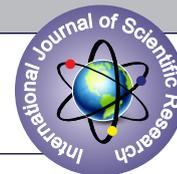# INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

UTILIZATION OF ELECTRONIC RESOURCES BY THE SCHOLARS OF AVINASHILINGAM INSTITUTE FOR HOME SCIENCE AND HIGHER EDUCATION FOR WOMEN UNIVERSITY, COIMBATORE

Home Science

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ABSTRACT

Electronic resources are easily accessible and precious sources of information. Due to the information deluge, the scholars face difficulty in locating and retrieving these resources. Consequently accessing these resources offer opportunities to retrieve accurate, timely and wide range of literature; observation shows that there is low usage of e- resources among the scholars. This study is an effort to evaluate the utilization of electronic resources by the research scholars of Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women, Coimbatore. Data was collected by using questionnaire. The study found that using e-resources require knowledge of computer and information literacy skills. They also need sufficient computers,high speed internet connectivity and guidance from the library personnel.

KEYWORDS

E-resources, Research Scholars, Utilization

Introduction

Electronic resources are easily accessible and precious sources of information. The knowledge of e-resources is a skill, useful for future life as well as enriching academic performance of research scholars. Carr (2006) stated that the emergence of information resources in electronic format, serves to accelerate emphasis and prominence to the needs of users. These resources reduce the dependency upon print-based materials and enable the user to accessa wide range of information. Benefits of e-resources are access to wide range of information, access to current and up to date information, speed access to information; obtain accuracy, timely and relevant informa tion.These resources provide an opportunity to transmit, acquire, download process and disseminate information on a specific subject to the scholars.

The present study was confined to the utilization of e-resources by the scholars of Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women University. The University plays a vital role in increasing female literacy rate in and around Coimbatore city. This Institute introduced innovative methods in teaching, evaluation, research, outreach programme and provides an environment conducive to learning and development. The library is a learning centre and heart of this university, is well equipped and up-to-date. This library provides opportunity to access more than 20,684 e-journals through subscription and e-ShodhSindhu. This Library procured e-journals, e-books and e-databases like SCOPUS, EBSCO and DELNET in different subject areas. The users of this library system constitute faculty, research scholars, students, and educational administrators.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Due to the information deluge, the scholars face difficulty in locating the resources and making use of the information in e-form. Whereas accessing e-resources offer opportunities to retrieve accurate and timely and wide range of literature, observation shows that there is low usage of e- resources in Avinashilingam University which is evident from the library statistics.Although the university conducts worksh ops, seminars and communicates to scholars regularly about the available e-resources, students are not effectively using e-resources. The library subscribes to a total of 10 electronic information resource packages which include full text electronic journals and databases. It is not known why there is such low usage of these resources in the university whose student population is almost 6000. This lack of understanding is what is causing concern to both the university and library managers.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Following are the objectives framed in the study:
- To study the available e-resources in this library
- To determine the extent of use and the relevance of e-resources
- To propose the strategies for promoting the usage of e-resources

HYPOTHESES

The following hypotheses were formulated in relation to the problem:

1. There is no significant relationship between the ICT skills and usage of e-resources
2. There is no significant relationship between academic performance and utilization of e-resources
3. There is no significant relationship between the accessibility of e-resources and the information needs of the scholars

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The most effective way to provide access to electronic resources is through UGC Infonet and also through subscription. Muteshewa (2004) revealed the traditional libraries and its storage of information in different formats, tools and guides were used to locate the resources when a person physically visited the library. With the advent of computers and communication technologies, libraries can provide access to these resources through PCs and laptops to the students within the Library and remote. According to Rowley (2006) the journals existed in two forms such as print as well as in digital form. The electronic versions do not need a publisher, which can be managed by an editor and the scholarly community. Online databases are a collection of electronic information sources (e-journals/e-books) by publishers from various fields and disciplines (Afolabi,2007). The information revolution brought forth by advances in information and communication technology has enabled universities and colleges around the world to take advantage of these developments. New modes of teaching, learning and accessing information have emerged as a result of Internet and World Wide Web (Darkwa et al, 2007). CD-ROM databases are important tools for identifying thebibliographic details of potentially useful documents and ensure easy access to large volumes of literature for research. Majid and Tan (2002) emphasize that the amazing technological advancementshave opened new horizons for information creation, duplication, storage, access, distribution and presentation. Digitization ofinformation is resulting in access to unbelievable volumes of information. This studyintended to assess the usage of e-resources available in Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women library and to determine the extent of use. This would help the librarian in thetransformations required in handling information in the context of the complexchallenges posed by the emerging e-learning environment and globalization.

