

# Information Literacy Skills among Faculty Members of Engineering Colleges in Tirunelveli District, Tamil Nadu: A Study

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**Abstract** - The present study is focused on information literacy skills among faculty members of engineering colleges in Tirunelveli district, Tamil Nadu. For the collection of data structured questionnaire was prepared. 100 questionnaires were distributed to the faculty members on first come first get basis. The researcher was able to get back only 85 duly filled in questionnaires. Out of 85, 50 (58.8%) faculty members are male, remaining 35(41.2%) faculty members of female. All the faculty members responded to the study 85 (100%) are in need of information. Out of that 80 (94.11%) faculty members need academic information Majority of 82(96.47%) faculty members find needed information in internet /web. 82(96.47%) faculty members have the knowledge of different section of books. Only 59(69.41%) faculty members use keyword and Boolean operators to search the required information in search strategy. 55 faculty members are aware of how to use copyright bound material. About 58(68.23%) faculty members have the knowledge of plagiarism. 32(37.64%) faculty members face the problem of lack of knowledge about the arrangements of books on shelves. 83(97.64%) faculty members are facing virus problems for accessing electronic information. About 75 (88.23%) faculty members are in need of information literacy training programme to become lifelong learners.

**Key Words:** Information Literacy Skills, Information Sources, Literacy, E -skills, Faculty Members, Tirunelveli District, Engineering College.

## 1.INTRODUCTION

Information is the living of democracy and it is measured as the vital source of power. Information literacy is currently understood as acceptance or the ability to define a problem, find information to solve the problem, evaluate information and use it effectively. Information literacy as was to move efficient access, evaluation and use of information should be taken into account and used for improving information end users. 1 The Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) have brought revolutionary changes in handling delivering and storage of information. The transition of traditional library collections to digital or virtual collections presented the librarian with new opportunities and challenges. The internet, especially WWW has given the librarian a new dynamic role to play in the society and serve the new information based in better ways than ever before, Because of the powerful features of web i.e. distributed,

heterogeneous, collaborative, multimedia, Standards and Protocols, architecture, world wide web has revolutionized the way people access information and has opened up new possibilities in areas such as digital libraries, Virtual libraries, efficient information retrieval and dissemination. ICT can be broadly defined as a set of activities that facilitate capturing, storing, processing, transmitting and displaying of information by electronics means. Universally, ICT has become an indispensable part of day-to-day work. ICT allows people to converse and see each other, even if they are separated by oceans, continents, time zones and geographical and political boundaries. The information super highway connects households, business and academic institutions to almost all available resources. Scientific research and dissemination of findings are heavily influenced by ICT developments. The statement 'Knowledge is power' is becoming more and more significant, backed up with ICT tools. The availability and access to modern information services using advanced technologies in data processing and communication are of critical importance for the socio economic development of any country.<sup>2</sup>

## 2.OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To find out the information literacy skills among faculty members of Tirunelveli district engineering colleges.
2. To find out the need for information both print and electronic format by faculty members.
3. To find out the effective use of information both print and electronic format by faculty members.
4. To identify different information search techniques used by faculty members for accessing information sources.
5. To find out knowledge on legal and social issues for accessing and using required information among faculty members.
6. To identify the barriers encountered while accessing print as well as electronic information sources.
7. To obtain the opinion of the members of faculty towards the need of training programme on Information Literacy.

### 3.LITERATURE REVIEW

**Dhanavandan (2011)**<sup>4</sup> found that the role of engineering colleges in the technical manpower development is quite significant. They need rapid Information Communication Technology infrastructure and in this context, there is a need for an adequate development of electronic resources. The lack of sufficient finance is the main reason for not developing information communication technology infrastructure especially in the case of libraries, those that do not receive financial aid from UGC of India or other like AICTE. The problem can be solved only through the aid from the state government or AICTE. The establishment of information communication technology infrastructure facilities in the self financing college libraries in Tamil Nadu can improve the efficiency of information support, the information retrieval and quality of education as a whole.

**Doraswamy (2007)**<sup>5</sup> carried out a study on "Knowledge and use of Digital Library Resources by Engineering Faculty Members Affiliated to Acharya Nagarjuna University, A. P." The major objectives of the study were to find out the familiarity, frequency of use of library resources, services and adequacy of library information sources. The study used questionnaire method for collecting the data. Copies of questionnaires were distributed to 200 faculty members, and only 160 faculty members responded. The study showed that majority of the respondents (53.63 %) were familiar with the usage of digital resources. It is also found that majority of the respondents (86.87%) were using digital resources for enhancing and updating their communication purposes, 49.37% of them stated that the information available in the digital form was adequate. The study suggested that user orientation programmes should be implemented. Awareness level should be increased for maximizing the usage of online journals.

