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DIGITAL LITERACY SKILLS AMONG BSC. AGRICULTURE STUDENTS OF AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE KALABURAGI : A SURVEY

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims to investigate the current state and influential factors in the development of digital literacy skills of the BSc. Agriculture students of Agricultural College Kalaburagi, Karnataka. The purpose of this paper is to determine the undergraduate students' level of awareness of information resources available in the college, to know their level of digital literacy skills and to determine the different search strategies used by them. Design/methodology/approach – The paper adopts a descriptive survey method and covers the 100 undergraduate students.



KEYWORDS : Computer literacy, Information literacy, ICT, IT skills and Search technique tools etc.

INTRODUCTION

Digital literacy encompasses the skills required to use technology safely, effectively and responsibly. As technology continues to become more and more ingrained in daily life, the importance of learning digital literacy skills is becoming increasingly apparent. Digital Literacy is the awareness, attitude and ability of individuals of appropriately use digital tools and facilities to identify access, manage, integrate, analyze the digital resources and create media. Literacy includes the ability to read and interpret media, to reproduce data and images through digital manipulation, and to evaluate and apply new knowledge gained from digital environments Digital Literacy (DL) is the process of teaching and learning about technology and the use of technology. It is the ability to use information and communication technologies to find, evaluate, create, and communicate information, requiring both cognitive and technical skills. A person's ability to perform tasks effectively in a digital environment Digitally Literate individuals find meaning in and make use of digital information, they exhibit the characteristics of cultural and social understanding, collaboration, the ability to find and select information, effective communication, E-safety, functional skills, creativity, and critical thinking. Digital information is a symbolic representation of data, and literacy refers to the ability to read for knowledge,

write coherently, and think critically about the written word.

MEANING OF DIGITAL LITERACY (DL):

Digital Literacy is the awareness, attitude and ability of individuals of appropriately use digital tools and facilities to identify access, manage, integrate, analyze the digital resources and create media.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Sandercock (2016) assesses the Information literacy (IL) perceptions of instructors at a technical college in the Middle East, the College of the North Atlantic - Qatar. Students at this college are instructed in four areas of study – engineering technology, Information technology, business studies and health sciences – which takes place exclusively in English and uses a Canadian curriculum. A web-based survey sent to instructors asked questions in two general areas on their perceptions of student Information literacy based on the Society of College, National and University Libraries (SCONUL) definition. Initially, over half of the respondents believed that their students were Information literate. However, when asked a series of questions about each of the seven IL skills identified by SCONUL, there was a large discrepancy between what skills instructors wished their students achieved, versus what was actually achieved by the end of their programme. Students' inability to critically evaluate sources of Information was seen as the weakest skill by instructors and was considerably lower than the skill level reported by university professors in similar studies.

Smith (2016) presents the findings of research which explored Scottish school libraries' Information provision and Information literacy (IL) support in the run-up to two major political events: the 2014 Scottish Independence Referendum (SIR) and the 2015 General UK Parliamentary Election (GE). To do this, the project identified, through an online survey, what political Information seeking secondary school students engaged in through school libraries, what Information provision and IL support was available to students relating to political issues and events, and what barriers school libraries faced in providing these aspects of political education.

Kolle(2017) examines the literature published on Information literacy (IL) from 2005 to 2014 and reveals key aspects of IL publication trends. The study analyses the literature indexed in Web of Science Database on Information literacy from 2005 to 2014 and employed the required bibliometric measures to analyze specific aspects of publishing trends. The findings of the study reveal that increase in literature on Information literacy from 2005 to 2014 is noticed. A high amount of annual growth of literature on Information literacy is observed for the year of 2007, 2008 and 2011.

Mansour (2017) explores DIL possessed by SVU library and Information professionals. It also tries to identify the various types of DIL and to find out any constraints affecting the related skills and competencies of those professionals. A quantitative research methodology was adopted in the form of a survey, which was undertaken from February to March 2016. The survey instrument was a self-administrated questionnaire, which was adopted for the data collection. The targeted population of this study is the library and Information professionals (n=127) belonging to SVU libraries. The findings showed that over two-thirds of SVU library and Information professionals are males, and almost one-third of them are females. Regarding the level of the respondents' knowledge of the types of computers, a large number of them showed that their knowledge of using mobile devices, followed by PCs, workstations Portable Media Players (PMP)/Digital Audio Player (DAP), and Personal Digital Assistant (PDA) was, at least, high.

SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY:

The present study is mainly based on the primary data collected from sample respondents and the following limitations have been identified. The present study is explorative in nature and shall be restricted geographically to the sample population of only undergraduate students of agriculture

college Kalaburagi, Karnataka. Present study has confined to the digital information literacy, computer literacy level among the BSc. Agri. Students

METHODOLOGY:

The survey method was adopted for the present study and a structured questionnaire was administered to collect the details about the attitude of respondents towards the digital information literacy by the students of Agriculture colleges. Totally 100 questionnaires were distributed among the students, out of which 90 filled in questionnaires were received. This constitutes 90% of the total response and same was used for analysis purpose. Simple random technique was used to collect the required data from the respondents.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

To ascertain the type of information required by the users.

