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## Role that Information Literacy Plays in the Engineering Institutions of the Ramanathapuram Region



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### ABSTRACT

One of the 21<sup>st</sup> century's essential literacies is information literacy. A person who is information literate is able to recognise information needs, seek out relevant information, evaluate that information, organise it for use, and apply it to problems at work, at home, and in the community. Faculty members from Engineering institutions in the Ramanathapuram district were surveyed to determine their familiarity with and comfort using a variety of online research tools and services, as well as their knowledge of the need of developing information literacy abilities. Reasons for using ICT-based library services, Level of Awareness, Amount of Use and Familiarity with Engineering Databases, Computer Literacy, Medium of Searching the ICT-based services, Reasons for using ICT-based library services, and Implications of this Research are reviewed.

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### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

As we go farther into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, ICT continues to have a profound effect on all facets of human life. The fast growth and spread of ICT across sectors including education, business, health care, agriculture, and so on has had a profound impact on society. Users of information resources may feel overwhelmed by the abundance of data available online. Information discovery and curation is more difficult than ever. Information literacy (IL) is increasingly important in the modern world. In today's highly technological environment, knowledge of computers is often included as a need for open positions. High-level skills in the use of ICT are required for all people to live and work in the technology-enabled world of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, according to the Department of Education, Training, and Employment.

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As a consequence of scientific and technical progress, engineering is rapidly evolving. The need for information-related competences has been brought to light by factors like the proliferation of electronic information, the importance placed on lifelong learning, and the need for highly qualified people. Therefore, it is crucial for engineering students to have proficient information literacy abilities to ensure their future success in the field. In the eyes of the American Library Association, “an information literate individual is one who can identify information needs, as well as successfully seek, analyse, and apply relevant information. Information literacy is a subset of the broader ICT literacy skills recognised by UNESCO. A student with ICT literacy can assess their own information requirements and then utilise ICT tools to find, gather, organise, analyse, evaluate, and share relevant data and knowledge. The proper and legal use of data should also be understood.”

### 1.1 Objectives of the Study

- To determine the level of computer literacy held by the engineering faculty at Ramanathapuram District Engineering College.
- To acquaint the use ICT-based search engines to find relevant information and services.
- To know why people go to libraries and how they plan to make use of digital resources provided by libraries.
- To evaluate people's familiarity with and utilisation of engineering data sources.
- To investigate the criteria for selection and utilizing ICT-based services.
- To evaluate the effect of information and communication technology tools on academic endeavours.

## 2.0 METHODOLOGY

Ramanathapuram district is home to four different engineering universities. The researcher has used an organised questionnaire to gather information from teachers at local engineering schools. The goal of the survey was to learn how well-versed in information literacy the engineering college professors in the Ramanathapuram area were and how they made use of ICT resources and services. In order to get a representative sample of engineering college faculty in the Ramanathapuram area, a random sample of 200 teachers from the district's various institutions was chosen and given a questionnaire. There were 147 (or 73.5% completion) surveys sent back.

## 3.0 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

### 3.1 Colleges wise Respondents

College Name	Questionnaire Distributed	Questionnaire Responded
Mohamed Sathak Engineering College, Kilakarai	50	38
Syed Ammal Engineering College	50	40
Anna University – Ramanathapuram Campus	50	36
Ganapathy Chettiar College of Engineering and Technology, Paramakudi	50	33
Total	200	147

The majority of responders (27.4%) were from Syed Ammal Engineering College in Ramanathapuram, followed by Mohamed Sathak Engineering College (25.7%), Anna University's Ramanathapuram campus (24.5%), and Ganapathy Chettiar Engineering College in Paramakudi (22.4%).

### 3.2 Purpose of Visiting the College Library

Purpose	Frequency	Percentage
For circulation	67	45.5
Prepare for examination	23	15.6
For browsing internet	89	60.5
For taking notes	45	30.6
Updating subject knowledge	101	68.7
To complete assignments	12	8.2
To prepare a research paper	78	53.1
For recreation	22	14.7
Reading newspaper	91	61.9
Consult periodicals/journals	67	45.6

We see that 101 respondents (68.7%) said they used the college library to brush up on their subject knowledge; another 91 (61%) said they did so to catch up on the news; another 89 (60%) said it was to do some online browsing; another 78 (53%) said it was to get ready for writing a research paper; another 67 (45%) said it was to read and consult periodicals; another 45 (30%) used it to take notes; another 23 (15%) said it was to study

### 3.3 Computer Knowledge

Computer Knowledge	Frequency	Percentage
Excellent	60	40.7
Good	52	35.3
Fair	22	14.8
Satisfactory	13	8.2
Total	147	100.0

It shows that 60% of participants had excellent computer knowledge, followed by 52% with good knowledge, 14.8 % with fair knowledge, and 8.2% who are satisfied with their own computer skills.