**Gunasekaran, Balasubramani and Sivaraj (2008)**<sup>6</sup> have conducted a study on "Usage of electronic journals through consortia by the students and members of faculty of Bannari Amman Institute of Technology, Tamil Nadu: a survey". The findings of the study revealed that electronic journals which are subscribed by the institute through consortium is being used effectively by the students and faculty members and maximum number of students and faculty members used electronic journals for course work and to get the latest information sources. The study suggested that the Internet speed must be increased and e-Journals such as ACM Digital Library, Elseviers ScienceDirect, Compendex Plus and INSPEC may be added in the institutional subscription.

**Rajeev Kumar and Dr. Amritpal Kauran (2006)**<sup>7</sup> conducted research study of "Internet Use by Teachers and Students in Engineering Colleges of Punjab, Haryana, and Himachal Pradesh States of India: An Analysis". They analyzed the use of the Internet and related issues among the teachers and the students of engineering colleges in India's three States viz. Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh. He found that the paper demonstrates and elaborates the various aspects of Internet use, such as frequency of Internet use, methods used for learning of Internet skill, most frequently used place for Internet use, purposes for which the Internet is used, use of Internet services, ways to browse the information from the Internet, problems faced by the users and satisfaction level of users with the Internet facilities provided in the college.

**Mondal and Bandopadhyay (2010)**<sup>8</sup> examined "Situation of IT application and related manpower problems in government-aided degree college libraries of Burdwan Sadar (North and South), West Bengal". The study has also observed the major problems such as trained and insufficient manpower, inadequate funds, lack of IT skills among the library professionals and lack of the right attitude of the authorities towards library development. The professional library staff may be given ample opportunity to work independently to provide IT-enabled services to the users.

**Mahadeva Prasad, M.S., and Dr.Mallinath Kumbar (2015)**<sup>9</sup> conducted a survey of faculty members of selected polytechnic colleges situated across Karnataka state. For the collection of data structured questionnaire was prepared based on ACRL standard and random survey method was used. All the respondents 100% are in need of information. 30.9% faculty members use basic search to search information. 70% faculty members can recognize the difference sources of information for their requirement. Only 23.1% faculty members can able to identify the correct keywords for a given topic. About 39.4% faculty members are facing virus problem for accessing electronic information. The output of the study shows that more than 60% of the faculty members acquire Information Literacy Skills.

**Murugesan and Balasubramani (2011)**<sup>10</sup> investigated "Application of ICT in research and development libraries in Tamil Nadu". It is analyzed that most of the libraries faced a number of barriers like lack of funds, lack of infrastructures, and lack of skilled professionals in the application of ICT.

**Olatunji and Oluwadare (2011)**<sup>11</sup> surveyed "ICT literacy among the staff members of Kenneth Dike and Nimbe Adedipe university libraries in Nigeria". The results of the study indicated that the levels of ICT awareness among staff in both libraries are very high. The level of ICT training was also adequate. However, some of the factors that hindered the use of ICT facilities in these libraries include power outage, inadequate technical staff for immediate

assistance and constant breakdown of equipment. It is recommended that the management of these libraries should make specific allowance for implement of ICT facilities in such a way that librarians get necessary computer facilities and software to enable provision of effective information services.

#### 4.SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

The scope of the study encompasses the ICT skills of faculty members of engineering colleges in Tirunelveli District of Tamil Nadu. There are 20 engineering colleges in Tirunelveli district of Tamil Nadu.<sup>3</sup> The study has following limits.

- The study is limited to Tirunelveli District of Tamil Nadu only.
- The study is including only the faculty members of the engineering colleges in Tirunelveli District.
- The study covers only faculty members ICT skills only.

#### 5.METHODOLOGY

The study undertaken by the researcher belongs to descriptive research study. The researcher has used sampling methods in his survey study. The data collected are primary and secondary in nature.100 faculty members constitute the sampling frame of the study. The sampling techniques adopted are stratified random sampling. Questionnaire is the tool used by the researcher for collecting required data for the investigation. 100 questionnaires were distributed to the faculty members on first come first get basic. The researcher was able to get back only 85 duly filled in questionnaires.

