

## DIGITAL LITERACY OF FACULTIES IN MANAGEMENT INSTITUTIONS OF PUDUCHERRY: A SURVEY

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### ABSTRACT

The learning resources in digital format, apart from the traditional sources found in libraries, are proliferating in terms of quantity, speed, and variety of formats of information due to numerous reasons. It is obvious that the users in the digital environment face many problems associated with selection, identification, evaluate and use ethically the information required. This paper was an attempt to assess the digital literacy skills of Faculty members from four institutions in Puducherry that offer management related courses. A total of 23 respondents were studied based on the questionnaires. The result revealed that 72.6% of the faculties were aware of digital sources. Faculties mainly used these sources for academic and research purposes. Online sharing tools like Email, Facebook, Google+, Youtube and Skype were very familiar among the respondents. The subject related databases such as Elsevier, Blackwell, Springer, INFORMS, and CMIE were found to be familiar among the respondents.

**Keywords :** Digital Literacy, Information Literacy, Management Institutions, Puducherry, online sharing tools

### 1. INTRODUCTION

It is a fact that the learning resources in digital format, apart from the traditional sources found in libraries, are proliferating in terms of quantity, speed, and variety of formats of information due to numerous reasons. The reasons could be such as advent of ICT; web publishing; and easy availability of open access resources. It is obvious that the users in the digital environment are bound to face the problems associated with selection, identification, evaluate and use ethically the information required. There are many operational definitions for the term 'digital literacy' given by various experts. ALA Digital Literacy Task Force developed a definition of digital literacy that can be used across library types. It is widely acceptable as it emphasizes both technical and cognitive skills. It 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.”(<http://connect.ala.org/node/181197#sthash.zAyrQqS6.dpuf>). At this juncture, the librarians, as information intermediaries, need to play a key role in making the users digital literate in order to promote the use of digital resources by imparting various literacy programmes.

It was observed based on the previous studies related to information literacy (IL) carried out by Maharana and Mishra (2007); Katz (2007);

Karisiddappa and Rajgoli (2008); Hadimani and Rajgoli (2010); Sasikala and Dhanraju (2010); Biradar and Swapna (2011); Syamalamba (2011); and Pinto (2012) to assess level of awareness among the faculty and students of various colleges and universities in India and abroad. The summary of the result of these studies revealed that majority of faculty were aware of various electronic information available for various purposes and used e-resources in order to enrich their knowledge. There was an ideal suggestion from the faculty on the whole that library need to take initiatives to promote IL. The following researchers Ameen and Gorman (2009); Shariman, Razak and Noor (2012); and Parvathamma and Pattar (2013) expanded their studies to digital literacy of students and faculty of various academic institutions in some countries including India. Surprisingly, it was reported that majority of the users were not aware of open access e-journals, subject gateways, e-books and institutional repositories; and the students had lack of digital literacy skill.

In view of the above, the researchers felt that it is the right time to carry out a study for assessing digital literacy skills of Faculty members working in the institutions offering management programmes in Puducherry.

### 2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To identify the level of awareness on the digital resources among the Faculties of management institutions in Puducherry;

2. To assess the respondents' ability to access and search the needed information for teaching and research;
3. To evaluate how the users utilize the information retrieved for academic purposes; and
4. To know the purpose and frequency of using digital resources.

### 3. METHODS AND TECHNIQUES

The target population of this study was confined to only faculties of management programmes working in the following four institutions in Puducherry namely (i) Pondicherry University – School of Management (PU), (ii) Christ College of Engineering & Technology (CCE&T), (iii) Acharya School of Business & Technology (ASB&T), and (iv) Rajiv Gandhi College of Engineering & Technology (RGCE&T). Hereafter, abbreviated form of these institutions will be used throughout the paper. There are altogether 36 faculties from these four institutions. All the faculties were considered for the study using census method. The questionnaire instrument was used as a tool for data collection. The questionnaire comprised open and close ended questions. Out of which 36 questionnaires distributed, only 23 questionnaires duly filled in by the respondents were received back. A pilot study was conducted to test the viability of the study. The questionnaires were personally hand-delivered and received back from the respondents. MS-Excel was used to analyse the collected data and draw simple percentage averages to interpret the results.

### 4. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

#### 4.1 Respondents by Designation

Table 1 presents the details of designation wise response of respondents. The result shows that there were 23 faculties identified among which 4 (17%) were Professors, and 19 (83%) were Assistant Professors. However, there were no Associate Professors identified from any of these institutions.

