ICT Awareness among the Faculty Members of Government Siddha Colleges in Tamil Nadu: A Study

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Abstract - **This paper analyses the level of awareness of ICT among the faculty members of Siddha colleges in Tamil Nadu. Data has been collected through the questionnaire distributed to the faculty members of three Government Siddha colleges in Tamil Nadu. The results of the study show that the faculty members of Siddha colleges in Tamil Nadu have good familiarity with internet since most of them had learnt about internet by self-learning and through their friends. Also it is found that the faculty members have more than 2 years of experience in the use of internet. The respondents also feel the importance of internet in research to a greater extent.**
Keywords: **Information and Communication Technology, Search Techniques, Awareness, Self-Learning, Internet**

I. INTRODUCTION

Communication exists in various forms since man appeared on Earth. The history of communication begins with hand signs and body language to communicate to others, the most elemental things like hunger or pain. Communication can be defined as exchange of ideas, views, information, and facts etc. with two or more persons with an aim to develop understanding. The means of communication has a long history starting from postal communication in 1837, Telegraph service in 1851, Telecommunication in 1881 and the present electronic communication that comprise of fax and email. Now Internet plays a vital role in communication.

Information and communication technology (ICT) plays a significant role in day-to-day life. Nowadays simple e-mail service can enable far cheaper and faster communication with others. It is very easy to just simply read softcopy books (which are accessible through the Internet) and learn remotely through educational tools. The significant impact of ICT draws a lot of attention in both industry and academia. Now ICT is capable of providing learning alternatives (such as self-learning) through educational tools or distance learning. In order to implement ICT fully in the academia, Ministry of human resource and development of India launched "The National Mission on Education through Information and Communication Technology". Under this Mission, a proper balance between content generations, research in critical areas relating to imparting of education and connectivity for integrating our knowledge with the advancements in other countries has been given importance.

II. RELATED STUDIES

Many studies have been undertaken on information resources in the areas of awareness, usage, relevance, access, preference, orientations and training, and evaluation among others. It is found in the literature that there are sometimes a gap between awareness and usage of digital resources.

Wael Sh. Basri & Jehan A. (2018) [1] conducted a study to explore the adoption of information communication technology by the universities in Arabia and the impact it makes on the academic performance of university students. It was found that there is a relation between ICT adoption and academic performance in a conservative environment.

Shahida Tabassum and Kiran Shehzadi (2018) [2] surveyed the awareness, attitude and competence level of using ICTs by faculty members of women universities of Pakistan. Findings show that the faculty members have a positive attitude towards computers but unfortunately, they have a low competence level of using ICTs. Most of the respondents have never attended any training on ICTs.

Adu, Eo, Bo, Emunemu and T. Oshati (2014) [3] examined the role and need of information and communication technology (ICT) and higher education in sustainable development in Nigeria. The findings of the study show that the effective ICT policies and facilities of high technology would promote sustainable development.

Sinha, Manojkumar (2008) [4] carried out a study on Information Communication Technology (ICT) and Internet Awareness Among the College and University Teachers and found the interesting findings in respect of Internet use pattern among the college and university teachers of India who have participated in Refresher Course on Information Technology (Interdisciplinary) at Academic Staff College, Shimla.

Mahmoud Abu & Qudais, *et al.,* (2010) [1] conducted a study to identify the main factors affecting the attitude of the senior faculty members towards using technology especially in their teaching activities. It was found that senior instructors do have the basic necessary knowledge and skills.

Angel de Vicente, John Crawford and Stuart Clink, (2004) [1] reports on the use of electronic information services by staff at GCU. It was found that the freely available Internet was the most widely used source, which some respondents viewed as a more appropriate source of vocationally orientated information than pass worded databases. Less than a third used the catalogue to find EIS, which raises questions about the future of the catalogue as a free-standing comprehensive resource. Non-use of EIS was rarely due to difficulty of access or use.

A. Research Questions

Keeping in view the importance of ICT in academia, the present study has been undertaken to know the use of ICT by faculty members of Siddha colleges in Tamil Nadu. This paper is an attempt to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the frequency and purpose of use of computers and Internet by faculty members of Government Siddha Colleges in Tamil Nadu?
2. What is the awareness level on the use of ICT facilities by faculty members of Government Siddha Colleges in Tamil Nadu?
3. What is the level of use of Internet facilities by faculty members of Government Siddha Colleges in Tamil Nadu?
4. What are the Internet based services used by faculty members of Government Siddha Colleges in Tamil Nadu?

III. SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

The Siddha System of Medicine (Traditional Tamil System of Medicine), which has been prevalent in the ancient Tamil land, is the foremost of all other medical systems in the world. Its origin goes back to B.C 10,000 to B.C 4,000. As per the textual and archeological evidences which indicate the remote antiquity of the Dravidian civilization of the east while submerged land Kumari kandam, that is the Lemuria continent situated in the Indian Ocean. The Siddha System of Medicine is contemporaneous with those of the submerged lands Egyptian, Mesopotamian, Chinese and Grecian medicines. The uniqueness of Siddha System is evident by its continuous service to the humanity for more than 5000 years in combating diseases and also in

maintaining its physical, mental and moral health while many of its contemporaries had become extinct long ago.

The Siddha system of education in ancient India was not imparted or organized on the scale of mass education like schools and colleges, but the ideal of education was to treat it as a secret and sacred process, for the reason that the process of an individual growth (especially the inner growth) can only be achieved by a close and constant touch between the teacher and the taught in their personal relationship from which the whole world was excluded. Siddha education has turned into a mass institutional education around the middle of the 20th Century and has been catering to the needs of the public. Developments in academic side and also in scientific research have been coming up. There are nine Siddha Colleges in Tamil Nadu of which three are Government Colleges namely

1. Govt. Siddha Medical College, Chennai
2. Govt. Siddha Medical College, Thirunelveli
3. National Institute of Siddha, Chennai.

The study selected all the three Siddha colleges in Tamil Nadu. The faculty strength in all these three colleges is
1. National Institute of Siddha   - 31
2. Government Siddha College, Chennai   - 58
3. Government Siddha College, Palayamkottai - 61

The questionnaire has been designed to fulfill the stated objectives. Questions were asked to capture the data on demographic information, use of computers and Internet. The questionnaire was distributed to all the faculty members and the response ratio is nearly fifty percent. The sample size of the population is 71 which are about fifty per cent of the entire teaching population of the three colleges. The filled questionnaires were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 14.0) and the data have been presented in the form of tables and charts.

IV. LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

This study restricted to only 3 Siddha Colleges. There are nine (9) Siddha Colleges in Tamil Nadu of which there are 3 Government Colleges. The researcher collected data from only the Government Colleges.

V. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

TABLE I DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY COLLEGE

Institution	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Govt. Siddha Medical College, Palayamkottai	24	33.80	33.80	33.80
Govt. Siddha College, Chennai	32	45.07	45.07	78.87
National Institute of Siddha, Chennai	15	21.13	21.13	100.00
Total	71	100.00	100.00	-

The total respondents taken for the study is 71 of which Government Siddha college, Chennai has the highest response rate of 45.07 percent. 33.80 per cent of the respondents are from Government Siddha Medical College, Palayamkottai and 21.13 per cent are from National Institute of Siddha, Chennai. It is found that 45% of the faculties are from Govt. Siddha College, Chennai.

From the Table II, it can be found that male and female respondents take almost equal share (male forming 50.80 percent and female forming 49.30 percent).

TABLE II DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY GENDER

Gender	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male respondents	36	50.70	50.70	50.70
Female respondents	35	49.30	49.30	100.00
Total	71	100.00	100.00	-

Table III shows the frequency of visit to the library by the faculty members of Government Siddha colleges in Tamil Nadu. It is found that more than fifty percent of them visit the college library daily (57.75%) and more than one third of them (33.8%) visit the library once in two days. This evidences shows that the faculty members of Siddha colleges are habitual in using the library.

TABLE III DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY THE FREQUENCY OF VISIT TO THE LIBRARY

Frequency of visit	Respondents	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Daily	41	57.75	57.75	57.75
Every alternate day	24	33.80	33.80	91.55
Once in a week	5	7.04	7.04	98.59
Occasionally	0	0.00	0.00	98.59
Never	1	1.41	1.41	100.00
Total	71	100.00	100.00	-

TABLE IV DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY THE TIME SPENT IN THE LIBRARY

Time Spent	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1-2 Hours	25	35.21	35.21	35.21
3-4 Hours	36	50.70	50.70	85.92
More than 4 Hours	10	14.08	14.08	100.00
Total	71	100.00	100.00	-

Table IV, shows that nearly half of the faculty members of Government Siddha Colleges spend 3-4 hours per day in the college library and 32.21 percent spend 1 - 2 hours per day in the library. This shows that the library usage by the faculty members is high.

