



DIGITAL LITERACY AWARENESS AMONG THE P.G STUDENTS OF VIKRAMA SIMHAPURI UNIVERSITY, NELLORE

Dr. Y .Sudha Rani

Librarian I/C, Dr.B.R Ambedkar Central Library, Vikrama Simhapuri University, Nellore.

Abstract

Digital literacy is crucial for the students in the fast changing society. Due to the enormous use of technological tools like desk tops, tabs, laptops, and the internet in the teaching and learning, it's a very important to the students not only for their course also for the day to day life. This study aims to analyze digital literacy awareness among the postgraduate students at Vikrama Simhapuri University in Nellore, Andhra Pradesh. Survey method and purposive sampling method was used to collect the primary data. A simple questionnaire was prepared in Google form and shared among the PG students whatsapp group. The findings of the study will help the students' awareness and the use of digital technology and tools in an effective way.

Keywords: Digital Literacy, P.G Students. Survey

Introduction

The term "digital literacy" was coined by Paul Glistner who defined it as, "a set of skills to access the Internet; find, manage and edit digital information; join in communications, and otherwise engage with an online information and communication network" (Glistner,1997) ALA's Digital Literacy Task Force defines digital literacy as "the ability to use information and communication technologies to find, evaluate, create, and communicate information, requiring both cognitive and technical skills." (Theme, n.d.) To be able to access, manage, integrate, evaluate, generate, and convey information in a knowledge society, one must have digital literacy, which is defined as the capacity to use digital technology and communications tools and networks. Students who are digitally literate learn how to compare sources, locate reliable information, and can evaluate information that present in falsified. The present study tries to focus on awareness of digital literacy among the Post graduate students of Vikrama Simhapuri University, Nellore

Background of the Study

Digital literacy has become an essential skill in the 21st century, particularly in higher education, where students increasingly rely on digital technologies for learning, research, communication, and career development. It refers to the ability to access, evaluate, create, and communicate information effectively using digital tools and online resources. The rapid growth of information and communication technologies (ICT), online learning platforms, digital libraries, and electronic resources has transformed the teaching and learning process in universities. Postgraduate students are expected to possess advanced digital skills to conduct academic research, analyze information, collaborate with peers, and use digital platforms responsibly. However, the level of digital literacy varies among students due to differences in educational background, access to technology, training opportunities, and digital experience. Assessing students' awareness and competence in digital literacy is therefore important for improving academic performance and preparing them for a technology-driven workplace.

At Vikrama Simhapuri University, Nellore, digital resources play a significant role in supporting postgraduate education. Understanding the digital literacy awareness of P.G. students can help identify their strengths and areas requiring improvement. The findings of this study can assist university administrators, librarians, and faculty members in designing appropriate training programs, enhancing digital infrastructure, and promoting the effective and ethical use of digital technologies in academic activities.



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Review of Literature

Parvathamma and Danappa (2013) studied the digital literacy of Management students in Davanagare district , Karnnataka. The study findings shows that all the respondents are possessed own personal computer, and most of the respondents are having their own internet connectivity. The investigators proposed a model curriculum to improve digital literacy skills.

Neera Bansal (2015) conducted a study in Hisar city in Haryana. The study used a questionnaire for collection of data, and survey as a research method. The results revealed that majority of the respondents are below average in the digital competence.

Shabana Tabusum, Saleem, A. and Batcha, M.Sadik (2014) investigated digital literacy awareness among Arts& Science students in Tiruvalluvar district, Tamilnadu. The study concludes that People of all ages now need to be digitally literate for a number of reasons, which is unprecedented.

Thakur (2020) study examines the digital literacy skills among the PG students of the University of Jammu. The results of the study elicit that the most of the respondents themselves opined that they have poor digital skills.

Singh (2022) paper highlights the effectiveness of digital literacy, the findings show that majority of the respondents know the concept of Digital literacy. Unorganized element in the search page is most difficult barrier faced by the respondents. To manage the references majority of the respondents preferred Mendely.

Objectives of the Study

The main objectives of the present study are

- To know the digital devices possessed by the students
- To determine the digital competence of the post graduate students
- To examine the familiarity of using digital tools
- To analyze the disadvantages in the use of digital devices

Research Methodology

The study population is PG students of Vikarama simhapuri University. Survey method and purposive sampling method was used to collect the required data from the respondents.

