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Student's Perception on Information Literacy at M.D.S.D. Girls College Ambala City

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Abstract: *Paper is based on a survey conducted to study the level of information literacy at M.D. S. D. Girls College, Ambala City using questionnaire method. The literacy levels of respondents (students) in information technology, the knowledge of students in using the tools of information technology and the areas where they lack in information literacy were assessed and the most preferred/popular sources of information at M.D. S. D. Girls College among the users were identified. Further, the key issues have been identified and suggestions are made on the methods of increasing the literacy levels of the users in information technology environment.*

Keywords: Information Literacy; Importance of Information Literacy; Information Technology; Sources of Information

Introduction: Information Literacy is the set of skills needed to find, retrieve, analyze, and use information. The beginning of the 21st century has been called the Information Age because of the explosion of information output and information sources. It has become increasingly clear that students cannot learn everything they need to know in their field of study in a few years of college. Information literacy equips them with the critical skills necessary to become independent lifelong learners. Academic success depends upon the students' abilities to evaluate the information that they can access to understand the quality of their information sources in to a coherent theme. Various terms are used to describe these abilities, including, research skills, Information skills, Information proficiency, critical thinking and information literacy. Information literacy as per US National Commission on Library and Information Science: "encompasses knowledge of one's information concerns and needs and [it is] the ability to identify, locate, evaluate, organize and effectively create, use and communicate information to address issues or problems at hand. It is a prerequisite for participating effectively in the information society and is part of the basic human rights of lifelong learning" (Webb and Powis, 2004).

Librarian plays a pivotal role in society and the users who educate themselves with new and updated system can obtain the quality of creating extraordinary work. Information literacy is the process of knowing when and why information is required, where to find it and how to evaluate it and communicate it in an equitable way. It is a compound of all the skills that are required for an effective and excellent use of information. Information Literacy is an ability to gather, organize, filter and evaluate the information which also includes the ability to form well-rounded opinions based on the result of the information you have at your disposal. the word 'information literacy' is used as a cover term to compile all or numerous forms of literacy viz. computer literacy, digital literacy, internet literacy, visual, oral, hyper literacy etc. Each one of these is essential to determine that each process has a certain significance to get the information that you need. Not only knowing what you need but how to get what you need and identifying the tools to get it done is real knowledge per se. Thus whole perception of information literacy is to move from text based learning to resource based learning. The role of librarians has been redefined:

whereas fifty years ago they created collections of reliable paper- based resources, they may also teach students:

How to think about a research problem

How to recognize their information needs

How to evaluate the information they collect from a bewildering variety of sources

How to use that information responsibly

Importance of Information Literacy:

The Information literacy competency standards for higher Education defines “Information Literacy” as proficiency with a set of skills that enables a person to navigate the universe of Information, to make sense of Unfiltered formats, raising questions about its authenticity, validity and reliability...Because the sheer abundance of Information will not itself create more informed citizenry without a complementary cluster of abilities necessary to use information effectively”. Information literacy is skillfulness to find, retrieve, evaluate and application of information. Everybody knows that nobody can learn everything they need to know their area of knowledge in few years of colleges and schools. Most of us assume that as students writing our exams and reading textbooks are acquiring information literacy skills, but it is not true. Information literacy may be introduced in this way but what needs to be done is side by side educational programme in information literacy for a strong base of knowledge. Information literacy is required for equality and democracy It is essential because to the following reasons (Dhiman, 2006):

- Rapid increase in the stream of information due to information revolution;
- Advent of information and communication technologies;
- Vast variety of information sources;
- Changing shape of libraries;
- Wide dispersal of information;
- Increase in number of users; and
- Research on complex and interdisciplinary topics.

Thus, the importance of information literacy cannot be neglected and it can be summed up by and bound as, “a prerequisite for participatory citizenship, social inclusion, the creation of new knowledge, personal empowerment and learning for life” (Naik and Padmini, 2014).

