The Use of Online Resources by the Students, Faculty and Research Scholars of Kannur University, Kerala

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Abstract

The present study assessed the use behaviour of the academic community of Kannur University, Kerala with regard to various online resources. It also assessed the awareness and satisfaction of them with respect to the online resources and identified various problems of them in accessing the online resources. A survey of 158 members of academic community was conducted through a questionnaire. The analysis of the study revealed that a majority of the academic community are aware of the various online resources. The highest percentage of them acquires usage skill of online resources through self learning. Only nearly half of them are satisfied with the online resources. The study concluded that online resources are the important information resources to update the information and knowledge of the academic community.

Keyword: Online Resources; Academic Community; Use Behaviour; Usage Skill.

Introduction

In the present knowledge era; students, faculty and research scholars need to find the recent and relevant information as quickly as possible. To meet this requirement, libraries have to provide ICT enabled more information services especially information resources in electronic mode, both offline and online. The online resources which include e-journals, e-books, e-theses/dissertations, OPACS, e-newspapers, e-magazines, online databases etc which can be accessed through internet. The relevance and importance of online information resources have increased in the digital era and they become the more reffered sources than print media.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the present study are:

- To assess the use behaviour of the students, faculty and research scholars of Kannur University with regard to various online resources,

- To assess the awareness and satisfaction of the academic community of Kannur University with respect to the online resources.

- To find out the various problems of the academic community in accessing the online resources.

Scope of the Study

The present study is confined to the post graduate students, faculty members and research scholars of Kannur University. Kannur University is one of the newly formed universities in Kerala. The University has several teaching departments belonging to the faculties of Science, Social Science and Humanities. Most of the teaching departments are research centres in their subject also.

Sampling

Kannur University Central Library conducted a National Seminar on "Online Resources: the Powerful Tool in Teaching, Learning and Research". All the students, teachers and research scholars of Kannur University are invited to participate in the seminar. Altogether 158 members in the faculty of Science,

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Social Science and Humanities were attended the seminar. This group forms the sampling for the study.

The Table 1 shows that the highest percentage of the academic community belongs to the faculty of Humanities (44.30%) has participated in the survey. This was followed by Science (37.97%) and Social Science (17.73%).

Table 1: Break-up of the Academic Community (Faculty-wise)

Faculty	Number	Percent
Science	60	37.97%
Social science	28	17.73%
Humanities	70	44.30%
Total	158	100%

Table 2: Break-up of Academic Community (Status-wise)

Status	Number	Percent
PG Student	22	13.92%
Faculty	60	37.98%
Research Scholars	76	48.10%
Total	158	100%

The data in Table 2 reveal that the highest percentage of the academic community belong to the status of "research scholars" (48.10%) have participated in the survey. The second highest group the" faculty" (37.98%) and "post graduate students" (13.92%) the lowest participated in the study.

Methods of Data Collection

In the present study, a survey was conducted for the collection of data regarding the various aspects of use of online resources by the students, faculty members and research scholars. For this purpose questionnaires were distributed among the participants in the national seminar belong to the faulties of Science, Social Sciences and Humanities. All of them responded to the questionnaire.

Use Behaviour of the Academic Community

Preference to the Media of Information Resources

The data in the table show that a vast majority of the students, teachers and research scholars in Science (93.33%), Social science (91.67%) and Humanities (96.77%) give high preference to both print and electronic media to gather information.

As the p-value is .092 there is no difference among the academic community in the subjects of Science, Social Science and Humanities in their preference to the media to gather information.

Table 3: Preference to the media of information resources

Media	Science	Social science	Humanities	Total
Electronic	4 (6.67%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	4 (2.74%)
Print	0 (0.00%)	2(8.33%)	2 (3.23%)	4 (2.74%)
Both	56 (93.33%)	22 (91.67%)	60 (96.77%)	138 (94.52%)
Total	60 (100%)	24 (100%)	62 (100%)	146 (100%)

Pearson Chi-square : 10.8674, df = 6, p = .092598

Table 4: Use of internet by the academic community, faculty-wise

Faculty	Use of Internet		Total
	Usual	Not usual	
Science	60 (100%)	0 (0%)	60 (100%)
Social Science	24 (85.71%)	4 (14.29%)	28 (100%)
Humanities	62 (88.57%)	8 (11.43%)	70 (100%)
Total	146 (92.4%)	12 (7.59%)	158 (199%)

Pearson Chi-square:4.09172, df =2, p =.129286

Use of Internet

The data in the above table show that all the students, research scholars and faculty members in the Science subjects(100%) and the vast majority of Social Science groups (85.71%) and Humanities (88.57%)are the usual users of internet.

Since the p-value is 0.129, it is clear that there is no difference in the use of internet among the academic community belonging to different subjects. This finding shows that the internet is an useful tool for

the academic community to get their required information and knowledge.

