

Information Literacy among Faculty and Students of Medical Colleges of Haryana, Punjab and Chandigarh

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Abstract : With the availability of diverse printed, electronic literature and web sites on medical and health related information, it is impossible for the medical professional to get the information he seeks in the shortest possible time. For all these problems information literacy is the only solution. Thus, information literacy is recognized as an important aspect of medical education. In the present study, an attempt has been made to know the information literacy skills of the faculty and students at medical colleges of Haryana, Punjab and Chandigarh. The scope of the study was confined to the 12 selected medical colleges of three States (Haryana, Punjab, and Chandigarh). The findings of the study were based on the data collected through 1018 questionnaires filled by the respondents of the medical colleges. It was found that Online Medical Websites (such as WebMD, eMedicine and Mayo Clinic etc.) were frequently used by 63.43% of the respondents of Chandigarh which is slightly more than Haryana (61%) and Punjab (55.65%). As well, 30.86% of the respondents of Chandigarh, 27.41% of Haryana and 27.05% of Punjab were familiar with the controlled vocabulary tool; 25.14% respondents of Chandigarh, 23.80% of Punjab, 23.17% of Haryana were familiar with the Boolean operators; 33.05% of the respondents of Punjab, 28.19% of Haryana and 25.14% of Chandigarh were familiar with the use and importance of the keywords while searching an electronic database; and 51.43% of the respondents of Chandigarh, 44.52% of Punjab and 36.29% of Haryana were able to make effective use of the retrieved information. For accessing information in electronic format, 47.74% of the respondents rated their skills high, while the majority of respondents (76.13%) were unfamiliar with the basic search technique i.e. Boolean operator used for searching information in an online database. On the basis of the findings, it was suggested that a comprehensive training program based on medical professionals information needs should be organized frequently. Furthermore, it was also suggested that information literacy may be included as a subject in the health science curriculum so as to make the medical professionals information literate and independent lifelong learners.

Keywords : information, information literacy, medical professionals, medical colleges

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