Information Literacy Skills of Library Professionals in Universities' Central Library

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Abstract— Information literacy is a crucial skill in the pursuit of knowledge. As the majority of information through internet is unfiltered formats, users face with new challenges in understanding the landscape of information. Library and information professionals need to play an important role in the education process by making people aware of a need and motivating the use of information a new knowledge and a new ability. Thus, librarians and their staff are concerned with skills to acquire required information efficiently for uses' needs. This research focuses on information literacy skill of professionals in the Universities' Central Library. The objective of the study is to examine the ability of information literacy of library professionals at Universities' Central Library which is a leading library in Myanmar Academic libraries. The research based on qualitative research method. Questionnaire was delivered to all professionals of the library for measuring the professionals' information literacy competency. This research explores the level of information literacy skills of professionals at the Universities' Central Library. The study concludes that information literacy skills are essential requirements for library professionals. These skills support to develop library service. Based on the assessment of their skills, the standard of universities' central library can be evaluated.

Keywords: Information, Information Literacy, Information Awareness, Information Competencies, Professional Skills
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I. INTRODUCTION

Information literacy is a set of skills which requires an individual to recognize when information is needed and has the ability to locate, evaluate and use effectively the needed information.[1] Literacy is the ability to interpret information critically. Information Literacy may be defined very simply as "the ability to access, evaluate and use information from a variety of sources." Information literacy is a skill, ability, expertise, capability and competency of a person that makes him able to find the right information from the right source.[2] It basically knows information about information and the source of information. Information literacy skill enables individuals to recognize not only when

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[1] American Library Association, *Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education*. (Chicago: American Library Association, 1990), accessed August 10, 2018, www.ala.org/Template.cfm*?* Section=Home &template=/Content Management/.

[2] F. Chanchinmawia and Manoj Kumar Verma, "*Assessment of Information Literacy Skills among Students of Academy of Integrated Christian Studies, Aizawl: A Survey*" . *Journal of Library & Information Science* Vol.7 No.3 (September 2017), 450.

information is needed, but also when different kinds of information are needed.

Information seeking and use have become complex processes for college and university students due to the proliferation of information technologies and resources in all types and formats. Students at the doctoral level frequently need detailed, comprehensive information—particularly for thesis research and therefore need strong information-seeking and use skills to accomplish their research goals. [3]

Librarian and its staff have always been concerned with skills of their users and efficient use of documents. However, the issue of efficient use of information is complex. Research information literacy can be determined the ability to understand and use information in order to conduct research in disciplines. In the academic setting, the library as a knowledge repository plays a very important role in promoting educational standard. So that librarian and its staff as information specialist or research consultant, have a great task in solving this problem. [4]

As librarians are working closely with users who pursuit information they need to provide skills to effectively and efficiently retrieve and use the information available from the treasure of resources. Information literacy becomes core competence category in librarianship. LIS professionals have to play a

significant role to promote information literacy in society. As Information literacy is the ability to recognize when and what information is needed, and the knowledge of how to define appropriate search strategies, determine relevant sources, locate, critically evaluate and ethically use information in all formats, Information literacy is a vital skill in the information age. [5]

Thus, the library professionals play a vital role in creating the awareness on the availability of various electronic information resources. Otherwise, they have to be skill in information literacy. Towards this purpose, a study was conducted to assess the information literacy of library staff at Universities' Central Library.

1.1. Information Literacy for Library Professionals

Due to the information explosion, the twenty-first century can be named the information era. With the advances in information technology, the libraries have affected significantly the nature of delivery of library resources and services. The traditional concepts of organization, bibliographic description and dissemination of information are changed to the new environment by these information technologies. So, the LIS professionals working in the environment have to face challenges concerned with ICT (Information and Communication Technology).

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[3] C. A Barry, "Information Skills for an Electronic World: Training Doctoral Research Students." *Journal of Information Science* 23 (3): 1997, 225–38.