**Table -1**  
**Respondents by Designation**

S. No	Institutions	Professor	Asst. Prof.	Total
1	PU	2	5	7
2	CCE&T	1	3	4
3	RGCE&T	-	6	6
4	ASB&T	1	5	6
Total		4	19	23
Percentage		17	83	100

#### 4.2. Gender and Age wise distribution of respondents

It was noticed that the overall response of the faculties in terms of gender there were 14 males and 9 females. The findings of age wise analysis revealed that 7(30%) faculties are under the age group of 30-35 years, 6 (26%) faculties are under the age group of below 30 and above 40 years and 4 faculties (17%) are under the age group of 35-40 years (Fig. 1).

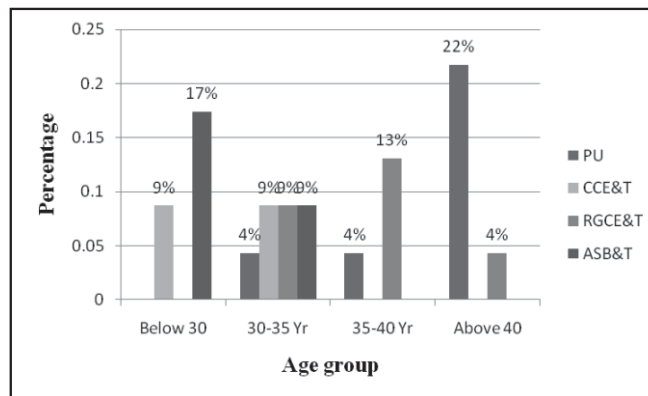


Fig. 1: Distribution of faculty by age group

#### 4.3 Purpose of using digital sources

Table 2 presents the purpose of using digital sources from all these institutions. It is evident that 32% of faculties used digital sources for academic purpose. 21% of faculties used digital sources for research and entertainment purpose; and 27% of faculties used digital sources for personal purpose. It is to be mentioned that majority of faculties used digital sources for academic purpose.

**Table 2**  
**Purpose of using digital sources**

S.No	Institution	Academic	Research	Entertainment	Personal	Total	%
1.	PU	7	7	4	5	23	37
2.	CCE&T	3	2	3	4	12	19
3.	RGCE&T	6	1	3	4	14	22
4.	ASB&T	4	3	3	4	14	22
Total		20	13	13	17	63	100
%		32	21	21	27	100	100

#### 4.4 Awareness and use of digital sources

There were nine different kinds of digital resources mentioned in the questionnaire. Table 3 reveals that out of 23 faculties, 21(91.3%) faculties are aware of the smart phone, mobile with internet access, Digital camera, Scanner and Desktop and 20(86.96%) faculties were aware of Tablet device. 19(82.61%) faculties had an awareness about mobile without internet access. On the other hand, it was found that majority of the users had used these resources optimally for various reasons.

**Table 3**  
**Awareness of Digital Sources**

S. No.	Digital Sources	PU		CCE&T		RGCE&T		ASB&T			Overall		
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	%	No	%
1.	Smart phone	7	1	3	1	6	-	5	1	21	91.30	2	8.70
2.	Mobile with internet access	6	1	3	1	6	-	6	-	21	91.30	2	8.70
3.	Mobile without internet access	6	1	2	2	6	-	5	1	19	82.61	4	17.39
4.	Digital camera	7	-	3	1	6	-	5	1	21	91.30	2	8.70
5.	Scanner	7	-	2	2	6	-	6	-	21	91.30	2	8.70
6.	Laptop	6	1	2	2	4	2	6	-	18	78.26	5	21.74
7.	Net book	6	1	3	1	6	-	3	3	18	78.26	5	21.74
8.	Desktop	7	-	2	2	6	-	6	-	21	91.30	2	8.70
9.	Tablet device	7	-	2	2	5	1	6	-	20	86.96	3	13.04

#### 4.5 Awareness of online sharing tools

It was observed from Table 4 that all the faculties (100%) were aware of E-mail and the least popular tool among faculty was I-Tunes (21.74%). The other popular online sharing tools which preferred are Facebook (95.65%) followed by Skype (86.96%), Google+ (82.61%), Youtube (82.61%), Slide share (78.26%), Blogs (69.57%), LinkedIn (69.57%), Twitter (65.22%), Wikis (47.83%), and Flickr (30.43%). As a result, it is clear that the predominant sources such as E-mail, Facebook, Google+, Youtube, Slide Share, and Skype are very much popular among the faculties.