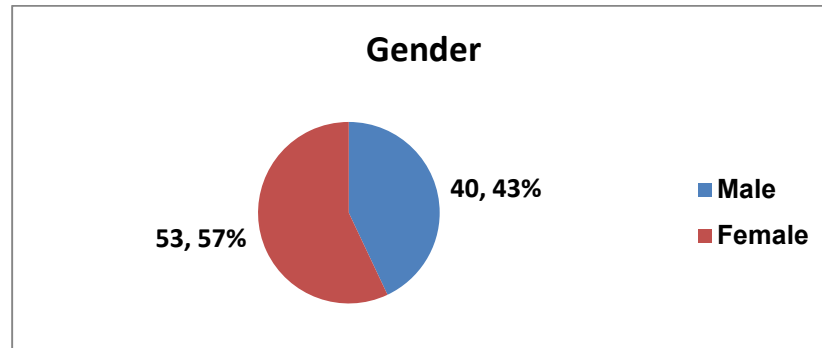
Questionnaire and data collection: A structured questionnaire was designed using Google form to collect the data from the respondents. The form was shared among the respondents through whatsapp. The data which were collected through the questionnaire were tabulated and analyzed by simple statistical techniques.

Data Analysis

On the basis of responses received from the respondents through the questionnaire, the data were analyzed and results were tabulated using SPSS software.



Figure -1: Gender wise distribution of Respondents



Primary data

The figure-1 shows the gender wise distribution of respondents. It is cleared that majority of the respondents 53(57%) are female, and 40(43%) are male respondents participated in this study.

Table- 1 Age wise distribution of Respondents

S.No	Year	Frequency	Percent
1	21-23	88	94.6
2	24-26	3	3.2
3	27 Above	2	2.2
Total		93	100.0

Primary data

Table-1, The age-wise distribution of respondents shows that the majority belong to the **21–23 years** age group. Out of 93 respondents, **88 (94.6%)** were aged 21–23 years, indicating that this age category overwhelmingly represents the study population. Only **3 respondents (3.2%)** were in the **24–26 years** age group, while **2 respondents (2.2%)** were **27 years and above**. This distribution suggests that the sample is predominantly composed of younger participants, with very limited representation from older age groups. Therefore, the findings of the study mainly reflect the opinions and experiences of respondents aged 21–23 years, making this age group the primary focus of the analysis.

Table- 2 Area wise distribution of Respondents

S.No	Area	Frequency	Percent
1	Urban	37	39.8
2	Rural	54	58.1
3	Semi Urban	2	2.2
Total		93	100.0

Primary data

Table-2, The area-wise distribution of respondents indicates that the majority belong to **rural areas**. Out of 93 respondents, **54 (58.1%)** are from rural areas, making them the largest group in the study. **Urban respondents** account for **37 (39.8%)**, representing a substantial proportion of the sample. Only **2 respondents (2.2%)** are from **semi-urban areas**, indicating minimal representation from this category. The findings suggest that the study is predominantly influenced by the views



and experiences of rural participants, while urban respondents also contribute significantly. The very small proportion of semi-urban respondents limits the generalization of findings to that population group.

Table-3 Year of study wise distribution of Respondents

S.No	Year	Frequency	Percent
1	I year	38	40.9
2	II year	54	58.1
3	III year	1	1.1
Total		93	100.0

Primary data

The table- 3 The data show that out of 93 postgraduate students surveyed, the majority were **II-year students**, accounting for **54 respondents (58.1%)**. **I-year students** constituted **38 respondents (40.9%)**, indicating a substantial representation in the study. Only **one respondent (1.1%)** belonged to the **III year**, reflecting a very small proportion of the sample. The findings indicate that the survey primarily represents the views and experiences of first- and second-year postgraduate students, with second-year students forming the largest group. Their higher participation may be due to greater availability, academic experience, or enrollment patterns. Consequently, the study's findings on digital literacy awareness mainly reflect the perceptions and digital competencies of I- and II-year postgraduate students rather than those of III-year students.

Table -4 Digital devices Owned students

S.No	Devices	I have	I don't have	Total
1	Smart Phone	54	0	93(100.0)
2	Lap top	36 (38.7)	57(61.3)	93(100.0)
3	Desk top	9(9.7)	84(90.3)	93(100.0)
4	Smart watch	17 (18.3)	76 (81.7)	93(100.0)
5	Digital camera	6 (6.5)	87 (93.5)	93(100.0)
6	Tablet	8 (8.6)	85 (91.4)	93(100.0)
7	Digital Pen	5(5.4)	88(94.6)	93(100.0)
8	IPOD	5(5.4)	88(94.6)	93(100.0)

Primary data (Values in the parenthesis indicate percentage)

Table-4, The distribution of digital devices owned by the respondents indicates that **all 93 respondents (100%) own a smartphone**, making it the most widely used device. **Laptops** are owned by **36 respondents (38.7%)**, while **57 (61.3%)** do not have one. Only **17 respondents (18.3%)** possess a **smartwatch**, whereas **76 (81.7%)** do not. Ownership of **desktop computers (9.7%)**, **tablets (8.6%)**, **digital cameras (6.5%)**, **digital pens (5.4%)**, and **iPods (5.4%)** is



comparatively low. These findings indicate that smartphones are the primary digital device among the respondents, whereas ownership of other advanced digital devices is limited. This suggests that mobile-based access to digital information and AI applications is likely to be more common than access through other electronic devices.

