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Assessment of Information Literacy Skills and Competencies among the Undergraduate Students of Kuvempu University: A Study

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Abstract

Information literacy is the set of skills that allows users to find, evaluate and use information. This study assesses the Information Literacy Skills and Competency among undergraduate students of Kuvempu University, Shivamoga, India. A structured questionnaire was prepared based on the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) standards of Information Literacy Competency for higher education and the sample size was calculated as per the Taro Yamane Scientific formula. About 847 (76.30%) responses were received from the respondents, highest response was received from the Under Graduate Students of the Government Colleges ie, 411 (91.33%), majority of the respondents were female 441 (52%). Out of which 189 (46.56%) male and 213 (48.29%) female respondents belonged to the Commerce faculty, 100% of the respondents were visiting the library and made use of the library resources and services, About 189 (46.6%) male and 189 (42.9%) female respondents visited the library three to four time in a week, 371 (91.37%) male and 430 (97.50%) female respondents visited the library to borrow and return books. Majority of the respondents ranked 'Textbooks related to the subject' ($\bar{x}=4.09$) as the most frequently used information source, 337 (83%) male and 325 (73.7%) female respondents were satisfied with the existing information sources available in their college library, 351 (86.45%) male and 403 (91.38%) female respondents need information sources 'To prepare for examinations and 218 (53.7%) male and 221 (50.1%) female respondents believed that they had the skills and competency to identify and find a variety of sources of information in print as well as the electronic format.

Keywords: Information Literacy, Information Literacy Skills and Competency, Undergraduate Students, Kuvempu University.

1. Introduction

Information Literacy is a lifelong learning process that starts at a younger age and proceeds until post-work state, where each person requires a different kind of information in different phases of life. At a younger stage, individuals acquire knowledge through elementary to

higher education. The teacher and library professionals impart Information Literacy competency through various academic programs. Besides formal education, they acquire knowledge through several informal ways and update their existing knowledge in their field of interest.

Information Literacy is the basis for lifelong learning and to develop the sense-making ability among the users. The information literates can make decisions, solve their problems and know how to learn. Therefore, students need to be trained in information competency. The information literacy skills help the students to become lifelong learners. Information Literacy is a set of abilities requiring individuals to recognize when information is needed and can locate, evaluate and use effectively the needed information (ACRL, 2000).

2. Literature Review

Hemamalini and Shobha (2020) conducted a study to assess the Information literacy competency among the undergraduate students of Mysore city. The study revealed that 102 (50.5%) students agreed that they could identify the needed information. 104 (52%) students agreed that they know how to locate information sources within the library, it was also found that 108 (54%) students lacked the knowledge about information retrieval and 64 (32%) students were unfamiliar with the search strategies. **Zeeshan, Idrees and Siddique (2020)** conducted a study to determine information literacy skills of Lahore University Students of Management Science Faculty. The results showed that majority of the students were aware of the importance of information for their academic achievements. Majority of the students believed that information literacy was necessary for their academic achievements which indicate their interest in receiving such training to fulfill their educational needs. **Olubiyo et al. (2019)** carried out a study to assess the information literacy skills among the undergraduate students at Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo, Nigeria. The study revealed that the undergraduate student's information literacy level was average.

Govindarajan and Dhanavandan (2018) examined the information literacy skills among the Students of Madurai Kamaraj University and Manonmaniam Sundaranar University of Tamilnadu. Majority of the students were in the age group of <23, 70.8% of students responded that they received formal training, 38.1% of the students learnt information literacy skills from friends, 86.1% of the students received information literacy education from a single

educator, 47.5% of the students use books, 45% of the students used the title to locate information and 68.3% of the students were using a single search mechanism. The findings revealed that the majority of the students exhibited good information literacy skills.

3. Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study is to assess the Information Literacy competency of the undergraduate students in Selected Colleges of Kuvempu University. The specific objectives are;

1. To study the library literacy skills and competency level among the Undergraduate Students.
2. To identify the information searching strategies followed by the students.
3. To offer suggestions based on the feedback from the students.

