



AWARENESS AND USAGE OF RESEARCH SOFTWARES AND WEBSITES: SPECIAL REFERENCE TO SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH STUDENT

Commerce

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ABSTRACT

Background: Research tools and data play an increasingly important role in research. The research tool can save time and add depth to qualitative work. Researchers need scholarly publications to read, study and to write a research article. As it is well known that the internet through the research tools has made this process more fruitful. Therefore, it is necessary to think more critically about sources and more effectively organize all the different kinds of digital research tools they find. There are many different research support tools that are available to help and to select proper information for research. **Objectives:** Aim of this study was to identify the level of awareness about research softwares and websites among Research Scholars of Parul University, to examine the tools used to get awareness on research softwares and websites by Research Scholars, to analyse the usage of research softwares and websites by Research Scholars and to study about the barriers of research softwares and websites by Research Scholars. **Methods:** 150 Social Science research students identified through simple random sampling technique from Parul University were given structured questionnaire and data was collected from all of them. **Results:** This study reported that all the research scholars of the University are familiar with research softwares and websites and most of them make use of it for their research purpose. Two third of the scholars use research softwares and websites for information support during the different phases of their research work. **Conclusion:** The present study underlines the need for giving the research scholars awareness about the importance of bibliometric and scientometric indicators in scholarly communication.

KEYWORDS

Softwares; Research, Social Science research student, India

INTRODUCTION:

The emergence of new technologies has changed the way people communicate with each other, access and share information.¹ Unlike in the olden days where people only have to rely on traditional media or interpersonal communication; people now have the opportunity to seek, read, view, and share the information they like, anywhere, anytime, and on any topic.² Similarly, this advancement in technology has helped researchers to reduce considerable amount of time required to complete the research programme.^{3,5} If the research support tools are effectively used, utilizing their actual potential, then definitely the researcher can attain his objective in limited time. It is often seen that the true prospects of these tools are often not exploited in the way it should be.⁵

University of Parul, Vadodara, Gujarat has a very good central library which has many research support tools in its collection. They are Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC), Bibliographical Databases (Scopus, web of science), Discovery Tool (Single Window Search), Spelling Checker (Grammarly), Journal Citation Report (JCR), Anti-Plagiarism Software (Turnitin), Reference Management Tool (Endnote, Mendeley), Remote Access Facility (EZ proxy), Institutional Repository (Eprints) etc. Many research scholars are doing research in various disciplines at University of Parul. An attempt is made to know about the awareness and use of these tools among research scholars.

There is no information completely given over the research softwares as well as research websites about awareness and usage. Such a study was not conducted so far and therefore this study was conducted to identify the level of awareness about research softwares and websites among Research Scholars of Parul University, to examine the tools used to get awareness on research softwares and websites by Research Scholars, to analyse the usage of research softwares and websites by Research Scholars and to study about the barriers of research softwares and websites by Research Scholars.

MATERIAL AND METHODS:

This descriptive and single-center study was carried out between DD-MMM-YYYY to DD-MMM-YYYY on consecutive 150 Social Science research students. This study carried out in the University of Parul, Waghodia, Limda, Vadodara, Gujarat, India. The study population who were identified through simple random sampling technique from Parul University were given structured questionnaire. The primary data from the various departments of University of Parul was collected from all of them through study questionnaire. Study variables like Awareness and usage of Research Softwares and

Website, Frequency of using Research Softwares and Websites, kind of Research information frequently used, Purpose of Using Research Softwares and Websites and Problems encountered while Research Softwares and Websites were analyzed in this study. Research websites like Google Scholar, ShodhGanga, Infilnet, Ebsco Host, Publons, Scopus, EndNote, Refseek, Wolfram Alpha and Science Govt were considered in this study. Research Softwares like Research Gate, Mendeley, Paperity, Curiosity, Plagiarism Checker, Microsoft, Harzing, Zotero and Refworks were considered in this study.

Research Hypothesis:

In our study, we have framed the below null hypothesis (H_0) and alternate hypothesis (H_1):

H_0 = There is no associate significance between gender wise distribution of respondents and awareness and usage of Research Softwares and Website

H_1 = There is associate significance between gender wise distribution of respondents and awareness and usage of Research Softwares and Website

Statistical analysis:

Data collected from this study using the appended proforma were entered in Microsoft Excel and its analysis was carried out in SPSS software version 16.0. Descriptive analysis was performed on all data and represented in percentage format. The results were tabulated in the form of tables.

RESULTS:

Table 1: Gender wise distribution of respondents

GENDER	NO OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
Male	89	59.33%
Female	61	40.67%
TOTAL	150	100%

From Table 1 it was shown that 89(59.33%) of respondents were male while 61(40.67%) were females.

