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DEVELOPING INFORMATION LITERACY SKILLS AMONG RURAL AREA COLLEGE STUDENTS A STUDY AT TIRUNELVELI DISTRICT TAMILNADU

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**DEVELOPING INFORMATION LITERACY SKILLS AMONG RURAL AREA
COLLEGE STUDENTS A STUDY AT TIRUNELVELI DISTRICT TAMILNADU**

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ABSTRACT

This paper intended to explore the information literacy skills of the students at rural area college and to find out the factors which have impact on these skills. Data has been collected at Sri Sarada College for Women situated in the rural area of Tirunelveli District, Tamilnadu. Among 200 questionnaires distributed, 175 questionnaires have been collected back. Data have been analyzed with the Descriptive analysis method, Anova Test, Paired Sample T Test using SPSS software. Information literacy skills of the students has been analyzed by their information search and retrieve ability, using email, Subject E Mail forum, Document Sharing, Downloading, Open Access Resources. The relationship between Native area of the students and information literacy skills of the students are analyzed. Native area of the students has important extent for affecting these skill levels. After that, according to the results, training has been given to these students to impart information literacy skills. Again the survey has been taken. The results are showing that students got awareness and learnt some extent to use internet for their academic purpose and also for their lifelong learning process. The conclusion is imparting information literacy skills among college students especially among rural area college students along with their regular study is very much important for building knowledge, lifelong learning skill and this is basis for empowered society.

Keywords: Information Literacy Skills, Nativity factor affecting Information Literacy Skills, Rural area students.

1. INTRODUCTION

The concept “information literacy” describes the ability to recognize when information is needed, how to find, evaluate, and use information effectively and ethically. Information literacy is an individual competency, and it is considered the key competency to enhance higher education and to improve workplace effectiveness (National Forum on Information Literacy (NFIL)). This study investigates on the rural area college students’ information literacy level and to investigate whether the native of the students has impact on their information literacy skill level of the students. Metro city students get chance to access to the internet. That becomes part of their daily life routine. But, rural area students are lacking behind this. This study is trying to reveal how much effect of this lacking on their information literacy skill level. Information Literacy acknowledges the crucial role of information in our everyday lives. Information Literacy is of immense importance to institution of higher education. “Given that the information revolution has immensely improved the ability to access and employ information, using various sources including information published electronically, societies are required to have certain capabilities (other than the ability to read and write) to fully utilize these resources. Scholars affirm that society requires multi-skilled learners, who are able to think critically, pose and solve problems, and become independent and lifelong learners”.

2. THE IMPORTANCE OF INFORMATION LITERACY (IL)

Data education remains at the center of flexibility of articulation and data since it engages residents to comprehend the elements of media and other data suppliers, to basically assess their substance, and to settle on educated choices as clients and maker of data and media content. Data Literacy is of tremendous significance to establishments of advanced education. One reason is that some college understudies acquiescing college have restricted foundation of basic research and data competency abilities. They might not have procured the essential abilities to viably look for data, or assess, combine and mix thoughts; or might not have figured out how to utilize data in unique function or give legitimate reference and reference for data utilized. While a few understudies may have procured essential PC abilities to send electronic mail, explore the web, and offer records, they might not have been trained how to viably look through the Internet or adequately utilize library E-assets for scholastic research. This is the

place Information Literacy abilities are fundamental and have the effect to the achievement of understudies.

3. REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Parvathamma and Pattar, Danappa (2013) has investigated on digital literacy among student community in management institutes in Davanagere District, Karnataka State, India. The study stated that there is need to sensitize students to use web resources and web based services for research and academic purposes. Majority of the students agree that information is easily available on internet, but it needs to be evaluated before use. A model curriculum is proposed to impart digital literacy skills to the students of master of business administration.

Thanuskodi, S (2013) this paper is an attempt to investigate the use of Information and Communication Technology among the students of rural areas in Tamil Nadu. For this purpose a survey was carried out using questionnaire tool. The findings indicated that more than half acquired their internet skill through training from the college. The results indicated majority of students used Internet weekly (56.53%). The study found that most of the respondents 73.91% use internet for literature search.

Wijetunge, Pradeepa and Manatunge, Kalpana (2014) have reviewed an information literacy programme offered for undergraduates in faculty of law in Sri Lanka. Constructive Alignment Theory of Biggs and the Empowering information literacy model were used to design the programme. Effectiveness of the programme was measured by comparing pre and post test marks of the students and feedback of the students and staff. It was determined that by following the programme, the students received declarative knowledge on a variety of tools and techniques required to become successful in an academic environment. It also determined that, several critical success factors, other an appropriate curriculum, are essential for an IL programme to thrive.

Wijetunge, Pradeepa (2015) has investigated on Information resources usage by the agriculture undergraduates of University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka. It has been revealed that they often depend on search engines, wikipedia, classmates and lecturers for information. The study found that few undergraduates never used e-resources. This study recommends that the students be provided adequate training in information literacy. Also the number of computers available in the library and the faculty computer centre should be increased so that the students can easily access e-resources.