4. Hypothesis of the Study

The following hypotheses have been formulated for the present study

1. There is no significant difference between the male and female respondents with regard to their frequency of visit to the library.
2. There is no significant difference between the male and female respondents with regard to their satisfaction with the information resources available in the library.
3. There is no significant difference between the male and female respondents with regard to their information retrieval skills and competencies.

5. Need and importance of the Study

Information is a vital resource and valuable input for social development and is certainly the basic component of education; the need and importance of information is increasing day by day. Information is available in abundance, in various forms and formats, poses many challenges to the users in understanding it and to get the right information at the right time from the abundance of unclassified data/information.

The fundamental goal of Information Literacy is to develop critical users of information. Information literacy is considered as a powerful weapon for life-long learning. It is common to

all disciplines, to all learning environments, and all levels of education. It enables learners to master content and extend their investigations, become more self-directed and assume greater control over their own learning. So it was important to conduct the study to know the Information Literacy Competency among Undergraduate Students of Kuvempu University, Shivamoga, India.

6. Methodology

The survey method of research was adopted wherein a structured questionnaire was employed to elicit the required information from the target study population; collected data were tabulated, analyzed and interpreted using the statistical package for the Social Science (SPSS). Hypotheses were tested and findings were drawn, appropriate statistical tests like Frequency, Percentage, Mean, Chi-square test were applied to test the null hypothesis and Likert scale used to rate the variables to measure the attitude of the respondents. Finally, the results were reported in the form of tables to make a simple presentation.

7. Scope and Limitations of the Study

The present study is limited to Colleges affiliated to Kuvempu University, Shivamoga, Karnataka

- The study is geographically limited to Kuvempu University.
- The present study is mainly based on the primary data collected from sample respondents and the following limitations have been identified.
 1. The present study is explorative in nature and restricted geographically to the sample population of undergraduate students of Kuvempu University spread over 2 districts of Shivamoga and Chikmagalur Districts.
 2. The user's population is fixed using Taro Yamane scientific formula and 15 users were selected from each responded Colleges.
 3. The present study uses the survey method wherein a questionnaire has been developed as a tool to elicit responses from the Undergraduate students of Kuvempu University.

8. Analysis of Data

8.1 Sample and Response Rate

The researcher designed a survey questionnaire to obtain necessary data from undergraduate students of Selected Colleges, affiliated to Kuvempu University. Table 1 reveals that total 1110 questionnaires were distributed to students among 74 Selected Colleges and data was collected personally. 847 filled in questionnaires were received accounting to response rate of 76.30%. The highest number of the response has been received from the Government Colleges consisting of 411 (91.33%) respondents, followed by 306 (65.80%) respondents from the Private Colleges and 130 (66.66%) respondents from Government Aided Colleges.

Table 1 Sample and Response Rate from the Selected Colleges

Type of Colleges	Questionnaire Distributed	Filled Questionnaire Received	Percentage
Government Colleges	450	411	91.33%
Government Aided Colleges	195	130	66.66%
Private Colleges	465	306	65.80%
Total	1110	847	76.30%

8.2 Demographic Details of the Respondents

In this section gender, age, type of college, faculty (department) and social background of the respondents were analysed.

8.2.1 Gender wise Distribution of Respondents

Gender has been one of the important variable in examining Undergraduate student's information literacy skills. Table 2 represents the gender-wise distribution of the sample consisting of 441 (52%) female and 406 (48%) male respondents respectively. From the analysis, it was found that the female respondents were more than the male respondents.