To find out the literacy level to search, locate, use and evaluate the information, their sources and types

To know the acquaintance level of the undergraduate students with different ICT tools and techniques

To find out whether Internet supplements library resources among the users

To determine the extent of digital information needed

To know the Purpose for using digital information

To know the Use of Internet Search Tools

To Evaluation of Web Resources by students

Table 1: Gender – wise distribution of respondents:

Sl. No.	Gender	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Male	60	66.67 %
2	Female	30	33.33 %
Total		90	100 %

Table 1, shows that of the 90 respondents, 60 (66.67%) are male and 30 (33.33%) are female.

Table 2: Residential status of the respondents:

Sl. No.	Status of the Residency	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Village	30	33.33 %
2	City	45	50.00%
3	Town	15	16.67 %
Total		90	100 %

Table – 2: shows that the residential status of the respondents, out of which 30 (33.33%) are from village, 45 (50.00%) from city, and 15 (16.67%) from town.

Table 3: Knowledge on Digital Information Literacy:

Sl. No.	Response	Percentage	Percentage
1	Yes	50	55.56%
2	No	40	44.44%
Total		90	100%

Table – 3 Shows that of the 90 respondents, 50 (55.56%) are having knowledge on digital information literacy and 40 (44.44%) responded not having knowledge on digital information literacy.

Table 4: Knowledge on Using Desk Top PCs/Smart Phones/Laptops/Tabs:

Sl. No.	Nature of ICT Equipment's	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Smart Phones/Tabs	65	72.22%
2	Desktops/Tabs	25	27.78%
Total		90	100%

Table – 4: shows that, the majority of respondents 65 (72.22%) are having knowledge on using smartphones/tabs and 25 (27.78%) are having knowledge on using Desktops/tabs.

Table 5: Frequency of Visiting the Digital Library:

Sl. No.	Visiting the Digital Library	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Daily	45	50.00%
2	Once in a Week	20	22.22%
3	Fortnightly	15	16.67%
4	Monthly	10	11.11%
Total		90	100%

The table – 5: Shows that 45 (50.00%) of respondents are using digital library daily and 20 (22.22%) of respondents are using digital library once in a week, 15 (16.67%) of the respondents are using digital library fortnightly and 10 (11.11%) respondents are using digital library monthly.

Table 6: Purpose of visiting the college Library:

Sl. No.	Purpose of Browsing	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Browsing the e-books	20	22.22%
2	E-Journals	08	8.89%
3	E-Reference Material	10	11.11%
4	Reading the E-newspapers	18	20.00%
5	Filling the Online Applications	08	8.89%
6	E-mails/Chatting/Social Sites	12	13.33%
7	Downloading the Course Material	07	7.78%
8	Looking for advertisement	07	7.78%
Total		90	100%

The Table – 6: shows that, among the 90 respondents 20 (22.22%) of respondents stated that, they need digital resources to browsing the e-books, e. Followed by this, 18 (20.00%) respondents stated that they use digital information to reading the E-newspapers, 12 (13.33%) of respondents stated that they use digital information resources to searching mails/chatting/social sites. 10 (11.11%) respondents stated that they use to browsing e-reference materials. simultaneously, 08 (8.89%) of respondents use digital resources to browsing e-journals and filling the online applications, and simultaneously, 07 (7.78%) of respondents to downloading the course materials and looking for advertisement.

Table 7: Awareness of E- Journals:

Sl. No.	E- resources	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Science Direct	20	22.22%
2	CRE	10	11.11%
3	INDIASTAT	15	16.67%
4	Indian journals .com	30	33.33%
5	CeRA	15	16.67%
Total		90	100%

Table – 7: shows that maximum respondents 30 (33.33%) are aware of Indian Journals.com, 20 (22.22%) are aware of Science Direct. Simultaneously, 15 (16.67%) are aware of Indiastat and CeRA. And it was followed by 10 (11.11%) are aware of CRE.

Table 8: Location of Internet Browsing:

Sl.no.	Place of Browsing	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Digital Library	40	44.44%
2	Department	10	11.11%
3	Computer Centre	15	16.67%
4	Cyber Café	20	22.22%
5	Home	05	5.56%
Total		90	100%

Table – 8: shows that, the majority which is 40(44.44%) are of the respondent's access information from the library, 20 (22.22%) of the respondents access digital information through Cybercafé, 15 (16.67%) are of the respondents access digital information through computer center, 10 (11.11%) are of the respondents access digital information through Department and the least is Home with a response rate of 05 (5.56%).

