

Barriers in Information Literacy Program at Our College

Mr. Rajesh S. Gedam¹

¹Librarian, Jijamta Arts College, Darwaha, Maharashtra, India

ABSTRACT

Today's information literacy is very important aspect for the development of higher education, college and users. In this paper is an attempt to bring out the barriers in Information Literacy Program. Stressing the need for Information Literacy Program the barriers such as problems related to management of the educational institutions, financial problem, inhibition of the teachers, psychological problems of the users such as students, full-time research workers, teachers and employees have been enumerated. The problem related to the status of the Librarian has been touched as also his inhibition. Attempts have been made to touch on important issue related to the problem and development of the library. This paper is an attempt to give a brief overview of the various problems encountered in the implementation of information literacy program in our college.

Keyword: Information skills, Information Literacy, Financial Problem, Psychology Problems, Management Problems, Government Responsibilities.

I. INTRODUCTION

Today is the age of information technology. In the of information technology, a great deal of information is being created. A large amount of information is being created as well as a large number of information tools. So that 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. Current modern era is a competitive era. To survive, one has to be aware of all the happenings in the world. Therefore, everyone tries to gain the information from various available sources for variety of reasons. The researchers, teachers, students collect the information for study purpose, managers collects it for manage their field work and other work. It means that information is key to success for everyone. The countries which are considered as Advanced Countries are rich in information. Because of their information richness, they have become advanced countries. Every human being and also nation knows the importance of the information. In this age of information every nation strives to be supreme. Unless and until the nation is not powerful in terms of information, it cannot achieve this target. On this backdrop, government motivates their scientist to engage in the research. Therefore the research output, especially of scientific literature has been increasing exponentially since the second half of the last century. Library in true sense is the power house of the information. This tremendous growth of literature in the various documentary forms is

to be managed in the library. It is the responsibility of library professionals to manage, organize and disseminate this information to the needy persons at right time without wasting their valuable time. Information is a valuable commodity. In the present information age, it has a monetary importance. Information Literacy is the solution for this critical problem of access, evaluate and use information from a variety of sources.

In the current information age, the speed at which we work makes us increasingly dependent on high quality information. However, information is becoming more voluminous, fragmented into different formats and media, and duplicated in multiple physical locations. People need to be literate in order to make effective use of these myriad resources. The term information literacy, sometimes referred to as information competency, is generally defined as the ability to access, evaluate, organize, and use information from a variety of sources. Being information literate requires knowing how to clearly define a subject or area of investigation; select the appropriate terminology that expresses the concept or subject under investigation; formulate a search strategy that takes into consideration different sources of information and the variable ways that information is organized analyze the data collected for value, relevancy, quality, and suitability; and subsequently turn information into knowledge (ALA 1989). This involves a deeper understanding of how and where to find information, the ability to judge whether that information is meaningful, and ultimately, how best that information can be incorporated to address the problem or issue at hand.

Information Literacy is the ability to access, evaluate and use information from a variety of sources. As students prepare for 21st century traditional instruction in reading, writing and mathematics need to be coupled with practice in communication, critical thinking and problem solving skills, Information Literacy is the ability to recognize why information is needed and have and have the ability to locate, evaluate and use effectively the needed information.

Information literacy has become a crucial issue today for development and progress .Even at the individual level to become an independent lifelong learner it is essential to achieve a high level of information literacy. Information Literacy programs are under way across the globe.

In the twenty first century, information literacy has become a crucial issue for the political, economic, social and cultural development in all countries. Information literacy is global phenomenon today. It is information gap that divides the nations and the citizens of a nation into rich and poor. It is information literacy that inclosing this gap.

II. OUR COLLEGE

Our JIJAMATA ARTS COLLEGE, Darwha Dist -Yavatmal is a Rural and Arts College; most of the students are studying in Marathi medium. So they don't have much knowledge of technology. Information literacy is the vital process in the modern changing word which is mostly used for higher education. We are implementing this program so that even our students can get important information in today's age. For such students, there is a lot of difficult in implementing information literacy program. The barriers encountered in the information program are briefly stated. For the last two – three years our libraries have been implementing information literacy program through induction program. This program accommodates maximum number of college students and we give them a lot of information about college and library every year through this program.

III. OUR LIBRARY ACTIVITIES

1. **College Prospect:** The prospect prepared annually in our college contains information regarding library rules, facilities, software and various other facilities.
2. **Best Reader award:** The Best Reader Award is given to three students every year by the library.
3. **Library Friend Award:** The Library Friend Award is given annually to the students who contribute to the various activities carried out by the library every year.
4. **Book Exhibition:** Every year an exhibition of books is organized through our library.
5. **User Education Program:** We are implementing user education program in the library so that the students get complete information about the library.
6. **Class room teaching by librarian**
7. **Library visit**
8. **Parents visit to library**
9. **Quiz competition**
10. **Practice Competitive Exam**

What is Information Literacy?

