned field and for most of the respondents, the preferred location to access digital resources was the hostel (37.41%). While studying the information literacy competency level of social science researchers, Rajesh and Shailendra (2019) found that overall 79.62 per cent of the respondents, consisting maximum 16.54 per cent from economics

followed by 15 per cent from political science, 13.08 per cent from history, 12.69 per cent from sociology, 11.35 per cent from law and 10.96 per cent from geography, were found competent in information literacy (IL) to use information ethically and legally. A study was conducted to know the awareness of information literacy among the students of arts and science colleges in Tirunelveli (TN) and found that 36.67% of the undergraduate students were faced the problem of lack of information literacy, whereas 48.89% of the postgraduate students were faced the problem of lack of search techniques while accessing their required information resources (Manthiramoorthi, Saravanakumar, & Thirumagal, 2019). To explore the digital information literacy skills of Mangalore University students, a study was conducted by Lokesha and Adithya (2019) and observed that 83.33% of the respondents were admitted that they need digital resources to update their subject knowledge followed by the statements, i.e., 'to prepare for seminar papers' (66.67%), 'to prepare their study notes' (63.33%), 'to prepare for competitive exams' (60%), 'to carry out projects / dissertations' (56.67%) and 'to write for assignments' (43.33%) respectively, whereas, a big majority of the respondents, i.e., 93% had the knowledge of digital library infrastructure facility.

To know the information literacy skills/level of future teachers studying in colleges of education particularly in West Bengal State of India, no study has been found, therefore, a study was planned to fill this gap.

3. Uttarayan College of Education, Cooch Behar

Uttarayan College of Education (UCE) is one of the leading teacher training institutions in Cooch Behar District of West Bengal state of India. It is located at village Jatrapur and surrounding with beautiful greenery. It offers Bachelor of Education (B. ed.) and Diploma in Elementary Education (D. El. Ed.) courses to the aspirants. Apart from the course curriculum of the programs offered, some other additional activities are also performed by the students or better we can say that the future teachers take participation equally with teachers and non-teachers of the college. UCE is recognized by National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE), New Delhi and affiliated with West Bengal Board of Primary Education (WBBPE), Kolkata.

4. Objectives of the Study

The following objectives of the study were intended to be achieved:

❖ To find out the various purposes of using the library

❖ To find out the various information needs of the future teachers

❖ To identify the level of information literacy skills among the future teachers

❖ To identify the various fields/areas of information literacy

❖ To know the awareness about social media among the future teachers

❖ To identify the use and impact of social media on various aspects of the future teachers

❖ To try to find out, whether the future teachers were using information ethically and legally

❖ To make recommendations as to how information literacy program could be integrated into the teaching and learning process of the teacher education college

5. Scope and Limitation of the Study

The present study intends to find out the information literacy skills among the students or future teachers studying in Uttarayan College of Education (UCE), Cooch Behar (WB), India. The study is limited to the students who were studying in Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) program and had replied positively by filling the questionnaire properly.

6. Research Methodology

Based on the objectives of the study and review of literature, the survey method was adopted for the present study. A well structured questionnaire was designed as a tool for data collection. The data were collected during May-June 2019. In the months of May-June 2019, the questionnaires were distributed among 80 B.Ed. students. Out of 80 respondents, 73 respondents were responded positively by filling the questionnaires properly. Thus overall response rate has been achieved @91.25% and the collected data have been tabulated, analysed and interpreted by using simple percentage analysis method.

7. Data Analysis and Results

The analysis of data as per the objectives of the study is presented in the following tables:

Table 1: Gender wise distribution of respondents

Gender	Respondents	Percentage
Male	34	46.58
Female	39	53.42
Total	**73**	**100**

Table 1 show the gender wise distribution of respondents and it is revealed that 46.58% of the respondents were male and 53.42% were female, who participated positively in this study. It is clear from the above table that female students (future teachers) were more interested to join teacher education programs as compare to male students.

