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Chapter – 1
INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction

One of the truths about modern society is that “information is everywhere.” Information is a pervasive and essential part of our society and our lives. Humans are, at their essence, processors and users of information. This is not a recent development. Humans have always been dependent upon information to help them make decisions and guide their actions. Increase in the sheer volume of information and the complexity of information systems have come about largely because of advances in information technology.

Information has been considered as an essential commodity and becomes a basic resource for individual development. Thus information lays the foundation of competitive advantage. According to Shera, information is that, “Which is transmitted by the act or process of communication, it may be a message, a signal, a stimulus, it assumes a response in the receiving organism and therefore, possess response potential, its motivation is inherently utilitarian, it is instrumental and it usually is communicated in an organized or formalized pattern, mainly because such formalization increases potential utility.”

In olden days students and academicians were depending on printed source, but now they are using print as well as electronic information resources. Use of the Internet has changed the way we access and use information, which was unimaginable a decade ago. Proficiency with digital technology and online communications are crucial skills based methodologists for conducting evidence-based research in all realms, including the fields of medicine, public health and higher education. As everyday life becomes increasingly digitized, Internet users faced new challenges as they endeavor to solve information problems. Mainly the information explosion has created anxiety among information users on how to reduce the information overload and use information in a more efficient way to complete the task in minimal period of time. The spectacular and extraordinary rapid development of scientific discoveries and knowledge in modern times has inevitably caused an unprecedented accumulation
and congestion of information, that for two centuries or more the volumes of scientific knowledge and consequently the volume of scientific information has increased in geometric progression. The volume of literature is doubled in every five and ten years, this causes information explosion in knowledge society. The channels of information resources are becoming more and more in printed as well as in electronic form. The advancement of information and communication technology has not only created an information overload but has also provided the means to reduce the information overload and use information in a more productive way.

One of the means of reducing the information overload or educating to use information in a more productive way is to teach or train information users on how to access, evaluate and use information, which is known as “Information Literacy”. Since 1970s information literacy skills with subsequent developments in information technology has become essential part of educational learning. The American Library Association Presidential Committee on Information Literacy Report (1989) has stated “Information Literacy is a survival skill in the Information Age”. This statement has emphasized the importance of information literacy skills in information abundant world.

1.2. Information Literacy

Information Literacy, since Paul Zurkowski, president of the Information Industry Association, first used the term in 1974, has taken place both within and outside the field of library science, not only in the United States but also throughout the world. Librarians have been especially sensitive to the so-called information explosion and its resultant repercussions. The concept of information literacy, which advocates the preparation of the people to be successful users of information, addresses the concerns librarians have with the evolving nature of information sources and the overwhelming amount of information available. Those outside the field of library science have also acknowledged the effects of the exponential growth of information.

The idea of Information Literacy, emerging with the advent of information technologies in early 1970’s, has grown, taken shape and strengthened to become
recognized as the critical literacy for the 21st century. Sometimes interpreted as one of a number of literacy’s, Information Literacy is also described as the overarching literacy essential for twenty-first century living. Today Information Literacy is inextricably associated with information practices and critical thinking in the information and communication technology. (Bruce, 2002).

Information Literacy which describes the knowledge and skills needed in all areas such as in studies, in the workplace, and in the everyday life of people in the information rich society of today. An extensive amount of literature has been published on information literacy during the last three decades and the concept is defined differently by different authors; also related terms such as information competency, computer literacy, library literacy, mediaacy, media literacy, network or internet literacy and digital information literacy have been created to emphasize different aspects of the phenomenon.

According to Paul Zurkowski Information Literacy is “People trained in the application of information resources to their work can be called information literates. They have learned techniques and skills for utilizing the wide range of information tools as well as primary sources in moulding information - solution to their problems.”

According to Lenox & Walker “Information Literacy is the realization that several conditions must be simultaneously present. First, Someone must desire to know, use analytic skills to formulate questions, identify research methodologies, and utilize critical skills to evaluate experimental and experiential results. Second. The person must possess the skills to search for answers to those questions in increasingly diverse and complex ways. Third, once a person has identified what is sought, be able to access it.”

Thus Information Literacy is a set of essential skills, which extends learning beyond established classroom settings. Information Literacy deals with when and why we need information, where to find it, and how to evaluate, managing, use and communicate it in an ethical manner.” Information Literacy has become a key component of, and contributor to, lifelong learning.
In the developing world, the government is giving more importance for their citizens to become more information literate, as there are many information literacy programs launched for its people to improve their level of information literacy. So that their nation can become world power in the global world. In 1992 Doyle published the results of Delphi Study, according to Doyle the Information Literate person is the one who:

- Recognizes that accurate and complete information is the basis for intelligent decision making.
- Recognizes the need for information.
- Formulate question based on the information needs.
- Identifies potential sources of information.
- Develops successful search strategies.
- Accesses sources of information including computer: based electronic resources.
- Evaluate information collected by various resources.
- Organizes information for practical applications.
- Integrate new information into an existing body of knowledge.
- Use information in critical thinking and problem solving.

