CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction:

Christine Bruce in her seminal text “The seven faces of information literacy” prominently described why the idea of information literacy has taken such strong root since the mid 1970s as-

“…the genesis of the concept has come from the need to describe something very real. That ‘something’, has been the information literate individual, the ideal ‘information consumer’ in a rapidly and continually changing world of information. These changes in the world of information are characterised by increases in the volume of information, changes in information technology and changing communication patterns. These changes are accelerating and likely to be ongoing. People, to function effectively in their personal and professional lives, need to understand and interact effectively with their ever changing information environment. Recognition of this need, often described in terms of ‘empowerment’ of the individual, contributed further to the emergence of the concept of information literacy” (Bruce, 1997)

Information literacy is a multifaceted umbrella form of literacy, an unique approach of learning through engaging with information which extends far beyond formal education, and one which has evolved rapidly as a field of research, scholarship, educational practice and conference, journal and monographic publication (Bundy, 2004).

Bawden (2001) has provided with an analysis of the terms related to information literacy which have been used in the literature. Excluding literacy itself, there are six kinds of literacy required to understand the complexities of information environment in the 21st century. They are-

1. Information literacy
2. Computer literacy (Information technology/electronic information literacy)
3. Library literacy
4. Media literacy
5. Network literacy (Internet/hyper-literacy)
6. Digital literacy (Digital information literacy)

Figure 1.1 Types of literacies emanated in 21st century

Information literacy is often confused with the computer literacy owing to extensive use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in the digitization of scholarly publications and electronic delivery of information available in various media’s. However, information literacy incorporates, and is broader than, fluency in the use of information and communications technology (ICT), which requires skills more than the learning of software and hardware associated with the computer literacy. “Information literacy initiates, sustains, and extends lifelong learning
through abilities that may use technologies but are ultimately independent of them” (Bundy, 2004).

Information literacy has become increasingly essential in the present Internet era owing to multifaceted delivery of information using different mediums. The process of identifying and selecting information has become complex due to availability of variety of digitized information. It is critical to promote information literacy (IL) in the digital age for effective utilization of information.

E-Information literacy is the ability to properly use and evaluate electronic resources, tools and services and apply it for lifelong learning process. E-Information Literacy is the global phenomenon for effective utilization of super flow of digital information. The most essential aspect of e-information literacy is the ability to make informed judgements about what is found online. It is unlike conventional media much digital or electronic information which is unfiltered by editors and opens to the contribution of all. It helps users to cope with the information emanating from variety of electronic formats and provides methods and techniques of collecting the electronic resources (Maharana & Mishra, 2007). It can also act as an effective tool to ensure lifelong learning in the networked world by gathering the elements like knowledge management and information skills development.

Successive research studies indicate that the last two decades have seen the greatest proliferation of print and electronic information in mankind’s history and there is drastic and sudden flow of information to come in the near future. Unfortunately, reading productivity and the skills to maximize the intake of these abundant resources have simply not kept pace with their prolific digitized dissemination. The Word Per Minute (WPM) reading rate has remained meager at the rate of speech (under 300 WPM) since Gutenberg reinvented the press. The post-graduate e-Learner of the 21st Century can no longer rely on the antiquated systems of teaching, reading and note-taking those are prevalent in education today. The private/commercial sector has moved forward with successful training programs dealing with the e-Information literacy explosion, whereas academia has not. It is the need of the hour to shift from teacher-centered to student-centered learning and from subject-based to knowledge based curriculum as well as from pedagogy to andragogy. The existing note-memory, reproduction teaching technique should be replaced by a technique, which awakens
curiosity, encourages self study; interpret problem-solving skills through a program renamed as Information Literacy or E-Information literacy. The present research work focuses on investigation of the perception, diffusion and expectations of the University teachers in the state of Maharashtra in context to the e-information literacy.

1.2 Need of the study:

The 21st century is witnessing the growth of electronic or digital information at a phenomenal rate. In the present information world the digital documents dominate the swelling tide of information that floods nearly each and every organization. While the growth of digital information is increasing, what has not increased is the awareness of the risks and skills required to access the information. At present for example in the academia, the amount of electronic information available is much more than the print, however many teachers and students do not know how to access and retrieve such electronic information from the Internet, E-Journals, E-databases etc. Information skills are not coping with the amount of digital information available for use, which is creating a different kind of digital divide among the group of researchers viz. information rich and information poor.