Table-2 Gender wise Distribution of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	406	48%
Female	441	52%
Total	847	100.0%

8.2.2 Age-wise Distribution of the Respondents

Age is another important demographic variable to be studied in assessing the information literacy of the Undergraduate Students. The respondents were categorised into two different age groups. The results of the age-wise distribution of respondents has been shown in table 3, it was observed that 257 (63.3%) male and 276 (62.6%) female respondents were in the age group between 15-20 years and then followed by 149 (36.7%) male 165 (37.4%) female respondents belonged to 21 and above age group.

From the analysis, it was observed that the majority of the respondents were in the age group between 15-20 years. It was quite obvious since the majority of the students who study at the Undergraduate level usually are in the age group between 15-20 years.

Table- 3 Age-wise Distribution of Respondents

Age	Male Respondents		Female Respondents		Total	Percentage
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage		
15-20	257	63.3%	276	62.6%	533	62.9%
21 and above	149	36.7%	165	37.4%	314	37.1%
Total	406	100.0%	441	100.0%	847	100.0%

8.2.3 College -Wise Distribution of Respondents

Kuvempu University is a young affiliating University; it includes Government Colleges, Government Aided and Private Colleges spread over Shivamoga and Chikmagalur districts. Table 4 shows that 187 (46.05%) male and 224 (50.79%) female respondents were from Government Colleges, followed by 163 (40.14%) male and 143 (32.43%) female respondents were from Private Colleges and the remaining 56 (13.79%) male and 74 (16.78%) female respondents were from Government Aided Colleges.

The majority of the respondents were from Government Colleges and the least number of the respondents were from Government Aided Colleges.

Table- 4 College-Wise Distribution of the Respondents

Type of College	Male Respondents		Female Respondents		Total	Percentage
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage		
Government Colleges	187	46.05%	224	50.79%	411	48.52%
Government Aided Colleges	56	13.79%	74	16.78%	130	15.35%
Private Colleges	163	40.14%	143	32.43%	306	36.13%
Total	406	100.0%	441	100.0%	847	100.0%

8.2.4 Faculty (Department) wise Distribution of the Respondents

The Kuvempu University offers Arts, Commerce and Science courses for Undergraduate Students. Table 5 provides information about the faculty (Department) wise distribution of the respondents. It was observed that 187 (46.56%) male and 213 (48.29%) female respondents were from Commerce faculty, followed by 177 (43.59%) male and 182 (41.27%) female respondents were from Arts faculty and the remaining 40 (9.85%) male and 46 (10.44%) female respondents were from Science faculty.

Majority of the male and female respondents belonged to the Commerce faculty as compared to other faculties since Commerce is one of the most emerging subject and it has a lot of job opportunities. Hence, majority of the respondents opt for a Commerce course.

Table- 5 Faculty (Department) wise Distribution of Respondents

Faculty (Department)	Male Respondents		Female Respondents		Total	Percentage
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage		
Arts	177	43.59%	182	41.27%	359	42.38%
Commerce	189	46.56%	213	48.29%	402	47.46%
Science	40	9.85%	46	10.44%	86	10.16%
Total	406	100.0%	441	100.0%	847	100.0%

8.2.5 Social Background of the Respondents

Table 6 represents the distribution of respondents according to their social background. It was found that 206 (50.7%) male and 290 (65.8%) female respondents were from the rural background and 200 (49.3%) male and 151 (34.2%) female respondents were from the urban background.

From the analysis, it was evident that the majority of the respondents were from the rural background.

Table-6 Social Background of Respondents

Social Background	Male Respondents		Female Respondents		Total	Percentage
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage		
Urban	200	49.3%	151	34.2%	351	41.4%
Rural	206	50.7%	290	65.8%	496	58.6%
Total	406	100.0%	441	100.0%	847	100.0%

8.3 Use of Library and Information Resources

To fulfill the educational needs of the users, College libraries should provide a comprehensive and well-balanced collection of textbooks, reference books, journals, magazines, newspapers and electronic information sources, which is helpful to the student's community for their academic activities.

8.3.1 Library Visit by the Respondents

It was very clear from table 7 that, among 847 respondents 100% of them were visiting the library. The results revealed that all male and female respondents were visiting and make use of the library resources and services for their various academic activities.