From the Table V, it can be seen that majority of the faculty members (33.8%) use laptops. Only a few people use E-book reader (1.41%) or PC/Desktops (11.27%). Nearly one fifth of the respondents use smartphones (21.13%) and 16.9 percent use tablets or 15.49 percent use LCT projector.

This shows that majority of the faculty use their own laptops or smart phones of tablets for accessing internet based information retrieval.

TABLE V DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY THE TYPE OF ICT USED

Type of ICT	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
PC/Desktop	8	11.27	11.27	11.27
Laptop	24	33.80	33.80	45.07
Tablet	12	16.90	16.90	61.97
Smartphone	15	21.13	21.13	83.10
LCD Projector	11	15.49	15.49	98.59
E-Book reader	1	1.41	1.41	100.00
Total	71	100.00	100.00	-

Table VI, shows that 23.94 percent of the respondents use internet daily and Once in a week, 42.25 percent use internet every alternate days. This shows that nearly 66.2 percent of the respondents have the high usage of Internet either daily or every alternate day.

TABLE VI DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY FREQUENCY OF USE OF INTERNET

Frequency of Use	Respondents	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Daily	17	23.94	23.94	23.94
Every alternate days	30	42.25	42.25	66.20
Once in a week	17	23.94	23.94	90.14
As and when required	7	9.86	9.86	100.00
Total	71	100	100	-

It is found from Table VII that more than 50 percent of the faculty has good experience of about 4-5 years and 19.72 percent have 2-3 years experience in the use of Internet. From this, analysis it can be inferred that, the majority of the faculty (71.83%) of Siddha Colleges have more than 2 years of experience in Internet.

From the table VIII, the faculty of Siddha colleges learns how to use internet through friends (33.80%) and self-learning (29.58%). Very few faculties (14.09%) learn internet through training courses or newspapers. More than one fifth of the faculty (22.54%) learn internet from experts.

TABLE VII DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY EXPERIENCE IN USING INTERNET

Experience	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Less than 2 years	19	26.76	26.76	26.76
2-3 years	14	19.72	19.72	46.48
4-5 years	37	52.11	52.11	98.59
Above 5 years	1	1.41	1.41	100.00
Total	71	100	100	-

TABLE VIII DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY MODE OF LEARNING INTERNET

Mode of Learning	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Self-learning	21	29.58	29.58	29.58
From experts	16	22.54	22.54	52.11
Friends	24	33.80	33.80	85.92
Training courses	8	11.27	11.27	97.18
Newspaper or the media	2	2.82	2.82	100.00
Total	71	100.00	100.00	-

VI. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

1. As per the Survey, 45% of the faculty members are from Government Siddha College, Chennai.
2. Research results reveal that male and female respondents take almost equal share.
3. It is found that the faculty members of siddha colleges are habitual in using the library.
4. It is found that out of 71 respondents, 36 (50.70%) spend time in the library 3-4 hours.
5. It is concluded that more number of faculty use their own laptop or smartphones of tablets for accessing internet based information retrieval.
6. It is found that majority of the faculty use internet daily and every alternate day.
7. It can be inferred that the majority of the faculty (71.83) of siddha colleges have more than 2 years of experience in internet.
8. It is found that more than one fifth of the faculty (22.5) learn internet from experts.

VII. CONCLUSION

Information and communication technology is very essential for the realization of academic goals. With the advent of ICT, sharing of ideas, accessing new resources and interacting with experts is very easy, which can aid in achieving the goals of academicians. This paper analyses the awareness level of ICT among the faculty members of Siddha Colleges of Tamil Nadu. It was found that faculty members have familiarity with Internet since most of them had learnt about internet by self-learning and through their friends. Also it is found that the faculty members have more than 2 years' experience in the use of internet. The respondents also feel the importance of internet in research to a greater extent.

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