[4] *Information Literacy Search Skills of Students in Five Selected Private .,* accessed August 10, 2018, https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi? article= 2513&context.

[5] *Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education*. accessed August 10, 2018, www.ala.org/ acrl/ standards/ ilframework.

User cannot achieve their needs without practicing special information literacy skills. In other words information literacy skills empower users with the skills which can help them to access information sources.

Librarians and their staff are closely with scholars and researchers to provide skills to effectively and efficiently retrieve and use the information available from the large pool of resources. The information literacy becomes important for LIS professionals so that they can identify, evaluate and use the relevant information effectively.

The technological tools of information age computer networks, tele-communication system, digital information resources and databases have put an unprecedented volume of information at in finger tips. Further the students are hardly able to make distinction between internet sources and electronic information sources. Therefore, it is necessary to teach the students to acquaint with what is available, when to use it and how to find it. Information literacy is one such potential toll that empowers all learners.[6]

The paper identified the concept of information literary and the role of LIS professionals.

To be information literate person, the staff should have the following qualities:

Recognizes the need for information

Appreciates the importance of accurate and complete information to make intelligent decisions;

Formulates questions based on information needs

Identifies potential sources of information

Develops appropriate search strategies;

Accesses sources of information including computer-based and other technologies

Evaluates information

Organizes information for practical application

Integrates new information into an existing body of knowledge and

Uses information in critical thinking and problem solving[7]

1.2 Objectives of the Research

There are many objectives for compiling this research. The main objectives of present study are:

To identify the information literacy skills of respondents to retrieve the information

To know the level of awareness about different sources of information

To determine the ability to access and evaluate the information resources

To know the opinion of respondents on Information Literacy Programme

[6] A. Jaya Prakash and V. Krishnama Charya., "Role of LIS Professionals in the E-Information Literacy in Digital Era, " in *4th International Convention CALIBER Gulbarga*, 2-4 February, 2006 (INFLIBNET Centre, Ahmedabad, 2006), 439.

[7] C Doyle. "Outcome Measures for Information Literacy within the Education Goals of 1990" ,*National Forum on Information Literacy*, 8, 1992, accessed 1 December, 2018, www. gov/database/ ERICDigest/ ed372756.html

1.3 Scope of the Research

Although there are many university libraries, the research focuses on Universities' Central Library which leads all university libraries in Myanmar. The study mainly emphasizes on Information Literacy skills of professional staff at the Universities' Central Library. Skills include the ability of searching, locating, arranging, evaluating and retrieving information.

1.4 Research Method

This research study employed a qualitative descriptive approach to determine the effectiveness of professionals' skills at the Universities' Central Library. A structured questionnaire was prepared and distributed all respondents of Universities' Central Library to obtain required information with regards measure their information literacy competency. The data collected and findings observed were tabulated, analyzed and interpreted for this study.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Researchers have used a variety of methods and definitions of information literacy to investigate undergraduate and graduate student perceptions of information competencies. There were several studies on information literacy carried out in educational institutions throughout the world. Some important studies carried out in India and abroad were as follows:

Maidul and Rahman, (2014) examine the information literacy competency (ILC) of the arts faculty students at the University of Dhaka, Bangladesh and determine their strengths and weaknesses and it was found that students had limited skills in the area of information literacy and reasons behind it is not discussed extensively in their academic course curriculum. Murtaza, (2014) examine the level of information literacy skills of faculty members of the University of Lahore. The majority of faculty members are deficient in searching catalogue and its use, choice of information sources, selection of relevant sources and formulation of search strategies. The study helps to organize different information literacy programs in the university to promote and to develop the information literacy skills among faculty and to improve the teaching quality.

F. Chanchinmawia and Manoj Kumar Verma did a research paper titled "Assessment of Information Literacy Skills among Students of Academy of Integrated Christian Studies, Aizawl: A Survey". The research revealed that information literacy is a major prerequisite for academic community in present ICT era because the skills and abilities are the main aspect that enables students to retrieve the right information from the right source without wasting their valuable time. Evaluation of electronic resources may be added in the information literacy program of the library. It is also remarkable that library resources, services, facilities and library personnel are inseparable in the process of organizing information literacy programs.

