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**UNDERSTANDING COVID-19 RELATED HEALTH LITERACY SKILLS  
AND COMPETENCIES AMONG THE WORKING LIS  
PROFESSIONALS IN DR. ZAKIR HUSAIN CENTRAL LIBRARY,  
JAMIA MILLIA ISLAMIA: A STUDY**

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# UNDERSTANDING COVID-19 RELATED HEALTH LITERACY SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES AMONG THE WORKING LIS PROFESSIONALS IN DR. ZAKIR HUSAIN CENTRAL LIBRARY, JAMIA MILLIA ISLAMIA: A STUDY

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## Abstract

*Health literacy has become an integral component of human life, and it plays a significant role in ensuring safety from a variety of deadly diseases. India's health literacy rate is below average when compared to other countries. Since the Covid-19 pandemic, doctors and volunteers from all over the world have been striving to promote health literacy to raise public awareness through various media. Given the foregoing, the main objective of this study is to identify the level of Covid-19 related health literacy among working LIS professionals at Jamia Millia Islamia's Dr.Zakir Husain Central Library. The survey approach is being used in this study's methodology. For ease of understanding, a well-structured questionnaire was created in both Hindi and English. A total of 54 questionnaires were distributed, with 40 completed questionnaires received. The key findings demonstrate that 100% of LIS professionals are aware of health literacy, and that the most common source of health information is family/friends 23(57.5%), followed by doctors 19 (47.5%). Electronic media (short clip videos provided by health organisations) is the most favoured medium for obtaining health-related information, i.e. 38. (95%). Furthermore, respondents are well-versed on COVID-19 transmission mechanisms; yet, respondents' difficulties in obtaining health information are attributed to a lack of understanding of health literacy sources. Another significant finding from the study is that 100% of respondents believe that libraries can play an essential role in improving health literacy among academic community. The entire work is based on original research and serves as a resource for other scholars working in the same field.*

**Keywords:** Health Literacy, Library and Health Literacy, COVID-19 and Health Literacy. Dr. ZHL, JMI

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The "SARS-CoV-2 virus" caused "COVID-19" (Corona Virus Disease 2019), a terrible infectious disease that was first diagnosed in Wuhan, China, at the end of 2019. It is very contagious and has spread rapidly over the world. "COVID-19" has been linked to a wide range of symptoms, ranging from minor aches and pains to life-threatening sickness. After being infected with the virus, the incubation time for apparent symptoms is two to fourteen days. The symptoms can range from moderate to severe, with respiratory symptoms such as a cold, flu, or pneumonia being the most prevalent. The virus "COVID-19" has the ability to infect the entire body, not simply the lungs and respiratory system. The sickness may spread to other parts of the body. Other symptoms of the "COVID-19 virus" include fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, muscular or body aches, weariness, headache, loss of taste or smell, and sore throat.

"COVID-19" causes mild symptoms in the vast majority of the people, but it can lead to serious sickness in a small percentage of the population. People with minor or no symptoms may be affected by "post-COVID" disorders, often known as "lasting COVID." This disease is more likely seen in the elderly with specific underlying medical conditions such as heart or lung disease or diabetes. Numerous people have died across the globe due to this pandemic. Vaccines formulated to tackle this dreadful disease are both safe and effective. It boost our immunity system to combat the corona virus "(Centers for Disease Control and prevention, n.d.)"

According to the "World Health Organization", a total of 360,578,392 confirmed cases of "COVID-19" were reported till date, including 5,620,865 deaths while in India a total of 40,371,500 confirmed cases were found with 491,700 deaths (WHO, n.d.). No one really wonders how many more outbreaks will occur in the future. People from all over the world must be able to obtain health-related information in order to confront such a pandemic in the future.

### 1.1 Health Literacy

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Health literacy refers to a person's ability to collect, process, and absorb fundamental health information and services in order to make informed health decisions (Santana et al., 2021). It is evident from the recent pandemic outbreak that a lot of people from all around the world died due to the lethal virus. It is found from the review of literature that to curb the spread of SARS-CoV2, a global catastrophe caused by COVID-19 has necessitated rapid absorption of knowledge and considerable behavioral changes among community members. In addition, people with chronic comorbidities such as diabetes, hypertension, and cardiovascular disease are more susceptible to SARS-CoV2 infection and have a greater death probability (Gautam et al., 2021). According to reports, at least nine out of ten persons in India have a low level of health literacy (Kumar, n.d.). Hence, sufficient health literacy could empower citizens to tackle various ailments.

Good health literacy may allow the people to get more about health conditions and the solutions require, answer questions about your health and requirements, know the options that are available in terms of treatments, doctors, facilities, services, and other aspects of health, Choose the services and options that are most appropriate, recognize and follow your treatment plan and on the other hand poor health literacy may always claim to be in terrible health, be admitted to the hospital, people with poor health literacy are also less likely to seek preventive procedures like mammograms, pap screenings, and flu vaccinations (Health Literacy: Why It's Important and How to Improve It, n.d.).