Table 2: Frequency of Library Visit

Frequency	Respondents	Percentage
Everyday	18	24.66
Once in a week	11	15.07
Fortnightly	21	28.77
Monthly	14	19.18
Occasionally	09	12.32
Total	**73**	**100**

Frequency of library visit by the respondents is highlighted in the above Table 2 and it was noticed that more than 27.77% of the respondents were using the library once in a fortnight, while 24.66% respondents were visiting the library every day. On the other hand, 19.18% of the respondents were visiting the library once in a month followed by visiting the library once in a week (15.07%) and occasionally (12.32%) respectively. This trend shows that most of the undergraduate students were not prefer to visit and use the library everyday or frequently, as they informed during the survey that they were been very busy in their regular classes and teaching practice.

Table 3: Purpose of library visit

Purpose	Respondents	Percentage
Issue/Return books	37	50.70
Reading newspapers	09	12.32
Reading books	18	24.66
Consulting reference resources	09	12.32
Total	**73**	**100**

Information needs	Respondents	Percentage
To prepare assignments	23	31.50
To update core knowledge	15	20.54
For preparing debate competitions	19	26.04
To prepare study notes for examination	16	21.92
Total	**73**	**100**

The data given in Table 3 represent the various purposes of undergraduate students for visiting the library and it was found that half of the respondents (50.70%) visit the library to issue or return the books, while 24.66% of the respondents were visiting the library for the purpose of reading of books. On the other hand, equal numbers of respondents, i.e., 12.32% each were visiting the library for either reading newspapers or to consult the reference resources.

Various type of needs for seeking information by the respondents are highlighted in the above Table 5 and it is evident from the data given in above table that 31.50% of the respondents were seeking information from the library 'to prepare their class assignments', whereas, 26.04% of the respondents were admitted that they need information 'for preparing debate competitions' followed by 'to prepare study notes for examination' (21.92%) and 'to update core knowledge' (20.54%) in their subject area respectively. It is clear from the above table that main focus of maximum number of respondents (future teachers/B.Ed. students) to visit the library and seeking information was 'to prepare their class assignments' or 'study notes for examination purpose'.

Table 4: Areas of literacy*

Literacy	Respondents (n= 73)	Percentage
Computer literacy	47	64.38
Internet literacy	51	69.86
Information literacy	26	35.61
Digital literacy	27	36.98
Media literacy (Including social media)	48	65.75

*Multiple answers permitted

Table 4 shows the various areas of literacy in which undergraduate students were having some literacy skills as they claimed during the survey. It was observed that 69.86% of the respondents had Internet literacy, whereas, 64.38% of the respondents had computer literacy and 65.75% had media literacy, which had also includes proficiency in using social media applications followed by digital literacy (12.74%) and information literacy (24.20%) respectively. The results show that the B.Ed. students have good literacy skills in various areas as it is to be considering that this is the era of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and social media.

Table 6: Information resources consulted

Information Resources	Respondents	Percentage
Books	34	46.58
Journals	07	9.58
Magazines	05	6.84
Newspapers	04	5.48
Internet	19	26.04
Other e-Resources	04	5.48
Total	**73**	**100**

Table 6 shows the various types of information resources, which are preferred to consult by the

respondents while seeking their required information during their visit to the library. It was noticed that books (46.58%) were the main information source for the respondents, while 26.04% of the respondents were prefer to use Internet for exploring their desired information. On the other hand, journals were being used by 9.58% respondents, while magazines were being used by 6.84% respondents, followed by newspapers (5.48%) and other e-Resources (5.48%) respectively for their required information. This trend shows that books are still prefer to use by the respondents for seeking their desired academic or other information as compare to other information resources.

Table 7: Awareness about the concept of information literacy (IL)

Awareness	Respondents	Percentage
Fully aware	15	20.54
Aware	21	28.77
Not aware	32	43.85
Total	**73**	**100**

The data given in Table 7 represents the awareness and relevance of social media among the respondents and it was found that 43.85% of the respondents covered under the study were not aware about the concept of information literacy, whereas 28.77% of the respondents were aware about the concept. Another side, 20.54% of the respondents were replied that they are fully aware about the concept of information literacy. It is clear from the above discussions that nearby half of the respondents covered under study were acquainted with information literacy concept.

