Digital Literacy among the Graduate Students of Colleges of Jorhat District

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Abstract

Digital Literacy is an important and necessary aspect in today's ICT environment. With the emergence of ICT, digital literacy became an essential quality for all of us. This paper has made an effort to study the different ways and means used by the graduate students for searching digital information in Jorhat District. This study also carried out to know the available sources used by graduate students for digital information. Further, the study finds that most of the students generally search information relating to their subject. The paper also focuses are the students are computer literate or not as to access digital literacy computer literacy is must. In conclusion, some important and fruitful suggestions are given to improve digital literacy skill among graduate students. . .

Keyword: Digital literacy, Information literacy, Graduate students of colleges of Jorhat district.

Introduction: Technological advancement helps our society in rapid transformation**.** Every sector like education, business, agriculture etc blessed with touches of technology. And, helps in rapid transformation of our society. Information seekers also blessed with the flood of digitized information. It becomes difficult to them to get their pinpoint information from the flood of information. So for searching exact information from the enormous amount of information digital literacy become an essential part of our life. Though computer and internet occupy an important place in everyone's life, with this we must know how to search, where to search to get our required information. Computer literacy and digital literacy is also an emergency prerequisite for job seekers.

In colleges, graduate students are the most important input. At graduate level students are much aware about their future plan. At this stage, they have to attend seminar, workshops, talks show, group dissection etc to develop their knowledge base. They are also play the role of information disseminator as they are connected with social networking sites. Are they all well convergent with the latest technological enhancement? Are they able to search their essential information quickly? Are all students has equal ability while using any digital device? The present study has been conducted to identify the level of

information literacy among the graduate students of the colleges of Jorhat district. The study reveals that majority of the students are able to identify, search, evaluate and use the required information. However, it is found that the students are not much aware about digital information and their use. The study also reveals that digital literacy training   should be arranged at regular interval to upgrade their digital literacy level. In this regard library and information science professional can do a lot to achieve this goal.

Meaning of Digital Literacy: According to Glister (1997; p.270)   Digital Literacy is "a set of skills to access the Internet; find, manage and edit digital information; join in communications; and otherwise engage with an online information and communication network. In simple terms, digital literacy is the ability to properly use and evaluate digital resources, tools and services and apply it to their lifelong learning process." But most important aspect of digital literacy is the judgement of collecting information   from the web as some information are available on web without filtration.

Characteristics of Digitally Literate People:
They can use digital information effectively to accomplish a work.
They can access the required   digital information effectively and efficiently.
They can make critical evaluation about   the digital information sources and services..
Understand the economic, legal, and social issues surrounding the use of digital information access and use of this information ethically and legally
Determine the extent of digital information needed.
Incorporate selected digital information into one's knowledge base;

Digital Information Literacy is a major component of information literacy. It helps users cope with information from a variety of digital formats and provides techniques and methods of collecting digital resources. It creates awareness of issues like copyright and intellectual property rights in a digital environment. Information is available from many sources and in many formats, such as printed text, television, videos, library databases, web sites, and more. To be "information literate" one needs to know why, when, and how to use all of these tools and think critically about the information they provide. One can't become digital literate in one day. Student's ability will improve over time as they   gain expertise in the topics they choose to investigate and as they practice searching for, selecting, and evaluating the information and ideas they encounter. It is proved that information literate students are supposed to:
Be competent, independent learners;
Actively engage in the world of ideas;
Confidently solve problems;
Know what the relevant information is;
Use technological tools to access information and communicate;
Operate comfortably in situations where there are multiple answers or no answers;
Have high standards for their work and use information ethically;
Create quality products.

Objectives of the Study:

To find computer literacy and internet literacy of the students.

To know why they use digital information.

To know how frequently they use digital information.

To know the familiarity with the digital information sources.

To evaluate the digital information sources.

Methodology: Keeping in mind the above objectives a structured questionnaire was administered seeking information about the attitudes of respondents towards the digital literacy by the graduate students of Jorhat district. About 200 questionnaires were distributed among the graduate students, out of which 150 questionnaires were filled by the students. This constitutes 75% of the total response and same was used for interpretations.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

COMPUTER LITERACY: When the students are asked about the use of computers. It is found that they are all able to use computer. It shows that all the students are computer literate.

USE OF INTERNET: Internet is the primary force by which one can access digital information. When all the questionnaires are analysed it found that all students are competent in internet using.

Table-1.1: Frequency of Internet User

Sl no	Frequency	No of Students	Percentage
1	Daily	85	56.7 %
2	Once in two days	33	22 %
3	Thrice a week	12	8%
4	Once in a week	15	10%
5	Occasionally	05	3.33%
	TOTAL	150	100%

From Table-1.1 shows   that 85(56%) respondents are using internet daily and 33(22%)respondents using internet once in two days, 12(8%) respondents using internet thrice a week,15(10%) of the respondents using internet once in a week and 5(3.3%) respondents are using internet occasionally.

Table-2.2: Formal Training on Computer and Internet Using

Formal Training	No of respondents	%
Obtained	**135**	**90%**
Not Obtained	**15**	**10%**
TOTAL	**150**	**100%**

Table-2.2 indicates that 135(90%) students had formal training in computer and internet using. Only 15(10%) students did not get formal training in use of computer and internet.

