
Usage of Electronic Resources by the Students of Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam, Kerala

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Abstract

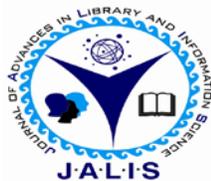
The study aims to provide an overview about the use of e-resources by students in Mahatma Gandhi (MG) University, Campus Kottayam. Survey method was used as the research instrument for this study. A questionnaire survey was conducted to collect the information regarding the use of e-resources, frequency of use of e-resources, purpose of using e-resources. The questionnaire titled 'Electronic Resources Usage of Students at MG University, Campus, Kottayam' has been used for data collection. Questionnaires were distributed randomly to the users. A total of 600 questionnaires were distributed to collect the primary data out of which 584 questionnaires were found usable for analysis. Study found that more than 9.42% respondents use different e-resources when necessary, 46.92% occasionally and rest of them (43.66%) very often. Online databases (35.10%) and UGC Infonet (25.34%) are the major sources of e-resources. DOAJ Directory of Open Access Journals comes in third position (15.58%) and WWW Sources (14.73%) in fourth place.

Keywords

Electronic Resources, Usage, Students, MG University, Campus, Survey.

Electronic access

The journal is available at www.jalis.in



Journal of Advances in Library and Information Science
ISSN: 2277-2219 Vol. 3. No.2. 2014. p89-93

INTRODUCTION

Internet and the web are directly and indirectly influencing the career development of students. Information and communication technologies (ICT) affect various aspects of education and research communities in a positive manner. Internet has the most influence on communities due to its interactive nature and wide usage. According to Katz et.al (2001) "Internet has unique, even transformational qualities as a communication channel, including relative anonymity and the ability to easily link with others who have similar interests, values, and beliefs". Nowadays information on every aspect of the educational world over the internet. The resources provided on various sources of electronic resources are very informative and useful for educational professionals and students related to their field of work. Electronic resources and internet resources which deal with every individual's educational needs. The paper aims to provide an overview about the use of e-resources by students in MG University, Campus Kottayam.

MAHATMA GANDHI UNIVERSITY, CAMPUS KOTTAYAM

Mahatma Gandhi University accredited (B+) by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council, India was established on 2 October 1983 in Kottayam. The university has 223 affiliated colleges spread over five districts in central Kerala. The University campus is located in the Priyadarsini Hills, 13 kilometers from Kottayam town and 4 kilometers from Ettumanoor junction. The University library is the centralised source of information and a member of the UGC-Infonet E-journals Consortium by INFLIBNET Centre, Ahmedabad (INFORMATION and LIBRARY NETWORK), an Inter-University Centre of the University Grants Commission. Through UGC-Infonet E-journals Consortium, the University library provides access to more than 4000 journals and databases. Mahatma Gandhi University Online Theses Digital Library website <http://mgutheses.in> provides Openly Accessible doctoral dissertations accepted by the MGU in different years. The Mahatma Gandhi University Library is also a member of the DELNET (Developing Library Network) and MGU access to SciFinder Scholar (SFS) the world's largest pool of scientific information. (Guide to the Library, 2011)

LITERATURE REVIEW

Mostofa (2013) examined the existence of various e-resources and services available in some selected Private University Libraries at Dhaka, Bangladesh and found that the availability of e resources on the campus is almost sufficient for all the existing disciplines but the infrastructure to use these resources is not adequate and can hinder the ability to meet the requirements of users.

Marques (2012) conducted a study with an aim to identify the Andrews University's students' perceptions, behavior, use, and attitudes towards e-textbook and e-books in general. Lack of awareness, not knowing how to get it, eyestrain, and difficulty of reading are the main culprits for students not using e-books more often. However, those who use e-books report they are generally satisfied. They do not usually read e-books cover to cover. The library is not their main point of entry or search for e-books. Students value portability, instant access, light weight and ability to store large amounts of materials are merits of e-books.

Bhatt and Madan (2011) evaluated the use of e-resources by the engineering academics of Rajasthan state. A survey was conducted with the help of a structured questionnaire followed by interview as and where it was felt necessary. Study reveals that academic staffs were using many types of e-resources. They were also using the latest sources of information like e-groups, virtual conferences. The teaching methodology also involved thee-resources uses and the students' ability was also affected in a positive manner and majority of users were quite satisfied with using e-resources.

Thanuskodi (2011) examined the usage of electronic resources at Dr T.P.M. Library, Madurai Kamaraj University. The study found that respondents were aware of various types of e-resources, e-database, and e-journals. The study suggested improvement access facilities with high internet speed and subscription to more e-resources.

Natarajan et.al (2010) conducted a survey of 117 faculty members and research scholars on use and user perception of electronic resources in Annamalai University, Tamilnadu. The results reveals that despite the availability of wide range of e-resources the frequency of their use was low. The reasons identified for this are lack of time, lack of awareness, lack of subject coverage; and slow downloading speed.