## **1.2 Dr. Zakir Husain Central Library, Jamia Millia Islamia**

Jamia Millia Islamia is one of the country's most prestigious universities, and it just won a significant triumph by getting an A++ rating from NAAC. JMI has also maintained its position in the NIRF grading system as well as on a worldwide scale. A library can exist without an Institution but an Institution cannot exist without a library. The Central University Jamia Millia Islamia contains a well-designed library with a four-story structure and all of the essential equipment, with decentralized library services. Dr. Zakir Husain Library is named after India's first Education Minister, Dr. Zakir Husain. The Library is well-known throughout the country for its extensive collection of rare books. The library has a document that is more than 200 years old. It offers a well-managed Digital Resource Center with a seating capacity of 100 students at a time. Furthermore, it has ample sitting capacity, with 1400 pupils able to read during any given time. It has developed a learning center for differently abled students with all essential equipment such as braille printers, screen reader software, instant reading machines, high resolution magnifiers, scanning devices, and more in order to provide inclusive access to all categories of users. Its research productivity is great, and it maintains its significance, thanks to high-quality electronic resources from national and international publishers. Dr. ZHL, JMI is not far behind in terms of adopting trends and technologies. Physical presence was closed during the epidemic, when the entire education system was disrupted, but libraries from all around the world demonstrate there was still a presence. Dr. ZHL, JMI open the virtual door to all of the bonafied students and faculty members to access resources. The dynamic staffs along with library services include a dialogue in the entire institution.

## **2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

The pandemic of Covid-19 has brought the entire world to its knees. According to the World Health Organization, a total of 5,207,634 individuals have perished worldwide. It has had a significant impact on our country's economy as well as the global economy. This pandemic COVID-19 has had a significant influence on our economy and education since the lockdown was proclaimed in early 2020 that had an adverse effect upon the nation's progress. At such times health literacy plays a very deep role in improving those conditions. As there were no immunizations or treatments available at the time, only health-related information might assist a common man in adopting preventive actions to protect their lives.

According to the Scopus Database, a substantial number of research papers were published around the world on "Health Literacy" during the Covid-19, totaling 7,203 from 2019 to 2021. However, India, on the other hand, has a relatively low literature, with only 221 publications, which is cause for concern. India, being the world's second most populous country, must place a greater emphasis

on health literacy in order to protect its inhabitants during such critical times. Our country's current scenario is dire, with greater death rates owing to Covid-19, and only health literacy can help alleviate the situation. A health-aware person may defend himself against silent epidemics like COVID-19 and many others by taking suitable preventative and emergency actions. In addition to these, India has also lost many Government officials too. According to officials familiar with the situation, approximately 900 Central government personnel died between March and May, 2021, up from 600 during the same period previous year. It was uncertain whether the pandemic was to blame for all of these deaths (Hindustan Times, 2021). Employees who are well-versed in health literacy can take preventive measures to reduce their own and others' chances of becoming ill. A fit employee adds to overall good performance at work, which boosts the output and efficiency of the organization. Keeping all these things in mind, the study is being carried out to know the level of Covid-19 related health literacy among the LIS working professionals of Dr. Zakir Husain Library, JamiaMilliaIslamia.

### **3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

- i. To assess the level of familiarity with Covid-19-related health Literacy.
- ii. To investigate the approach taken by LIS working professionals in finding health-related information.
- iii. To examine the sources of health Literacy use by the Dr. ZHL, LIS professionals.
- iv. To get the Dr. ZHL staff's perspective on delivering Health Literacy Services through the Library.

### **4. SCOPE AND LIMITATION OF THE STUDY**

JamiaMilliaIslamia, one of the country's most prestigious universities, just got NAAC's highest possible grade of A++. The University Library's named after Dr. Zakir Husain, the country's first Education Minister, Infrastructure and Facilities, composed a dialogue throughout the Library Profession. It boasts a four-story structure and a large number of well-trained librarians with value-added abilities. The study's confined to all working professionals at the Dr. Zakir Husain Central Library and associated libraries which include regular, contractual, and retiring library employees.

### **5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

In this study, survey methodologies were adopted to perform the research. A well Structured Questionnaire was developed using Google forms and kept bilingual in nature for the ease of understanding among LIS Professionals of Dr. Zakir Husain Library, JamiaMilliaIslamia. Google Form has been used to collect and acquire the data about health literacy among the LIS Professionals in the form of questionnaires that is shared to them through the use of modern technologies like WhatsApp and Gmail. A total of 54 questionnaires was been sent to the concerned employee of Dr. Zakir Husain Library, JamiaMilliaIslamia out of which 40 responses were received by us. To analyze the data related to Health Literacy, MS Excel 2007 was used. The APA 6<sup>th</sup>edition was used throughout the study for providing references and citations in the research.

### **6. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

Xuewei Chen and others (2018) conducted a study on 'Health literacy and use and trust in health information'. The study focuses upon the need to investigate health related sources that are most preferred and treated as authentic by the people. This will contribute to identify strategies for recognizing knowledge gaps that can help prevent sickness. It is found that persons with low health literacy have less faith in specialist, doctors and dentists and rely upon social media, television, blogs/celebrity web pages, friends and pharmaceutical companies regarding health information. This study might be necessary to improve people's capacity to evaluate the quality of health related information sources and get best health related information and hence increasing the efficiency of health literacy programs and campaigns. Larisa Antonisse and Rachel Garfield (2018) carried out a study entitled ' The relationship between work and health: Findings from Literature Review'. The

