

## **Awareness and Proficiency in Digital Literacy Skills among Librarians of First Grade Degree Colleges of Bagalkot District with respect to Age Group**

**Mrs. Shivaleela S. Hiremath\* & Dr. V.M. Bankapur\*\***

*\*Research Scholar, Department of Library and Information Science, Rani Channamma University, Bhutaramanahatti, Belagavi-591156, Karnataka, India.*

*\*\*Associate Professor & In-charge University Librarian, Department of Library and Information Science, Rani Channamma University, Bhutaramanahatti, Belagavi-591156, Karnataka, India. E-mail: [bankapur@rcub.ac.in](mailto:bankapur@rcub.ac.in)*

### **Abstract**

{This paper highlights the current advancements in digital technologies which can be used in academic libraries. Digital literacy plays an important role in providing quality library services. Digital knowledge improves the service delivery and attracts the members of the academic community to the libraries. This study identified different age groups and tried to understand how it influences the digital literacy skills of librarians. The target population was only librarians of First Grade Degree Colleges of Bagalkot District. A survey was done and information was collected from the college librarians about their proficiency and awareness in digital literacy skills, constraints in acquiring them and need of training to acquire proficiency and skills. The study found that Librarians of all age groups were well aware of and also proficient in Digital Literacy Skills. They were well trained and had no constraints in acquiring Digital Literacy Skills. Therefore age group had no significant effect on the librarians' proficiency or awareness about Digital Literacy Skills. The recommendations focused on encouraging the librarians and motivate them further to attend more and more seminars, workshops, conferences, trainings, etc. to enhance their digital skills to be in pace with the present digital age}

**Keywords:** Proficiency, Awareness, Digital Libraries, Digital Literacy Skills, Academic Librarians.

### **1. INTRODUCTION:**

It is found that Digital age has reformed the structure and functioning of libraries. With the help of ICT it is now possible for users to have access to full-text journal

articles, conference papers, research reports, technical documents, statistical information and many more even staying away from the libraries.

Digital libraries are an emerging trend these days. Presently information and services are provided in a digital form in the libraries. Digital libraries are turning into a digital face of traditional libraries which include both digital collections and traditional collections. No matter their form or format, digital libraries will still serve the communities as good as traditional libraries.

The modern information environment requires the knowledge of digital literacy to access and use resources especially those available on the internet. The transforming aspect of digital libraries is being faced positively and enthusiastically by library professionals. New applications and services are being developed with respect to the emerging trends and role of libraries in the new digital environment.

## **2. DIGITAL LIBRARIES AND LIBRARIANS**

The emerging digital libraries generate the need of producing “digital librarians” to manage the digital knowledge resources. Librarians require new expertise in digital literacy skills as the importance has increased to merge the traditional library collections and services with new digital library services.

Roles of digital librarians have been defined by many researchers who have also suggested digital competencies and skills required to perform their roles. Present day librarians are expected to possess digital literacy skills along with their traditional library skills and knowledge which are required to work in a digital library environment. Librarians are thus facing a challenge of acquiring various digital literacy skills. As a result, it has become a high priority to prepare the librarians to work in a fast and frequently transforming digital environment.

The digital nature of libraries requires librarians to locate relevant information in an efficient and cost effective way and providing it to the users in different formats. Digital Literacy is about finding the right information at the right time and disseminating it to the users in stipulated time and in the required format. The emergence of digital libraries poses many challenges as well as opportunities to the digital librarian. Digital librarians can add value and make digital libraries truly useful and user friendly with proper digital literacy skills.

- A digital librarian plays an important role in assisting the users to access digital resources. Digital librarians are required to manage digital libraries by:
- Organizing digital information.
- Disseminating digital information.
- Providing necessary digital reference services and electronic information services.
- Handling digital storage process and digital preservation.
- Cataloguing and classifying digital documents and digital information.