Skills required for Information Literacy:

- Need for Information
- Available resources
- How to find Information

- Need to evaluate results
- How to work with or exploit results
- Ethics and responsibility of Use
- How to communicate and share your findings
- How to manage your findings

Objectives of the Study

This study is conducted to find out the knowledge of the information literacy among the students of M.D.S.D. Girls College Ambala City. The study was carried out with the following objectives:

- To search the extent information skills of the students.
- To know the frequency of library visits by the students.
- To know the proficiency level of information literacy among students.
- To gauge the knowledge of using tools of information technology.
- To identify the most preferred documents in library used by the students.
- To suggest how information literacy aptitude can be raised among the students.

Research Methodology:

The population of the study was the students of M.D.S.D. Girls College Ambala City. A questionnaire was designed to collect the data from the respondents. It was in simple English with fifteen multiple choice questions. Hundred questionnaires were distributed to the students of different branches of M.D.S.D. Girls College randomly. Total fifteen questions were there in questionnaire to evaluate the information skills of the students at M.D.S.D. Girls College Ambala City.

Limitations of the study:

The target of the study was to find out the information literacy levels of the students at M.D.S.D. Girls College Ambala City. Thus, the study was focused on the skills of the students for finding and retrieving information from libraries of their university from both print and electronic sources being used by them in college library. Data was collected from the available students at M.D.S.D. Girls College.

Data Analysis:

Table 1: Branch Wise Distribution of the Respondents:

<i>Branch Wise Distribution of the Respondents</i>	No. of Respondents
Arts	45
Commerce	33
Science	22
Total	100

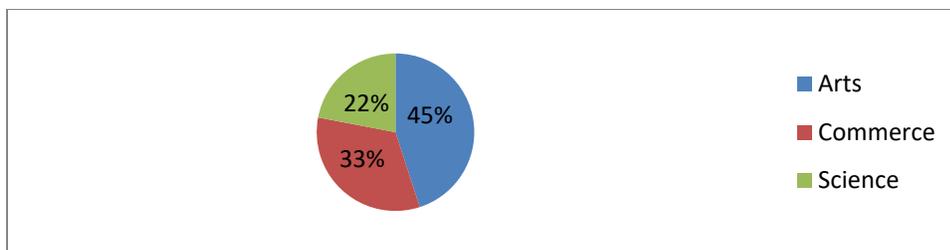
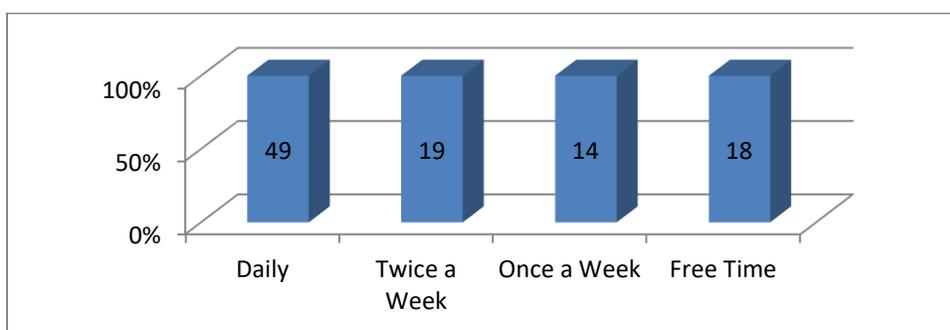


Table No. 1 shows branch wise distribution of respondents. It is found that Maximum 45% respondents were from Arts background.

