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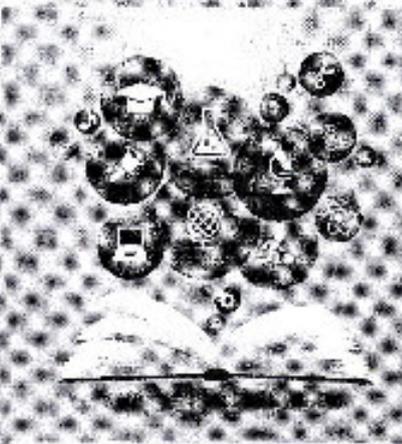
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Relationship between educational qualification of librarians and their role in promoting information literacy

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Abstract

Today information literacy has become an important academic product and the user should be educated apart from their day-to-day needs. In this context, we have highlighted the importance of the information literacy programmes in academic libraries and how the institution will be benefited by implementing the information literacy programmes. Hence, this research work was undertaken to study the factors affecting information literacy and the role of librarians in promoting information literacy. Survey method was used to carry out this research. A well-structured questionnaire was used to collect the primary data from the respondents. Study result indicates significant ($P < 0.001$) association between the factors, academic qualification acquired by librarians and their frequency of promoting information literacy.

Keywords: Information Literacy, Academic Libraries, Educational Qualification

1.0 Introduction

All over the world libraries are dedicated to providing free and equitable access to information for all, be it in written, electronic or audiovisual form. They play a key role in creating literate environments and promoting literacy by offering relevant and attractive reading material for all ages and all literacy levels and by offering adult and family literacy classes. They embrace the social responsibility to offer services that bridge social, political and economic barriers, and traditionally make a special effort to extend their services to marginalized people. Libraries assist in finding, using and interpreting appropriate information that opens up opportunities for lifelong learning, literacy enhancement, informed citizenship, recreation, creative imagination, individual research, critical thinking, and ultimately, empowerment in an increasingly complex world. This paper will show how library and information services in public and school libraries, in community learning centres or NGO resource centres are dedicated to creating literate environments that support basic education for all. It will not discuss the rather different role of academic research libraries and specialised documentation centres.

Information literacy refers to a set of characteristics that transform an ordinary student into a "wise information consumer" and "lifelong learner." Information literacy isn't just something you "do" in college, rather "information literate" is something you become, via your coursework and personal experiences and interactions with information. Today, information has become a major economic commodity and citizens need to be educated for productive information use from pre-school through post-secondary education. Librarians play an important role in the education of people for effective and efficient information use by teaching them information skills at all levels of education to enable them to be informed citizen of the country. In the information-rich world, where the scope of available information appears limitless, there is a growing need for researchers, faculty members and students to become critical users of information. It not only includes knowing how to locate Internet resources but focuses upon developing the skills necessary in seeking information from a variety of resources. What information is found is not important, but to use that information to complete the assigned task or research is of great importance.

Today the role of libraries and professional librarians is changing worldwide. They are no longer passive keepers and preservers of books; rather, they have evolved to become facilitators of information and lifelong learning opportunities with an emphasis on service, identifying user needs and communicating solutions. Modern libraries are unfolding the community's learning potential by providing information on community issues, such as health, employment, continuing education and local history.⁵ This equitable access to



information is essential to enable educated and informed citizens to participate in a democratic global community. Libraries are also custodians of the local and national culture by storing popular and academic knowledge and material for current and future generations. Public libraries play the most important role worldwide in helping to bridge the information gap by providing free access to information and communication technologies, particularly the Internet. They are inclusive in that they build bridges between individuals at the local level and the global level of knowledge. Academic Research is one of the fundamental components of human well-being and national productivity. Though research is not to be blamed for a country's problem, it is a critical part of the solution. High-quality academic research results can provide ways to develop a solution to any of the issues. Literacy skills

2.0 Review of Literature

Maitaouhong et al., (2012) studied the roles of university libraries in the support of information literacy integration in the course instruction. Two research approaches, a survey and a focus group were used. Data were collected from 42 academic librarians by using the questionnaires and then confirming the data by conducting a focus group interview with 15 experts in the field. The findings indicate that university libraries are the important organisation with the roles to teach and support the integration of information literacy in the instruction of various undergraduate courses. Libraries have 4 major roles, namely, (a) preparation of resources and learning sources, (b) supporting the teaching of information literacy of educators and librarians, (c) organising learning and teaching activities that develop students' information literacy, and (d) organising activities to develop educators' information literacy.