Table 9: Accessing the Digital Information Resources:

Sl. No.	Nature of the E-Resources	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	E-Books	35	38.89%
2	Open Access Journals (Online)	20	22.22%
3	E-Databases	18	20.00%
4	E-Conference Proceedings	12	13.33%
5	UGC-Infonet E-Journals	05	5.56%
Total		90	100%

Table – 9: shows that, the majority of respondents which is 35 (38.89%) are access digital information resources through e-books, 20 (22.22) are access through open access journals, 18 (20.00%) are access through e-databases, 12 (13.33%) are access through e-conference proceedings and 05 (5.56%) are access through UGC-Infonet E-journals.

Table 10: IT Skill of the respondents:

Sl. No.	Types of IT Skills	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Internet	70	77.77 %
2	MS-Office / DTP Tools	10	11.11 %
3	Multimedia	05	5.56 %
4	Programming Languages	05	5.56 %
Total		90	100%

Table - 10: shows that among 90 respondents 70 (77.77%) are having knowledge of Internet applications. A significant number 10 (11.11%), however have working knowledge of MSOffice or other DTP tools, simultaneously, 05 (5.56%) having knowledge of Multimedia and programming languages.

Table 11: Methods of Learning to Use Digital Resources:

Sl. No.	Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Library	40	44.44%
2	Faculties	20	22.22 %
3	Friends	10	11.11%
4	Computer Schools	15	16.66 %
5	Himself/Herself	05	05.55 %
Total		90	100 %

Table - 11: shows that, the 40(44.44%) are responded that, they learnt to use digital resources through library, 20 (22.22%) are responded through faculties, 15 (16.66%) are responded through computer schools, 10 (11.11%) responded through friends and only 5 (05.55%) are responded by themselves.

Table 12: Types of Search techniques used:

Sl. No.	Search techniques	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Simple Key words	25	27.77 %
2	Boolean Operators (AND, OR, NOT)	30	33.33 %
3	Field search Title URL etc.	35	38.88 %
Total		90	100 %

Table - 12: shows that, the 35 (38.88%) are use Field search Title URL etc., search technique, 30 33.33% are use Boolean Operators (AND, OR, NOT), and 25 (27.77%) are use simple key words.

Table 13: Problems Faced in Using Digital Resource

Sl.No.	Problems	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Difficulty to find relevant information	28	31.11 %
2	Too much information retrieved	10	11.11 %
3	Field search Title URL etc.	30	33.33 %
4	Difficulty to use digital resources due to lack of ICT knowledge:	12	13.33 %
5	Not compatible	10	11.11 %
Total		90	100 %

Table – 13: shows that, the majority which is 30 (33.33%) are facing problems in Field search Title URL etc., 28 (31.11) are facing Difficult to find relevant information, 12 (13.33%) are facing Difficulty to use digital resources due to lack of ICT knowledge and similarly, 10 (11.11) are facing problem with Too much information retrieved and Not compatible.

Table 14: Use of storage devices:

Sl. No.	Use of storage devices	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	CD-ROM	25	27.78 %
2	DVD-ROM	20	22.22 %
3	Pen drives	45	50.00 %
Total		90	100 %

Table – 14: shows that, the majority of the respondents i.e., 45 (50.00%) are using pen drives as a storage device, 25 (27.78%) are using CD-ROM and 20 (22.22%) are using DVD-ROM.

Table 15: Satisfaction on the Digital Information Resources:

Sl. No.	Satisfaction of the Respondents	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Fully Satisfied	60	66.67%
2	Partially Satisfied	20	22.22 %
3	Not Satisfied	10	11.11%
Total		90	100 %

Table – 15: shows that, the majority of the respondents i.e., 60 (66.67%) are satisfied with the digital information resources, 20 (22.22%) are partially satisfied and only 10 (11.11%) are not satisfied.

MOJOR FINDINGS:

Present study found that, the majority of respondents are (66.67%) are male. (55.56%) are having knowledge on digital information literacy.(72.22%) are having knowledge on using smartphones/tabs a. (50.00%) of respondents are using digital library daily. (38.89%) are stated that they access digital information resources through e-books. Maximum of respondents (33.33%) are aware of Indian Journals.com. Majority which is (44.44%) are of the respondent's access information from the library. Majority of respondents (77.77%) are having knowledge of Internet applications.(44.44%) are responded that, they learnt to use digital resources through library. Among type of search techniques, majority of respondents (38.88%) are use Field search Title URL etc. technique. The majority which is (33.33%) are facing problems in Field search Title URL etc.The majority of the respondents i.e., (50.00%) are using pen drives as a storage device. The majority of the respondents i.e., (66.67%) are satisfied with the digital information resources.

CONCLUSION:

The present study revealed that greater part of respondents uses digital resources in daily basis. It was found that they access digital resources from library to update their subject knowledge. The investigators also pointed out that majority of respondent were well aware of digital resources available in their subject domain and well expert in browsing interne. Digital literacy is a broader concept that is frequently increasing. It consists of developing new skills and knowledge which provides awareness and advanced level thinking skills.

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