### 3.4 Method of Accessing the ICT Based Services

Method of Accessing	Frequency	Percentage
Search engine	109	74.1
Websites	16	10.9
Institution library portals	5	3.4
Other sources	17	11.6
Total	147	100.0

Almost three-quarters of the respondents (74%), or 109 people, said that they use search engines to get information on ICT-based services. Other sources were cited by an impressive number of respondents (17, 11%), including websites (16%) and library portals (3%).

### 3.5 Reason for Using ICT-Based Library Services

Reason	VHL	HL	ML	LL	VLL
E-mail & document exchange	98	33	10	6	0
To read and download the electronic books	45	67	22	6	7
To collect data through internet	69	51	14	10	3
To access online database	51	42	33	11	10
To access electronic journal	88	32	20	7	0
For carrier development	56	51	22	15	3
To make manuscripts proposal and papers	48	52	34	11	2
To update knowledge	56	53	21	13	4
To search web OPAC	24	35	45	22	21
To use discussion forums	24	38	47	25	13
To utilise the social networking	70	34	25	13	5
Casual internet surfing	45	52	31	15	4
Other purposes	43	44	31	26	3

Note: (VHL - Very High Level, HL- High Level, ML- Moderate Level)

Table 5 demonstrates that 98 (66.6%) out of 147 (N) respondents said that E-Mail& Document Exchange is Very High-Level Purpose followed by 88 (60%). Seventy percent (47%) of readers use social networking sites, forty-seven percent (46%) use the internet to get information, and fifty-six percent (38%) use the journal to improve their expertise and advance in their careers. One of the most important reasons people use ICT-based services is so that they may read and download electronic materials (67(45%)), followed by keeping up with new information (53(36%)), creating a manuscript proposal (52(35)), and just plain browsing the web (35%) for fun (35%).

### 4.0 FINDINGS

The majority of respondents (101; 68.7%) said they used the college library to brush up on their knowledge in a particular topic; this was followed by 91; 61% who read the newspaper; 89; 60% who surfed the web; 78; 53% who prepared a research paper; and 12; 8% who finished their homework.

Sixty people (40%) were rated as having excellent computer knowledge, while another 52 (52%) were rated as having good computer knowledge, 22 (14.8%) were rated as having fair computer knowledge, and 8.2% were rated as being satisfied with their computer knowledge.

The investigation also uncovered a channel for looking for ICT-based materials and assistance.

Almost three-quarters of the respondents (74%), or 109 people, said that they use search engines to get information on ICT-based services. Other sources were cited by an impressive number of respondents (17, 11%), including websites (16%) and library portals (3%).

From a total of 147 respondents, this study found that 98 (66.6%) consider E-Mail & Document Exchange to be a Very High Level Purpose, while another 88 (60%) use the internet to gain access to electronic journals, 70 (47%) use social networking sites, 69 (46%) gather data online, and 56 (38%) advance their professional and academic skills online. High-Level Reasons for Utilizing ICT-based Services Include Reading and Downloading Electronic Resources (67%) and Keeping Up with Knowledge (36%), Creating Manuscript Proposals (52%) and Casual Web Surfing (35%).

Professors in engineering departments are familiar with all relevant engineering databases. The most widely used databases in the engineering field include the Emerald engineering database, the ASTM digital library, IEEE, and Engineering Village. With respect to the IEEE database, 132 respondents (89%) are Very Aware, 110 (74%) are Very Familiar, and 99 (67%) are Regular Users. This is then followed by ASTM's Digital Library, the ABI, and Engineering Village.

## 5.0 CONCLUSION

In today's digital world, it is impossible to overlook the significance of educating faculty members via information literacy programmes in order to foster information literacy abilities. The majority of professors agree with this. Most people who have offered their opinions on how best to teach IL advocate for incorporating IL into already-existing classes. The majority of respondents also agreed that the college's website and printed materials may be used to promote IL skills. Student suggestions for areas and themes in which they would benefit from instruction, coaching, and support were instruction in using the Internet, followed by instruction in using computers, printed materials, electronic resources, and databases.

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