The research "Assessing Information Literacy Competency of Arts Faculty Students at

the University of Dhaka by Md. Maidul Islam and Md. Anisur Rahman" found out the information seeking strategy and explore information literacy skill of the faculty and identify the their problems. The findings of this study show Arts faculties agree that information literacy is very important and helpful in academic work and research and it should also be introduced early in education to make it more effective.

Mr Christopher O. Ukpebor and Daniel Emojorho compiled a paper concerning with information literacy skill. The title is "Information Literacy Skills: A Survey of the Transition of Students from Secondary to University Education in Edo State, Nigeria". This is a survey of the entry-level information literacy skills of first year students. The findings demonstrate that entry-level students have some little skills which are not enough for independent research work or library usage.

Ebele N. Anyaoku and others compiled a research titled "Information Literacy Skills and Perceptions of Librarians in Colleges of Education in Nigeria. The study concludes that there is need for IL standards that will guide information literacy development in Nigerian Colleges of Education. Librarians in the study have shown good perceptions towards IL and rated their skills high.

The research "Role of LIS Professionals in the E-Information Literacy in Digital Era by A. Jaya Prakash and V. Krishnama Charya" discussed the concept of information literary and the role of LIS professionals in promoting

electronic information literacy in Digital Libraries. The research pointed out a specific role for library professional to play in matching the user with correct information source. Library professionals with their expertise, knowledge and techniques of where to look up and how to find out information for given query can help the users in their search for information by extending personal help and assistance. Library professionals should acquire such skills in handling the information sources and users tactfully and render satisfactory information service in the fast changing digital library environment.

Prasanna Ranaweera's "Importance of Information Literacy skills for an Information Literate society" is to present a broader analytical insight to the information literacy concept, in order to achieve an information literate society. In addition, this paper also proposes to discuss the available information literacy models and their practical approach, information literacy standards, and available frame works. A sample information literacy programme, curriculum, and assessment methods, are also elaborated in this study.

A. Jaya Prakash and V. Krishnama Charya contributed the research paper titled "Role of LIS Professionals in the E-Information Literacy in Digital Era". The paper discussed the concept of information literary and the role of LIS professionals in promoting electronic information literacy in Digital Libraries. This paper pointed out specific role for library

professional to play in matching the user with correct information source.

III. UNIVERSITIES' CENTRAL LIBRARY

3.1 Background History

Although University of Rangoon (later Rangoon), the first university in Myanmar was established in Dec. 1920, the University of Rangoon Library was founded in 1929. In 1964, the name of library was redesigned at as the Universities' Central Library (UCL). In 1973 construction for a new building for the Universities' Central Library was began. In 1987, Universities' Central Library and Rangoon University Library were separated.[8] This library is a leading and the biggest library in Myanmar Academic Libraries. The library is oriented to meet the needs of university teachers, scholars, under graduates and post-graduates. Consequently it can be noted as a resource center for not only all faculty members and students from all academic libraries in Myanmar. It has reputation with its valuable collections and activities. UCL has the largest collection of books, palm-leaf and parabike paper manuscripts in Myanmar. The collections of UCL are mainly for research and reference.

The main sections are Myanmar Books Section, English Books Section, Periodical Section, Loan and Reference Section, Myanmar Manuscripts Section, Reprographic Section, Preservation and Conservation Section, e-Library Section, Gifts and Exchange Section,

[8] *Universities' Central Library,* accessed January 20, 2019, http:// www.uclmyanmar.org.

Administration Section, and Theses and Dissertation Section. It is a combined catalog and effort of 23 major University Libraries in Myanmar.[9]

Figure 1: Universities' Central Library

3.2 Organizational Structure of UCL

The organizational structure of the department is very important to achieve the department's goal and objectives. The Universities' Central Library consists of professional and non-professional positions. In the library, there are many different classifications of employees, including professional librarians, paraprofessionals, clerical workers, technical specialists, and part-time workers such as students' assistants.