study examines literature based upon relationship between work and health and analysis is done in context of Medicaid work needs and requirements. It has been discovered that bad health is linked to an increased likelihood of unemployment, but those with health insurance have a beneficial impact on their ability to acquire and maintain their work. On the influence of employment on health, there is a paucity of evidence. Several studies have been conducted, with some indicating a good impact of work on health and others indicating no relation or even isolated impacts. The study also found that work quality and reliability are important factors in the work-health correlation. Low-quality, unpredictable, or low-paying occupations also have a negative impact on health, according to research. Another systematic review and qualitative synthesis is done by Chenxi Liu and Dan Wang (xxxx) with an objective to reveal what health literacy represents. This study focuses on three main areas: first, knowledge of health, healthcare, and health systems; second, the ability to process and use information in various formats related to health and healthcare; and third, the ability to maintain health through self-management and collaboration with health providers. The health literacy here is conceptualized as set of knowledge, skills or hierarchy of functions. Minh Cuong and others (2021) in their study titled 'The levels of COVID-19 related health literacy among university students in Vietnam' with an aim to examine level of COVID-19 knowledge among university students in Vietnam. A self-developed questionnaire was created for a cross-sectional study involving all Phenikaa University students. It was evident from the study that only a portion of university students (suboptimal level) have sound knowledge about COVID-19. It is therefore suggested in research study that there is need to improve quality of COVID-19 education with stress upon all aspects of the disease and not only its preventive measures especially among those living alone or not focusing at all upon health related information. Another study carried out by Ashley Van Slyke (2020) was done to investigate 'Mental health literacy among undergraduate students' at university counseling centre in Northeastern United States. The goal of the study was to look into how students used campus mental health services and how mental health literacy correlated with individual characteristics. According to the findings, undergraduate students have a high level of mental health literacy, which means they have a strong awareness of mental illness, are less stigmatised, and are aware of resources on campus and in the community. According to the findings of the counselling center's doctors, undergraduate college students have high rates of anxiety, depression, and suicidality, as well as medium knowledge of on-campus options and low understanding of off-campus resources. Cecilia Nunes, Cristina Vazde Almeida and Celia Belin (2020) made an attempt to ascertain young age people perception towards health issues in their study entitled ' Health literacy in younger age groups : Health care perceptions: Informed people will be more prepared people' to ascertain young age people perception towards health issues. A well-organized questionnaire survey was conducted and distributed online. As per the study, young people want to know about their health but prefer to do their own research. On the other hand, health information research and the use of technical skills by young people to acquire health information both fail to produce reliable information sources, processing, and interpretation. AmnHagell (2015) in his study entitled 'Promoting young people's health literacy and understanding their help-seeking behaviour' found that young people are dependent upon more informal sources to get themselves aware about health literacy including issues related to physical and mental health problems. This age group exhibit high demand about self-awareness and need to feel self-reliant. Young people have developed increased faith in more formal sources due to their positive past experience, social support and encouragement. It is also suggested that promotion of health literacy is a very crucial activity for the betterment of young people's well-being and long term health outcomes. Muhammad Yousuf Ali and Rubina Bhatti (2020) conducted a study on 'COVID-19 (Corona virus) pandemic: Information sources channels for public health awareness'. The objective of this research is to identify public health information sources that libraries prefer in this pandemic scenario, as well as the role of information professionals in health education. It is concluded from the study that social distancing is one of the key factor that can prevent spread of COVID-19. Public health awareness can also help diminish the emergency situation that arose out of this dreadful disease. It also demonstrates that library professionals, with the help of health care providers, society, and communities, play an important role in spreading information. The study also proved that information channels like mobile Apps, artificial intelligence

based chatbots, social media trolling (like whatsapp, facebook, instagram), video based lecture and electronic resources play a very leading role in bringing about awareness among general public as well as health care professionals. Michelle Lambert and others (2014) carried out a study on ‘Health literacy: health professionals understandings and their perceptions of barrier that indigenous patients encounter’ to identify knowledge of health literacy among health professionals and the barriers to health literacy that patients confront which limits their ability to understand and manage their sickness. Health workers, according to the research, have a very limited understanding of health literacy. The study shows that indigenous, minority, and socioeconomically disadvantaged people have larger literacy requirements and it can be reduced by providing inclusive education of both health professionals as well as indigenous patients to reduce such inequities. Both the participants faces common cultural, social and systemic barrier to health literacy. Another study executed by Navkiran Kaur and Satinderbir Kaur (2021) on ‘Role of libraries in promoting health information literacy in India’ is concerned with recognizing and bridging gaps in provision of health information to general public. The role of India's public and medical libraries in providing health information sources and services, as well as developing health literacy among their users, is highlighted in this paper. The major problem revealed in this study lies in finding, selecting and using relevant health information out of abundance of information i.e. easily available now-a-days and avoiding misleading information. Tuyen Van Duong and colleagues (2017) conducted a study called ‘A new complete short-form health literacy survey instrument for patients in general’ with the goal of validating a conceptual short-form health literacy 12 items questionnaire (HL-SF12) in a patient population. The result depicts that health literacy is significantly higher among female gender and is also associated with higher income and more often seen with patients watching health-related television shows to inform them in this regard. Patients, on the other hand, reported stronger health literacy than the general public, but not when it came to disease prevention or health promotion. It is further concluded in the study that widespread HL-SF12 is a suitable and simple to handle tool for evaluation of patient’s health literacy in hospitals for ease of healthcare providers in enhancing patient’s health literacy and uplifting the quality of health services. Rocco Palumbo and Carmela Annarumma (2014) conveyed a research entitled ‘*The importance of being health literate: An organizational health literacy approach*’ which mainly emphasize upon approaches to improve organizational health literacy. This explorative research aims to bridge gaps by comparing formal and informal tools that should be adopted by health care organizations in order to improve their host’s health literacy. The results show that the informal tools are more common than formal inspite of the fact that the former has lower effectiveness in comparison to latter. It also exemplify that the health care organization are far enough from effective health literacy gateways. A lot of systemic efforts are needed on the part of health care organizations to identify the loopholes by selecting right formal tool to get them aware about health literacy and strongly require change towards effective processes in place of wasteful tools and techniques.