Agarwal and Dave (2009) studied the use of internet by the scientists and research fellows of Central Arid Zone Research Institute, Jodhpur (Rajasthan) through a questionnaire survey. The study revealed that respondents accessed Google search frequently (100%) followed by Yahoo (85.29%) and 97.06% of respondents use the internet for education and research.

Al-Ansari (2006) investigated the patterns of internet use by the faculty members of Kuwait University through a structured questionnaire. The study revealed that the internet was mostly used for communication, research, and publication for saving time, to find up-to-date information. Slow speed, lack of time, and lack of access from home were some of the major problems faced by the respondents.

Ibrahim (2004) done a survey to measure the use and perception of the United Arab Emirates University (UAEU) faculty members of electronic resources. Questionnaires were sent to a sample of 140 faculty members. Data analysis shows that frequency of use of electronic resources was low. Reasons cited were lack of lack of awareness to electronic resources provided by the library; ineffective communication channels, and language barrier.

Rogers (2001) studied faculty and graduate student use of electronic journals, printed journals and electronic databases at Ohio State University(OSU) during the years 1998-2000. The findings of the surveys showed that since 1998 there has been a significant progress in the acceptance and usage of electronic journals at OSU. In 1998, 19% of the respondents used e-journals at least once a week, while in 2000, the percentage increased to 36%. At the same time, the at least weekly usage of printed journals decreased from 45% in 1998 to 34% in 2000.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the study were:

- To assess the frequency of e-resources use of students
- To find the purpose and utilization of the electronic resources of students
- To identify the major source of e-resources
- To determine the Most Preferred Type of E-Resources
- To know the level of satisfaction on currently available e-resources

SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study focuses on the use of electronic resources by Students at MG University, Campus, Kottayam, Kerala. The questionnaires were distributed to the following schools of MG University Campus .

- School of Behavioral Science
- School of Bio Science
- School of Chemical Science
- School of Computer Sciences
- School of Environmental Science
- School of International Relation & Politics
- School of Letters
- School of Pedagogical Sciences
- School of Pure and applied physics
- School of Management & Business Studies
- School of Social Science
- School of Tourism Studies

The study provides a useful overview and practical experience of the topic but the study was limited to the students of MG University Campus, Kottayam in the period of 2011-2013 only.

METHODOLOGY

Survey was used as the research instrument for this study. A questionnaire survey was conducted to collect the information regarding the use of e-resources, frequency of use of e-resources, purpose of using e-resources, problems faced by the users while using e-resources. The questionnaire titled Electronic Resources Usage of Students at MG University, Campus, Kottayam. A total of 600 questionnaires were distributed to collect the primary data out of which 584 questionnaires were found usable for analysis. The collected data was analyzed and presented in the tabular form in the data analysis section.

DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis is the process of inspecting transforming, and modeling data with the goal of discovering useful information, suggesting conclusions, and supporting decision making. Here the collected data from the questionnaires were analyzed using frequency counts and simple percentage.

Table 1: Demographic Factors

Sl.No	Vari-ables	Factors	Freq-uecy	%
1	Gend er	Male	204	34.94
		Female	380	65.06
		Total	584	100
2	Age	18-21	24	4.11
		21-24	314	53.77
		24-27	163	27.91
		27-30	52	8.90
		Above 30	31	5.31
		Total	584	100
3	Educational Qualifications	Degree	80	13.70
		PG	389	66.62
		M.Phil	35	6.16
		PhD	46	7.70
		Others	34	5.82
		Total	584	100

A study of data in table- 1 indicates the gender distribution of respondents. It could be noted that out of the total 584 respondents, majority of the respondents (65.06%) belong to the female group and the rest of them (34.94%) are males. It is concluded that female respondents constitute more in number than male respondents. It could be noted that out of the total 584 respondents, 4.11 percent of them belong to the age group of 18-21 years and 53.77 per cent of them come under the age group of 21-24 years. In this study, 27.91 per cent of the respondents' age is in the range of 24-27 years and 8.90 percentage them come under 27-30 .18.12 per cent of them are found in the age group of above 30 years. Table -1 shows that majority of the respondents are post graduates. i.e ; 66.62 percentage of the total 584 respondents .

Table 2: Frequency of Use of e-Resources

Sl.No.	Source	Frequency	%
1	Very often	255	43.66
2	Occasionally	274	46.92
3	When necessary	55	9.42
	Total	584	100

Table- 2 shows that more than 9.42% respondents use different e- resources when necessary, 46.92% occasionally and rest of them (43.66%)very often.