Like in other countries, the higher education sector in India too is fast changing due to the influence of competition, changing policies, e-learning and deployment of information and communication technologies [ICTs]. This has resulted in UGC bestowing state run universities with huge number of E-Resources through its ambitious programme of ‘UGC-INFONET E- Journal Consortium’ in December, 2003. This has given boost for university libraries in meeting the information requirements of their clientele from vast amount of print and non-print electronic resources as compared to the pre e-consortium era. These facilities enabled faculty and students access vast amount of e-resources from any part of the university Intranet and also from outside through remote access. However, it has been observed from the research that, many of them lack the awareness and skills to retrieve particular information from the bundle of e-resources and also ignorance of user about the potentials of their own library.

Hence, in order to identify the level of awareness and skills among the faculty members working in the PG departments of universities in Maharashtra and to suggest
the measures for libraries in undertaking e-information literacy programmes for faculty the present study is being undertaken.

1.3 Statement of the Problem:

The present study is an attempt to examine the perception, diffusion and expectations of e-information literacy amongst the university faculty members of Maharashtra. The study attempts to know their views on available resources, type of information requirements, e-resources used, information retrieval skills and expectations from e-information literacy programmes to carry out their teaching and research assignments. The study examines the factors, which are associated with the collection and use of electronic information. The study also discusses the methods and approaches used by university teachers in accessing electronic information. Hence, the present study, suitably entitled “Awareness of e-information literacy amongst university teachers of Maharashtra”

1.4 Objectives of the study:

Following are the main objectives of the present study:

1. To understand awareness of e-resources amongst University Teachers.
2. To know the type of e-information required by the University teachers and how they acquire the information from e-resources.
3. To understand the purpose and problems of the teachers while acquiring e-information.
4. To understand the impact of e-information literacy on information seeking behavior of university teachers.
5. To assert the measures of esteems like citations, consultancy, evaluation and project work of teachers due to e-information literacy.
6. To know the use of computers, Internet search tools and e-information literacy skills of the teachers in retrieving information.
7. To know the role of University libraries in conducting various types of e-information literacy programmes for developing e-skills of University teachers.
8. To recommend e-information literacy model for university libraries.
1.5 Hypotheses:

In the light of the above objectives and related literature, the following hypotheses have been formulated for the present study.

**Hypothesis 1:** E-information literacy facilitates the university teachers to make use of e-information independently

**Hypothesis 2:** E-information literacy facilitates the university teachers to use ICT effectively for the retrieval of information from e-resources to meet their information needs

**Hypothesis 3:** E-information literacy programs of the University libraries enable university teachers to become e-information literate to make effective and efficient use of E-Resources

1.6 Methodology:

For the present research work, Descriptive Method of research has been used. The data was collected through structured and pre-tested questionnaire and it would be about awareness of e-resources and type of e-information required by University teacher, computer literacy and digital information competency, training and orientation, the role played by the university library etc in respect with e-information literacy of university teachers. The questionnaires were distributed amongst the university teachers of different departments existing in the traditional Universities of Maharashtra. Personal visits and field survey at all the Universities of Maharashtra was undertaken to increase the rate of response and accurate filling of questionnaire through discussion with the university teachers.

1.6.1 Pilot Study:

It is very obligatory to pre-test the designed questionnaire to come across the formulated objectives. Before finalizing the questionnaire a pilot study was taken up in order to eliminate any ambiguity in questions and thereby eradicating the irrelevant questions. Researcher pre-tested ten respective questionnaires against a small group of sample population i.e Ten University teachers from Shivaji University, Kolhapur from the faculties of Sciences-5 (3 Professors, 2 Assistant Professors), Social Sciences-3 (3 Professors), and Languages/Humanities-2 (2 Professors). This exercise helped in
revising, restating certain questions, identifying the demerits and thus improving the validity of questionnaire. After this pilot study, questionnaire was finalized and applied for all.

1.6.2 Scope and Limitations of the Study:

The scope of the study is limited to university teachers from 10 traditional universities established in Maharashtra excluding agricultural, technological, health sciences, open and deemed universities. There are such 10 traditional universities established in the state of Maharashtra which are selected for the present study as shown in the following table. The traditional Universities are selected because they occupy large scope in terms of various courses and a large number of teachers with their different specialization.