Table-7 Visit to the Library by the Respondents

Library Visit	Male		Female		Total	Percentage
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage		
Yes	406	100%	441	100%	847	100.0%
No	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Total	406	100%	441	100%	847	100.0%

8.3.2 Frequency of Visit to the Library

Table 8 reveals the respondent's frequency of visit to the library, it was observed that 189 (46.6%) male and 189 (42.9%) female respondents visit the library three to four times in a week, followed by 117 (28.8%) male and 150 (34%) female respondents visit the library once in a week, while 66 (16.3%) male and 72 (16.3%) female respondents visit the library daily and 34 (8.3%) male and 30 (6.8%) female respondents rarely visit the library.

The above analysis revealed that majority of the respondents visit the library three to four times a week and very few respondents rarely visit the library.

The respondent's frequency of library visit was tested using chi-square. It was observed that $X^2=35.075$, $df=9$ and the p-value is .000, which is lesser than the significance (alpha) level of .05. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected. It can be concluded that there was a significant difference in the frequency of visit to the library among the male and female respondents.

Table-8 Frequency of Library Visit

Frequency	Male Respondents		Female Respondents		Total	Percentage
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage		
Daily	66	16.3%	72	16.3%	138	16.3%
Three to Four time in a week	189	46.6%	189	42.9%	378	44.6%
Once in a week	117	28.8%	150	34.0%	267	31.5%
Rarely	34	8.3%	30	6.8%	64	7.6%
Total	406	100.0%	441	100.0%	847	100.0%
Chi-Square Test Statistics	$X^2 = 35.075$ df = 9 a = .05 p = .000 Remark = S					

8.3.3 Purpose of visiting the library

Several factors make the users visit the library, table 9 shows that the respondents visit the library for the purposes as mentioned here. It was found that majority i.e. 371(91.37%) male and 430 (97.50%) female respondents visit the library ‘To borrow/return Books’, further 202 (49.75%) male and 335 (75.96%) female visit the library ‘To read Textbooks, followed by 273 (67.24%) male and 224 (50.79%) female visit ‘To read Newspapers/Magazines’, 220 (54.18%) male and 267 (60.54%) female visit ‘To prepare notes/assignments/seminars’, 178 (43.84%) male and 219 (49.65%) female visit ‘To consult Reference Books’, 102 (25.12%) male and 122 (27.66%) female and 146 (35.96%) male and 74 (16.78%) female visit ‘For recreational reading’ and ‘To use the Internet’ and remaining 73 (17.98%) male and 92 (20.86%) female visit the library ‘To access N-LIST e-resources’.

The result revealed that majority of the respondents visit the library to borrow/return books, read textbooks, newspapers/magazines and prepare notes/assignments/seminars, which is very much essential for their academic learning activities.

Table- 9 Purpose of Visit to the Library

(N=847)

Purpose of the Library Visit	Male Respondents		Female Respondents		Total	Percentage
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage		
To borrow/return Books	371	91.37%	430	97.50%	801	94.56%
To read Newspapers/Magazines	273	67.24%	224	50.79%	497	58.67%
To read Textbooks	202	49.75%	335	75.96%	537	63.40%
To consult Reference Books	178	43.84%	219	49.65%	397	46.87%
For recreational reading	102	25.12%	122	27.66%	224	26.44%
To browse the Internet	146	35.96%	74	16.78%	220	25.97%
To access N-LIST e-resources	73	17.98%	92	20.86%	165	19.48%
To prepare notes /Assignments /Seminars	220	54.18%	267	60.54%	487	57.49%

(Note: The respondents could answer more than one variable)

8.3.4 Frequency of Use of Information Sources available in the Library

Information sources play a very important role in the library by providing information to their end-users for their teaching-learning activities. Respondents were asked to indicate their frequently used information sources in the library on a five-point Likert scale' (1=Always). To compare respondents frequently used information sources, each preference was calculated by weighing with the number of responses received.