1.3. Need for the Study

Information plays a vital role in the society. Information is available from various sources through libraries, organizations, manufacturers, service providers, internet, media and community resources. Now a day’s individuals are forced to face with abundant information choices in their studies, workplaces and in lives. As there is enormous information available from all resources and remote corners of the world it becomes unfiltered and an individual possesses a problem to choose the authentication and reliable information. Thus Information Literacy is required because of proliferation of information access and resources. The need for the Information Literacy arises due to the following factors:

- The rapid development in the technology and advancement in information communication technology.
- The growth of literature, which leads to information explosion.
The shift in the paradigm from traditional libraries to digital and virtual libraries.

Variety of information sources available from remote corners of the world.

Research’s carried out interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary subject.

The growth in the numbers of users who are seeking information and utilizing it to solve problems.

Depending on the above mentioned factors there is a need to find out the level of information literacy skills in all areas of education sectors. As the faculty members of polytechnic colleges are from technical background, they are very well versed in the utilization of the technical equipments to know how to access the information. On the Review of Literature it was found that no study has been conducted on this area in the context of faculty members of polytechnic colleges in Karnataka state. Thus the present study is undertaken to find out the extent of Information Search and Information Literacy skills of the faculty members of polytechnic colleges in Karnataka in utilizing information Resources.

1.4. Statement of the Problem

The present study conceived under the title “Information Search and Information Literacy Skills of Faculty of Polytechnic Colleges in Karnataka in Utilizing Information Resources: An Analytical study”.

1.5 Definition of the Concepts

1.5.1. Information Search

It is an act of try to find the needed information by looking carefully, thoroughly in to the print as well as non print resources (Electronic format) in the traditional library and in the web world.

1.5.2. Information Literacy skills

Information Literacy skills are the ability to effectively identify, access, evaluate and make use of information in its various formats, and to choose the appropriate medium for communication. It also encompasses knowledge and attitudes related to the ethical, legal and social issues surrounding information and information technology.
1.5.3. Polytechnic Colleges

Polytechnic mean multiple technical skills or many technical skills. The colleges associated with these technical skills are called Polytechnic Colleges. The polytechnic offers technical (engineering) as well as non-technical diploma courses of three years and two years. Engineering courses are Civil, Electronic and Communication, Information Science, Mechanical, Computer Science, Automobile, Machine Tool Technology, Electrical, etc., Non Technical Courses are Library and Information Management, Business Studies, Commercial Practice, Apparel Design and Fashion Technology.

1.5.4. Information Resources

The document, which provides the users of libraries or of the information services with the information, sought. The data or records providing the basis for an information search. The document which provides information, reproduced or extracted in another document.

1.6. Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study is to find out Information Search and Information Literacy Skills among Faculty Members of Polytechnic colleges in Karnataka in Utilizing Information Resources. The Specific Objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To know the use of library by faculty members in polytechnic colleges in Karnataka
2. To find out the types of sources frequently used by faculty members
3. To know the skill level in identifying types of information sources
4. To identify different information search techniques used by the polytechnic faculty members for accessing information resources.
5. To find out the faculty members knowledge on search engine
6. To identify the knowledge about copyright, fair use of information and plagiarism by faculty members
7. To find out the computer and web literacy skills among faculty members to access information in web environment
8. To identify barriers while accessing and using information resources both print and electronics
9. To ascertain the respondents opinion on the need for information literacy training programming in the use of information resources.
10. To suggest the means of improvement in information literacy skills for faculty members of polytechnic colleges.

1.7. Hypotheses

The following hypotheses have been framed and tested for the study:

H1 – There is no significant difference between gender among faculty members with respect to skill to identify the parts of book.

H2 – There is no significant difference between age among faculty members with respect to skill to identify the parts of book.

H3 – There is no significant difference between gender among faculty members about the skill to identify sources of information

H4 – There is no significant difference between age among faculty members about the skill to identify sources of information

H5 – There is no significant difference between qualification among faculty members about the skill to identify sources of information

H6 – There is no significant difference between branches among faculty members about the skill to identify sources of information

H7 – There is no significant difference between gender among faculty members with respect to skill of information search techniques used to access information sources (Print and Electronics)

H8 – There is no significant difference between branch among faculty members with respect to skill of information search techniques used to access information sources (Print and Electronics)

H9 – There is no significant difference between age among faculty members with respect to skill to evaluate information with suitable parameters.