Table 2: Frequency of Visits to the Library

Frequency of Visits to the Library	No. of Respondents
Daily	49
Twice a Week	19
Once a Week	14
Free Time	18
Total	100

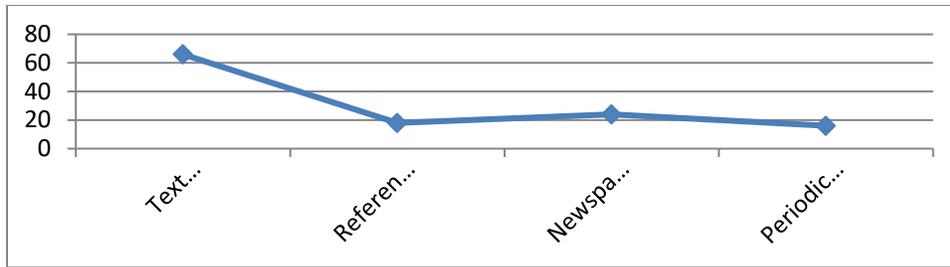


Maximum 49 % respondents said that they visit the library daily. 19% respondents said that visit library twice a week followed by 18% said that they visit the library once a week.

Table 3: Preferred Documents Used in the Library

Preferred Documents Used in the Library	No. of Respondents
Text Books	66
Reference Books	18
Newspapers	24
Periodicals/magazines	16

Respondents could choose more than one option

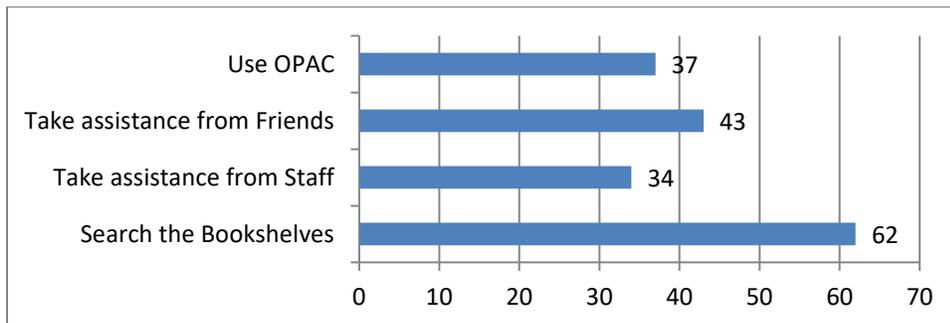


Maximum respondent's response that they visit library to issue or study text books and 24% respondents said that they visit the library to read newspaper.

Table 4: Methods Used to Search Documents

Methods Used to Search Documents	No. of Respondents
Search the Bookshelves	62
Take assistance from Staff	34
Take assistance from Friends	43
Use OPAC	37

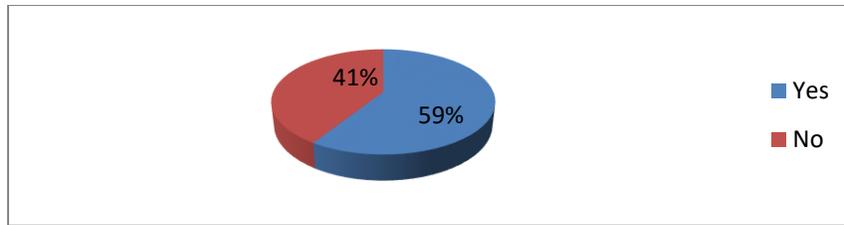
Respondents could choose more than one option



62 out of 100 respondents reply that they search bookshelves to search document. 43 respondents said they take assistance from friends to search the documents.

Table 5: Use of Internet to collect Information

Use of Internet to collect Information	No. of Respondents
<i>Yes</i>	59
<i>No</i>	41
Total	100

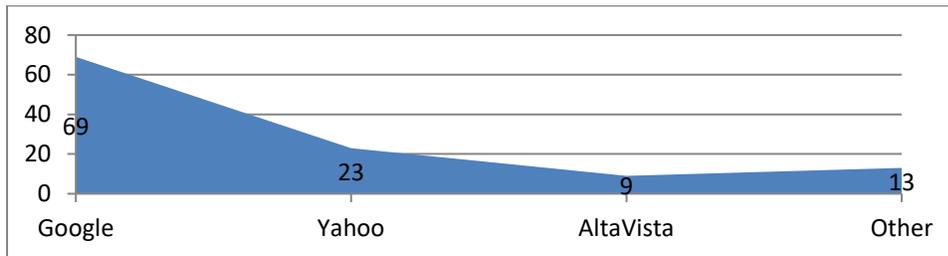


It is seen that users also use the internet in library for collecting various types of information. Table 5 shows the use of internet among the students who use it to collect information. Majority 59% respondents said that they use internet to collect their required information.