Table 10 summarises the mean value of each frequently used information sources in the library with their respective ranks. Majority of the respondents ranked 'Textbooks related to the subject' (\bar{x} =4.09) as the most frequently used information source, 'Newspapers' (\bar{x} =4.01) was the second frequently used information source. 'Reference books' (\bar{x} =3.77) was the third frequently used information source, their fourth frequently used information source was 'Journals/Periodicals' (\bar{x} =3.65), the next frequently used information sources were 'Dictionaries' (\bar{x} =3.16), 'Atlas/Maps' (\bar{x} =3.01) and 'Audio-Visual Materials' (\bar{x} =2.52) and the least frequently used information sources were 'Encyclopedias' (\bar{x} =2.13) and 'Project Reports' (\bar{x} =1.36) respectively.

It was found from the analysis that respondents frequently used information sources in the library were textbooks related to the subject, newspapers, reference books, journals/periodicals, dictionaries, atlas/maps and audio-visual materials and the least frequently used information sources were encyclopedias and project reports.

Table-10 Frequency of Use of Information Sources available in the Library

(N=847)

Information Sources	Always	Often	Sometime	Rarely	Never	Total Scores	Mean	Rank
Textbooks related to Subject	460 54.30%	177 20.89%	105 12.39%	44 5.19%	61 7.20%	3472	4.09	1
Reference books	404 47.69%	129 15.23%	125 14.75%	103 12.16%	86 10.15%	3199	3.77	3
Journal /Periodicals	389 45.92%	81 9.56%	173 20.42%	102 12.04%	102 12.04%	3094	3.65	4
Newspapers	443 52.30%	165 19.48%	92 10.86%	100 11.80%	47 5.54%	3398	4.01	2
Dictionaries	236 27.86%	113 13.34%	196 23.14%	161 19.00%	141 16.64%	2683	3.16	5
Encyclopedias	67 7.91%	89 10.50%	170 20.07%	83 9.79%	438 51.71%	1805	2.13	8
Atlas/Maps	261 30.81%	63 7.43%	212 25.02%	50 5.90%	261 30.81%	2554	3.01	6
Audio-visual Materials	180 21.25%	74 8.73%	135 15.93%	80 9.44%	378 44.62%	2139	2.52	7
Project Reports	21 2.47%	12 1.41%	66 7.79%	58 6.84%	690 81.46%	1157	1.36	9

(Note: The respondents could answer more than one variable)

8.3.5 Satisfaction of Respondents towards Information Sources Available in the Library

The image of the library always depends on the satisfaction level of users, which depends on the availability of information resources in the library. From table 11 it was evident that 337 (83%) male and 325 (73.7%) female respondents were satisfied with the existing information sources available in their College libraries and surprisingly 69 (17%) male and 116 (26.3%) female respondents were not satisfied with the information sources available in their College libraries.

It was observed that the majority of the respondents were satisfied with the information resources available in their College libraries.

The chi-square test was employed to know the satisfaction of respondents towards information sources available in the library. It was observed that $X^2=10.730$, $df=1$ and the p-value is .001, which is lesser than the significance (alpha) level of .05. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected. It can be concluded that there was a significant difference in the satisfaction towards information sources available in the library among the male and female respondents.