Types of Digital Information Sources: The questionnaire asked about types of digital information sources used by the Students. Table 3.3 below illustrates the information sources.

Table-3.3: Types of Digital Information Sources Used By the Students

Sl no	Types of information sources	Name of respondents-150	%
1	Subject related e-article	139	92.7%
2	E-Newspaper	101	67.33%
3	E-Journals	92	61.33%
4	E-Books	87	58%
5	Websites	143	95.33%
6	You Tube	149	99.33%
7	News Groups	26	17.33%
8	Blogs	05	3.33%

From the above Table (3.3) it is clear that 149(99.33%) students search information in You Tube. Websites users are about 143(95.33%).Subject related e-article users are about 139(92.33%).101(67.33%) students using e-journals.87 (58%) students are using e-books. It is seen that newsgroups and blogs are not popular among students. Only 26(17.33) students using news groups and Blogs are using by 5 (3.33%) students.

Table-4.4: Purpose of Using Digital Information Sources

Sl No	Purpose	No Of Respondent N=150	%
1	To update subject related information	95	63.33%
2	For doing project	100	66%
3	For writing an article	43	28.66%
4	For attending seminar	82	54.7%
5	For preparing competitive exams	65	43.33%
6	For preparing class notes	45	30%
7	For solving assignment	75	50%

Table-4.4 reveals that 100 (66%) respondents need e-resources for doing project,95(63.33%) students require e-resources to update their subject related information,43(54.7%)students use e-resources to attend seminar,75(50%) students use e-resources for solving assignment.,65(43.33%) students search e-resources for preparing competitive examination,45(30%) students use e-resources for preparing class notes,43 (28.6%) respondents use e-resources for writing papers for publication.

Table-5.5 Computer Skills of the Graduate Students

Sl.no	Computer skill	No of respondent	%
1	MS-Office/DTP	95	63.33%
2	Internet	147	98%
3	Multimedia	30	20%
4	Programming language	12	8%

Table-5.5 reveals that 147(98%) students have internet searching skill, 95(63.33%) respondents have working knowledge in MS-Office and DTP. However 30(20%) students have multimedia knowledge and 12(8%) students have programming language knowledge. From the above table it could be stated that majority of students are capable of using internet but in other application they have to be improved.

Table - 6.6: Uses of   Search Engines

Sl. No	Types of search engine	No of respondents-150	%
1	Google	120	68%
2	Yahoo	20	13.33%
3	MSN	12	8%
4	Alta vista	09	6%
5	Bing	04	3.2%

The Table-6.6 shows that among 150 respondents 68% respondents use Google search engine, 13.33% use Yahoo, 8% use MSN,6 % of them use Alta vista   and only 3.2% respondents use Bing. It is clear from the table that   Google is the most popular search engine among graduate students.

Table – 7.7: Evaluation of Web Resources by the Graduate Students

Feature	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent
Accuracy	30(20%)	20(14.7%)	37(24.7%)	36(24%)	25(16.6)
Accessibility	19(12.66%)	43(28.66%)	32(21.33%)	26(17.33%)	30(20%)
Reliability	70(46.66%)	20(13.33%)	35(23.33%)	15(10%)	10(6.6%)
Usability	84(56%)	22(14.66%)	31(20.66%)	13(8.66%)	
Coverage	90(60%)	40(26.66%)	20(13.33%)	0	0

Comprehensive	95(63.33%)	45(30%)	15(10%)	0	0
Currency	105(70%)	25(16.66%)	20(13.33%)	0	0
Easy to use	60(40%)	20(13.33%)	30(20%)	25(16.66%)	15(10%)
Timeliness	120(80%)	30(20%)	0	0	0

The above Table- 12 shows that out of the many features given in the table for only few features such as accuracy, accessibility, reliability, usability, easy to use the respondents rated as excellent and very good. Remaining all other features was rated as good, fair and poor.

Discussion on Findings

- Majority of the respondents 85(56.7%) are using Internet daily.
- Majority of students 135(90%) have formal training on computer and internet.
- Majority of respondents 139(92.7%) use subject related e-article.
- Majority of 90(60%) respondents use digital resources for doing project work.
- Majority 147(98%) of students responded their IT skill in Internet 95(63.33%) have IT skill in MS-office/DTP Tools, 30(20%) have multimedia IT skill and 12(8%) have Programming languages IT skill.
- Study shows majority i.e.120(68%) respondent using Google Search engines as a search tool .Google is the most favourite search engine among them
- Majority of respondents rated as excellent for accuracy, accessibility, reliability, usability, easy to use of web resources.

Conclusion: Digital literacy becomes a need of changing time. Due to technological advancement, most of the information is available in digital form. The students must know how to access, store, use and dissemination of information. They should be digitally literate. The present study is an attempt in this regards. There should be lot of studies should be conducted in this level to provide the effective services to the users community in the libraries. These types of studies also help much any organization while taking important decisions such as procuring the digital information resources to their library. The library should take a lead role in spreading knowledge of digital information.

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