#### 4.6 Frequency and purpose of using online sharing tools

Based on the result presented in Table 4, it was observed that the sharing tools such as E-mail, Facebook, Google+, Youtube, Slide Share, and Skype were popular. Here an attempt was made to analyze the frequency of use of these tools for different purposes. Table 5 presents the result of frequency of use. The result indicates that Email being the most preferred tool to share their views shares 69.57% of the faculty who used Always followed by Frequently (21.74%), Occasionally (4.35%) and Rarely (4.35%). Facebook and Google+ were used Always by the Faculty sharing an equal percentage of 39.13%. Slide share is another popular tool which was used by 39.13% of the Faculty. On the whole, it was observed that E-mail, Facebook, Google+, Youtube, Slide

Share, and Skype were popular while the other tools like I-Tunes, Flickr, Wikis, Twitter, Blogs, etc. were not familiar among the faculties of management.

Analysis on the purpose of using these online sharing tools revealed that out of 23 faculties, 19 (82.61%) used for academic purpose, 14(60.87%) used for research purpose and 15 (65.22%) of faculties used these tools for entertainment and 17(73.91%) faculties used for their personal work. However, it is an unexpected result that 73.91% and 65.22% of faculties used these tools for personal and for entertainment purposes respectively. It is therefore essential to turn their interests towards teaching and research purposes.

#### 4.7 User awareness on teaching-learning resources

Table 6 shows the awareness of Teaching-Learning resources among the faculties of various management institutions. There were twenty two types of teaching-learning resources specified in the questionnaire. The result highlights that the majority of teaching-learning resources of which faculties were aware, includes Elsevier (65.22%) followed by Springer (60.87%), Taylor & Francis (60.87%) and Blackwell/Wiley journals (60.87%). The other databases like Emerald Extra (56.52%), Proquest Dissertations and Theses (47.83%), etc. were also found to be familiar among the faculties.

Table 4  
Distribution of awareness of online sharing tools

Online sharing tools	PU		CCE&T		RGCE&T		ASB&T		Overall			
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	%	No	
Email	7	--	4	--	6	--	6	--	23	100.00	--	
Facebook	6	1	4	--	6	--	6	--	22	95.65	1	
Skype	5	2	3	1	6		6		20	86.96	3	
Google+	7	--	4	--	3	3	5	1	19	82.61	4	
Youtube	6	1	3	1	5	1	5	1	19	82.61	4	
Slide share	6	1	3	1	4	2	5	1	18	78.26	5	
Blogs	6	1	4	--	2	4	4	2	16	69.57	7	
LinkedIn	6	1	3	1	4	2	3	3	16	69.57	7	
Twitter	4	3	3	1	3	3	5	1	15	65.22	8	
Wikis	3	4	4	1	1	5	3	3	11	47.83	13	
Flickr	2	5	1	3	2	4	2	4	7	30.43	16	
I-Tunes	3	4	--	4	--	6	2	4	5	21.74	18	

Table 5  
Frequency of using online sharing tools

Frequency of Use	Email	Skype	Blogs	Facebook	LinkedIn	Google+	Slide share	Youtube	Wikis	Twitter	I-Tunes	Flickr
Always	69.57	17.39	13.04	39.13	21.74	39.13	21.74	21.74	17.39	8.70	0.00	4.35
Frequently	21.74	26.09	4.35	21.74	13.04	30.43	39.13	26.09	13.04	13.04	0.00	0.00
Occasionally	4.35	34.78	26.09	21.74	26.09	8.70	13.04	26.09	13.04	17.39	13.04	17.39
Rarely	4.35	4.35	17.39	13.04	13.04	4.35	13.04	13.04	17.39	17.39	21.74	13.04
Never	0.00	17.39	39.13	4.35	26.09	17.39	13.04	13.04	39.13	43.48	65.22	65.22