#### 6.DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

**Table 6.1: Gender wise distribution of respondents**

| Sl.No | Gender | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|-------|--------|-----------|----------------|
| 1     | Male   | 50        | 58.8           |
| 2     | Female | 35        | 41.2           |
| Total |        | 85        | 100            |

Table 6.1 presents the gender wise distribution of faculty members out 85 Respondents, 50 are Male faculty members representing 58.8% of total sample and the remaining 35 are female faculty members representing to 41.2%. This shows that male faculty members are more responded for the study when compare to female faculty members.

**Table 6.2: Opinion about Information Need**

| Sl.No | Responses | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|-------|-----------|-----------|----------------|
| 1     | Yes       | 85        | 100            |
| 2     | No        | 00        | 00             |
| Total |           | 85        | 100            |

Table 6.2 indicates the opinion about the need for information by respondents. Out of 85, 85 faculty members are in need of information representing 100 % of the total sample.

**Table 6.3: Type of information needed by respondents**

| Sl.No | Types of Information                    | Frequency (N=85) | Percentage (%) |
|-------|---|------------------|----------------|
| 1     | Academic Information                    | 80               | 94.11          |
| 2     | General Information                     | 72               | 84.70          |
| 3     | Information related to Govt. Programmes | 65               | 76.47          |
| 4     | Current Information                     | 59               | 69.41          |
| 5     | Health Information                      | 56               | 65.88          |
| 6     | Financial Information                   | 48               | 56.47          |
| 7     | Political Information                   | 42               | 49.41          |
| 8     | Environmental Information               | 36               | 42.35          |

Table 6.3 Provides different types of information needed by faculty members out of 85 respondents 80 faculty members need academic information representing 94.11% of the total sample. About 72(84.7%) faculty members need general information then followed by 65(76.47%) respondents need information related to government programs.59 (69.41%) faculty members need current information. Then followed by 56(65.88%) respondents need to health information, 48(56.47%) respondents need to financial information. About 42(49.41%) respondents need political information and 36(42.35%) respondents need environmental information. Majority of the respondents need academic information as the faculty members always work in academic surroundings it is evident that they need academic information compare to other types of information.

**Table 6.4: Availability of Information Needed by Respondents**

| Sl.No | Types                     | Frequency (N=85) | Percentage (%) |
|-------|---------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| 1     | Library                   | 75               | 88.23          |
| 2     | Internet / Web            | 82               | 96.47          |
| 3     | Medias (TV, Radio, etc.,) | 58               | 68.23          |

Table 6.4 presents that out of 85 respondents 82 faculty members say that they will find needed information in internet / web representing 96.47% of the total sample. Then followed by 75(88.23%) faculty members say they will find the needed information in library. 58 (68.23%) respondents opines that they will find the needed information in media as TV, Raio.etc.

**Table 6.5: Types of sources that you use to satisfy your information need**

| Sl.No                     | Document Types              | Frequency (N=85) | Percentage (%) |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| <b>Printed Sources</b>    |                             |                  |                |
| 1                         | Books                       | 82               | 96.47          |
| 2                         | Journals                    | 73               | 85.88          |
| 3                         | Back Volumes of Periodicals | 25               | 29.41          |
| 4                         | Reference Sources           | 49               | 57.64          |
| 5                         | Standard and Specification  | 29               | 34.11          |
| 6                         | Technical Reports           | 55               | 64.70          |
| 7                         | Patents                     | 22               | 25.88          |
| 8                         | Government Publication      | 39               | 45.88          |
| <b>Electronic Sources</b> |                             |                  |                |
| 9                         | E-Books                     | 56               | 65.88          |
| 10                        | E-Journals                  | 47               | 55.29          |
| 11                        | E-Reference Sources         | 35               | 41.17          |
| 12                        | CD-Rom Sources              | 15               | 17.64          |
| 13                        | E-Database                  | 38               | 44.70          |
| 14                        | Online Virtual              | 29               | 34.11          |

Table 6.5 indicates the types of sources used by the respondents to satisfy their information need. In printed sources out of 85, 82 (96.47%) respondents use books to satisfy their information need. The followed by 73(85.88%) faculty members use journal to satisfy their information need. About 55(64.70%) faculty members use technical reports to satisfy their information need.49 (57.64%) faculty members use reference sources to satisfy their information, 39(45.88%) faculty members use government publications to satisfy their information need.29 (34.11%) faculty members use standards and specification to satisfy their information need. 25(29.41%) faculty members uses back volumes of periodicals and 22(25.88%) faculty members use patent satisfy their information need. In Electronic Sources out of 85 respondents, 56(65.88%) faculty members use E-Books to satisfy their information need then followed by 47(55.29%) faculty members use E-Journals to satisfy their information sources. About 38(44.70%) faculty members use E-Database to satisfy their information sources. 35(41.17%) faculty members use E-reference sources satisfy their information sources. 29 (34.11%) faculty members use Online Virtual Resources to satisfy their information need. 15(17.64%) faculty members use CD-Rom sources to satisfy their information need.