Methodology

The data for this study was collected using questionnaire among the research scholars of the Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women, Coimbatore. The investigator consulted a group of experts and modified drafted questionnaire based on their comments. A questionnaire containing both open-ended and closed questions was prepared and distributed to one hundred and sixsixresearch scholars. The respondents were requested to fill in the questionnaire given to them. The sample represented the scholars from the following departments namely Resource Management, Food Service Management and Dietetics, Food Science and Nutrition, Textiles and Clothing, Human Development, Home Science Extension Education, Lifelong Learning and Extension, Biochem istry, Biotechnology and Bioinformatics, Chemistry, Zoology, Botany,

Physics, Mathematics, Computer Science, Psychology, Tamil, English, Economics, Hindi, French, Music, Management, Commerce, Tourism Management, Education, Special Education, Physical Education, Community College and Engineering. The responses received from the research scholars were tabulated and subjected to further statistical analysis.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Academic Performance
Academic performance refers to how successfully one achieves the educational goal by utilizing the resources and services of the library. This has been measured in terms of getting degrees, publication of papers and participating and attending conferences, seminars and workshops by the Researchers. The respondents are asked about their research productivity in terms of books and research paper published. The analyses of the academic performance of the Researchers have been done separately and the results are as follows:

Analysis of Academic Performance
Academic performance of the subjects, depends on their information seeking behaviour and retention and exhibition of acquired knowledge through publication of papers/articles in peer reviewed journals, reviews, reports, books etc; participation in different academic conferences, seminars, workshops and organizing of such workshops, conferences and seminars in their areas of interest. The obtained data from the researchers on academic performance' were scored and the maximum score possible was 75. Researchers' scores were ranging from 21 to 50. Table 1 shows the distribution of scores on academic performance of researchers of different faculties of the university:

Table 1 Academic Performance Scores of Researchers of Various Faculties

Name of the Faculty	21 to 30		31 to 40		41 to 50		Total
	No. of Researchers	%	No. of Researchers	%	No. of Researchers	%	No. of Researchers
Business Administration	4	36	7	64	-	-	11
Community Education	-	-	2	100	-	-	2
Education	-	-	12	100	-	-	12
Engineering	-	-	5	100	-	-	5
Home Science	2	4	46	87	5	9	53
Humanities	22	81	5	19			27
Science					56	100	56
Total	28		77		61		166

The results presented in Table 1 shows that out of 166 researchers, 28 researchers have scored between 21 and 30, 77 of them scored between 31 and 40 and remaining 61 scored between 41 and 50.

The obtained scores were further analysed using descriptive statistics and the results obtained for mean, standard deviation, minimum and maximum scores for the academic performance of researchers are presented in Table 2:

Table 2 Descriptive Analysis of Academic Performance of Researchers of Various Faculties

Name of the Faculty	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum Score	Maximum Score
Business Administration	11	31.36	1 .501	30	34
Community Education	2	39.5	0.707	39	40
Education	12	35.25	2.340	32	39
Engineering	5	37.4	0.547	37	38
Home Science	53	34.21	3.381	30	43
Humanities	27	28.88	1.671	27	33
Science	56	45.18	2.643	41	50
Total	166	35.96	1.881	27	50

The results presented in Table 2 proved that the range of scores were from 27 to 50. The lowest mean score was 28.88 of Researchers in Humanities faculty and the highest mean score was 45.18 of Researchers in Science faculty. The overall mean score of the researchers was 35.96 with standard deviation + 1.881.