The term information literacy was introduced in 1974 by Zurkowski who was the president of the US Information Industry Association to refer to people who knew how to apply information resources to their work. Even after three decades of its first use information literacy as a concept is still evolving. Various attempts have been made by experts to explain this concept of information literacy. Often information literacy, library literacy, media literacy, computer literacy, network literacy and digital literacy are erroneously used as synonymous terms. Library literacy relates to the competency in the use of library resources and services. Media literacy refers to the ability to evaluate the information received from different mass media of information. Computer literacy denotes the skills in manipulating the computer hardware and software. Network literacy refers to the ability to navigate the Internet and digital literacy refers to the ability to explore the digital information. Whereas information literacy is a wider concept that encompasses all of the above mentioned literacies and goes much beyond. It is about using information effectively and intelligently. Often some librarians find it difficult to differentiate between library instruction and information literacy. Library instruction is about teaching the use of library. Information literacy, on the other hand, focuses on users empowerment to do independent and self-directed search.

- 1) According to the American Library Association. Presidential Committee on Information Literacy Final Report.(ALA, 1989) "Information Literacy is a set of abilities requiring individuals to recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate and use effectively the needed information."

Why Information Literacy Program is necessary?

Today's world is the world of Information. Information has an important place in human life as well as for decision making for the planner and plays an important role for acquiring knowledge. Information is also important for using new technology etc. Because of information explosion, it creates lots of information and locates in various tools or things which became as the sources of its. Information also publishes in various volumes and edition. Due to unawareness of readers, scope of information in library and differences in information sources, students, readers and researchers don't understand where they should search information.

They don't get proper information at right time. Students, Readers or Researchers who come in library want information immediately; therefore they should know about all information sources. User doesn't know how to get the information. Information Literacy is the only one solution over it. To implant 'The Information Literacy program is responsibility of a College Librarian for getting proper information at proper time to the Users. Therefore librarian should be able to handle it and there is a necessity of research on Information Literacy.

Users need information basically according to their needs. Information Literacy is aimed to promote the skills of users to locate, collect and evaluate the information. The information may be in printed or electronic form, it is useful to them, but they don't know how to access it. Therefore, Information Literacy programming has become essential. But some barriers come into implementing Information Literacy Program.

Therefore, this topic has become important to the library professionals and hence the researcher has selected this topic for studies.

IV. BARRIERS OF INFORMATION LITERACY PROGRAM

Different problem can arise when introducing Information Literacy Program. We have tried to include the important barriers in the implementation of information literacy program in our college. These barriers are enumerated as follows:

A) Organization/Institution related Problems

The librarian in charge of the library is responsible for organizing the library and providing library services to students and faculty members, researchers or library users, and is responsible for its services and IL program. He is the information specialist and manager for library operations and functions.

Responsibility implies delegation of proper authority to transact the assigned business effectively. The business of the college library is to organize the library resources and services. But practically Librarian has no freedom to take his own decision. For ex. for the governance of the college library many colleges have got a library committee constituted or formed under the college regulations by an executive order for the Principal. It acts as a link between the top management of the college and the Librarian and mostly have recommendatory role. Its recommendations are not final unless duly approved by an appropriate authority. As a matter of Principal, the Principal and the Librarian should be its Chairman and Secretary respectively. The college Librarian occupies key position in its library committee. His active participation in his deliberations will be in the interest of the library and its users because he is accountable for library, organizations, services, execution and follow up action on the decisions taken by the authorities on the recommendation of the library committee.

Unfortunately, the position of the Librarian in library management at many places is like a square peg in a round hole. He is neither delegated with any authority in the college management nor granted even the membership of the library committee. If he is simply expected to bear the responsibilities without any authority commensurate to his position, then he should not be accountable for the decision made by the library committee and other authorities. Hence cooperation of the authorities of the organizations has to be secured through persuasion.

B) Financial Problems:

Every college has to face with various financial issues while implementing any plan. No grant is given by the government for this purpose. The college has to spend for such various activities. In the same way our college may also face financial problems while implementing important initiatives like information literacy program. It may be derived from the parent organization or UGC or any such funding sources, but it needs proper planning,

prior assessment of the current and anticipated demands and thoughtful utilization which can be made by a trained and competent librarian only. But it is a matter of experience that the college librarian is quite often neglected in deciding the library finance. The decisions are generally taken at higher level as to what amount should be made available to the library without caring for the stepping prices and periodical subscriptions, requirement of the library users and the library's requirements. But librarian is the only competent persons who is well familiar with the strength and weakness of the library collections requirements of the library users, nature and value of publications, new services to be introduced and the areas of the library which need strengthening. He should plan his requirements well in advance and put up his demands before the appropriate authorities. He should also plan as to how he would utilize the funds made available for the library by the UGC and other sources. Thus his job is very challenging, because he attempts to draw maximum funds in the best possible manner to the utmost satisfaction of the library users as well as authorities. Hence financial problems should not be obstacles in way of librarians.