The library always has appointed 31 daily wages in various sections. Among them, 19 are working in professional areas such circulation counter, processing areas, user service areas and technical services but they are not degree holder in Library and Information Studies. The study includes only LIS professionals and permanent staff in professional

[9] *Universities' Central Library*, accessed January 20, 2019, http:// www.uclmyanmar.org.

area totally 28. The following table shows organizational structure of this library.

Table1. Organizational Structure of UCL

Sr No.	Position	Set-up	Sanctioned	Appointed	Vacant	Remark (Attached from Other University Library)
1	I	1	1	1	-	
2	II	1	1	1	-	3
3	III	4	4	3	1	
4	IV	4	4	3	1	1
5	V	3	3	3	-	
6	VI	5	5	5	-	
7	VII	3	3	-	3	1
8	VIII	1	1	1	-	
9	IX	1	1	1	-	
10	X	2	2	2	-	
11	XI	2	2	2	-	
12	XII	2	2	2	1	
13	XIII	2	2	2	-	
14	XIV	1	1	-	1	
15	XV	1	1	1	-	
16	XVI	2	2	2		
17	Peon	2	2	2	-	
18	Driver	1	1	-	1	
19	Gate Keeper	2	2	2	-	
20	Cleaner	2	2	2	-	
	Total	42	42	35	7	5

Source: Survey

I=Librarian (Head of the Library)

II=Librarian

III= Assistant Librarian

IV= Library Assistance-2

V= Library Assistance-3

VI= Library Assistance-4

VII= Library Assistance-5

VIII= Mechanic Technician-3

IX= Mechanic Technician-4

X= Computer Operator

XI= Assistant Computer Operator

XII= Lower Clerk

XIII= Assistant Computer Operator-2

XIV= Account-1

XV= Account-2

XVI= Account-3

According to the organization structure, the library has 42 sanctioned staff. But, there are 35 staff including librarian (head) which post are professor level or director level and only one in Myanmar Academic Libraries. The table shows that there is seven vacant staff and five are supported from the other university library post.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS

Internet becomes the most powerful tool and medium to access information sources easily. Internet literacy skill is essential to access, evaluate and disseminate information. This study asked the respondents to find out most frequently used internet. Under the using internet, the research surveyed frequency, items of internet, purposes.

Table2. Use of Internet

Frequency	No of Staff	Percentage
Daily	25	89%
At Least once a Week	2	7%
At least once a fortnight	1	4%
At least once a month	-	-
Rarely	-	-

Source: Survey

Table3. List of Using Items from Internet

Items	No of Staff	Percentage
E-mail	18	64%
www resources	12	43%
Downloading	19	68%
Uploading	5	18%
Online Databases	9	32%
Facebook	26	93%

Source: Survey

According to table 2, majority or 89% of the staff use internet daily and only 4% or one staff use internet once a fortnight.

Internet is a vast information superhighway that facilitates communication between computer users both nationally and internationally. There are valuable programs, items, resources on the internet. Regarding used item from internet, the research categorized six types of items involving writing and sending E-mail, www resources, Downloading and Uploading data, Online Databases and Using Facebook. Among these items, five staff utilized all items. The staff 18 or 64% use Email, 12 or 43% use for resources, 19 or 68% use downloading required data, 9 or 32% utilize online databases, 26 or 93% use for Facebook but only 5 or 18% use internet for uploading data.
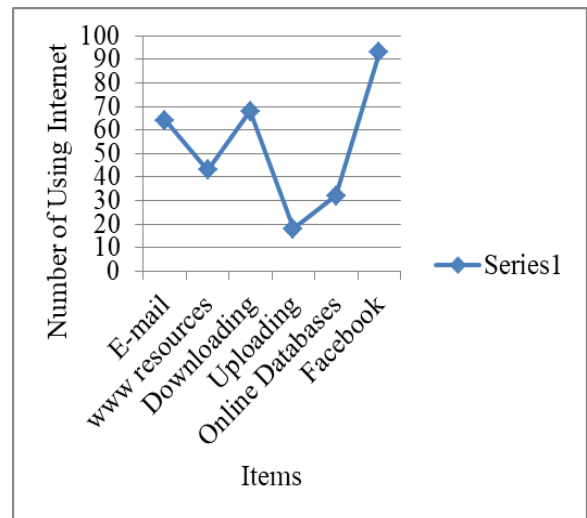