## 7. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

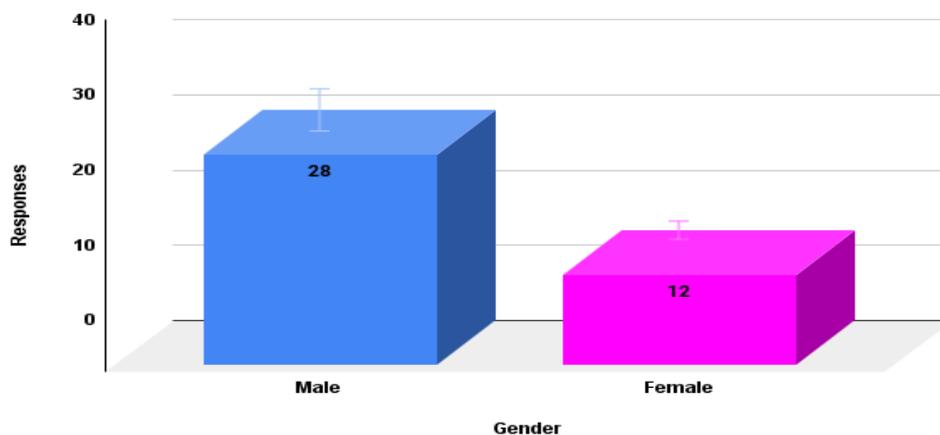
The act of giving a connotation to the obtained data and determining the results, suggestions, and conclusions is referred as data analysis and interpretation. Statistical data has no worth unless it is analyzed and interpreted to draw valid conclusions out of it. Hence, the data received through filled up questionnaire from the library has been analyzed and interpreted. For analyzing of data, the entire questionnaires received from the respondents were thoroughly scrutinized, organized and tabulated by the use of MS Excel.

**Table 1: Gender**

Sr. No.	Gender	Responses [N=40]
1	Female	12 (30%)
2	Male	28 (70%)

<b>Total</b>	<b>40 (100%)</b>
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**Table 1** depicts gender wise analysis. A total of 40 responses were received out of 54 in which 28 responses were made by male LIS Professionals and 12 female LIS Professionals. It is observed that 70 % of the respondents were male and only 30% remaining were female respondents. This shows a greater participation of male LIS Professionals as compared with female LIS Professionals at Dr. Zakir Husain Library, JamiaMilliaIslamia. This is also shown in **Figure 1**.



**Figure 1: Gender**

**Table 2: Age Distribution**

Sr. No.	Age Group	Responses [N=40]
1	25-30	2 (5%)
2	30-35	6 (15%)
3	35-40	8 (20%)
4	40-45	4 (10%)
5	45-60	19 (47.5%)
6	Above 60	1 (2.5%)
<b>Total</b>		<b>40 (100%)</b>

**Table 2** divulges age wise distribution of the responses received from LIS Professionals. A maximum of 19 (47.5%) responses received are between the age group of 45-65 years, followed by 8 (20%) between the age group of 35-40 years, then followed by 6 (15%) respondents between the age group of 30-35 years and the least one is above the age of 60 years i.e. retired LIS Professional (only 1 respondent) that contributes to only 2.5% of the total responses and so on. This shows a wide response received in all age groups. It is found from the study that most of the LIS working professionals in Dr. Zakir Husain Central Library, JMI are old age i.e. (50%). It proves that they have abundant working experience than the young age professionals i.e. (20%). Library should therefore attempt to preserve this tacit knowledge of experienced professionals for future posterity and use by young aspiring LIS Professional. It will help them to overcome the hurdles they confront in a certain practical situation while rendering their duties and responsibilities.

**Table 3: Educational Qualification**

Sr. No.	Qualification	Responses [N=40]
1	Ph.D.	05 (12.5%)
2	M.Phil.	03 (7.5%)
3	MLISc	16 (40%)

4	BLISc	06 (15%)
5	Certificate	06 (15%)
6	Others	04 (10%)
<b>Total</b>		<b>40 (100%)</b>

**Table 3** represents educational qualifications of the LIS Professionals. Qualification is the prerequisite for performing a job. Education plays a vital role that decides the level of understanding of LIS Professionals with health literacy. A maximum of 16 (40%) LIS Professionals have done M.LISc, followed by 6 (15%) respondents that were B.LISc. A total of 5 (12.5%) respondents were highly qualified having Doctorate of Philosophy and 3(7.5%) respondents have pursued M.Phil. With reference to certificate course in library and information science, only 6 (15%) respondents have pursued it. This shows that maximum numbers of respondents are well qualified and educated and have enough knowledge about health literacy. It is also evident from the study that 20% respondents are highly qualified (both Ph.D and M.Phil) and thus higher level of understanding is possible in this regard.