**Table 6.6: Aware of the type of cataloguing tools by Respondents**

| Sl.No | Responses | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|-------|-----------|-----------|----------------|
| 1     | Yes       | 75        | 88.23          |
| 2     | No        | 10        | 11.76          |
| Total |           | 85        | 100            |

The above table 6.6 presents the awareness of cataloguing tools by the respondents. From the table it is evident that our of 85 faculty members, 75(88.23%) faculty are aware of the different cataloguing tools and the remaining 10(11.76%) faculty members are not aware of the different cataloguing tools. Majority 75(88.23%) of the faculty members are aware of the different cataloguing tools available in the library.

**Table 6.7: Sources used to search journal article**

| Sl.No | Sources              | Frequency (N=85) | Percentage (%) |
|-------|----------------------|------------------|----------------|
| 1     | Indexing Journals    | 83               | 97.64          |
| 2     | Abstracting Journals | 78               | 91.76          |
| 3     | Databases            | 72               | 84.70          |
| 4     | Any others           | 00               | 00             |

It is understood from Table 6.7 83 faculty members find the required journal article in indexing journals. Then followed by 78 (91.76%) faculty members find the journal article in abstracting journals and the remaining 72(84.7%) faculty members find the journal article in databases.

**Table 6.8: Search Strategy used to search information in Search Engine**

| Sl. No | Search Strategy                           | Frequency (N=85) | Percentage (%) |
|--------|---|------------------|----------------|
| 1      | Type the required statement is search box | 83               | 97.64          |
| 2      | Type the keywords in search box           | 75               | 88.23          |
| 3      | Type the keywords using Boolean operators | 59               | 69.41          |
| 4      | Use wildcard/ Truncations                 | 26               | 30.58          |
| 5      | Don't Know                                | 35               | 41.17          |

Table 6.8 indicates the search options used in search strategy for required information by faculty members. Out of 85 faculty members, 83(97.64%) faculty members type the required statement is search box. Then followed by 75(88.23%) faculty members' type the keywords in search box. About 59(69.41%) faculty members type the keywords using Boolean operators. 26 (30.58%) faculty members use wildcard/truncations to search information and about 35 (41.17%) faculty members say they don't know the way of searching in the search strategy.

**Table 6.9: Knowledge about Copy Rights**

| Sl.No | Opinion   | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|-------|---|-----------|----------------|
| 1     | Seek permission from the authority                        | 42        | 49.41          |
| 2     | Consult for fair use of information                       | 13        | 15.29          |
| 3     | Download the whole text without acting on the above (1,2) | 12        | 14.11          |
| 4     | Don't Know  | 18        | 21.17          |
| Total |   | 85        | 100            |

Table 6.9 shows the faculty opinion about the use of document which is copy right bound. Out of 85 faculty members 42(49.41%) faculty members seek the permission for the authority to use the document which is copy right bound. The followed by 13(15.29%) faculty members consult for fair use of information which is copy right bound. About 12(14.11%) faculty members download the whole test without consult the authority. Remaining 18(21.17%) faculty members don't know how to use the information which is copyright bound.

**Table 6.10: Knowledge about Plagiarism**

| Sl.No | Responses | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|-------|-----------|-----------|----------------|
| 1     | Yes       | 58        | 68.23          |
| 2     | No        | 27        | 31.76          |
| Total |           | 85        | 100            |

The above table 6.10 shows the knowledge of plagiarism. It is observed from the respondents that out of 85 faculty members 58(68.23%) faculty say yes they have the knowledge of plagiarism. And the remaining 27 (31.76%) faculty members lack of knowledge of plagiarism.

