

UTILIZATION OF INFORMATION RESOURCES AMONG THE FACULTY WORKING IN THE COLLEGES OF EDUCATION, CHENNAI.

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Introduction

It is a common fact that libraries play a vital role in teaching and learning. Information Technology is transforming the traditional methods of teaching and learning in the 21st century classrooms. Likewise the introduction of information technologies in Libraries and information centers warrants the students to develop a combination of skills in computer technology, critical thinking and information-seeking strategies. The classroom teacher is the key to the success of an education program that promotes these qualities. There is also a growing realization that a teacher can no longer do it all. Librarians represent a professional group that bridge the gap between the traditional methods and the modern technological techniques used in the organization, management and retrieval of information. Society has long viewed librarians as the acknowledged information experts.

Role of libraries in teacher education

Education is an “aggregate of all the processes by means of which a person develops abilities, attitudes, and other forms of behavior positive value in the society in which he lives”¹ According to Carter V. Good it is a “social process by which people are subjected to the influence of a selected and controlled environment (especially that of the school) so that they may attain social competence and optimum individual development.”² Education” and “library”

are considered as two inseparable— indivisible concepts that are fundamentally and synchronically related to and co-existent with each other. Hence libraries survive as long as education exists.

Significance of the study

The main reason for focusing the study on the faculty of teacher education colleges is because of their central role in the educational system to mould the entire society towards excellence. The teacher is the only person who is having constant contact with both the knowledge and the student in molding their growth. A teacher's attitude towards information depends on his/her professional commitment and performance. Also a healthy trend in using information will help to improve the efficiency of the faculty and thereby the students who are their wards. . It will be possible only for the teachers to translate the ideologies and vision of the students into reality with the maximum utilization of information resources and services. The purpose of this study is to analyse and present a view of pattern of use of the library and its information resources by the teachers working in the colleges of education towards.

Review of Literature

Provision of information resources and services and the assessment of the utilization of information resources is the primary focus of libraries irrespective of types and clientele they serve.

Abstract

Education cannot exist alone in the absence of library, and library has no meaning if it cannot impart education. Libraries play a vital role in teaching and learning. Information Technology is transforming the traditional methods of teaching and learning in the 21st century classrooms. This study is to analyse and present a view of pattern of use of the library and its information resources by the teachers working in the colleges of education towards. The study shows a positive attitude on the usage of information resources by the faculty of teacher education colleges.

Keywords : Chennai, Colleges of Education, Faculty, Information resources, utilization.

Also, the basic law of Librarianship by Raganathan (1931) emphasizes that the library resources are for use. Therefore any library, no matter how big and rich its collection is will fail in its entirety if its resources are not exploited by its users. Thus user studies have ever been the interest of librarians.

Awolola (1998) undertook a survey to examine the prevailing position of libraries of two colleges of education in Nigeria. The survey revealed that libraries have failed to perform their role mainly because of inadequate finance, whereas adequate funding can solve a major part of the problems. Author suggested the formulation of standards and guidelines particularly for college of education libraries.

Adebayo (2007) conducted a study to examine the implementation of library service standards in the colleges of education in Nigeria under name "Library Services Standards Implemented in Colleges of Education in Nigeria". Data was collected through structured questionnaire. Results of the study revealed that libraries were rendering basic services as recommended by National Commissions for Colleges of Education.

Kumbar et al. (2007) assessed the extent of use of periodical literature by agriculture scientists. Data was collected from random sample through questionnaire. Survey revealed that 74.35% respondents scanned the current issues of the journals to keep themselves updated with latest developments. Majority of the users considered print journals as better version than electronic journals, as 74.36% chosen print journals and 25.64% opted for electronic version. Authors concluded that proper display of periodicals, informing users about recent arrivals and effective reprographic service are the best ways to serve the users and suggested to encourage users to make use of e-resources.

Moghaddam and Talawar (2008) found that a A growing interest in using electronic journals was found as users of the Indian Institute of Science Library had free access to electronic journals at all hours. The users were using electronic journals mainly for research work and PDF format was the most preferred.

Popoola (2008) examined the faculty's awareness and use of library information products and services in Nigerian Universities and found that the users did not have the required knowledge of library products and services relevant to their teaching and research work. Author concluded that level of knowledge of faculty have relationship with the frequency of library use, consultation of librarian etc.