Bilawar, Prakash Bhairu and Pujar, ShamprasadM(2016) investigated impact of e-information literacy on information seeking behavior of university teachers in the state of Maharashtra. Questionnaire method was used to collect data on information seeking behavior of teachers. This study confirms that teachers are able to evaluate information critically and can classify/compare the information better after undergoing the e-information literacy programme. The paper concludes that e-information literacy empowers the university teachers to enhance e-information search skills effectively and independently for taking informed decisions.

4. OBJECTIVES:

- To explore the information literacy skills of the rural area college students.
- To investigate the nativity factor affecting these skill level.
- To compare the information literacy skill level before and after the training.

5. METHODOLOGY:

To assess students' information literacy level, Questionnaire method has been used to collect the data. Among 200 questionnaires distributed, 175 questionnaires have been collected back. With the kind concern of College Secretary, data has been collected at Sri Sarada College for Women situated at rural area of Tirunelveli District, Tamilnadu. After collecting the data, data have been analyzed with the Descriptive analysis method, Anova Test using SPSS software. Descriptive analysis method used to find out the information literacy skill level of the students. It is being analyzed by their information search and retrievable ability, using email, Subject E Mail forum, Document Sharing, Downloading, and Open Access Resources. Anova Test has been used to find out the relationship between information literacy skills and native area of the students. Based on the results training on information literacy skills have been organized for the students. After the training another survey has been taken back. Paired T Test has been used to find out the differences between before training and after training.

6. DATA ANALYSIS:

The awareness of Searching Information, Using E Mail, Subject E Mail forum, Document Sharing, Downloading, Open Access Resources have been asked to assess the information literacy skills of the students.