**Table 6.11: Barriers Faced while Accessing Information (Print and Electronic Format) 6.11.a Printed Sources**

| Sl.No | Barriers  | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|-------|---|-----------|----------------|
| 1     | Lack of Knowledge about use of library catalogue                    | 32        | 37.64          |
| 2     | Lack of knowledge about arrangements of books on shelves in library | 28        | 32.94          |
| 3     | Lack of Assistance form library staff                               | 25        | 29.41          |
| Total |   | 85        | 100            |

Table 6.11.a presents difficulties face by faculty members while accessing printed information sources. Out of 85 respondents, 32(37.64%) have faced the lack of knowledge about use of library catalogue. The followed by 28(32.94%) faculty members faced the lack of knowledge about arrangements of books on shelves. And the remaining 25(29.41%) faculty members say they lack of assistant from the library staff. Maximum number of faculty opines that they lack the knowledge about the arrangement of books on the shelves which shows the lack of knowledge about the classification of books in the library.

**6.11.b Electronic Sources**

| Sl. No | Barriers  | Frequency (N=85) | Percentage (%) |
|--------|---|------------------|----------------|
| 1      | Virus problem for accessing information               | 83               | 97.64          |
| 2      | Unfamiliarity with search methods                     | 69               | 81.17          |
| 3      | Unorganized elements /contents in a search page       | 55               | 64.70          |
| 4      | Too much time consuming for searching the information | 74               | 87.05          |
| 5      | Speed of access in slow                               | 78               | 91.76          |

The above table 6.11.b shows barriers faced while accessing e-sources. 83 (97.64%) faculty members opine that they faced virus problem for accessing information, about 78 (91.76%) faculty members says the speed of access in slow while accessing required information in the internet. 74(87.05%) faculty members have the problem of too much time consuming for searching the information, 69 (81.17%)

respondents says that they find unfamiliarity with search methods for accessing electronic information. And 55 (64.70%) faculty members have the opinion that they face problem of unorganized elements contents in a search page of website.

**Table 6.13: Opinion about the training on Information Literacy Skills**

| Sl.No | Opinion | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|-------|---------|-----------|----------------|
| 1     | Yes     | 75        | 88.23          |
| 2     | No      | 10        | 11.76          |
| Total |         | 85        | 100            |

It is observed form the above table 6.13 that out of 85 respondents, 75(88.23%) faculty members need training to improve the information literacy skills. Remaining 10(11.76%) are opine that they do not training on information literacy skills improvement.

**7.MAJOR FINDINGS**

- Out of 85, 50 (58.8%) faculty members are male. All the faculty members responded to the study 85 (100%) are in need of information. Out of that 80 (94.11%) faulty members need academic information.
- Majority of 82(96.47%) faculty members find needed information in internet /web.
- 82(96.47%) faculty members have the knowledge of difference section of books and e-books
- About 75(88.23%) faculty members are aware of the different cataloguing.
- 83(97.64%) faculty members consider indexing journal to search article.
- 83(97.64%) faculty members use keyword on given topic to search information in the search strategy. Only 59(69.41%) faculty members use keyword and Boolean operators to search the required information in search strategy.
- 55 faculty members are aware on how to use copyright bound material.
- About 58(68.23%) faculty members have the knowledge of plagiarism.
- 32(37.64%) faculty members face the problem of lack of knowledge about the arrangements of books on shelves. 83(97.64%) faculty members are facing virus problems for accessing electronic information.
- About 75 (88.23%) faculty members are in need of information literacy training programme to become lifelong learners.

## 8.SUGGESTION

Regular orientation program and workshop on information literacy skills to be conducted in Engineering college library to faculty members; Qualified and innovative librarian has to be appointed to the engineering college library. Librarian has to educate the user (faculty members) in identifying and accessing different information sources. Faculty members have to get update with the difference and current technologies. As the majority of faculty members are in need Information Literacy training program, DOTE, AICTE has to take initiative to implement regular Information literacy training programe to faculty members through libraries.

## 9.CONCLUSION

To acquire information literacy skills and to become information literate person is not an easy task; it needs continuous updates of knowledge and skill in the competitive knowledge worlds. Information and Communications Technology (ICT) or Information Technology (IT) usually a more general term that stresses the role of unified communications and the integration or telecommunications, computers, middleware as well as necessary software, s torage-and audio-visual systems, which enable users to create, access, store , transmit and manipulate information. The elite aim of the study is to realize and a structure of information literacy level of faculty members of engineering colleges in Tirunelveli district in order to meet the ever changing demand of users. Faculty members with right ICT skills and expertise will have plenty opportunities in future and will be crucial to the management of technology intensive libraries.

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