



# Chapter 10

## Role of University Libraries in Imparting Information Literacy Skills Among Indigenous Post Graduate Students in India

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### ABSTRACT

*The chapter examines the role of university libraries in imparting information literacy skills to indigenous students in three Indian universities. It explores the many facets of information literacy on indigenous knowledge and culture, how it is integrated into academic curricula, and how academic librarians' roles as information literacy educators are changing. It highlights the importance of preserving indigenous culture, traditions, and customs. The chapter also describes various stages and channels by which information literacy can be analyzed to create awareness of library services at the university level. Information literacy of indigenous PG students has not been found satisfactory of the three universities. Also, the library has to take proper initiative to enhance IL among these students. The chapter also looks to what extent the university library has a collection of tribal literature and whether the tribal students use the collection to enhance their subject knowledge.*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Paul Zurkowski, the president of the Information Industry Association at the time, initially proposed the idea of information literacy in 1974. He noticed that people who are information literate are taught how to use information resources in their profession. In comparison to people who lack information

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literacy, it enables them to make more informed judgments at work, during research, and in academic pursuits. The ALA Presidential Committee on Information Literacy provided one of the first definitions of information literacy in 1989. “To be Information Literate, a person must be able to recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use the needed information effectively.”. It is becoming more and more crucial for people to acquire the necessary information and technology skills to become proficient information users. For this reason, it seems that in the current information era, these abilities are turning into “survival skills” (Shettappanavar & C, 2021).

Information Literacy is the ability to use information for the good or benefit of others. In the modern age, students are not only depending on information provided by libraries or information centers but also they are expected to navigate through huge amounts of information through the online/ digital way. Due to dramatic and rapid technological advancement and the incredible growth of digital information, libraries are acting at a crucial point. Slowly Digital Library and Institutional Repository are becoming the focus of many libraries (Matteson & Gersch, 2020). Due to the inclusion of technology, there is a need to learn, unlearn, and relearn in the digital environment.

Information is becoming a valuable economic resource, and citizens must be prepared from early childhood through post-secondary education for the constructive use of information. By imparting information literacy skills at all stages of school, colleges, and universities, librarians play a significant part in preparing people to use information effectively and efficiently and become informed members of society. Researchers, professors, and students must learn to use information critically in today’s information-rich environment when the amount of knowledge at their disposal seems endless. In addition to knowing where to find materials on the Internet, it emphasizes the skills required for finding information from several sources. It doesn’t matter what knowledge is found; how you use it matters.

The potential and challenge for educational institutions is to equip their libraries to fulfill the needs of the Information Age. People who have received a high-quality education have something in common, like the ability to think critically, solve problems, have a global perspective and a multicultural outlook, be prepared for the workforce, and be decent citizens.

It is identified from various studies (Hangshing & Laloo, 2021; Omeluzor & Ogo, 2018) that in academic libraries, many users mostly indigenous students are unable to use the information resources effectively as they don’t have adequate information access skills. Academic libraries need to consider the preferences of their users in receiving literary information.

In India, the indigenous knowledge systems of indigenous communities reflect a deep understanding of local environments, a holistic worldview, and a commitment to communal decision-making and cultural preservation. These knowledge systems are an important aspect of India’s cultural heritage and are essential to sustainable development and the well-being of indigenous communities.

Many indigenous communities have developed sophisticated knowledge of local environments, including the flora, fauna, and natural resources that are found in their area. This knowledge is often passed down through generations and is key to sustainable resource management practices. Some indigenous communities also have rich oral traditions that include stories, songs, and other forms of cultural expression. These traditions are often used to transmit knowledge from one generation to the next and are an important aspect of maintaining cultural identity. Indigenous knowledge of indigenous communities refers to some developed traditional medicinal practices that use natural remedies and spiritual practices to treat a range of health conditions. These practices often reflect the holistic worldview of indigenous communities and emphasize the interconnectedness of physical, emotional, and spiritual health (WHO, n.d.).

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