Figure: 1 Search Information

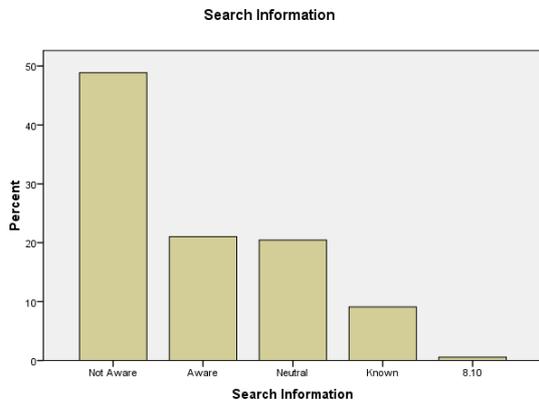


Figure: 2 Aware E-Mail

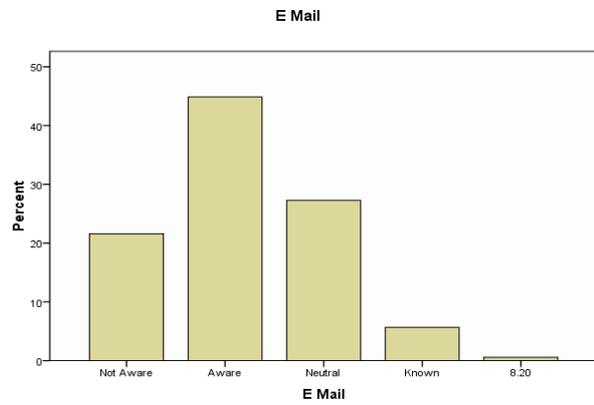


Figure: 3 Aware about Subject E-mail Forum

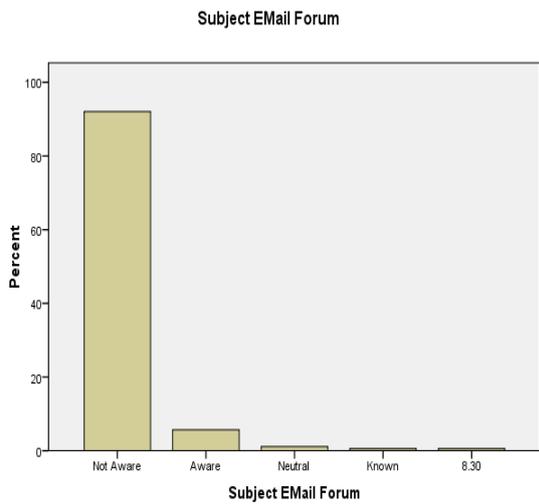


Figure: 4 Aware Document Sharing

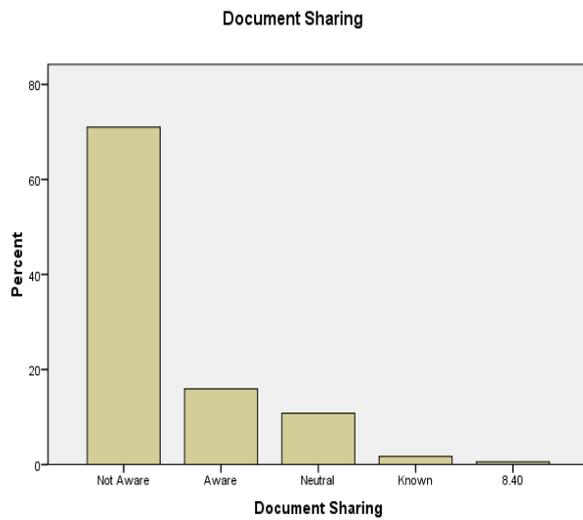
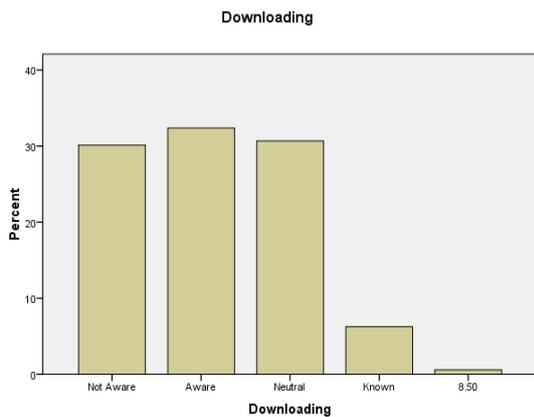


Figure:5 Aware Downloading



Figures: 6 Aware Open Access Resources

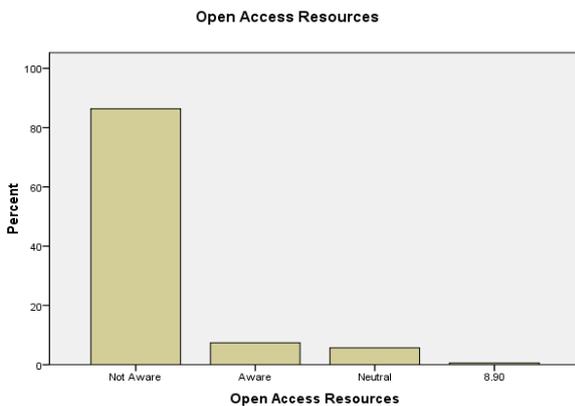


Figure 1 to 6 shows the results. 48%, 21%, 92%, 71%, 30%, 86% of the students do not have awareness of search techniques, e mail, subject e mail forum, document sharing, downloading respectively. It reveals that Downloading, Using e mail is more familiar to them. Searching information is next to those. Document sharing, Subject email forum, open access resources are not familiar to them.

Table:01 ANOVA

Factors		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Search Information	Between Groups	10.334	2	5.167	5.113	.007
	Within Groups	173.815	172	1.011		
	Total	184.149	174			
E-Mail	Between Groups	4.291	2	2.146	3.166	.045
	Within Groups	116.566	172	.678		
	Total	120.857	174			
Subject E-Mail Forum	Between Groups	.370	2	.185	1.274	.282
	Within Groups	24.979	172	.145		
	Total	25.349	174			
Document Sharing	Between Groups	1.294	2	.647	1.140	.322
	Within Groups	97.563	172	.567		
	Total	98.857	174			
Downloading	Between Groups	8.684	2	4.342	5.362	.006
	Within Groups	139.293	172	.810		
	Total	147.977	174			
Open Access Resources	Between Groups	.712	2	.356	1.328	.268
	Within Groups	46.066	172	.268		
	Total	46.777	174			

Table 1 shows the results of the anova test being analyzed for finding out the relationship between the native place of the students and information literacy skills of the students. Here it is important to note that the College is also situated in the rural area. Null hypothesis has been formulated that there is no mean difference between native area of the

students and information literacy level of the students. As the results are <0.05 for 3 modules such as information search, email, downloading, null hypothesis has been rejected in these. But, for subject e mail forum, Document sharing, open access resources, the results were more than 0.05. So, Null hypothesis has been accepted here.

It is found that irrespective of native area of the students, subject e mail forum, Document sharing, open access resources are not aware to the students. But, urban area students have awareness of information search, email, downloading. Still these modules have not touched rural area.

Table: 02 Paired Samples Correlations

Pairs	Factors	N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1	Search Information & Search Information	175	.776	.000
Pair 2	E -Mail & E -Mail	175	.697	.000
Pair 3	Subject E-Mail Forum & Subject E-Mail Forum	175	.551	.000
Pair 4	Document Sharing & Document Sharing	175	.687	.000
Pair 5	Downloading & Downloading	175	.737	.000
Pair 6	Open Access Resources & Open Access Resources	175	.582	.000

Table 2 shows the comparison test before training and after training using paired sample T Test in SPSS. The null hypothesis is there is no difference between before training and after training. Here, as the results are less than 0.05, null hypothesis is being rejected. All the results have shown that there is difference between before training and after training. This is visible that Students are enthusiastic to learn technology, to learn how to learn.

7. CONCLUSION:

The conclusion is imparting information literacy skills among college students especially among rural area college students along with their regular study is very much important for building knowledge, lifelong learning skill and this is basis for empowered society. This can be successful with the initiative efforts of the Librarian, the support of the Management, cooperation of the department staff and interest of the students. Sri Sarada College for Women is such a college which has full cooperation in the development of students. Thus, these

imparting information literacy skills should be adapted by all rural area college libraries to empower the student community and so to build knowledge society.

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