The population of the present study includes fulltime regular university faculty members such as, Professors, Associate Professors/Readers, Assistant Professors/Lecturers and any other regular teaching posts recognized by University Grants Commission (UGC) working in the traditional universities in the faculties of Sciences, Social Sciences and Humanities (Languages).

While collecting data from targeted Universities it was noticed that at five of the Universities there is less or no number of projected members of faculty in Sciences, Social Sciences and Arts (Humanities), hence teachers from other faculties such as Education, Law, Commerce and Management etc were surveyed and merged in to targeted sample of teachers from faculties of Sciences, Social Sciences and Humanities.

The data pertaining to universities and faculty members is represented in the following table.
### Table 1.1: List of Universities and Teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No</th>
<th>Name of University</th>
<th>Total Number of Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>University of Mumbai, Mumbai</td>
<td>321</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>SNDT (Smt. Nathibai Damodar Thackersey) Women's University, Mumbai</td>
<td>516</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Rashtrasant Tukadoji Maharaj Nagpur University, Nagpur</td>
<td>171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>University of Pune, Pune (Savitribai Phule Pune University)</td>
<td>246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University, Aurangabad</td>
<td>246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Shivaji University, Kolhapur</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Sant Gadge Baba Amravati University, Amravati</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>North Maharashtra University, Jalgaon</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Swami Ramanand Teerth Marathwada University, Nanded</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Solapur University, Solapur</td>
<td>*46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1912</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: “Universities Handbook, 32nd Ed. 2010

* Data collected through telephonic enquiry

For the present study, Krejcie-Morgan (1970) table has been applied for determining Population – Sampling ratio for the total population size of 1912 (from the above table) and its equivalent sample ratio between 320 to 322. To round-up the sample digit and proportional division of faculty members in three groups (Professor, Associate Professor and Assistant Professor) 360 as a total sample size for the present study was chosen by applying the ratio of 1:2:3 This ratio indicates in all 36 teachers (6 Professors + 12 Associated Professors + 18 Assistant Professors) from each university need to be surveyed against all three faculties.

However during field study it is observed that in some of the universities there is diversity in availability of faculty member’s (teachers) ratio in three faculties namely Sciences, Social Sciences and Languages which is not fitted with the above proportion, but predetermined 36 teachers from each university is taken as a final teacher strength. So total 360 sampling size is considered for the present study. Accordingly 360 questionnaires were distributed to the faculty members working in
the ten traditional Universities of Maharashtra. Out of that 347 questionnaires are duly filled by the teachers so rate of response is 96.38%.

The analysis of data is undertaken using various statistical methods / techniques based on three teachers groups like Professors, Associate Professors/Readers, and Assistant Professors/Lecturers in the three faculties of Sciences, Social Sciences and Humanities.

1.7 Conspectus of the study:

The present study is organized in six chapters. The core content of each chapter is given below-

**Chapter-1 Introduction:**

This chapter introduces the topic of research by describing briefly the concept of Information Literacy and E-Information Literacy. It describes the need and provides statement of the problem, objectives and hypotheses of the study. It also explains the research methodology used for data collection.

**Chapter-2 Review of Literature:**

It briefly reviews the important literature and studies available in print and online form related to the present study by emphasizing on issues such as information literacy, e-information literacy, awareness and use of e-resources and Information literacy skills and Competencies.

**Chapter-3 Information Literacy and E-Information Literacy:**

This chapter deals with the meaning of Information Literacy and E-Information Literacy, Components, Models and Standards of Information Literacy. It also discusses the tools for measuring Information Literacy Skills, Library and teachers collaboration in setting of Information Literacy Programs, Need of Information Literacy and E-Information Literacy and role of Library and Information Centers in enhancing Information Literacy and E-Information Literacy skills by exploring essential Methods and Skills of e-information literacy.
Chapter-4 Analysis and Interpretation of Data:

This chapter reveals the analysis and interpretation of data collected from the respondents (university teachers) through tabulation and graphical presentation on the aspects such as awareness and types of e-information needed by the faculty members, e-information skills and use of internet search tools by the faculty members with role played by University library to enhance e-information literacy skills of the university teachers.

Chapter-5 Conceptual e-information literacy model for University Library:

It deals with conceptual e-information literacy model useful for university libraries.

Chapter-6 Findings, Suggestions and Conclusion:

It discusses findings drawn in the light of objectives and testing the hypotheses formulated for the study. It also highlights on specific constructive suggestions for enhancing e-information literacy of university teachers. It concludes the study with final remarks.
References:


