

**A Study on Information Literacy (IL) Skills of Undergraduates: With Special Reference to Buddhist and Pali University of Sri Lanka**

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**Abstract**

Information Literacy skills are acutely needed for undergraduates. Today the passing society belongs to the information era. Information literacy is the ability to access, evaluate, organize and use information, problem solving and to make decisions. All professionals are influenced as information technology and there are a number of challenges to the information seekers. This research aims to conduct an investigation of the skills of the undergraduates seeking information by themselves.

Objectives of this study was to examine the awareness of information literacy skills, to Identify the perception of students' ability of IL, to identify the obstacles in information seeking and to recommend the suggestions to improve information literacy among undergraduates.

The research method used in this study is survey design. Questionnaires, interviews and observation were used as principle techniques for primary data collection. Questionnaires were distributed between 9 am -10 am per two weeks to those undergraduates who are come to the library representing first and second year students. The Questionnaires covered question on citation and reference styles, searching methods and strategies, plagiarism etc. Few faculty members were randomly selected and interviews were conducted. Personal observations were carried out on students' information searching, catalogue usage, finding information resources etc. Data is presented and analyzed graphically in tabulated forms.

The study reveals that the students lack of locating skills. The respondents do not have very clear idea on the types of E-resources. Students are aware of the meaning of the 'plagiarism'. They believe that the internet is the most current and accurate information source. They do not have a fair idea about methods and tools to be used for retrieval of information from related information sources. Students' ability of referencing is low. The study makes several recommendations that the program to IL skills has to be planned for all undergraduates. Short time program should be introduced parallel with first year orientation program. Bibliographical workshops, short time courses should be introduced by university library. IL program should include an assessment of student learning and Individual assessments should be developed in consultation with the faculty members and also to be Collaborated with faculty to create effective research assignment.

**Keyword:** *IL, University Libraries, Plagiarism, information literacy skills, Reference style, User education*