

TRANSITION OR TRANSFORMATION OF LIBRARIES DUE TO COVID PANDEMIC: LESSONS TO LEARN

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SECOND FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNERS AND THE IMPORTANCE OF DIGITAL LITERACY INCLUSION: GURU EXPERIENCES

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Introduction

Nowadays one of the most common words is ‘digital’. The digital becomes a needed vocabulary, very often, despite literate or illiterate. Therefore, the intangible ideas on digital can be seen broadly: Digital Competence (DC) and Digital Literacy (DL). Digital Competence, user’s perspective, European Commission (2006) defines as ‘the confident and critical use of basic skills in the use of computers to retrieve, assess, store, produce, present and exchange information, and to communicate and participate in collaborative networks via the Internet. While Digital Literacy, Bawden (2008) explains as ‘the ability to read, write and use technological devices; understanding of the digital creation pathways, sources and resources; the ability to assemble knowledge from multiple sources; the ability to learn independently, as well as to exhibit good behaviour in a digital environment’.

Digital Competence and Digital Literacy, widely used around the world by individuals, became one of the essential components in Information Literacy of contemporary society. Contemporary society consume more and more digital commodities therefore, the basic knowledge and skills of digital literacy are vital for them. While, consuming digital commodities such as e-resources, e-services, and e-facilities, the capabilities, and capacities of skills and knowledge have to be enhanced. For skills and knowledge enhancement in digital literacy usage, English (2016) emphasizes an integral element of contemporary society.

The majority of consumers who engage with digital commodities are lacking in required skills and knowledge to receive maximum benefits from digital resources. However, it is very important and necessitates enhancing the skills of individuals to gain benefits from digital resources. Increasing and developing knowledge to use digital resources by assigning specific tasks to perform well without any hesitations will be a great opportunity for individuals. Creating of such opportunities to engage with digital tasks by the individuals, Hall, Nix, and Baker (2013) point that can gain diverse knowledge both online as well as off-line. The importance of diverse knowledge in digital literacy, Kivunja (2015) emphasis as the digital divide and cultural enclaves lead to illiterate individuals and society. Educating individuals on the importance of digital literacy can able to build a digital inclusion society. Van (2006) urges that creating an equal opportunity for all then can increase digital equity and digital inclusion regardless of the domain that individuals engage in which is vital in e-education and e-lifelong learning.

Need for the study

E-education and e-lifelong learning is a fully participatory process with a mentor, a learner, and e-content. E-content and digital inclusion are now some of the fundamental requirements in e-education and e-lifelong learning. In a digitizing world, the learner who cannot read digital

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content and cannot write on a digital platform will face new forms of marginalization. Steve (2018) urges currently ten percent (10%) of the world's population has difficulties engaging with digital learning environments and platforms. Sokolowsky (2019) explains the carefully designed digital content can help a learner to engage with advanced digital content. The learner's low digital literacy level and very limited technology skills may welcome to work in digital learning spaces. National Digital Inclusion Institute (2019) highlights the mentor and the learner until critically understand problems and opportunities in the digital inclusion both in teaching and learning environments, the digital competence increased. In a digital inclusion society that the importance of digital competence well taken into consideration to build digital-friendly individuals and society. Digital competence leads the learner to build digital confidence, critical and responsible use of digital content, and engagement with them for active e-learning and e-participation. But, Sokolowsky (2019) criticizes digital exclusion from learning applications and platforms marginalized equal digital benefits for the learner. An equal digital benefit for the learner, Steve (2018) refers to the activities necessary to ensure that learner have the Internet-enabled digital content that meets his or her needs; digital content engagements; digital learning assistance and support; encourage self-sufficiency, and e-participation and e-collaboration. Knowing the ongoing developments of digital literacy, this research has set as the research problems: why digital literacy is important in learning? and how digital literacy inclusion is impacted in learning of the second language?

Scope

This study aims to discover: the awareness of the concept of digital literacy, skills, and knowledge having to use e-resources, learning experiences in e-services, e-resources, and e-facilities, engaging experiences in digital contents, and experience in peer-review in digital contents.

Methodology

Data from the sample selected were collected through an online questionnaire. The questionnaire was sent to Sri Lankan students who learned the Chinese Language as the Second Foreign Language. The course was designed with digital resources and delivered on an online platform. The total number of questionnaires was sent to One Hundred and Thirteen (113) students. The responded number was considered as the research population and data was analysed by using descriptive statistics.

Results and Discussion

Gender, age, and length of experience of engaging in digital literacy

The highest percentage of responses were males (48%) and age groups were 19-29 (18.4%), 30-39 (7.43%), and 40-49 (4.16%). The length of experience of engaging in digital resources and services were four (4), three (3), and one (1) years respectively.

Awareness in Digital Literacy

As shown in Table 1, 7.96% of respondents were answered that students have very advanced awareness in Digital Literacy while only 32 respondents were having fair awareness which was nearly twenty-nine percentages (28.31%). However, it is significant that the majority of the respondents were shown that no awareness of digital literacy which was fifty-four percent (54%).