Table 6: Frequently Used Search Engines

Frequently Used Search Engines	No. of Respondents
Google	69
Yahoo	23
AltaVista	9
Other	13

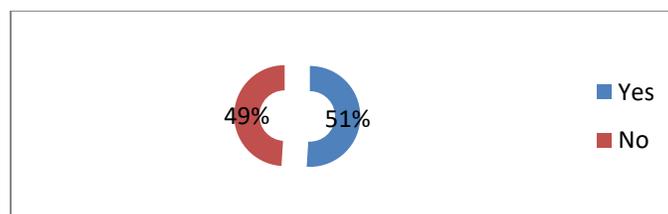
Respondents could choose more than one option



Maximum 69 respondents out of hundred said that they use Google search engine most of the time.

Table 7: Knowledge of Open Access E-Resources

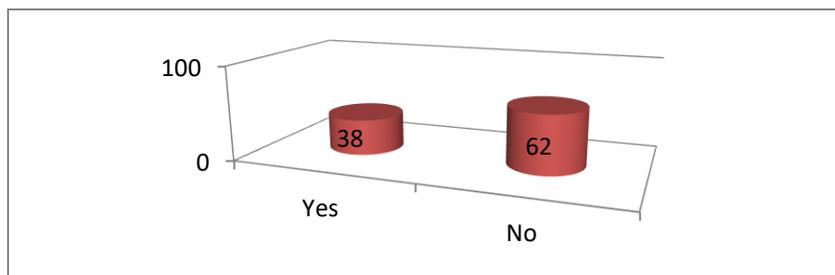
Knowledge of Open Access E-Resources	No. of Respondents
Yes	51
No	49
Total	100



It is seen that in the era of information and communication technology, the users frequently use internet for their daily information needs. This knowledge may further be enriched by knowing open access resources. So next question was asked to ascertain whether the users are aware of open access e-resources or not? Maximum 51 Respondents said that they have good knowledge of open access e-resources.

Table 8: Status of Subscription of E-Resources

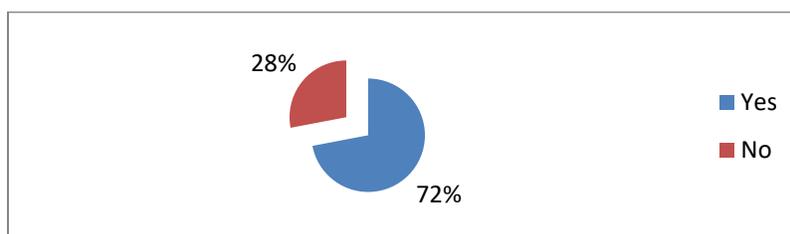
Status of Subscription of E-Resources	No. of Respondents
Yes	38
No	62
Total	100



Besides, open access resources, university libraries are also subscribing e-resources through various modes. But whether, the users are aware of them or not? it was ascertained in next question. The table no eight shows that maximum 62% respondents said that they are aware that MDS college library subscribing E-resources.

Table 9: Assistance from Library Staff to locate Online Information

Assistance from Library Staff to locate Online Information	No. of Respondents
Yes	72
No	28
Total	100