Tan (2015) reported that from the dawn of the 21st century, due to emerging technologies, renovations of infrastructure and information explosion, most libraries have been transformed from information storage places to learning gateways, and librarians have played the role as learning facilitators. As a result, in a modern era, what are the standard services in libraries as gateways? How has librarianship been re-defined and performed to live up to the expectation from the society? Author attempted to get these questions addressed. In the meantime, to facilitate the descriptions of services, he was taken his workplace, an urban college library, as a case in point.

Zimmer (2015) observed that public libraries are increasingly turning to cloud computing solutions to satisfy their technological needs in order to best serve patrons, while simultaneously taking advantage of new opportunities for cost savings, flexibility, and enhanced data management. The use of cloud computing in libraries, however, has the potential to disrupt longstanding ethical norms within librarianship dedicated to protecting patron privacy. While librarians have historically engaged in professional practices that limit retention of patron data and protected confidentiality, cloud computing platforms are largely based on the tracking, collection, and aggregation of user data.

Mugwisi (2015) examined the teaching of information literacy (IL) in universities in Zimbabwe and South Africa, and the role played by librarians in creating information literate graduates. An electronic questionnaire was distributed to 12 university libraries in Zimbabwe and 21 in South Africa. A total of 25 questionnaires were returned. The findings revealed that IL was being taught in universities library and non-library staff, was compulsory and contributed to the term mark in some institutions. The study also revealed that 44 per cent of the total respondents indicated that the libraries were collaborating with departments and faculty in implementing IL programmes in universities.

Ellis et al., (2017) aimed to identify that upto which extent IL is being promoted through institutional websites. Data were collected from all UK university websites (n=133) in early 2015 to identify the promotion of IL. Data collection was limited to information in the public domain which could be accessed from individual websites, which were searched and browsed systematically. In total, 85.7 per cent of universities promote IL to some extent on their websites in at least one of the five categories, however the degree of the information provided varied extensively. Less than 6 per cent of universities promote IL at



institutional level. Only 17.3 per cent refer to a model or framework, 15.8 per cent show their IL policy and 9 per cent provide information on their assessment of students' IL skills.

Tshuma and Chigada (2018) focused on evaluating the IL programmes and practices, as well as the challenges of implementing IL at selected academic libraries in Zimbabwe. Qualitative data collected using face-to-face interviews and focus group interviews were analysed with the assistance of Qualitative Data Analysis Software (Atlas.ti version 8). The study revealed that Zimbabwean academic libraries used different and incoherent methods in implementing and teaching IL and that IL initiatives were confronted with a myriad of challenges. The study concluded that academic libraries should have IL policies in place which aid in the implementation and teaching of IL in Zimbabwean academic libraries, as well as guide all the consortium members especially on collaboration issues, teaching aspects, as well as the recognition of IL by university stakeholders other than the librarians.

Bapte (2019) discusses as how from the traditional bibliographical instruction, it has been advanced as a tool for library and information professionals to streamline the profession and their position. The existing models of information literacy instruction have also been highlighted along with brief overview of information literacy content. The academic dishonesty and the accountability of academic libraries are explained briefly. IL is the basic pre-requisite of lifelong learning, the article exhorts international, national and local governments should have information policies and strategies with emphasis on assessment. Library professionals are predictable to play a key role in extending cognitive abilities of the users to make IL to be a great success

Marios et al., (2019) focused on school libraries and the important role they play in the development of students' information literacy skills. Most of the students coming from the Cyprus Education System are not aware of the content of the collection and services offered by an academic library. This survey takes into consideration the current students' knowledge in media literacy, including computer, media, Internet, multimedia and information literacy skills. The results of this survey are presented in this paper together with suggestions for solutions that will enable the decision makers of the education system to improve the students' weak information literacy skills.

Academic libraries have for centuries played critically important roles in supporting the education system. A statistically significant correlation between library use and academic productivity has been found. Recently, libraries have not been used at the optimum level. To design library services, user studies are being conducted by many researchers. However, non-users, who have legal rights, are left-out from these studies. Pillai (2020) defines the users and non-users, and the reasons for non-use, and suggests methods to promote the library services among the non-users.

Chatterjee et al., (2020) analyzed the role played by public libraries in driving community education and promoting information literacy in digital society. Public libraries being storehouses of knowledge, they have always supported user education while undertaking active part in community information services. We design a simple model to explain and analyze the effects of public libraries on user education and community literacy drive. We also discuss the relevance and value of public libraries in this age of digital technology. Our findings reinforce the claim that public libraries are still relevant even in this digital age, and they indeed support user education for the progressive improvement of society.