Table 1. Awareness in Digital Literacy

Digital Literacy Level	Frequency	Percentage
Advanced Knowledge	09	7.96%
Fair Knowledge	32	28.31%
Basic Knowledge	11	9.73%
No Experience	61	54%

The Skills and Knowledge of Using e-resources

It was important to see that no professional skills and knowledge of using e-resources from the majority of respondents. Also, students who have studied in Bachelor Degrees and Postgraduates were almost having a similar level of skills and knowledge of using e-resources as depicted in

Figure 1.

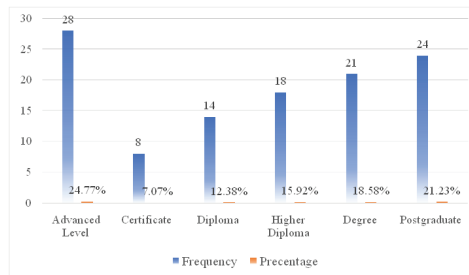


Figure 1. Skills and Knowledge of using e-resources

Learning Experiences in e-services, e-resources and e-facilities

Data were shown that either government schools or government universities were far behind the private universities in digital literacy inclusion in education which was 2.65% and 7.96% respectively. However, digital literacy inclusion in private universities is comparatively very high even than the workplaces which are nearly 47%.as shown in Figure 2.

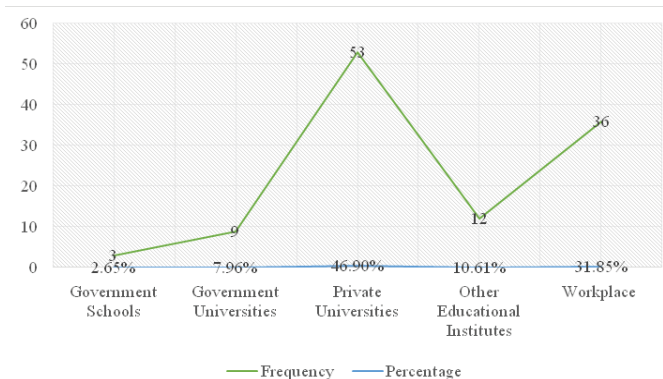


Figure 2. Learning Experience in e-services, e-resources and e-facilities

Engaging Experiences in Digital Contents

As presented in Table 2, 2.65% of respondents did not have any engaging experiences in digital contents in government schools or government universities.

Table 2. Engaging Experience in Digital Contents

Engaging Experience	Frequency	%
Government School	3	2.65 %
Government Universities	3	2.65 %
Private Universities	69	61.06 %
Other Educational Institutes	16	14.15 %
Workplace	22	19.46 %

Experience in peer-review in Digital Contents.

As shown in Figure 3, 78% of respondents did not have experience in peer-review of digital content. In contrast, having experience in peer-review was less than 8%.

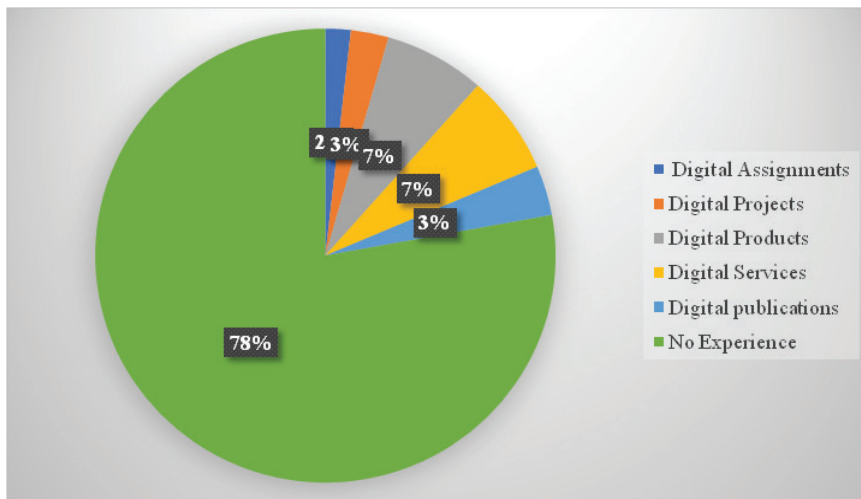


Figure 5. Experience in peer-review in Digital Content

Conclusion

The average learners of the second language in the world, Steve (2018) are digital literacy exclusion while a majority of the second language learners in Sri Lanka are the same. The highest number of the respondents are moderately digital literacy inclusion however, wide-ranging is exclusion. Also, it is noteworthy that almost one-third of second foreign language learners did not have either awareness in digital literacy or peer-review experiences in digital content. It has reflected that immediate action should be taken to educate the second foreign language learners of the importance of digital literacy in their language learning process. Also, it is vital to evaluate whether course contents are enriching enough to create opportunities in the digital literacy inclusion process. Consequently, it should be noted that the digital literacy

inclusion of the Chinese Language learners' profiles of Sri Lanka is not satisfactory, Ferrari (2013) says in most the countries in the world. However, the majority of learners are shown very enthusiasm in engaging in digital content and gain lengthy experiences in interacting with peer-learners. Therefore, the research stimulates the importance of digital literacy inclusion for second foreign language learning and teaching process with proper digital concept planning and evaluation interventions.

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