Figure:2. List of Using Items from Internet

There are different purposes for using internet. Concerning purpose of using internet, there are five types involving for doing research, searching information, personal interest, entertainment and knowledge. The four staff (14%) utilizes internet for all purposes. 9 or 32%of the staff use internet for the purpose of

research, 24 or 86% use for searching for users' needs, the most majority of respondents 25or 89% use internet for personal interest, entertainment and general knowledge.

Computer skill is one of the most important tools in handling information now a day. One must be aware of computer to accomplish his information needs. The study asked to the respondents seven kinds of skills concerning with computer skill: Word-processing, Spreadsheets, Desktop publishing, Power point presentation, Convert to PDF file, Scanning, and Burning CD. These skills are very basic for computer skill. According to the survey, eight staff (29%) can operate all items or above seven skills but only one who is Library Assistance-5 has not any skills concerning with computer knowledge. The following table and figure shows number of staff having computer skills.

Figure 3: Computer Skill of Professionals

Table3. List of Computer Skills

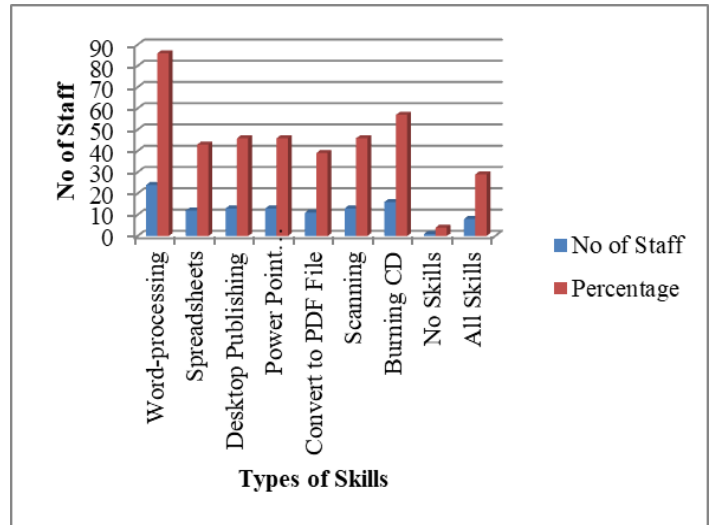| Types of Skills	No of Staff	Percentage
Word-processing	24	86
Spreadsheets	12	43
Desktop Publishing	13	46
Power Point Presentation	13	46
Convert to PDF File	11	39
Scanning	13	46
Burning CD	16	57
No Skills	1	4
All Skills	8	29

Source: Survey

ELIB (Electronic Library on Web) software is a library management system developed by CE Technology Co. The library has used library software which is ELIB since 1999. The majority of academic libraries use it in Myanmar. According to survey, the 20 staff (71%) has knowledge to operate this software.

Search strategy is absolutely key sources for identifying and finding information from the databases, internet. A search strategy is an approach to find information using computers and to solve an information need. It can consist of a single search query or a selection of search queries. The LIS professionals should be qualified to search electronic resources effectively which are user's demand.

Regarding the types of search strategy, the respondents were asked two types of questions ie. Google Search and Specific type of Search Strategy. The survey pointed out that most of the staff utilizes specific search type of databases but almost all can operate Google search. They

always type web address directly to get required data from the internet. Besides, the only three professionals can search required information through typing the web address directly, search engine and can consult subscription databases.