The competences of a digital librarian can be represented by different sets of digital skills. There are some skills and competencies that a digital librarian should develop. The following are the skills and competencies broadly required for a digital librarian to manage the digital libraries:

- navigating through and browsing the internet,
- locating, accessing and filtering of digital sources,
- provision of digital reference services,
- searching databases from various digital sources,
- developing websites,
- web publishing and electronic publishing,
- digital preservation and archiving of digital documents,
- electronic messaging, connectivity skills,
- cataloguing and classification of digital documents,
- searching and retrieval of text, images and other multimedia objects,
- conferencing techniques including teleconferencing, video conferencing, etc.
- development of digital information sources,
- digitization of print collections,
- development of machine readable catalogue records,
- design and development of databases,
- design and development of software for digital libraries.

### **3. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY:**

To understand the Awareness and Proficiency in Digital Literacy Skills among Librarians with respect to age group.

### **4. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:**

- i. To identify the different age groups of librarians.
- ii. To understand awareness about Digital Literacy Skills with respect to different age groups of librarians.
- iii. To understand proficiency in Digital Literacy Skills with respect to different age groups of librarians.
- iv. To understand constraints in acquiring Digital Literacy Skills with respect to different age groups of librarians.

- v. To understand the need of training in Digital Literacy Skills with respect to different age groups of librarians.

## 5. SCOPE & LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY:

The scope of the study is confined only to first grade degree colleges of Bagalkot District that are affiliated to Rani Channamma University, Belagavi and limited to librarians only.

## 6. METHODOLOGY:

A survey method was adopted for collection of data. Structured questionnaires were administered among librarians of 28 colleges.

## 7. RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

- Are librarians trained in Digital Literacy Skills?
- Are librarians aware of online databases, mobile operating system, mobile operating system, mobile website creation, software mobile applications, cloud based services, emerging technologies, infographic tools?
- Are Librarians proficient in using software, hardware, operating system, MS office, application software, library automation software, digital library software, web publishing software, citation software, plagiarism software?
- Do librarians face any constraints in acquiring digital literacy skills?

## 8. RESULTS:

**Table No 1: Demographic Details**

<b>Age Group</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Less than 25	1	<b>3.571</b>
26-30	5	<b>17.85</b>
31-40	10	<b>35.71</b>
41-45	8	<b>28.57</b>
46-50	3	<b>10.71</b>
51-55	1	<b>3.571</b>

**Table no 2:** ANOVA showing proficiency in using digital literacy skills with respect to the age group of respondents

ANOVA <sup>a</sup>						
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Proficiency in using software	Between Groups	134.507	3	44.836	1.305	.296
	Within Groups	824.457	24	34.352		
	Total	958.964	27			
Proficiency in using hardware	Between Groups	322.736	3	107.579	1.870	.162
	Within Groups	1380.514	24	57.521		
	Total	1703.250	27			
Proficiency in using operating system	Between Groups	70.067	3	23.356	.892	.460
	Within Groups	628.648	24	26.194		
	Total	698.714	27			
Proficiency in using MS office	Between Groups	110.317	3	36.772	.892	.460
	Within Groups	989.790	24	41.241		
	Total	1100.107	27			
Proficiency in using application software	Between Groups	233.495	3	77.832	1.691	.195
	Within Groups	1104.362	24	46.015		
	Total	1337.857	27			
Proficiency in using library automation software	Between Groups	15.174	3	5.058	.116	.950
	Within Groups	1043.790	24	43.491		
	Total	1058.964	27			
Proficiency in using digital library software	Between Groups	10.545	3	3.515	.291	.832
	Within Groups	290.133	24	12.089		
	Total	300.679	27			
Proficiency in using web publishing software	Between Groups	16.602	3	5.534	.192	.901
	Within Groups	690.648	24	28.777		
	Total	707.250	27			
Proficiency in using citation software	Between Groups	9.638	3	3.213	.247	.862
	Within Groups	311.790	24	12.991		
	Total	321.429	27			
Proficiency in using plagiarism software	Between Groups	29.460	3	9.820	.227	.877
	Within Groups	1037.790	24	43.241		
	Total	1067.250	27			

**Interpretation:** The above table shows the output of the ANOVA analysis and it represents the proficiency of the respondents in different aspects and their age. It can be seen that the significance value is 0.296 which is above the p value (i.e.

p=0.05) and therefore no statistically significant difference between the groups is seen, which means that respondents of all ages are proficient enough in using software. Similarly, the significance value of proficiency in using hardware, operating system, MS Office, application software, library automation software, citation software, digital library software, plagiarism software is 0.162, 0.460, 0.460, 0.195, 0.950, 0.862, 0.832, 0.877 which are above p value (i.e. p=0.05) and therefore no significant difference between the groups is observed, which means the respondents of all age were proficient enough in the above-mentioned digital skills.