Table 6  
Distribution of awareness on the teaching-learning resources

S. No.	Teaching-learning Resources	PU		CCE&T		RGCE&T		ASB&T		Overall			
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	%	No	%
1.	ABI/Inform	2	5	-	4	2	4	1	5	5	21.74	18	78.26
2.	ACM Teaching-learning Library	2	5	3	1	-	6	3	3	8	34.78	15	65.22
3.	Blackwell/Wiley journals	5	2	2	2	4	2	3	3	14	60.87	9	39.13
4.	Bloomberg professional service	5	2	-	4	-	6	2	4	7	30.43	16	69.57
5.	Business source complete	6	1	1	3	1	5	3	3	11	47.83	12	52.17
6.	Capitaline	4	3	-	4	2	4	2	4	8	34.78	15	65.22
7.	CMIE	7	-	-	4	2	4	1	5	10	43.48	13	56.52
8.	Commodity India Wire	3	4	2	2	-	6	2	4	7	30.43	16	69.57
9.	Elsevier	6	1	2	2	2	4	5	1	15	65.22	8	34.78
10.	Emerald Extra	6	1	2	2	3	3	2	4	13	56.52	10	43.48
11.	IBID	2	5	-	4	-	6	2	4	4	17.39	19	82.61
12.	ICFAI press journals	4	3	-	4	-	6	3	3	7	30.43	16	69.57
13.	INFORMS journals	1	6	2	2	-	6	2	4	5	21.74	18	78.26
14.	INSIGHT	3	4	1	3	-	6	5	1	9	39.13	14	60.87
15.	ISI Emerging markets	4	3	2	2	-	6	3	3	9	39.13	14	60.87
16.	JCCC	4	3	2	2	2	4	1	5	9	39.13	14	60.87
17.	LexisNexis	3	4	-	4	-	6	2	4	5	21.74	18	78.26
18.	Proquest Dissertation and Theses	5	2	3	1	1	5	2	4	11	47.83	12	52.17
19.	Springer	6	1	3	1	3	3	2	4	14	60.87	9	39.13
20.	Taylor & Francis	6	1	2	2	2	4	4	2	14	60.87	9	39.13
21.	Wiley-Blackwell	5	2	1	3	2	4	2	4	10	43.48	13	56.52
22.	JSTOR	3	4	1	3	2	4	3	3	9	39.13	14	60.87

#### 4.8 Purpose of using teaching-learning resources

Figure 2 depicts the purpose of using Teaching-Learning resources by faculties. The result indicates that maximum number of (21%) faculties used the Teaching-Learning resources for enriching their subject knowledge and writing research papers the other 20% of them used for preparing study related assignments and for contributing to conference/seminar, 12% of faculties used for conducting collaborative research. It is quite encouraging that a few respondents (7%) used for forming special interest groups.

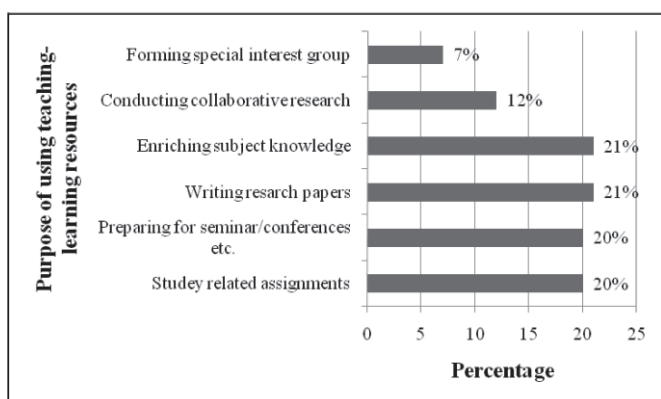


Fig. 2 Purpose of using Teaching-Learning resources

#### 5. MAJOR FINDINGS

The study conducted based on the four institutions in Puducherry offering management courses led to the following major findings:

- Out of total respondents majority 83% of faculties are Assistant Professor and 17% are Professors.
- 72.6% of the faculties were aware of digital sources. Faculties mainly used these sources for academic and research purposes.
- Online sharing tools like Email, Facebook, Google+, Youtube and Skype were very familiar among the respondents. Majority of users used these tools for academic purpose.
- The subject based databases such as Elsevier, Blackwell, Springer, INFORMS, and CMIE were found to be familiar among the respondents.

#### 6. SUGGESTIONS

In this study, the users experienced different kinds of difficulties. The following are few suggestions to be considered for the betterment:

- The private institutions do not have the facility to use e-journals and databases. Therefore, there is a need to impart digital literacy

programmes on teaching-learning resources for faculties.

- Respondents use online sharing tools for entertainment purpose they do not have proper knowledge to use them for academic and research purpose. It needs to be changed.
- Many of the users are not aware of digital resources available in their subject field. The librarians should take initiatives to promote the awareness among the faculties.

#### 7. CONCLUSIONS

As the digital resources are proliferating very fast, the faculty who are in higher educational institutions need to be prepared to keep themselves up-to-date with the latest developments in order to cope with the changing needs of the stakeholders through enhanced teaching-learning methods. So the faculties of the institutions studied are not exceptional. Moreover social networking sites like Facebook, Google+, Youtube, Skype, etc. play a major role in sharing of information including academic and research related contents that influence the society at large. Altmetrics is one of such examples that emerges as a 21st century indicator for measuring the research impact at article level based on the parameters like shared, viewed, tweeted, downloaded, cited, etc. In view of the above, it can be concluded that the digital resources will surely influence stakeholders in the field of teaching, learning and research which in turn will lead to qualitative teaching-learning environment and higher research productivity.

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