Table3: Major Source of e-resources

Sl.No.	Source	Frequency	%
1	WWW Sources	86	14.73
2	UGC Info- net	148	25.34
3	Online databases	205	35.10
4	DOAJ	91	15.58
5	Others	54	9.25
	Total	584	100

Table -3 shows the Online databases (35.10 %) and UGC Info- net (25.34 %) are the major sources of electronic resources. DOAJ -Directory of Open Access Journals [DOAJ is website that lists open access journals and is maintained by Infrastructure Services for Open Access] comes in third position (15.58 %) and WWW Sources (14.73 %) in fourth place.(Figure -1)

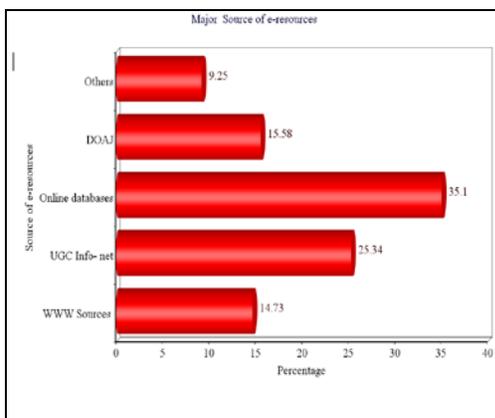


Figure1.Major Source of e-resources

Table 4: Main Purpose of Using E-Resources

Sl.No	Purpose	Frequency	%
1	For Study	89	14.04
	For Class Assignments	59	9.25
2	For Research	255	35.10
3	To Update Knowledge	18	3.08
4	For Projects	220	29.11
5	For General Information	55	9.42
	Total	584	100

Table -4 highlights that 35.10 % of students main purpose of using e-resources for research purpose ,29.11 % for Projects preparation , 14.04% for

study purpose and 9.42 % for collecting general information .

Table 5: Most Preferred Type of E-Resources

Sl.No	Type	Frequency	%
1	WWW	147	25.17
2	CDs/DVDs	48	8.22
3	E Journals	186	31.85
4	E Books	69	11.82
5	E Theses	89	15.24
6	E-Newspaper	30	5.14
7	Others	15	2.56
	Total	584	100

Table- 5 shows that the majority of the students (31.85 %) prefer to use e-journals. Second highest preference is www ((25.17 %)) includes blogs,wikis ,informative webpages etc and 15.24 % use of e-theses as the most preferred type of e resources.11.82% choose ebooks and 5.14 % most preferred sources is e-newspapers.(Figure -2)

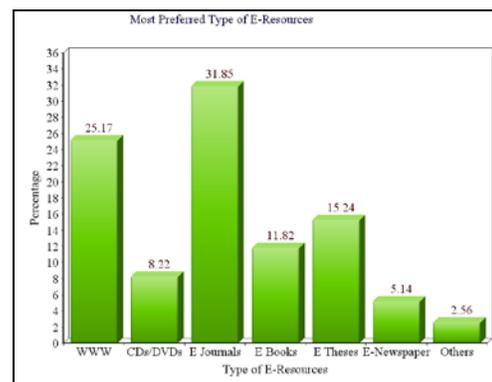


Figure 2.Most Preferred Type of E-Resources

Table 6: Satisfaction Level -Currently available E-Resources

Sl.No.	Satisfaction Level	Frequency	%
1	Very Satisfied	190	32.53
2	Satisfied	284	48.63
3	Not Satisfied	110	18.84
	Total	584	100

Table -6 shows that 32.53 percentage are very satisfied about the currently available e-resources in MG University Campus and 48.63 percentage are satisfied but 18.84 percentage of 584 respondents are

not satisfied about the currently available e-resources.(Figure -3)

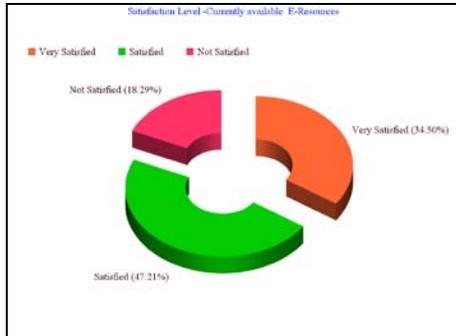


Figure 3.Satisfaction Level -Currently available E-Resources

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

Study found that more than 9.42% students use different e-resources when necessary, 46.92% occasionally and rest of them (43.66%)very often.Online databases (35.10 %) and UGC Infonet (25.34 %) are the major sources of e resources .DOAJ Directory of Open Access Journals comes in third position (15.58 %) and WWW Sources (14.73 %) in fourth place.35.10 % of students main purpose of using e-resources for research purpose ,29.11 % for Projects preparation , 14.04% for study purpose and 9.42 % for collecting general information .Majority of the students (31.85 %) prefer to use e-journals. Second highest preference is www (25.17 %) includes blogs,wikis ,informative webpages etc and 15.24 % use of e-theses as the most preferred type of e resources.11.82% choose ebooks and 5.14 % most preferred sources is e-newspapers.32.53 percentage are very satisfied about

the currently available e-resources in MG University Campus and 48.63 percentage are satisfied but 18.84 percentage of 584 respondents are not satisfied about the currently available e-resources.The significance of the use of e-resources itself reflects through data analysis in the study. Study shows the use of e-resources is very common among the university and majority of the students are dependent on e-resources to get the desired and relevant information.

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