3.0 Research Methodology

In the present study, survey research method was adopted to study the relationship between educational qualification of librarians and their role in promoting information literacy. The primary data was mainly collected through the questionnaire. The researchers have collected information of the librarians. The structured questionnaire was designed for data collection and distributed to all the librarians.



3.1 Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the present research is to study the relationship between educational qualification of librarians and their role in promoting information literacy. The other major objectives of the present study are: To know the information literacy of the librarians. To identify the impact of educational qualification on information literacy. To identify the factors affecting information literacy of the librarians.

4.0 Statistical Analysis and Data Interpretation

The analysis of data, measurement and scaling, consisted of performing descriptive and inferential statistical procedures using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) and MS Office Excel.

Table 1

Highest academic qualification acquired * Frequency of promoting information literacy

Highest academic qualification acquired	Frequency of promoting information literacy			Total
	Very Often	Often	Sometimes	
M. Lib.	130 (32.50%)	108 (27.00%)	39 (9.75%)	277 (69.25%)
M. Phil.	31 (7.75%)	36 (9.00%)	-	67 (16.75%)
Ph. D.	4 (1.00%)	8 (2.00%)	-	12 (3.00%)
NET/SET	7 (1.75%)	5 (1.25%)	-	12 (3.00%)
M.Lib. and M.Phil	8 (2.00%)	14 (3.50%)	-	22 (5.50%)
M.Lib., M.Phil. and Ph.D.	5 (1.25%)	-	-	5 (1.25%)
M.Lib., Ph.D. and NET/SET	5 (1.25%)	-	-	5 (1.25%)
Total	190 (47.50%)	171 (42.75%)	39 (9.75%)	400 (100%)

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	Df	P
Pearson Chi-Square	35.474	12	0.000
Critical Value of Chi Square	32.910	12	0.001

df - Degrees of Freedom; P- Asymptomatic Significance

Table 1 shows results of the data about association between highest academic qualification acquired by librarians working at college libraries affiliated to S.G.B. Amravati University and their frequency of promoting information literacy. Results showed that Pearson Chi-square value for association between highest academic qualification acquired by librarians and their frequency of promoting information literacy is 35.474 at df = 12 which is greater than critical value of chi-square (32.910) at significant level 0.001 for df = 12. This result indicates significant ($P < 0.001$) association between the factors, highest academic qualification acquired by librarians and their frequency of promoting information literacy.



5.0 Conclusions

In conclusion we can say that to deliver information to all the user communities is not the focus of information literacy. However, where the literacy rate is so low & availability of information resources are also quite poor, libraries cannot stop at just informing where information is available but has also to take a proactive role in making some important information resources available to the users. Now the librarian need to teach the users the basic skills so that they can educate and re-educate themselves to survive & be the lifelong learners. These libraries are also providing current awareness programs to make them acquainted with the sources of information, their utility & use. Also they are playing the pro-active role of supporting the learning process by storing materials & providing facilities for developing healthy atmosphere of quality education.

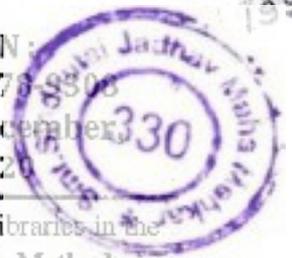
5.5 Suggestions

Based on the findings of the study the following suggestions are made:

- This is high time, the library associations of all kind propagate and advocate the significance of information literacy programmes for the progress of the society.
- There is an ongoing need for clear, coherent and authoritative documents that define information literacy and provide a rationale for its implementation. If it is to be effective, national document or policy statement of this kind will also need to be followed up with an ongoing process of monitoring at a national level.
- There is a need for more specific documentation outlining frameworks for curriculum development and practice. A document of this kind would need to include: a clear model of learning progression, details of specific learning outcomes, expressed in terms of competencies; and criteria and procedures for evaluation and assessment.
- Well-intended documents and frameworks are worthless without trained staff to implement them. Elements of training in information literacy should be included in initial and in-service training programmes, and be available as part of „teachers ongoing professional development.
- Despite the changing and sometimes ephemeral nature of the content of media education, teaching materials can have a long shelf life if they are carefully and professionally produced. Information literacy does not by any means have to be a high tech enterprise, but it should at least reflect the levels of access that students and teachers have to technology outside the campus/school environment.

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