**Table 4: Designation**

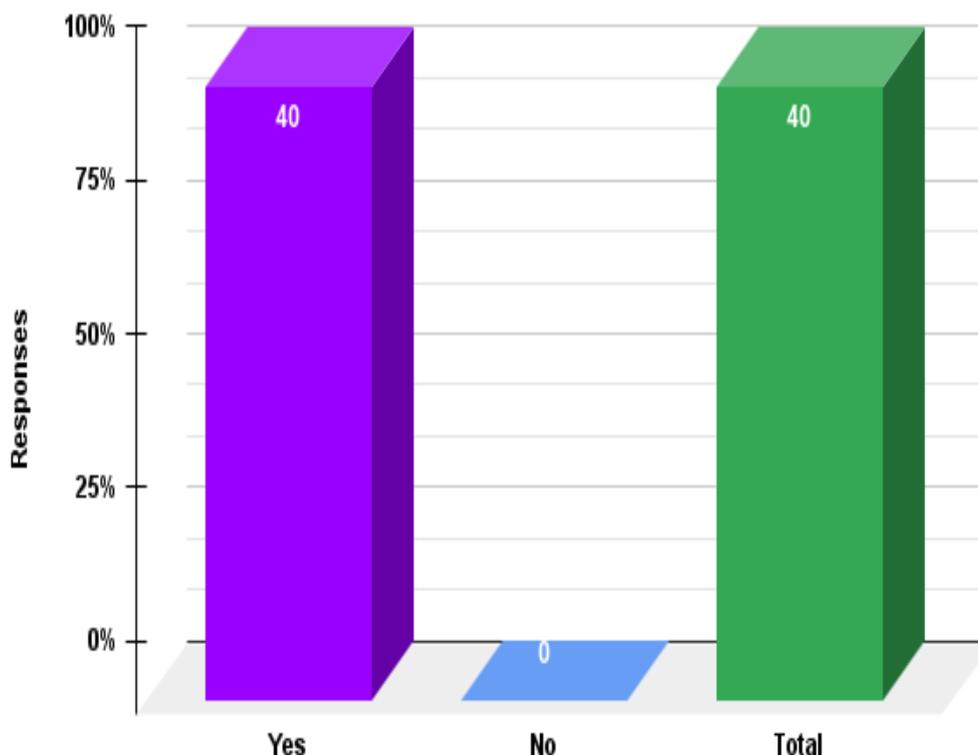
Sr. No.	Designation	Responses [N=40]
1	Deputy Librarian	1
2	Assistant Librarian	2
3	Professional Assistant	7
4	Semi Professional Assistant	11
5	Library Attendant/ Assistant	11
6	Ex-employee of Dr. Zakir Husain Library	1
7	Professor/ Associate Professor	1
8	Others	6
<b>Total</b>		<b>40</b>

**Table 4** expresses the level and positions of LIS Professionals at Dr.Zakir Husain Central Library, JamiaMilliaIslamia. An attempt is made to provide a complete coverage by including each and every LIS Professional at Dr.ZHL, JMI. The University Library act as an useful resource in meeting goals and objectives of the University and thus follow different Scales and level of designation including University Librarian, Deputy Librarian, Assistant Librarian, Professional and Semi Professional Assistant, Library Attendant/Assistant, Professor, etc that contributes to the overall structure of the LIS Professionals. Wide responses are received in this survey covering LIS Professional of various designations and level in a university library.

**Table 5: Awareness of Health Literacy**

Sr. No.	Awareness	Responses [N=40]
1	Yes	40 (100%)
2	No	00
<b>Total</b>		<b>40 (100%)</b>

**Table 5 and Figure 2** demonstrate the awareness of health literacy among LIS Professionals of Dr. Zakir Husain Libray, JMI. A total of 40 (100%) responses were received including both male and female LIS Professional, all having positive response and thus it is verified that all LIS Professionals are well alert with regard to health literacy. LIS Professionals plays a pivotal role in bringing health related awareness among academic community and hence if they are well informed then only can serve the community needs and requirements. Health related information is of great importance in today's pandemic situation where only preventive measures can safeguard the lives of the citizens.



**Figure 2: Awareness of Health Literacy**

**Table 6: Source of Health Literacy**

Sr. No.	Sources	Responses (%) [N=40]
1	Family/Friends	23 (57.5%)
2	Doctors	19 (47.5%)
3	By Participating in Health Literacy Programs	05 (12.5%)
4	Social Media	30 (75%)
5	Library Website	07 (17.5%)
6	WHO Website	08 (20%)
7	Newspaper/Magazines	25 (62.5%)
8	Ministry of Family & Health Welfare Website	14 (35%)
9	FM Radio	09 (22.5%)
10	Television	20 (50%)

**Table 6 and Figure 3** demonstrates the various sources of health literacy by the means of which LIS Professionals get attentive about health related information like family/friends, doctors, by participating in health related programmes, social media, library websites, newspaper/magazines, Ministry of family and health welfare websites, FM Radio and television. Maximum responses i.e.

30 (75%) reveals that LIS Professionals get awake by social media like WhatsApp, YouTube videos, networking sites like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc. which manifest that social media have a strong influence upon citizens and the least number of professionals i.e. 5 (12.5%) by participating in health literacy programmes. The figure also illustrates that 25 (62.5%) respondents acquire knowledge about health literacy by the way of newspaper/magazines, followed by 20 (50%) by television that verify that mass media too have a deep impact upon its users.