The library has a rich collection of Myanmar manuscripts on palm-leaf and parabikes as well as rare printed books which are historical and national heritages and retrospective publications of Myanmar books as early as 1872 has also been collected. There are many bound volumes of newspapers, magazines and journals published in Myanmar, some dating back to the 19th Century. It has the best collection of old, rare periodicals published in the country.

As the library has carried out digitization project for its invaluable collections as the preservation of library materials, the study asked some questions concerning with digitization of materials and technology such as OCR (Optical Character Recognition), Bibliographic Format. Optical Character Recognition (OCR) software converts a scanned image into a text file that a word processor can read. To do this, it must first recognize where the text is on the page.[10] The survey points out that 20 professional staff or (71%) can digitize these materials but ten of them have known, eight can create OCR technology. Two of respondents didn't answer these questions.

[10] Alhaji, Ibrahim Usman. *Digitization of Library Resources and the Formation of Digital Libraries: A Practical Approach*, accessed January 20, 2019, http://www.netlibrarynigeria.

Table4. Skills of Search Strategy, Carrying Data and Digitization

EL IB	Search Strategy		Carrying Required Data				Digiti zation	OCR
	Go ogl e	Data base	Print ed	Soft	Both	No ne		
20 71 %	24 86 %	3 11%	7 25%	3 11%	9 32%	9 32 %	20 71%	10 36%

Sources: Survey

V. CONSLUSION

Traditionally library professionals have to provide guidance to the users of the library by making various bibliographic tools like catalogue indexes and abstracts, so that a user himself can find out the required information. As the complicated and sophisticated information are exploded in digital era, the role of library professional is changing from time to time. The usage of electronic sources is gradually increasing. However, users face problems concerned with selecting appropriate information sources and using them effectively. Today's library professionals must be experts in dealing with digital information. Library professionals should acquire such skills in handling the information sources and users tactfully and render satisfactory information service in the fast changing digital library environment.[11]

[11]A. Jaya Prakash and V. Krishnama Charya. "Role of LIS Professionals in the E-information Literacy

Regarding these skills, the respondents in the research were asked the skills of using internet, information acquire from the internet, search strategy, computer skills and so on. These skills are very basic skills for LIS professionals. Library professionals in the study have shown good perceptions towards information literacy and rated their skills high.

According to this survey, most of LIS professionals in the library are familiar with using internet daily. Among them, most of them use internet for the purpose of Facebook and Downloading resources. As today is information technology, the staff in library must have awareness of computer technology. Computer literacy skill is one of the most important tools in handling information now a day. Library professional must be aware of computer to accomplish his information needs. Through the research, most of staff has skill of Word-processing and they can burn CD for data carrying which they need. Among the staff (28), 8 or 29% have full skills of computer knowledge which are Word-processing, Spreadsheets, Desktop publishing, Power point presentation, Convert to PDF file, Scanning, and Burning CD. Findings also revealed that they have low skills in Convert to PDF File.

20 (71%) of the LIS professionals have knowledge of library software (ELIB). Regarding search strategy of required data from the internet, 24 or 86% of respondents utilize Google Search for finding information on the Internet.

For carrying data on the internet, 32% of respondents use both of hard or printed copy and soft copy (CD/ memory stick) while 32% have not this knowledge. The most of respondents (71%) have awareness of digitization for library materials. Among them, 36% have awareness of OCR knowledge for digital resources.

in Digital Era", *4th International Convention CALIBER-2006, Gulbarga, 2-4 (*February 2006) *INFLIBNET Centre, Ahmedabad,* 439p

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[3] G, Swapna, and B.S. Biradar . "Information Literacy Model for Higher Education Institutions In Inda." *International Journal of Digital Library Services* Vol. 7 (September 2017): 31-50.

[4] Nawarathne, I. M. and Cherian K. George. "Attitude of Academic Librarians in Sri Lanka Towards Teaching Information Literacy (IL)." Nay Pyi Taw: XVII CONSAL, 2018. Photocopied.

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