**Table no 3:** ANOVA showing Awareness of software and applications with respect to the age group of respondents

Awareness of online databases	Between Groups	360.850	3	120.283	1.013	.404
	Within Groups	2849.257	24	118.719		
	Total	3210.107	27			
Awareness of mobile operating system	Between Groups	139.993	3	46.664	1.960	.147
	Within Groups	571.257	24	23.802		
	Total	711.250	27			
Awareness of mobile website creation software	Between Groups	102.067	3	34.022	1.263	.309
	Within Groups	646.362	24	26.932		
	Total	748.429	27			
Awareness of mobile applications	Between Groups	71.764	3	23.921	.423	.738
	Within Groups	1356.914	24	56.538		
	Total	1428.679	27			
Awareness about cloud based services	Between Groups	103.517	3	34.506	.578	.635
	Within Groups	1431.733	24	59.656		
	Total	1535.250	27			
Awareness about emerging tech	Between Groups	34.317	3	11.439	.123	.946
	Within Groups	2238.362	24	93.265		
	Total	2272.679	27			
Awareness about infographic tools	Between Groups	65.724	3	21.908	1.638	.207
	Within Groups	320.990	24	13.375		t
	Total	386.714	27			

**Interpretation:** The above table represents the level of awareness of the respondents about different aspects with respect to their age. It can be seen that the respondents are aware of online databases, mobile operating systems, mobile website creation

software, cloud-based services, graphic tools etc, and the p values of all the above mentioned variables were 0.404, 0.147, 0.309, 0.635, 0.207, 0.738, and 0.946 respectively. The significance values of all the above-mentioned variables are above the p value (i.e.  $p=0.05$ ) which means there is no statistical difference between the awareness of the respondents and their age.

**Table no 4:** ANOVA showing constraints in acquiring digital literacy skills with respect to the age group of respondents

Constraints	Between Groups	108.886	3	36.295	.964	.426
	Within Groups	903.829	24	37.660		
	Total	1012.714	27			

**Interpretation:** The above table represents the constraints faced by the respondents which shows that the significance value 0.426 is above the p value (i.e.  $p=0.05$ ). This shows that the respondents had no constraints as such. And therefore, they were proficient enough in using the software and aware of all the software.

**Table no 5:** ANOVA showing training acquired in digital literacy skills with respect to age group of respondents

Training	Between Groups	195.267	3	65.089	.402	.753
	Within Groups	3886.590	24	161.941		
	Total	4081.857	27			

**Interpretation:** The above table represents the training taken by the respondents which shows that the significance value 0.753 is above the p value (i.e.  $p=0.05$ ). This indicates that the respondents were trained enough in using the software and hardware. And therefore, they were proficient enough in using the software and aware of all the software.

## 9. RESEARCH FINDINGS :

- i. Respondents of all age groups were proficient enough in the specified digital literacy skills.
- ii. There is no statistical difference between the awareness of different digital literacy skills among librarians with respect to their age.
- iii. Librarians had no constraints in acquiring digital literacy skills and therefore they were proficient enough in using the different software and aware of all specified technologies.

- iv. Librarians were trained enough and therefore they were proficient enough in using the different software and aware of all specified technologies.

## **10. CONCLUSION**

The present research was carried out in the Bagalkot district and it can be seen that the librarians exhibited a positive attitude towards embracing digital technologies in libraries irrespective of different age groups. They are trained in the use of digital technologies and hence proficient enough in digital literacy skills and also aware of various latest technologies. They expressed that there were no constraints in acquiring digital literacy skills.

In the present digital scenario, when new technologies are introduced almost daily, it is essential for librarians to keep in pace with the latest ICT trends. The reluctance of some library professionals towards accepting ICT is broadening the digital divide. Training the librarians for necessary digital literacy skills can bring about knowledge in the use of ICT which may ultimately lead to a positive attitude among librarians towards the ICT tools.

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