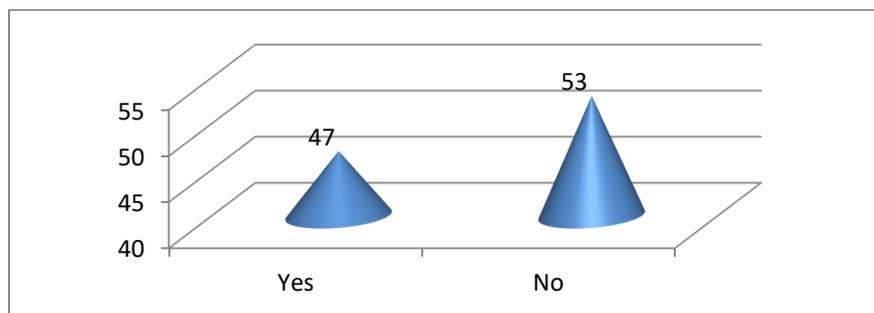


Sometimes, the users may not be aware of using the online information. Then, what will be the solution, the solution is that there should be some library professional that could help them in locating the right information in short time. Table No. 9 shows that 72% students are getting help from the library staff to locate any type of desired online information.

Table 10: Conduction of User Orientation Programmes

Conduction of User Orientation Programmes	No. of Respondents
Yes	47

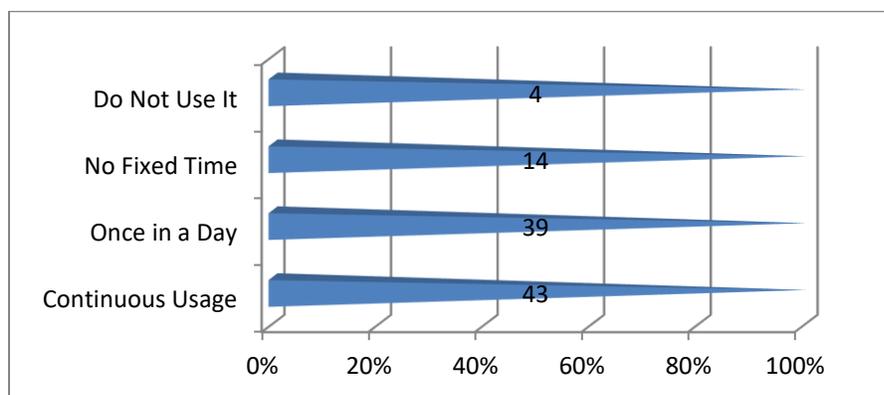
No	53
Total	100



User education programmes are necessary to make aware the new users in the library about different sections and working of library. Majority 53% respondents negatively responded about the conduction of user orientation programmes by the libraries to educate them on the library system. Only 47% respondents responded positively.

Table 11: Use of Social Networking Sites

Use of Social Networking Sites	No. of Respondents
Continuous Usage	43
Once in a Day	39
No Fixed Time	14
Do Not Use It	4
Total	100

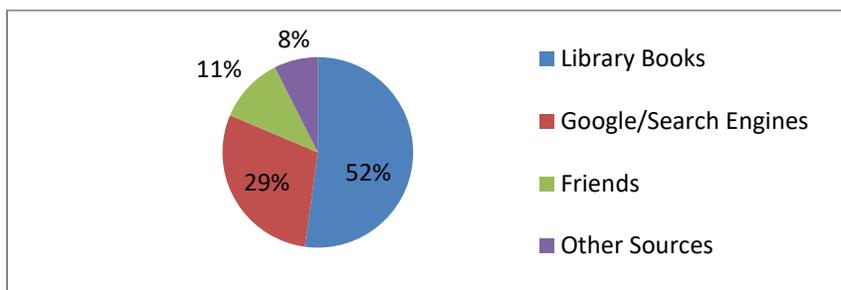


With the increased use of internet and cheap & easy availability of the internet, the use of social networking has also increased in the library. It is found that majority 43 respondents out of 100 replied that they use social networking sites continuously followed by 39 respondents out of hundred reply that they use social networking sites once in a day.

Table 12: Reliability and Convenience of Sources for Information

Reliability and Convenience of Sources for Information	No. of Respondents
Library Books	84
Google/Search Engines	47
Friends	18
Other Sources	12

Respondents could choose more than one option



The reliability of the sources is of much importance in the era of internet, because a lot of information is available on the net, but whether it is useful and reliable? It is of great concern. Maximum 52% respondents reply in favour of library books followed by 29% Google or search engines.