H10 – There is no significant difference between qualifications among faculty members with respect to skill to evaluate information with suitable parameters.
H11 – There is no significant difference between age among Faculty members skill with respect to copyright, fair use of information and Plagiarism

H12 – There is no significant difference between qualification among Faculty members skill with respect to copyright, fair use of information and Plagiarism

H13 – There is no significant difference between gender among faculty members with respect to barriers faced while accessing and using information

H14 – There is no significant difference between qualification among faculty members with respect to barriers faced while accessing and using information

H15 – There is no significant difference between branch among faculty members with respect to barriers faced while accessing and using information

1.8. Methodology

The researcher has made an attempt to review previous research work on information search and information literacy through scanning online and offline databases, such as LISA (Library and Information Science Abstract), LISTA (Library, Information Science & Technology Abstract), EBSCO host, Emerald, e-thesis and dissertation, Conference proceedings, books, etc. and other online and offline literature available on Information Literacy.

Based on the objectives of the study the researcher has designed a structured questionnaire according to ACRL standards of information literacy competency for higher education. Before finalizing the questionnaire, opinion of the experts in the concerned field were sought and suggestions by the experts were incorporated promptly for the finalization of questionnaire

After necessary changes were incorporated, the questionnaire was first pretested through pilot study. The purpose of conducting pilot study is to incorporate the necessary changes such as improvement of contents, remove ambiguity in questions asked and to know the response of the faculty members for the study. For the purpose of the pilot study a total of 132 questionnaires were randomly distributed among the members of faculty of 6 polytechnic colleges situated in Hassan district.
109 questionnaires were received back, the rate of response is 82.57%, based on the output of pilot study, the necessary changes were made, it was further refined and revised in its content, sequence and format for final use in the survey. The questionnaire is given in Annexure – I and Annexure - II

Further, Informal Interview was conducted with members of faculty and Librarians to ensure clarity and authority of data. Stratified random sampling survey method was used to collect the questionnaire among members of faculties of polytechnic colleges in Karnataka state.

1.8.1. Techniques used in Data Analysis
A total of 730 useable questionnaires were coded after data collection. The data obtained were tabulated and analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) version 15. Hypotheses were tested and findings were drawn in the light of the objectives of the study. Finally, the results were reported in the form of thesis. Table, charts and figures were used wherever necessary to make the presentation simple, clear and lucid. Following statistical techniques were used: Frequency, Percentage, Chi-square test, mean, SD, t-test and ANOVA.

1.9. Scope and Limitations of the Study
The scope of the study is confined to the Information Search and Information Literacy skills of faculty members of Polytechnic Colleges in Karnataka in utilizing information resources. The study is confined to polytechnic colleges which are completed 25 years. Totally 68 Polytechnic Colleges situated across Karnataka state were selected for the study. The colleges covered under the study are enclosed in Annexure – III.

1.10. Chapterization
The thesis is presented in the following six chapters:

Chapter 1: Introduction
The first chapter begins with the topic of research and establishes the need and importance of the study. It states the research problems, definition of the concept, objectives and hypothesis of the study. It presents the methodology adopted for the study i.e. data collection and data collection tools. Further it explains statistical
techniques used in data analysis and interpretation. It also explains in brief the organization of the thesis.

**Chapter 2: Review of Literature**

This chapter gives the glimpses of Information Search and Information Literacy Skills related areas. The reviews of the study is presented in the following heading such as information search and information literacy skills and competency. These studies are further arranged in ascending chronological orders.

**Chapter 3: Information Literacy Standards and Models**

The third chapter introduces the concept of Information Search and Information Literacy skills, then explain the concept with important meaning and definition. Further it states and explains the important models and standards of information literacy.

**Chapter 4: Polytechnic Colleges and their Libraries: A Profile**

The fourth chapter reveals the historical development of technical education in India and Karnataka. It also highlights importance, functions and other activities of polytechnic education in Karnataka. It states polytechnic colleges covered under study with year of establishment. Further it explains about the library resources and services available in polytechnic colleges under study.

**Chapter 5: Analysis and Interpretation of Data**

This chapter explains the background information of the respondents covered under study in details including series of respondents demographical data, branch they belong to, designation, college they belong to, gender, age, qualification and publications. The total numbers of questionnaire distributed and received back are presented. Further this chapter describes the interpretation of data on Information Search and Information Literacy Skills with suitable statistical techniques such as frequency, percentage, Chi-Square test, mean, SD, t-test and ANOVA. The data has been presented in the form of tables, graphs and figures.

**Chapter 6: Finding, Suggestions and Conclusion**

The chapter 6 presents the summary of findings, it gives suggestions to improve information search and information literacy skill of members of faculty of polytechnic colleges. Then concludes the study with suggestions for further research.

Bibliographies, Questionnaire, List of Colleges are appended at the end.
REFERENCE


