IMPACT OF INSTRUCTION IMPROVING INFORMATION LITERACY SKILLS OF SCHOOL LIBRARY STAFF IN AMPARA DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to identify the impact of encountered information literacy program. To provide a quality service for students, the staff of school libraries have to be competent about information skills and information literacy program. However, according to the first-hand experience of the researcher and related research findings, school` library staff in Ampara district have lack of awareness on IL programs. Ampara district located in the Eastern part of the country and 350 km away from the capital city of Sri Lanka. Results revealed that the school library staffs are engaged in a traditional custodian role of the library, and which negatively affects the quality of the lifestyle of school library staff in the study area. As a quantitative approach researcher found 92 school library teacher librarian and library attendant as the population, who speaks Tamil and it considered only 46 members as the study sample. The purposive sampling technique was used to select the sample consisted of 46 school library staff. The data were analyzed using SPSS version (20). This study is useful to understand the weaknesses/barriers of school library staff skills.

Keywords: Ampara district, information literacy skills, school library staff

1. INTRODUCTION

Information literacy is the basis of lifelong learning. "Lifelong learning (LLL) means providing for individuals by way of developing information skills based on printed and electronic materials, as well as learning opportunities" (Yalız Solmaz, 2017). Because lifelong learning acknowledges that learning is not restricted to time and place. It can be undertaken anywhere that the passion for learning is present. Therefore, the concept of 'Lifelong learning' has been used by educational institutions worldwide to effectively design their academic program. These conditions require an information literacy program which is designed in a way that equips learners with lifelong learning skills. These skills could be acquired through learning approaches that encourage independent learning.

In order to achieve LLL, the ability of a student to engage in "information literacy can be seen as a subset of independent learning that in turn is a subset of lifelong learning" Bundy (2004). According to American Library Association (ALA) report, 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" (ALA, 1989). Information literacy also is increasingly important in the contemporary environment of rapid technological change and proliferating information resources.

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1.2 Objectives of the Study

The major aim of the present study is to identify Impact of Teaching Information Skills on Information literacy Program for school library staff in Ampara District.

1. To identify existing knowledge related to the information skills of the study population.
2. To identify the analytical and locational skills as impact after conducting the program.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Based on the above discussion, it is clear that Ampara District school libraries, particularly in the rural areas, are not fully developed. It has been hampered by the fact that there is no ministry of education responsible for the development of Ampara District school libraries. The new technological changes have bestowed challenges to many school libraries staffs since they lack information literacy skills to access electronic information. school library users need to get the needed information from the available sources with ease but it seems they lack information skills. There are existing gaps in area of information literacy in school libraries hence, the researchers need to explore on the implementation of information literacy skills in school library staffs and suggest possible solutions.

1.4 Scope of the Output Study

Information retrieval program mainly focuses on the IL skills of school library staff in identifying, locating, searching, accessing, retrieving and using information from both print and electronic sources of information. The sample of this study covers sample size of 46 library staff in the Ampara District

1.5 Significance of the study

Therefore, this research would be interested and practically useful to School library staff as well as to identify the real situation of the slow implementation and adoption of information literacy skills are integrated in to the curriculum, the information retrieval program for the school library staff will be more impact and these skills are also useful in their further studies and help their research work as well, the result of present study will save as a basis to design an appropriate information retrieval program at the Ampara District Tamil medium school library staff

As such the finding of the study will elaborate the level of IL competencies and weaknesses   and gap in their information gathering and processing skills, especially related information retrieval program, moreover, IL skills needed for research work can also be identified through this study. Therefore, the finding of the present study will help to design a suitable IL Course to train the school library staff their information retrieval program session start.

1.7 Limitation of the study

- This study was limited to investigating the role of school libraries in enhancing IL skills of school library users and the school library staffs in Ampara District.
- Target of five education Zone include Tamil speaking domain area in school libraries in the Ampara district were included in this study. school libraries were included in the study because they offer IL programs to all community members of school libraries and they were selected on the basis of being actively involved in IL programs. The respondents were confined to school library staffs, as because the focus of the study was on them.
- School libraries were selected from where the majority of people are Tamil language speaking. This is just because of the researcher's personal language barrier issues in communicating IL program.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Literacy can be defined as an ability to read and write. Literacy in Sri Lanka is known as the ability to read, write, and count. UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) (2008) declared that literacy is the ability to make and communicate meaning by the use of a variety of socially contextual symbols. A literate person can mediate their world by deliberately and flexibly orchestrating meaning from one linguistic knowledge base and applying or connecting it to another Knowledge base (Moll, 1994, p. 202). Literacy is the ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate, and compute, using printed and written materials associated with varying contexts. Developing lifelong learners is the central mission of the school library. Information literacy is a key component, and contributor of lifelong learning and it forms the basis for lifelong learning. It is common to all disciplines, all learning environments, and all levels of education.