Table 13: Satisfaction with the Inventory of the Library

Satisfaction with the Inventory of the Library	No. of Respondents
Yes	61
No	39
Total	100

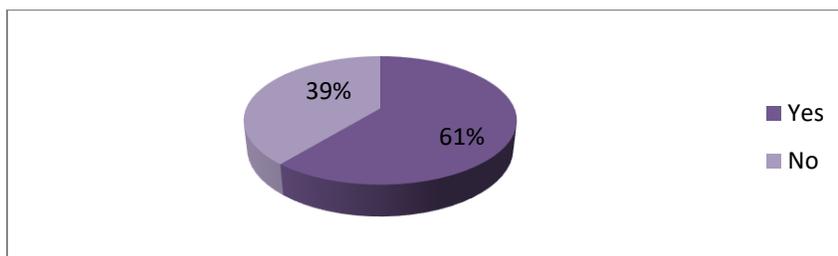
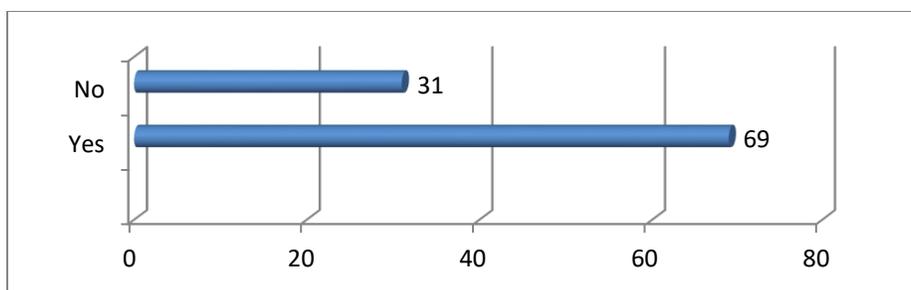


Table 13 shows the general satisfaction of the users with the inventory that is the collection of the library. It is seen that maximum 61% students are satisfied with the collection of their MDSDE College library.

Table 14: Satisfaction with the Library Services

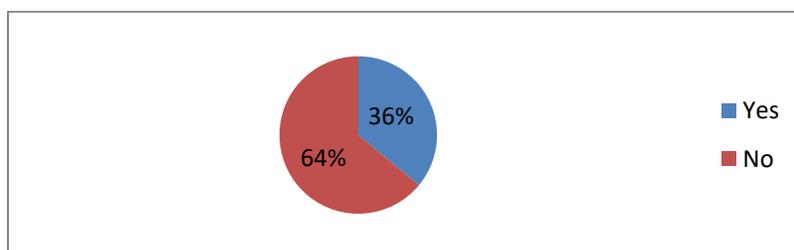
Satisfaction with the Library Services	No. of Respondents
Yes	69
No	31
Total	100



Library services are equally important along with the collection of the library. Hence, the users were asked to rate their satisfaction with the availability of the library services. It is found that maximum 69% respondents indicate that overall services of MDSD College Library are satisfactory.

Table 15: Digitalization of Library Reading Materials

Digitalization of Library Reading Materials	No. of Respondents
Yes	36
No	64
Total	100



Digitization of the reading material has paved the way to use information resources more successfully. Therefore, it is seen most of the time, the users want information in digital format but sometimes, users need traditional format of the reading material, i.e., the printed material. Table no 15 shows that maximum 64% respondents really wants that their college library to be digitalized, which a very good sign,36% students were responded negatively as their opinion was more in favor of traditional libraries and resources.