Table-4 narrate the digital devices owned respondents. It is evident that all the respondents having smart phone, followed by laptop 36 (38.7%), smart watch 17 (18.3%), desktop 9(9.7%), tablet 8(8.6%) and the remaining devices like digital camera, digital pen, iPod are possessed in very less number.

Table- 5 Digital Competency

S.No	Digital Competency	YES	NO	Total
1	Installing a software	78(83.9)	15(16.1)	93(100)
2	Connect to Wi-Fi or Bluetooth	88(94.6)	5(5.4)	93(100)
3	Creating a website using Google sites	59 (63.4)	34(36.6)	93(100)
4	Create a strong password	89 (95.7)	4(4.3)	93(100)
5	Create a profile on a social network	81(87.1)	12(12.9)	93(100)
6	Search and collect information	87(93.5)	6(6.5)	93(100)
7	Identify the fake information	69(74.2)	24(29.8)	93(100)
8	Saving file in specific location	81(87.1)	12(12.9)	93(100)
9	Evaluating the information in online sources	82(88.2)	11(11.8)	93(100)
10	Presenting through a video	68(73.1)	25(26.3)	93(100)

Primary data (Values in the parenthesis indicate percentage)

Table-5, The findings reveal that respondents possess a high level of digital competency across most activities. The majority can **create strong passwords (95.7%)**, **connect to Wi-Fi or Bluetooth (94.6%)**, and **search and collect information online (93.5%)**. A significant proportion are also capable of **evaluating online information (88.2%)**, **creating social media profiles (87.1%)**, **saving files in specific locations (87.1%)**, and **installing software (83.9%)**. However, comparatively fewer respondents can **identify fake information (74.2%)**, **present content through videos (73.1%)**, and **create websites using Google Sites (63.4%)**. Overall, the results indicate strong digital literacy among respondents, although advanced digital content creation and critical information evaluation skills require further improvement.

Table-6 Familiarity of using digital tools

S.No	Digital Tools	YES	NO	Total
1	E-mail	93	0	93(100)
2	Drop box	8(8.6)	85(91.4)	93(100)
3	Skype	7(7.5)	86(92.5)	93(100)
4	Google Drive	84(90.3)	9(9.7)	93(100)

Primary data (Values in the parenthesis indicate percentage)



Table-6, The analysis of digital tool usage shows that **all respondents (100%) use e-mail**, making it the most commonly used digital communication tool. **Google Drive** is also widely used, with **84 respondents (90.3%)** reporting its use, indicating a high level of familiarity with cloud-based storage and file sharing. In contrast, the usage of **Dropbox** is relatively low, with only **8 respondents (8.6%)** using the platform, while **85 (91.4%)** do not. Similarly, **Skype** is used by just **7 respondents (7.5%)**, whereas **86 (92.5%)** do not use it. Overall, the findings suggest that respondents prefer widely accessible and integrated digital tools, particularly e-mail and Google Drive, over less frequently used platforms such as Dropbox and Skype.

Table-7 Use of Online learning platforms

S.No	Online Learning platforms	Frequency of usage	Percentage
1	Swayam	93	100
2	Coursera	6	6.5
3	Edex	11	11.8
4	Khan Academy	1	1.1

Primary data

Table-7, The analysis of online learning platform usage reveals that **all 93 respondents (100%) use SWAYAM**, making it the most popular and widely accessed online learning platform among the participants. In comparison, only **11 respondents (11.8%) use edX**, while **6 respondents (6.5%) access Coursera**. **Khan Academy** is the least used platform, with only **1 respondent (1.1%)** reporting its usage. These findings indicate a strong preference for SWAYAM, likely due to its accessibility, relevance to Indian higher education, and availability of free courses. The comparatively low usage of international platforms suggests limited awareness, access, or preference among the respondents.