Mashroofa (2009) carried out a study of how information literacy is taught to freshers and the special degree students of social science at the South Eastern University in Sri Lanka. This paper analyzed the skills among the Students who participated in the workshop.

"An information literate person is able to identify the problems and by using his skills on realizing, Locating, accessing, evaluating and utilizing information, he would be able to solve the problem" Mashroofa 2014.

2.1 Information Skills

Developing information skills is an important aspect of studying and working. These are skills which will help you to identify, find, evaluate and manage the information that you need so that you can effectively and efficiently find the right material for researcher's studies and work.

Analytical skill: Analytical skills are problem-solving skills. The standard of ACRL (2000) and standard developed by Australian and Newzeland

information literacy Framework (Bundy,2004) have mentioned that the "Recognizes the need for information and determines the nature and extent of the information needed" as the first information literacy standard. In order to achieve this standard, a person must have some array of skills, which can be collectively called as analytical skill. The analytical skill through which the need for the information or gap in information has been analyzed according to the situation.

Locational skills: Locational skills refer to knowing where to find information residing in various reference sources. Locational skills are more generally referred to as research skills include the ability to find specific words in an alphabetized list, to find specific pages from a table of contents or index, to find the pronunciation and meaning of words and phrases from dictionaries and glossaries, to obtain data from reference books and encyclopedias and to use classification systems to locate library

3.METHODOLOGY

This chapter provides the methodology and techniques that the researcher used in carrying out the research study. school library staffs in Ampara district were selected as the subject of this study who had academic characteristics, such as having passed the courses: information technology, basic writing and writing ability development, basic reading and reading ability development, and philosophy of science. The courses provide much contribution to the information literacy. This study used action research design. This study aims to find solutions and a thorough analysis of efforts to improve school library staffs' problem-solving skills in the "Research Methods". In accordance with the method used the techniques of data collection used are document analysis, questionnaire. The chapter further discusses the mode of data analysis.

3.1 Study Population & sample method

The study was carried out with a school library staffs in Ampara district, and the Tamil language speaking staffs only included in this study because researcher has limitation to conduct the IL program in other languages. The study population comprised of the 46 members of library staffs which included 25 Teacher librarian and 21 library attendants. These 46 members were found among 92 members of study population. The following table shows Sample size of staff table (1)

Table 1: Sample *size of the population*

Designation of staff	Male	Female	Total
Teacher Librarian	10	15	25
Library Attendant	9	12	21
Total	**19**	**27**	**46**

Sampling technique a means that used in research to take a sample of the population. Data were collected in a natural setting without any manipulation of the setting from the primary data source. The researcher randomly selected (Purposive sampling) technique will be used to collect the data, which represent the whole of the population. The sample is used as the participant in the study. The statistics were finally the data were analyzed SPSS.

4. DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

This study applied quantitative method to analyze the data which were collected from self-administered questionnaire. The library staffs were because of the respondents as they were provided with information literacy programmed (IL). Various techniques and methods were used to analyze, present and interpret data which comprised of pie charts, bar graphs, tables and diagrams. The chapter presents and discusses the results of the survey and the questionnaires.

4.1 Overall Demographic Profile of the Responses

In this section, the responses are profiled on two levels. Firstly, the response from the Librarians are profiled; secondly, the Library Attendant participating are profiled since they are the unit of analysis. Accounting Practitioners are described by the variables of gender, experience in the library, Academic qualification and Professional qualification and Position in the school library environment while the library is described in terms of a number of employees, the number of year's experiences in organizations. In fact, the characteristics of the sample indicate that (54%) of the respondents were Teacher Librarian. In general, the profile of the respondents indicates that these respondents are likely the library environment on firm performance that is about the objective of this study, are capable of answering the questions, and are credible sources of information about the companies. The next same group of respondents was from the Library Attendant representing (46%), Table (2) illustrates the demographic characteristics of the respondents and their firms involved in this study.