Rao and Babu (2008) executed a survey of the faculty members of autonomous colleges in Chennai to examine the provision and use of library services, resources and facilities. Only govt. and govt. aided colleges were covered in study. More than three fourth respondents were visiting libraries for research studies and to write research papers. A few users were using e-resources. Authors suggested for right choice between print and electronic sources of information for collection development.

Adekanmbi and Boadi (2008) in study entitled, "Problems of Developing Library Collections: A Study of Colleges of Education Libraries in Botswana" found that majority of the libraries in Botswana did not have collection development policies. Lack of constant training for librarians, inadequate staff, lack of support from administration and unavailability of collection development policies were some of the major problems found. It was further found that majority of the libraries did not involve their users in formulation of policies and did not implement these for collection development. Study revealed the need to train librarians on collection development.

Shanmugam (1999) examined the information seeking behaviour of trainee teachers of the two teacher training colleges of Malaysia. The study brought to light that trainee teachers' information needs were influenced greatly by the course requirements centred around their course. Survey revealed the general lack of interest in reading books and newspapers.

Ijirigho (2009) hinted that despite the increasing availability of online resources, faculty staff members do not want to part with a paper- based library as they preferred information in print format. She therefore advocated for the integration of traditional and modern librarianship through hybrid collections and that efforts should be made by academic libraries to intensify the teaching of information literacy.

Objectives

In order to assess the use of libraries and the information resources by the faculty members of colleges of teacher education, the researcher has framed the following objectives

1. To find out how often the faculty visit the libraries of colleges of education
2. To find out how much time they spend in the library for gathering information related to their study
3. To analyses the attitude of the faculty on the information resources in the library

4. To find out the pattern of use of various types of information resources in the Libraries of teacher education colleges

Methodology

Tamil Nadu is the seat of Higher Education in India which offers a number of general as well as professional courses. It pays attention to the development of elementary, secondary and higher education and training of the teachers involved in these programs. The study is confined to the four aided Colleges of Education and two Government Institutes of Advanced study in Education. The study area is restricted to Chennai region. A structured questionnaire was designed for data collection on the basis of objectives of the study. The entire population, i.e., faculty members of all government and aided Teachers Training Institutions of Chennai were taken as sample which was 109. Among the total faculty members, 97.24% (106) responded. Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS) is used to analyse the data.

Discussion

Table 1
Frequency Distribution of Respondents by College

Name of the College	Respondents	Percent
Institute of Advanced Study in Education, Saidapet	15	14.15
NKT College of Education, Triplicane	24	22.65
Meston College of Education, Royapettah	16	15.09
Lady Willingdon Institute of Advanced study in education	15	14.15
Stella matutina College of Education, Ashok Nagar	21	19.81
St. Christopher College of Education, Vepery	15	14.15
Total	106	100.00

Questionnaires were distributed to all the 109 faculty members in six colleges of whom 106 responded. Table 1 shows the respondents scattered in the six colleges. From the table it can be seen that more respondents are from NKT college of education followed by Stella Matutina College of Education.

Table 2
Distribution of Respondents by Age Group

Age	Respondents	Percent
25-30	13	12.26
31-35	13	12.26
36-40	21	19.81
41-45	12	11.32
46-50	20	18.87
Above 50	27	25.47
Total	106	100.00

Among the respondents, nearly one fourth belong to the age group of above 50 and almost belong to the age group 46 to 50. Nearly one fifth of the respondents belong to the age group of 36 to 40. On the whole, more than 50 per cent of the respondents are above 40 years of age.

Table 3
Frequency of visit to the Library

Frequency of Visit	Respondents	Percent
Everyday	34	32.08
Once in a week	26	24.53
Twice in a week	11	10.38
Thrice in a week	22	20.75
Occasionally	11	10.38
Rarely	2	1.89
Grand Total	106	100.00

Nearly one third of the respondents visit the college library every day while almost one fourth of the faculty visit the library once in a week. Only less number of faculty visit the college library rarely or occasionally. This attests the fact that the faculty of the teacher education colleges know the value of libraries in their teaching practices.

Table 4
Distribution of Respondents by the Time Spent in the Library

Time Spent	Respondents	Percent
More than 10 Hours	16	15.09
7-10 Hours	27	25.47
4-6 Hours	34	32.08
Less than 4 Hours	29	27.36
Total	106	100.00

From the table 4 it can be found that more than 40 per cent of the faculty spend more than 7 hours in the college library while those spending four to six hours in the library is nearly one third. Also it can be seen that more than one fourth of the faculty spend less than 4 hours in the library. The inference is that the more the frequency of visit to the college library does not necessarily mean that they spend more time in the library.