C) Inhibition of the Teachers:

While the information Literacy program is being implemented in colleges, it does not seem to be of much use to college professor. Although information tools are being made available to students and professor through this information letters program, there is not much enthusiasm among the teachers. In such a situation, one has to consider their mentality while implementing such a program.

Many times the feelings of teachers towards the librarian may not always be very encouraging. Faculty members and Researchers in many cases may not agree that a non-teaching staff of the library have anything to teach the teacher. Now days in every modern library, a well qualified librarian is appointed whose qualifications are not less than the faculty members. In college librarians have been granted faculty status. Many teachers do not think of approaching the librarian in case of any requirements for his study and research purposes. This type of psychological inhibition should be removed from their mind by way of some orientation program specially arranged for the teacher community. The problem of inhibition of the teachers arises because of failure of teacher training instruction to include in their basic training program. An adequate understanding of the function of the college library as a learning laboratory and the role of librarian as a fellow teacher is necessary.

D) Student's Psychological Problems:

The User Components of libraries are as follow:

1) Students:

Students may be school level, under graduate or post graduate levels...

2) Researchers:

- a) Full Time Scholars mostly receive research grants primarily from various national, international organizations.
- b) Part-time: Part-time researchers are mostly working on honorary basis.
- c) They are mostly working in the under graduate colleges as whole time teachers.

1) Teachers:

- a) Full time Asst.Prof. Assot. Professors, Professors, Readers, Lecturers and
- b) Part-Time and Honorary teachers.

2) Employees:

They are not frequent library users. The above said categories of users and their requirements are different in nature. Librarian and staff have to face their varieties of requirements and also to make psychological study of

each category. For example, Student community is rather shy in nature and they generally do not express their demands before the Librarian. Librarian has to take initiative in this regards by way of personal contact and identify their exact requirements. Secondly, student's community is the prime user in the libraries, The library system of most of the undergraduate colleges is so bad that it fails to attract students to its fold. No uses orientation program is carried on. Naturally their information collecting, handling and usage capacity is very inadequate.

E) Researchers:

Researchers of different disciplines are studying books related to various researches in our college. So they also have different demands. Our library strives to meet the demands of maximum research through inter library loan. A library use pattern of the researchers varies in many ways. There are senior research fellow who are aware of some core document of their subjects and also aware of the library norms, rules and regulations for utilizing library facilities. But in most case it is found that the researchers are not well acquainted with the ordinary document like national indexing and abstracting service, report of conference etc.

F) Teachers:

Changes in teaching pattern, competition for higher posts, impact of information explosion, lead a section of teachers to increasing use of the libraries. But in many cases faculty members and researchers may not agree that the library's non-teaching staff has anything to teach teachers. Researchers may also share the same view.

G) Problems Related to Librarian Status:

Intertie has to deal with the problem of rest in order to present any new program. The librarian may not be able to overcome the psychological barrier in introducing such a programmer out of his own accord. Co-operation of the authorities of the organization or institution and the faculties has to be secured through precaution in this respect. But to bitter experience some of the researchers and faculties may not find interest in this regards. Their feelings towards the librarians may not always be very encouraging.

H) Inhibition of the Librarian:

Today Libraries are facing some major barriers in implementing the information literacy program, notable among them are absence of properly designed curriculum on information literacy. Since our library is a small library, there are not skillful staff libraries available. Therefore, the librarian alone has a huge responsibility over time. At such times the librarian has to face different problem.

To remove the inhibition of the librarian and the library staff and to create an atmosphere conducive to proper library functioning, library association with the assistance of the Government and the authorities concerned may undertake certain programmes, to promote Information Literacy Programmed.

V. GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Govt. of the India and the state Government should take initiative to make compulsory provision in the budget of college for the library and post of Librarian while granting recognition to them.
2. Government has failed to include in the advance course of study either at state or National level, the specific learning experience requiring library support and specific reference to the necessity of intergrading instruction in the use of library within the frame work of teaching learning programmed.

VI. CONCLUSION

No matter how many problems arise while implementing information literacy program, it is very important to implement information literacy program for the benefit of the users. It is necessary to adoption an information literacy program in order to explore deeply and use information resources. Skillful staff should be provided to the library through the govt. for maximum development of the library. A specific set of rules should be prepared in the context of the information literacy program through the university Library.

Management of educational institutions must recognize the importance of libraries and librarians, providing maximum possible financial support to the libraries and giving decision making authority to the librarians.

Teachers need come forward by shedding their concept that the librarian cannot teach them the use of library. Teacher should help the librarian to implement the Information Literacy programmes.

The librarians should dispel any doubts regarding the implementation of Information Literacy programmes and should work like a salesman in this respect.

The student community, research workers and the faculty members should neither feel shy of nor should they feel that the librarian is not competent in guiding them for the use of library resources.

The Universities and the Government should insist upon the Information Literacy programmes in schools and colleges since they usually provide the financial support for building up the libraries.

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