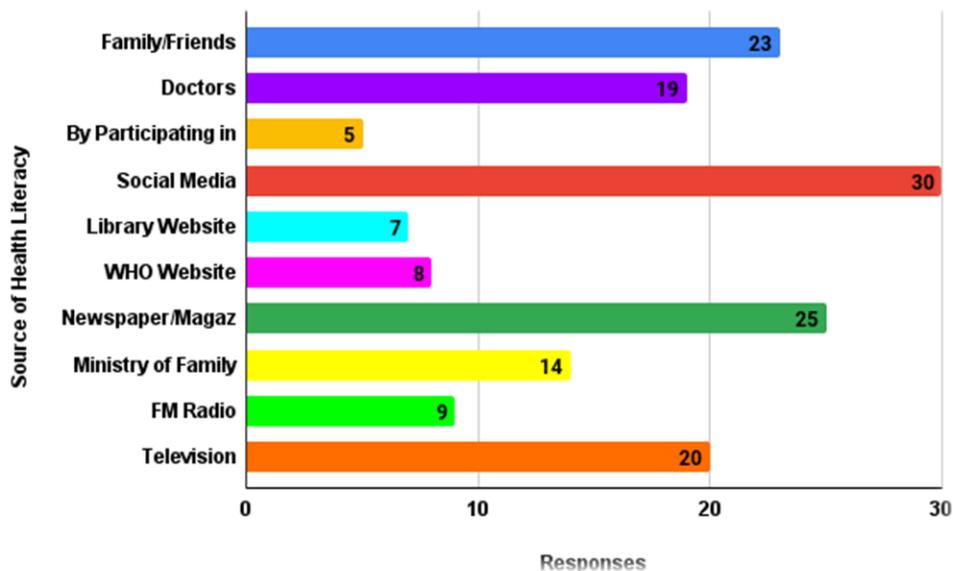


Figure 3: Sources of Health Literacy

Table 7: Most Preferred Media to acquire Health Literacy

Sr. No.	Media	Responses [N=40]
1	Print media (Pamphlets)	2 (5%)
2	Electronic media (Short clip videos released by the health organization)	38 (95%)
<b>Total</b>		<b>40 (100%)</b>

Table 7 exemplifies the media preferred by LIS Professionals to discover and get themselves familiar with health related information. A total of 38 responses that contributes to 95 % of total response rely upon electronic media i.e. some sort of short clip videos released by the health organization to get themselves well conversant about health literacy and only 2 (5%) respondents were reliant upon print media like pamphlets. From this study it is evidently said that electronic media have a very powerful effect upon inhabitants in comparison to print mediums. Moreover electronic mode or short video clips are easily comprehensible and convincing to LIS Professionals and therefore it is preferred most of the time.

Table 8: Users Understanding towards Health Literacy

S.No.	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	Have capacity to locate, evaluate, and apply information and services in order to make health-related decisions and actions.	13 (32.5%)	27 (67.5%)	00	00
2	Having adequate information to maintain my health.	18 (45%)	21 (52.5%)	1 (2.5%)	00

3	Ability to locate high-quality health information.	14 (35%)	24 (60%)	2 (5%)	00
4	“Understanding health related information well enough to know what to do.”	17 (42.5%)	20 (50%)	2 (5%)	1 (2.5%)

**Table 8** deals with the competence of LIS Professionals to locate, evaluate and apply health related information in their day to day life and make health-related decisions and actions by maintaining their own health along with the ability to guide others well enough to combat their hurdles in relation to health literacy. A maximum of 27 (67.5%) respondents agree to have the capacity to locate, evaluate and apply health related information and services in order to make health-related decisions and actions, followed by 24 (60%) respondents who have the ability to locate high-quality health information, then followed by 21 (52.5%) respondents who agree to have adequate information to maintain their own health. Half of the respondent’s i.e.20 (50%) have well understanding with health information and know what to do. This proves profound level of understanding among LIS Professionals towards health literacy.

**Table 9: Symptoms of COVID-19**

Sr. No.	Statements	Most Common Symptoms	Less Common Symptoms	Serious Symptoms
1	“Fever, Cough, Tiredness, Loss of Taste or Smell”	34(85%)	5(12.5%)	1(2.5%)
2	“Sore Throat, Headache, Aches and Pains, Diarrhea, a rash on Skin, or Discoloration of Fingers or Toes Red or Irritated Eyes”	11(27.5%)	28(70%)	1(2.5%)
3	“Difficulty Breathing or Shortness of Breath, Loss of Speech or Mobility, or Confusion, Chest Pain”	18(45%)	7(17.5%)	15(37.5%)

**Table 9** exemplify the familiarity of LIS Professionals with the symptoms of COVID-19 and their wakefulness in this regard. The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are fever, cough, tiredness, and loss of taste or smell, with 34 (85 percent) respondents knowing about them, followed by 28 (70 percent) respondents who know about less common symptoms like sore throat, headache, aches and pains, diarrhoea, a rash on the skin, or discoloration of fingers or toes, red or irritated eyes. Only 15 (37.5%) of respondents were aware of major serious symptoms of this disease such as trouble breathing, loss of speech or mobility, confusion, and chest pain. This shows that LIS Professionals need to be more literate about serious symptoms of COVID-19 and thus can safeguard themselves as well as others in which health literacy programs can help a lot that should be arranged at regular periods by the library itself.