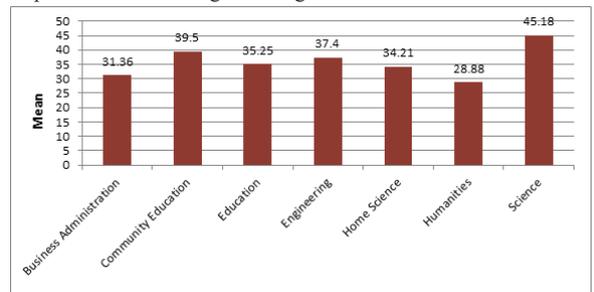The obtained mean values on academic performance of the researchers are presented as a bar diagram in Fig: 1:

Fig.1   Mean Values on Academic Performance of Researchers of Various Faculties
Since there were differences in the mean scores of the researchers on academic performance levels, the obtained data were further subjected to Analysis of Variance to test the statistical significance of the differences that existed and the results obtained are presented in Table 3:

Table 3 ANOVA results of the Differences in Academic Performance among Researchers

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	F
Between Groups	6333.551	6	1055.592	147.734**
Within Groups	1136.093	159	7.145	
Total	7469.645	165		

**Significant at 0.01 level {Required table F df (1,159) at 0.01 level 2.8020}

The results presented in Table 3 proved that there were significant differences on means of academic performance of the researchers as the obtained F-value of 147.734 is greater than the table value of 2.8020 and is significant at 0.01 level.

E-Resources
Sources of information existed in print as well as in e-form. The benefits of e-resources are easy accessibility and round the clock availability. These resources are available in the form of e-journals, e-books, e-databases, e-theses, e-magazines, e-newspapers and internet/online resources. The respondents were asked to state their frequency of access to e-resources and the results are shown in Table 4:

Table 4 E-Resources used by the Research scholars

S. No.	E- resources	Frequency	Percentage %
1.	E- Journals	59	36
2.	E- Books	37	13
3.	E-Databases	18	9
4.	E-Theses	16	7
5.	E-Magazines	9	5
6.	E-Newspapers	7	4
7.	Internet/Online resources	55	26

Majority of the research scholars (36 percent) frequently accessed e-journals and twenty six percent of them used Internet and online resources regularly. Thirteen percent used frequently e-books as they found them adequate in meeting their educational/research needs. Nine percent of them regularly used e-databases and seven percent of them accessed e-theses often. Five percent of them accessed e-magazines and four percent of them had the practice of reading e-newspapers.

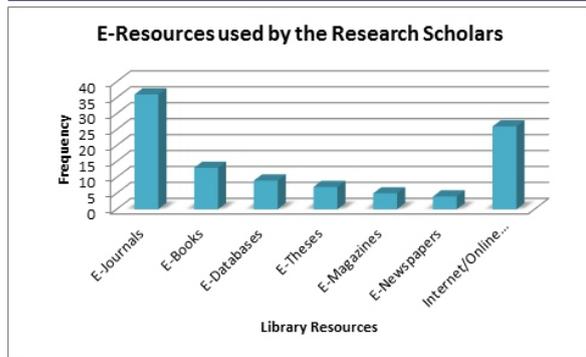**The results above are presented as a bar diagram in Fig: 2.**

Fig: 2 Utilization of E-resources by the Research scholars – Percentagewise

Other Findings

The findings of the study based on the opinion of the researchers are as follows:

- Majority of the respondents frequently used e-resources for research in the Library
- Majority of the researchers necessitated the potential and relevance of e-resources
- Use of internet is high among all categories of researchers
- Retrieval skill, limited number of networked computers, slow internet speed and constrained working hour of the library affected the effective use of e-resources
- Majority (67.46) of the researchers has high information needs
- Majority (56 percent) of the researchers visit the library daily for browsing e-journals
- The findings indicate that 70.48 percent of the researchers have explicit purposeof seeking information very often
- 32 percent of the researchers are highly satisfied with the information sources available in the library

CONCLUSION

Libraries are the reservoirs of knowledge. Knowledge is a distinguishing characteristic of human being and it is transmitted from one generation to another. Today's library users are tech-savvy, ambitious, creative, collaborative, quick, multitasking and hyperaware. The library on the other hand should employ more effective strategies to enhance the utilization of e-resources. In addition to these, introduce e-mail alert messages, send text messages and prizes to be awarded for the effective user are also under consideration to promote efficient use of e-resources.Hence it is the need of the hour to introduce innovative services, document delivery system and disseminate information to quicken the retrieval of information.

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