Table 8: Relation between information literacy skill and use of information resources

Relation/Impact	Respondents	Percentage
Enhance information use skills	33	45.20
Enhance motivation	11	15.08
Enhance to learn ethics in information use	13	17.80
Enhance success rate in career or in any area of interest	16	21.92
Total	**73**	**100**

Use and impact of social media on respondents covered under study is shown in the above Table 8 and it is evident from the data given in above table that 45.20% of the respondents were agreed that there is a relation between information literacy skills and use of information resources as it 'enhances information use skills' among them, while 21.92% said that it 'enhances success rate in their career or in any area of their interest', followed by 'enhance to learn ethics in information use' (17.80%) and 'enhance motivation' among them (15.08%) respectively. This description shows that information literacy skills play a very important role to use of information resources in better way.

Table 9: Need of information literacy programs

Need	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	59	80.82
No	14	19.18
Total	**73**	**100**

Table 9 shows the views of respondents on need of information literacy programs and it is observed that majority of the respondents, i.e., 80.82% were agreed

upon that there is a need to organize information literacy programs on different level for the respondents from time to time, while 19.18% of the respondents were responded that there is no need to organize such type of programs as it is assumed that new or young generation has some literacy skills regarding applications of information and communication technology and social media.

Table 10: Areas, where information literacy programs are required

Areas of information literacy	Respondents	Percentage
Use of social media applications purposefully	12	16.44
Use of Internet	30	41.10
Use of e-resources	18	24.66
Use of print resources	08	10.96
Library catalogue	05	6.84
Total	**73**	**100**

The data given in Table 10 highlights the various areas, where information literacy programs could be conducted as per the need of the respondents. It is evident from the data given in above table that 41.10% of the respondents were interested to join literacy programs in the 'use of Internet', whereas, 24.66% respondents were shown their keen interest on the 'use of e-resources', followed by the 'use of social media applications purposefully' (16.44%), 'use of print resources' (10.96%) and the 'use of library catalogue' (6.84%) respectively.

8.   Summary of findings

Based on the results, the following major findings may be summarized as given below:

❖ 27.77% of the respondents were using the library once in a fortnight, while 24.66% respondents visit the library everyday

❖ 50.70% of the respondents were visiting the library to issue or return the books, while 24.66% respondents were visiting the library for the purpose of reading books

❖ 69.86% of the respondents had Internet literacy, whereas, 65.75% had media literacy and 64.38% had computer literacy

❖ 31.50% of the respondents were seeking information from the library to prepare their class assignments, whereas, 26.04% of the respondents were seeking information for preparing debate competitions

❖ Books were the main information source for 46.58% of the respondents, while 26.04% of the respondents were prefer to use Internet for exploring their desired information

❖ About half of the respondents covered under study were aware about the concept of information literacy

❖ 45.20% of the respondents were agreed that there is a relation between information literacy skills and use of information resources as it enhances information use skills among them, while 21.92% said that it enhance success rate in their career or in any area of their interest

❖ 80.82% were agreed upon that there is a need to organize information literacy programs on different level for the respondents from time to time

❖ 41.10% of the respondents were interested to join literacy programs in the use of Internet,

whereas, 24.66% respondents were shown their keen interest to join literacy program in the use of e-resources

9. Conclusions and Suggestions

Information literacy is an important concept for all of us as the society is widely affected by the interference and the by way of incorporation of Information and Communication Technology (ICT). Teachers are the main base for the building of society as well as for the nation. If teachers are information literate, than the students will also be automatically information literate and they can play an important role in the development of the society. From the present study, it is found that nearly half of the respondents (future teachers) are information literate and agreed that there is a relation between information literacy skills and use of information resources as it enhances the information use skills among them. However, the respondents were interested to join literacy programs in the use of Internet, e-resources and in other areas, if these programs will be conducted by the authority of the college on frequently basis. Therefore, it is recommended that various training programs of short duration, orientation programs, workshops, seminars or similar type of other programs according to the needs of the future teachers should be conducted on regular basis so that they may enhance their level of information literacy skills. Further, it is also hereby recommended that information literacy programs on various levels should be integrated with the teaching and learning process of the college and its course curriculum.

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