**Table 10: COVID-19 Transmission Pathways**

Sr. No.	Transmission Pathways	Percentage [N=40]
1	COVID-19 is passed from person to person by respiratory droplets	27 (67.5%)
2	COVID-19 is passed from person to person via aerosols	19 (47.5%)
3	COVID-19 is passed from person to person via contaminated surfaces	20 (50%)
4	COVID-19 can be transferred in a variety of ways	27 (67.5%)

**Table 10** presents the COVID-19 transmission pathways. An aggregate of 27(67.5%) respondents agree with the statement that transmission from person to person is through respiratory droplets and in a variety of ways. Half of the respondents i.e. 20 (50%) agree with the fact that COVID-19 is passed from person to person by the means of contaminated surfaces, followed by 19 (47.5%) respondents who feel that COVID-19 is passed from person to person through aerosols. Overall, it can be concluded from the study that LIS Professionals of Dr. ZHL, JMI are well literate about COVID-19 transmission pathways.

**Table 11: Preventive Measures of COVID-19**

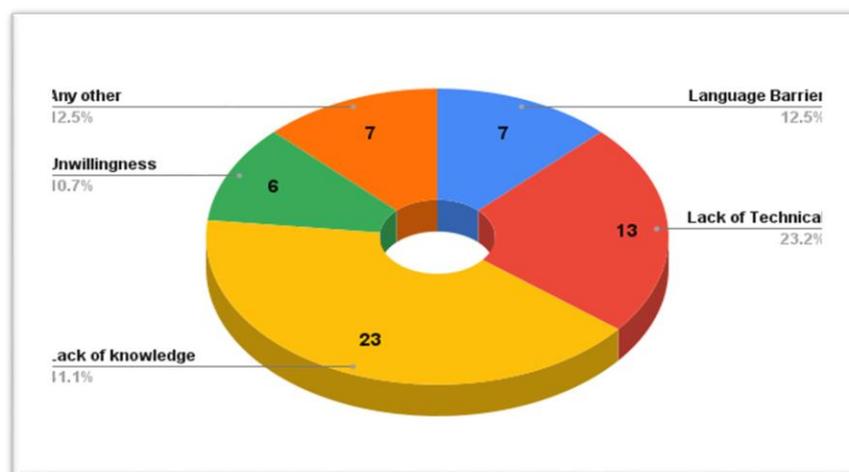
Sr. No.	Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	“ Keep a physical distance of at least 1 metre from others, Avoid crowds and close contact”	31 (77.5%)	9 (22.5%)	00	00
2	“ When physical separation isn't possible and the environment isn't well ventilated, put on a properly fitted mask”	27 (67.5%)	13 (32.5%)	00	00
3	“Frequently clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water.”	28 (70%)	11 (27.5%)	1 (2.5%)	00
4	“When you cough or sneeze, cover your mouth and nose with a bent elbow or a tissue. Used tissues should be disposed of quickly, and hands should be cleaned on a regular basis”	33 (82.5%)	7 (17.5%)	00	00
5	“ Self-isolate until you recover if you develop symptoms or test positive for COVID-19”	29 (72.5%)	11 (27.5%)	00	00

**Table 11** represents the coherence of LIS Professionals with preventive measures of COVID-19 that can be adopted to avoid any severity of disease. A total of 33 (82.5%) people strongly believe that when coughing or sneezing, one should cover his or her mouth and nose with a bent elbow or a tissue that should be discarded immediately, followed by 31 (77.5%) respondents strongly agree that by keeping a safe distance of 1 metre from others and avoiding crowds and close contact, one can be protected from this dreadful disease while 29 (72.5%) respondents strongly agree with the fact that self-isolation is required until the person infected recovers completely. 28 (70 percent) respondents strongly agree that cleansing hands with an alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water on a regular basis is a smart option, while 27 (67.5%) respondents strongly agree with the statement that when physical separation isn't possible and environment isn't well ventilated, properly fitted masks must be used to avoid such transmission. It is clearly evident from the study that LIS Professionals of Dr. Zakir Husain Library, JamiaMilliaIslamia have sound knowledge about preventive measures that should be undertaken to cease the transmission of COVID-19 infection.

**Table 12: Problems Faced by LIS Professionals**

Sr. No.	Problems	Responses [N=40]
1	Language Barrier	7 (17.5%)
2	Lack of Technical Skills	13 (32.5%)
3	Lack of Knowledge on Health Literacy Sources	23 (57.5%)
4	Unwillingness	6 (15%)
5	Any other	7 (17.5%)

**Table 12 and Figure 4** showcase the hurdles faced by LIS Professionals while acquiring health literacy. A maximum of 23 responses that contributes to 57.5% of the total responses reveals that they have lack of knowledge on health literacy sources, followed by 13 (32.5%) responses that are deficient in technical skills required for acquiring health related information. Moreover, 7 (17.5%) respondents face language constraints and 6 (15%) respondents showed unwillingness in acquiring health related information. This proves that majority of LIS Professionals are oblivious about authentic health literacy sources on which they should rely upon to get best and latest health related information. Moreover, language barrier and unwillingness to attain health related information are some of the reasons to diminish health literacy.