Table-8 Online Job information seeking

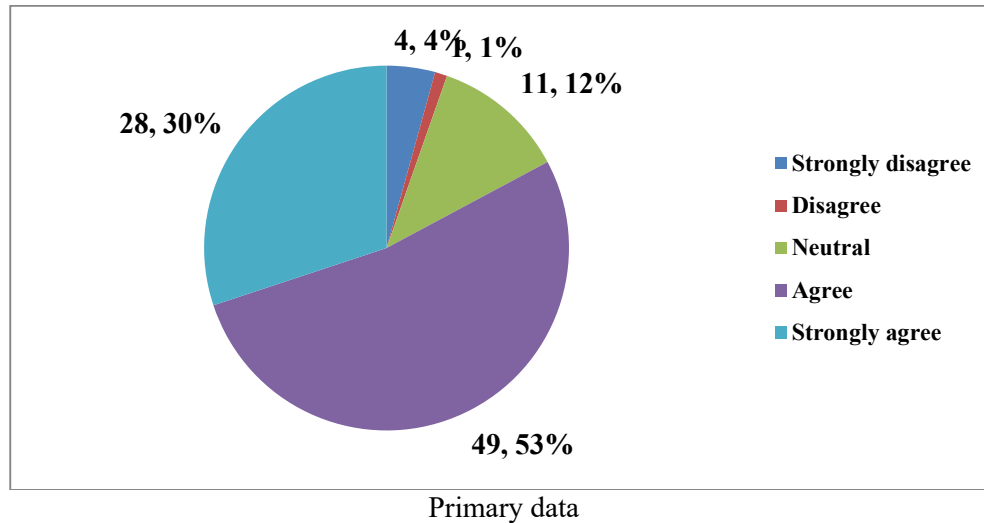
Sources	Yes	No	Total
Govt. websites	87(93.5)	6(6.5)	93 (100)
Online News papers, Magazines etc.	64(68.80)	29(31.20)	93(100)
LinkedIn online profile	63(67.7)	30(32.3)	93(100)
Online Job portals	79(84.9)	14(15.1)	93(100)

Primary data (Values in the parenthesis indicate percentage)

Table-8, The analysis of online information sources indicates that **government websites** are the most trusted and frequently used source, with **87 respondents (93.5%)** accessing them, while only **6 (6.5%)** do not. **Online job portals** are also widely used by **79 respondents (84.9%)**, reflecting their importance for career-related information. **Online newspapers and magazines** are used by **64 respondents (68.8%)**, and **LinkedIn online profiles** by **63 respondents (67.7%)**, indicating moderate usage for news and professional networking. Overall, the findings suggest that respondents rely primarily on authentic government websites and employment portals, while online news platforms and LinkedIn are used by a substantial, though comparatively smaller, proportion of participants.



Figure-2 Importance of Digital Literacy



The above figure represents the data relating the respondent's opinion on the importance of digital literacy. It is clear that majority of the respondents 49 (53%) are Agree followed by 28(30%) are strongly agree the digital literacy is essential. Only few 11(12%) are neutral and 1(1%) disagree.

Table-9 Opinion on Disadvantages of Digital Technologies

Disadvantages	Yes	No	Maybe	Total
Distraction	42(45.2)	10(10.8)	41(44.1)	93 (100)
Cyber bullying	48(51.6)	20(21.5)	25(26.9)	93(100)
Lack of Reliability of Information	36(38.7)	30(32.3)	27(29)	93(100)
Decreased physical activity	62(66.7)	13(14.0)	18(19.4)	93(100)
Reducing Human contact	63(67.7)	11(11.8)	19(20.4)	93(100)

Primary data (Values in the parenthesis indicate percentage)

Table-9, The analysis of perceived disadvantages of digital technology shows that **reducing human contact (67.7%)** and **decreased physical activity (66.7%)** are the most commonly recognized concerns among respondents. More than half (51.6%) also believe that **cyberbullying** is a significant issue. Regarding **distraction**, opinions are divided, with 45.2% agreeing that it is a disadvantage, while 44.1% remain uncertain. Similarly, 38.7% of respondents believe that the **lack of reliability of online information** is a concern, whereas 32.3% disagree and 29.0% are uncertain. Overall, the findings indicate that respondents are more concerned about the social and health-related impacts of digital technology than information reliability.

Conclusion & Recommendations

The paper discuss with the awareness of Digital Literacy among the P.G students of Vikrama Simhapuri University, Nellore. The results of this study demonstrate that several ICT tools are unfamiliar to the respondents. Cultivating digital literacy is the need of the hour therefore the study recommends that the university should organize awareness programs,



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workshops and provide hands on training at regular intervals. University library and the staff also take initiative on creating awareness of various digital tools and teach them how to use them more effectively.

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