Findings:

- It is found that Maximum 45% respondents were from Arts background.
- Maximum 49 % respondents said that they visit the library daily. 19% respondents said that visit library twice a week followed by 18% said that they visit the library once a week.
- Maximum respondent’s response that they visit library to issue or study text books and 24% respondents said that they visit the library to read newspaper.
- 62 out of 100 respondents reply that they search bookshelves to search document. 43 respondents said they take assistance from friends to search the documents.
- Majority 59% respondents said that they use internet to collect their required Information.
- Maximum 69 respondents out of hundred said that they use Google search engine most of the time.
- Maximum 51 Respondents said that they have good knowledge of open access e-resources.
- MDSD Library is also subscribing e-resources. Maximum 62% respondents said that they are aware that MDSD college library subscribing E-resources.

- Table No. 9 shows that 72% students are getting help from the library staff to locate any type of desired online information.
- Majority 53% respondents negatively responded about the conduction of user orientation programmes by the libraries to educate them on the library system. Only 47% respondents responded positively.
- It is found that majority 43 respondents out of 100 replied that they use social networking sites continuously followed by 39 respondents out of hundred reply that they use social networking sites once in a day.
- Maximum 52% respondents reply in favour of library books followed by 29% Google or search engines.
- It is found that maximum 61% students are satisfied with the collection of their MDSDE College library.
- It is found that maximum 69% respondents indicate that overall services of MDSDE College Library are satisfactory.
- Maximum 64% respondents really wants that their college library to be digitalized, which a very good sign, 36% students were responded negatively as their opinion was more in favor of traditional libraries and resources.

Suggestions:

- Library should conduct orientation programmes for the students especially for the new comers to educate them on the workings of library and to harness the facilities to best of its use.
- Practical sessions need to be conducted for the students to make aware them - how to access the journals and other information over the internet and how to use an OPAC.
- Information literacy programs should be introduced in the curriculum as a compulsory
- Course to help the students to reap the benefits of a well-stocked library in an efficient manner to increase the quality of education.
- The infrastructure of libraries and the support system should be in synchronization with the
- Courses offered at the universities. Not only should the courses be latest in the concerned field but the reference material provided should also be updated in the libraries in terms of technology and accessibility.
- The users should be educated not only on how to access information but also how to process and dispense it in a manner which promotes quality research and learning through awareness on information literacy.

Conclusion:

Librarian role is not defined as support for faculty but rather as an active agent in the mission of education. As students progress in their education, they need more refined skills. Librarians tailor their content to the needs of the user in order to meet the student's needs for academic success. Librarians can teach the students to think broadly about their topic, look for corresponding interests in other disciplines, search databases, refine their topic, write their work in a specific citation style and avoid plagiarism and copyright issues. The results of the present study show that information literacy level among the students of M.D.S.D. Girls College is not up to the mark. Most of the students visit library for study purposes and end up seeking text books relevant to their syllabus. They are totally unaware of other primary sources like periodicals, encyclopedias, e-journals etc. Further, most of them visit the library to either get recommended text books of their syllabus or to read newspapers and popular magazines. The results further indicate that students directly approach the shelves for searching the books/ documents. Surprisingly few respondents only use and know the OPAC in the library. Knowledge of open access e-resources is also comparable and on the rise but subscriptions of e-resources is surprisingly low. Assistance from the library staff to the students is favorable but in contradiction the rate of user orientation programmes and drives to educate students. Library systems is substandard that needs to be upgraded. However, it is seen that the tech savvy generation is restricted to use the power of internet only to socialize and get their news feed but when it comes to educate themselves the learners' reliance and preference is still towards the more traditional ways of flipping through just the hard bound books on the shelves which are mostly older versions of the textbooks printed

ages ago. There is ever growing need to update and multiply the quantity and quality of the reliable information available and to keep up and cater for the learners need and to seek the help from Technology and pump in more resources to upgrade the 'source' of all sources of information in the libraries. Integration of digital Information literacy in to the Curriculum is about building skills for independent and lifelong learning in a systematic way throughout a

Student's career. Library and Information Science deal with information, organization, control, searching, storage, dissemination etc. now question is arising how information literacy can be integrated in library science course curriculum. The ideal place to start is curriculum design stage. This will ensure digital Information literacy and skills are introduced and developed in library science appropriate subject and context in a logical and sequential way.

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