Table 2: *Statistics of Respondents and their Public library*

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	19	45%
Female	27	55%
Total	46	100%
Number of years' Experience		
Below 5 years	2	4%
5-10 years	3	7%
10-15 years	6	13%
15-20 years	8	17%
20-25 years	9	20%

25-30 years	8	17%
30-35 years	6	13%
Above 35 years	14	9%
Total	46	100%
Position in Library		
Teacher Librarian	25	54%
Library Attendant	21	46%
Total	46	100%
Academic qualification		
O/L	8	17%
O/L & LIS	4	9%
A/L	6	13%
A/L & LIS	3	7%
COE	14	30%
Degree/Postgraduate	11	24%
Total	46	100%

4.2 Suitability of Analytical skills

The researcher sought to find out how the application of Empower 8 model helped in the provision of information literacy skills for school library staffs to improve the level of Analytical skills. As it can be observed from Table (3) the purpose of the question was to find out the various methods used to provide information literacy programs in the library. Eight items were given to choose with the use of the rating scale. When analyzing the suitability of using the analytical skills, the majority of respondents stated as good maximum number of scored totally 100 (56.81 %).   Which is given for the response 'good'. For following items, 6,1,2,7 and 4, the majority of the participants opted as good, 6th item stating that "Identify the parts of the Book" has an average of 20 (90.90%), 1st item stating that " Use of mind map" has an average of 16 (72.72%), 2nd   item stating that ".Use of concept map" has an average of 16 (72.72%), 4th item stating that "Use of Index of Book" has an average of 15 (68.18%) and 4nd   item stating that " Use of Library catalogue for printed materials" has an average of 14 (63.63%).

Again, it can be observed from Table (3) that scale items with the 2nd majority of average is "Average" score, which has been given for the items 3 and 8. 3rd item stating that "Use of 5WH" has an average of 15 (68.18%), 8th item stating that "Use of encyclopedia" has an average of 15 (68.18%) and option "Excellent" has been selected item number 5 which is stating that "Use of

classification" has an average of 11 (50%). The following table illustrates the findings.

Table 3: *Suitability of Information Literacy skills for school library staff*

Analytical skills	V/Poor %	Poor %	Average %	Good %	Excellent %
1. Use of mind maps	_	4.55	22.7.3	72.72	_
2.Use of concept map	_	4.54	22.72	72.72	_
3.Use of 5WH	_	_	68.18	22.72	9.09
4.Use of Library catalogue for P/M	_	4.54	4.54	63.63	27.27
5.Use of classification	_	_	4.54	45.45	50
6.Identify the parts of the Book	_	_	4.54	68.18	27.27
7.Use of Index of Book	_	_	20	90.9	9.09
8.Use of encyclopedia	_	4.54	68.18	18.18	9.09
Total	_	2.27	24.43	56.81	16.47
Average	_	2.27	24.43	56.81	16.47
Locational Skills					
9.Use of Internet and different Internet Browsers	_	18.18	18.18	59.09	4.54
10.Develop online search strategy (truncation, Boolean operators etc.)	_	13.63	22.72	59.09	4.54
11. Evaluating web sites	_	13.63	36.36	50	_
12. Use of Social media sites	_	9.09	4.9	50	_
13.Use of mobile devices to information need	4.54	_	13.63	72.72	9.09
Total	0.9	10.9	26.36	58.18	3.63
Average	0.9	10.9	26.36	58.18	3.63

4.3 Suitability of Locational skills

As it can be observed from Table (3) the purpose of the question was to find out the various methods used to provide information literacy programs in the library. When analyzing the suitability for locational skills, the majority of participants opted the response 'good' Majority of the respondents overall average scale 64 (58.18%). which is given for the response 'good'. For following items locational skills with the 1st majority of average is "good" scores are 13,9,10,11 and 12, respectively. 13th item stating that "se of mobile devices to information need" has an average of 16(72.72%),9th item stating that "Use of Internet and different Internet Browsers" has an average of

13(59.09%), 10th item stating that "Develop online search strategy" has an average of 13(59.09%), 11th item stating that "Evaluating web sites" has an average of 11(50%) and 12th item stating that "Use of Social media sites" has an average of 11(50%).

5. CONCLUSION

This paper discussed the impact of an Information Literacy Programme for the school library staff in Ampara district. Community needs information to full fill their day to day activities. School library is one of the educational institutions that can provide access to such information for the community.

In order to improve IL programmes in school libraries and make them more effective, the more proactive approach is needed, especially from librarians who need to promote widespread and deeper recognition of IL in school libraries by raising awareness among student, Teacher librarians and other stakeholders on the importance of IL in facilitating sensitizing student for lifelong learning. Various methods like seminars, leaflets, posters and posting information in library websites can be used to serve this purpose. it is concluded that the skills of school library staff have been enhanced after conducting information library programmes. Especially it was identified their analytical and locational skills have been improved. this study recommends that school library staff should be given training on information literacy in a regular basis.

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