Table-11 Satisfaction of Respondents towards Information Sources Available in the Library

Satisfaction	Male Respondents		Female Respondents		Total	Percentage
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage		
Yes	337	83%	325	73.7%	662	78.16%
No	69	17%	116	26.3%	185	21.84%
Total	406	100.0%	441	100.0%	847	100.0%
Chi-Square Test Statistics	$X^2 = 10.730$ $df = 1$ $\alpha = .05$ $p = .001$ Remarks = S					

8.3.6 Purpose of Using the Information Sources

The Undergraduate Students need the information sources for various purposes. The purpose of using the information sources by the respondents are as follows. . Table 12 depicts that majority of the respondents 351 (86.45%) male and 403 (91.38%) female respondents need information sources ‘To prepare for examinations’, followed by 287 (70.68%) male and 362

(82.08%) female need information sources ‘To update their knowledge’, 235 (57.88%) male and 319 (72.33%) female need information sources ‘To prepare for competitive exams’, 218 (53.69%) male and 309 (70.06%) female need information sources ‘To write assignments/seminar papers’, 179 (44.08%) male and 239 (54.19%) female required information sources ‘To become a life-long learner’ and remaining 166 (40.88%) male and 210 (47.61%) female needed information sources ‘To keep abreast of the latest subject information’.

The results revealed that majority of the respondents need information sources to prepare for the examinations, update knowledge and prepare for competitive exams, which is very much essential for their academic growth.

Table 12 – Purpose of Using the Information Sources

(N=847)

Purpose	Male Respondents		Female Respondents		Total	Percentage
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage		
To prepare for the examinations	351	86.45%	403	91.38%	754	89.02%
To update Knowledge	287	70.68%	362	82.08%	649	76.62%
To keep abreast of the latest subject information	166	40.88%	210	47.61%	376	44.39%
To prepare for competitive exams	235	57.88%	319	72.33%	554	65.40%
To become a lifelong learner	179	44.08%	239	54.19%	418	49.35%
To write assignments/seminar papers	218	53.69%	309	70.06%	527	62.21%

(Note: The respondents could answer more than one variable)

8.3.7 Skills and Competencies to identify and find a variety of Information Sources

Table 13 represents the respondent’s opinion about skills and competency to identify and find a variety of sources of information. About 218 (53.7%) male and 221 (50.1%) female respondents believed that they have the skills and competency to identify and find a variety of sources of information, however, 188 (46.3%) male and 220 (49.9%) female respondents agreed

that they have a lack of skills and competency to identify and find a variety of sources of information.

It was clear from the analysis that majority of the male and female respondents had the skills and competency to identify and find a variety of sources of information.

The respondent's skill and competencies to identify and find the information sources were tested using chi-square. It was observed that $X^2=1.228$, $df=1$ and the p-value is .268, which is greater than the significance (alpha) level of .05. Hence the null hypothesis is accepted. It gives evidence that there was no significant difference in the skill and competencies to identify and find the information sources among male and female respondents.

Table 13 – Skills and Competencies to identify and find a variety of Information Sources

Skills and Competency	Male		Female		Total	Percentage
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage		
Yes	218	53.7%	221	50.1%	439	51.83%
No	188	46.3%	220	49.9%	408	48.17%
Total	406	100.0%	441	100.0%	847	100.0%
Chi-Square Test Statistics	$X^2 = 1.228$ $df = 1$ $\alpha = .05$ $p = .268$ Remarks = NS					

9. Suggestions for Effective implementation of Information literacy programmes

Keeping in the view of the findings of the study and as well as the feedback from the male and female respondents the following suggestions are given as below:

1. Library orientation/ information literacy programme should be conducted from time to time for Undergraduate students at the beginning of the courses.
2. The practical based/hands-on library orientation programme should be conducted to understand the library tools, services and resources.
3. Information literacy subject should be introduced as a common/elective paper at the Undergraduate level, to make them information literates and independent lifelong learners.

4. For effective conduction of information literacy programmes, the collaboration between teachers and librarian is essential for enhancing the information literacy skills of the students.

10. Conclusion

Information literacy helps in overcoming the problems of identifying and retrieving the right information for the right person at the right time in the right manner. The present study revealed that respondent's information literacy skills in the use of library resources were observed to be satisfactory. The study concludes that Kuvempu University Undergraduate Students had information literacy skills and competencies and they are confident in the use of library resources to accomplish their academic excellence in their learning process.

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