**Figure 4: Problems faced by LIS Professionals**

**Table 13: Library Outreach Activity**

Sr. No.	Library Role	Responses (N=40)
1	Yes	40 (100%)
2	No	00
<b>Total</b>		<b>40 (100%)</b>

**Table 13** expresses the library's role in promoting health literacy among its academic users. A total of 40 responses that means 100% respondents agree upon library's eminent role in providing health related information to its users. Thus it is strongly verified that library outreach activities and orientation programs can surely enable health literacy among its academic community. It is therefore necessary that library should take grave steps in this regard to enhance health literacy amongst its academic users and promote consciousness within them by rendering outreach activities like organizing lectures, exhibitions, health literacy programs, updating library websites, library Facebook page and displaying health related information in high traffic areas of the library like circulation desk, new arrivals and many other ways.

**Table 14: Promotion of Health Literacy through Library**

Sr. No.	Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	Frequently Organizing Health Literacy Programmes.	20 (50%)	17 (42.5%)	3 (7.5%)	00
2	Health Literacy News Broadcast through Library Websites.	16 (40%)	21 (52.5%)	3 (7.5%)	00
3	Social Networking sites like, Library Facebook page	15 (37.5%)	22 (55%)	3 (7.5%)	00

4	Displaying health-related information in high-traffic areas of the library. For example, the Circulation Desk, New Arrivals Display Areas, Library Bulletin Board, and so on.	16 (40%)	22 (55%)	2 (5%)	00
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**Table 14** depicts the role of library in promoting health literacy in an academic community. A maximum of 22 (55%) respondents agree with the statement that social networking sites like library Facebook page and display of health related information in high-traffic areas of the library like circulation desk, new arrivals display areas, library bulletin board and so on can increase health literacy to a great extent among its academic users, followed by 21(52.5%) respondents that agree with the fact that health literacy news broadcast can be done through library websites. Awareness by the means of adding health related information through Library websites can prove to be a very sound platform for all regular students who usually visit library websites to keep them updated about the recent news and services offered by the library. This shows that library have a greater influence on the minds of academic users and can lead a pivotal role in bringing more alertness about health literacy among its patrons.

## 7.1 Findings

- The findings of the study clearly show that the male LIS Professionals had shown greater participation in this survey as compared to female employees of Dr. Zakir Husain Library, Jamia Millia Islamia. The majority of 70% respondents are male and the rest 30% are female employees including all age groups.
- In connection with qualification, the majority of the LIS Professionals are highly qualified and knowledgeable about health literacy.
- The result depicts the various sources to gain health literacy in which the majority of 75% respondents rely on social media platforms like WhatsApp, You Tube short videos released by health organizations and social networking sites like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc to get themselves acquainted with health related information which proves a strong influential power of social media upon people.
- Several respondents were also reliant upon mass media platforms like newspaper/magazines, television to get themselves conversant about health literacy.
- It is evident from the study that majority of respondents preferred electronic media than print media to get themselves educated about health literacy. This proves that in today's scenario and with advent of ICT, electronic media have a powerful hold upon people.
- A lot of hindrances are faced by respondents while gaining health related information like language constraints, lack of knowledge on health related sources, lack of technical skills, etc.
- The survey reveals that majority of LIS Professionals are well literate about COVID-19 transmission pathways, its symptoms and preventive measures that can be adopted to evade its transmission.
- The findings reveal that majority of LIS Professionals are capable of locating, evaluating and applying health related information at the time of the need.
- It is a very good sign for Dr. Zakir Husain Library, JMI that all respondents are in favor of library outreach activities to promote health literacy by the way of organizing health literacy programs, updating library websites and its Facebook page and display of health related information amongst its academic community.

## 7.2 Suggestions

- Library should conduct health literacy programs on frequent basis for both staff as well as its academic users teaching technical skills required to explore health related data and briefing knowledge on reliable health related sources.
- Library authorities should encourage LIS Professionals working at Dr.ZHL to get them acquainted with the latest health related information by organizing lectures, discussion forums by inviting medical experts for guidance, opinion and recommendations.
- Placing pamphlets (describing prevention and cure about COVID-19 related health literacy) can be kept before verso page of the books that are frequently issued by the students will off target gain their attention and bring more alertness among them in this regard.
- Libraries can guide its academic users in overcoming language constraints by the use of the modern technologies like Google translators and many more.
- Tacit knowledge of the experienced professionals should be preserved in some form to benefit future young generation to tackle hindrances that may be faced by them while rendering their services.

## 8. CONCLUSION

From this study, we draw a conclusion that LIS Professionals from JMI are well versed with health literacy and are well educated and qualified professionals having sound knowledge about COVID-19 related health information. They are well literate about its symptoms, transmission and preventive measures and are capable to locate, evaluate and make corrective actions and right decisions in this area and thus have ability to guide others too. A majority of respondents agree with the library's role in promoting health literacy. Social media platforms like WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc also have a deep influence upon its citizens. A lot of respondents also depend upon mass media like newspaper/magazines, televisions to get themselves literate in these areas. As a result, it may also be inferred that mass media plays an important role in increasing attentiveness among its users. Electronic format is most preferred option by LIS Professionals to get them informed about recent news in this regard. Thus it is evident that library outreach activities should be encouraged in this pandemic situation with the use of electronic mode to promote health literacy among academic community by organizing health literacy programs in online mode, regular updating of library websites, Facebook page and display of health related information in high traffic areas of the library like circulation desk, new arrival areas, library bulletin board, etc where the probability of student's reach is more likely to occur. Libraries are the aggregators of knowledge and thus can impart it to others benefiting society and nation as a whole and can serve information needs of its user community and protecting them in such crucial times.

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