Table 5
Distribution of Respondents by Nature and Types of information required

Types sources sought	Not Required	Frequently Required	Highly Required	Total Score	Average Score
Year books, Dictionaries & encyclopedia	13	55	38	237	2.24
Subject related text books	0	43	63	275	2.59
Subject related reference books	4	44	58	266	2.51
Other general books	15	67	24	221	2.08
Subject related journals/periodicals	3	58	45	254	2.40
General journals/periodicals	14	64	28	226	2.13
Theses	7	48	51	256	2.42

The faculty members visit the library to consult various information sources like Year books, Dictionaries & encyclopedia, Subject related text books, Subject related reference books, Other general books, Subject related journals/periodicals, General journals/periodicals and Theses. The respondent's preference of these information sources is varied in nature and this is measured by three point scaling method. The highest score goes to subject related text books followed by subject related reference books. This is followed by theses (2.42) and subject related journals. The least score goes to other general books. The inference is that the faculty of teacher education colleges give least preference to books for leisure or pleasure.

Table 6
Distribution of Respondents by the source that motivate the information seeking

Types sources sought	Not Motivator	Frequently Motivator	Strong Motivator	Total Score	Average Score	
To prepare the students for University Examinations	5	49	52	106	259	2.44
To prepare for student project work	4	47	55	106	263	2.48
General awareness for new knowledge	2	48	56	106	266	2.51
To prepare for examinations	7	45	54	106	259	2.44
For pleasure of doing good work, Self-fulfillment and self-satisfaction	5	50	51	106	258	2.43

There are various factors that motivate the faculty to visit the library in search of information. Among the various factors, General awareness for new knowledge has the highest score. The next leading factor is to prepare the students for their project work. Both these two factors are inter-related since it is a common fact that, in the course of assigning project work, the faculty, being a guide have to make themselves equipped with new knowledge about the budding areas of research. Here it is interesting to note that there is not so much variation among the scores for the various motivating factors that induce the faculty in their information seeking behavior.

Table 7
Distribution of Respondents by their dependency on formal and documentary sources

Types sources sought	Not Motivator	Frequent	Occasional	High	Average Score	
Text Books	46	23	37	106	203	1.92
Hand books / reference books	34	42	30	106	208	1.96
Journals and Periodicals	33	42	31	106	210	1.98
Project Reports/ Theses	27	47	32	106	217	2.05
Online resources	32	24	50	106	230	2.17

Table 7 reveals the sources on which the faculty depend on for their routine work of teaching and learning. It can be seen from the table that the faculty depend more on online resources followed by project reports/theses and journals/periodicals. The least dependency is for Text books. This is a clear evidence that the faculty of the teacher education institutions are more research oriented rather than curriculum oriented.

Table 8
Distribution of respondents by frequency of use of Online Resources

Frequency of use of Online Resources	Respondents	Percent
Regularly	56	52.83
Frequently	26	24.53
Occasionally	18	16.98
Rarely	5	4.72
Never	1	0.94
Total	106	100.00

The highest dependency on online resources by the faculty members is attested by Table 8 which shows that more than 50 per cent of the faculty members use the online resources regularly. Also it is found that nearly one fourth of the respondents have marked that they use the online resources frequently. The high usage of online resources by the faculty members show that the faculty of the teacher education institutions are more technology oriented rather than traditional.

Findings and conclusion

In the light of the discussions, the following are the findings of the study:

- The faculty of the teacher education colleges understand that education and libraries co-exist and this is proved by their frequent visits to the Library.
- The time spent in the library is more than 4 hours as shown by more than 4 per cent of the respondent. Though the frequency of their visit to the library is more, their duration of time spent is less. This warrants the librarian to conduct information awareness programmes especially for the faculty
- The faculty members give more priority to consult subject related text books and reference book
- The main reason for the faculty to use the library is to equip themselves with general awareness of new knowledge and research projects
- The faculty of the teacher education colleges use more online resources, project reports/theses and journals/periodicals. The least dependency is for Text books.
- As far as the use of online resources, only 50 per cent of the faculty use with high frequency and hence it necessitates the librarian to take steps to enable the faculty to understand the use of online resources.

Education cannot exist alone in the absence of library, and library has no meaning if it cannot impart education. Education is an eye-opener to the human beings and hence it is the duty of the librarians of teacher education colleges to start various awareness programmes to the faculty in order to enhance the utilization of the information resources (both traditional and modern online) in the Library.

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