Table 2: Awareness and usage of Research Softwares and Website

AWARENESS	NO OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
Shelf / friends / colleagues	56	37.33%
Teachers/Research Supervisors	60	40%
Library orientation programmes	34	22.67%
TOTAL	150	100%

Table 2 indicates that majority 60(40%) of respondents acquired their

aware and usage of research softwares and websites through teachers/research supervisors, followed by 56(37.33%) through shelf/friends/colleagues, 34(22.67%) library orientation programmes.

Table 3: What kind of Research information frequently used

RESEARCH INFORMATION	NO OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
E-books/ E-journals	68	45.33%
Online Databases	42	28%
E-Newspapers	7	4.67%
E-reference sources	33	22%
TOTAL	150	100%

The above table highlights that 68(45.33%) of respondents frequently used e-books/ ejournals, followed by 42 (28%) of respondent's online databases, 33(22%) e-reference sources and only 7(4.67%) of respondents use for e- newspapers.

Table 4: The Purpose of Using Research Softwares and Websites

Purpose	NO OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
To gain current information	8	5.33%
To support research work/ Projects	89	59.33%
For study	3	2%
To update knowledge	50	33.33%
TOTAL	150	100%

From the above table revealed that 3(2%) of respondents using research softwares and websites for the study purpose, whereas 89(59.33%) to support research work/ Projects, 8(5.33%) of respondents to gain current information and 50(33.33%) of respondents using E – resources for purpose to update knowledge.

Table 5: Frequency of using Research Softwares and Websites

Frequency	NO OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
Daily	40	26.67%
Twice in a week	55	36.67%
Once in a week	25	16.67%
As and when I required	30	20%
TOTAL	150	100%

The above table explains that 40(26.67%) of the respondents use e-resources daily, followed by 55(36.67%) twice in a week, 25(16.67%) weekly, and 30(20%) of the respondents use as and when they required.

Table 6: Problems encountered while Research Softwares and Websites

Problems	NO OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
Lack of internet access speed	20	13.33%
Few computers with internet facilities	30	20%
Overload of information on the Internet	44	29.33%
Lack of computer skills	25	16.67%
Difficult in finding relevant information	31	20.67%
TOTAL	150	100%

The above table indicates the responses of respondents regarding the problems while research softwares and websites. 20(13.33 %) of respondents have faced the major problem of slow internet access, while 31(20.67%) are difficult in finding relevant information, 44(29.33%) overload of information on the Internet, 25(16.67%) lack of computer skills and 30(20%) of respondents reported few computers with internet facilities.

Table 7: Cross tabulation between Gender * Awareness

		Awareness			Total	
		Shelf / Friends / Colleagues	Teachers/ Reserach Supervisor	Library Orientation Program		
Gender	Male	Count	45	27	17	89
		% within Awareness	80.4%	45.0%	50.0%	59.3%
	Female	Count	11	33	17	61
		% within Awareness	19.6%	55.0%	50.0%	40.7%
Total		Count	56	60	34	150
		% within Awareness	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

DISCUSSION:

From the current study, it was concluded that the research scholars of the University of Parulwere familiar with research softwares and websites and most of them make use of it for their research purpose. The research scholars are definite about the requirements of a search engine. Coverage of all the subject areas and inclusion of materials in different forms of publication are the most preferred qualities. Speed of retrieval and the facility to formulate citation format as per the desired standard are also considered important. Two third of the scholars use research softwares and websites for information support during the different phases of their research work. One third of them make use of it for preparing research papers and seminar presentations and for citation tracking. Research softwares and websites is used as a current awareness source by more than 40% of the scholars. Easiness of search and multi-disciplinary coverage of research softwares and websites are its most attractive features, to 44% of the scholars. Prompt updating and links to full text are viewed as other attributes which boost the use of research softwares and websites. Majority of the scholars have positive opinion about the retrieval of items while searched using access points of their choice. Regarding subject search, 22% are not satisfied with the retrieval. More than half of the scholars have positive opinion about the relevance of search results provided by the research softwares and websites. More than 29.33% of the respondents have experience of the high recall of research softwares and websites. The percentage of scholars disagreeing with adequacy of recall and precision of search results, downloading citations in the desired format and linkage to full text of citations is in the range of 3 to 38. Regarding the level of satisfaction with the different unique facilities in research softwares and websites, citation tracking and the scholarly nature of the retrieved items are the most favoured ones. The observations recorded in this study have been in agreement with several studies.⁶⁻¹⁰

CONCLUSION:

The rapid growth of information and communication technologies, particularly the Internet and the digital information resources, has changed the traditional method of research, as well as storage, retrieval and dissemination of scholarly information. Since it retrieves data from a range of resources and facilitates citation tracking, research scholars can make use of it as a dependable tool for exhaustive information search on any topic. The bibliometric indicators in research network would enable the researchers to identify top ranking journals to publish their papers. The present study underlined the need for giving the research scholars awareness about the importance of bibliometric and scientometric indicators in scholarly communication.

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