Purpose of the Use of Internet

The data analysis indicates that a majority of the academic community belonging to the subject groups of Science (93.33%), Social Science (85.71%) and Humanities (88.57%) use the internet for the use of online resources. Their next importance is sending

Table 5: Purpose of the Use of Internet (Faculty -wise)

Purpose	Science	Social science	Humanities	Total
Use of online resources	60 (93.33%)	24 (85.71%)	62 (88.57%)	152 (89.87%)
Chating	10 (16.67%)	8 (28.57%)	20 (28.57%)	38 (24.05%)
E-mail	48 (80%)	20 (71.43%)	40 (57.14%)	108 (68.35%)
Entertainment	26 (43.33%)	12 (42.86%)	20 (28.57%)	58 (36.71%)
Other	6 (10.00%)	0 (0%)	10 (14.29%)	16 (10.13%)

the e-mail (68.35%), followed by entertainment (36.71%), chating with friends, colleagues and subject experts (24.05%) and other purposes (10.13%).

Awareness of Various Online Resources

Table 6 reveals that a majority of the academic community belonging to the Science subjects

Table 6: Awareness of various online resources by the academic community (Faculty-wise)

Level of awareness	Science	Social science	Humanities	Total
Aware	44 (73.33%)	24 (85.71%)	43 (61.43%)	111(65.82%)
Not aware	16(26.67%)	4 (14.29%)	27(38.47%)	47(29.11%)

Pearson Chi-square: 9.12293, df=4, p=.058123

(73.33%), Social Science (85.71%), Humanities (61.43%) are aware with the various online resources.

Since the P-values is .058, there is no significant difference in the level of awareness among the academic community belongs to the different subject groups regarding various online resources.

Different Formats of Online Resources Referred

The analysis of the data show that most of the students, faculty members, and research scholars in Science subjects (60%) prefer e-journals and e-books as their major knowledge resources. The Social Science groups prefer electronic newspapers for their information updation, whereas the Humanities groups mostly use e-books to update their knowledge.

Various Online Resources Referred by the Academic Community

The study indicates that 50% of the Social Science groups and only 40% of the Science group and 26.67% of the Humanities are aware of the UGC Infornet E-

Journal consortium. More than one third of Science group (36.67%) are aware of IEEE online resource but 20% of them are aware each of CSIR E-Journal consortium, Elsevier Science Direct and Web of Science. As many as more than quarter of the academic community belongs to Social Science subjects (28.57%) and Humanities (25.71%) are aware of Pro-quest full text theses. Only a meager percentage of academic community in different faculty groups are aware of Ebsco online database, J-gate, Emerald full text, INDEST consortium, Nature and IIM consortium

Methods of Acquiring the Usage Skills of Online Resources

It is observed from Table 7 that highest percentage of the academic community in the faculties of Science (66.67%), Social science (85.71%) and Humanities (45.71%) acquire the usage skill of online resources through 'self learning'. Other ways to acquire the skills are 'learned from friends' (32.91%), training got from the institutes (25.32%) and learned from other sources (16.16%).

Table 7: Methods of acquiring the usage Skills of online resources

Methods	Science	Social science	Humanities	Total
Training from the institution	12 (20%)	9 (35.71%)	18 (25.71%)	40 (25.32%
Self training	40 (66.67%)	24 (85.71%)	32 (45.71%)	96 (6076%)
Learned from friends	26 (43.33%)	8 (28.57%)	18 (25.71%)	52 (32.91%)
Learned from other sources	4 (6.67%)	4 (14.29%)	18 (25.71%)	26 (16.16%)

Table 8: Place of Accessing the Online Resources (Faculty-wise)

Place	Science	Social Science	Humanities	Total
Library	56 (93.33%)	24 (85.71%)	38 (54.29%)	118 (74.68%
Computer Lab	12 (20.00%)	6 (21.43%)	16 (22.86%)	34 (21.52%)
Cyber café	2 (3.33%)	4 (14.29%)	14 (20.00%)	20 (12.66%)
Home	34 (56.67%)	12 (42.86%)	26 (37.14%)	72 (45.57%)

Place of Accessing the Online Resources

From the Table 8 it is found that most of the academic community in Science (93.33%) and Social Science (85.71%) and only a little above the half of Humanities group (54.29%) access the online resources from the institutional 'library'. Nearly quarter of them (21.52%) access the online resources from the 'computer lab' and 12.66% from the 'Cyber café' and 45.57% from 'home'.

Frequency of Use of Online Resources

From the table 9 it is found that half of the students,

faculty members and research scholars in Science faculty (50%), 42.86% in Social Science 48.57% in Humanities use online resources more than once a week. As many as 43.33% of Science groups, 35.71% of Social Science groups and 22.86% of Humanities group refer the online resources once a week. As many as 15.19% of the academic community consult the online resources more than once a month, a meager number (2.53%) refer everyday and once a month (1.27%).

Since the P-value is 0.404, no significant difference is observed in the frequency of use of online resource by the academic community in all subject groups.

Table 9: Frequency of use of online resources

Frequency	Science	Social Science	Humanities	Total
Everyday	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	4 (5.71%)	4 (2.53%)
More than a week	30 (50%)	12 (42.86%)	34 (48.57%)	76 (48.10%)
Once a week	26 (43.33%)	10 (35.71%)	16 (22.86%)	52(32.91%)
More than once a month	4 (6.67%)	6 (21.43%)	14 (20.00%)	24 (15.19%)
Once a month	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	2 (2.86%)	2 (1.27%)

Pearson chi-square: 8.30069, df = 8, P = .404691

Duration of Use of the Online Resources

From the Table it was observed that 40% of the Science group, 21.43% of Social Science and 42.86% of Humanities spend on an average of 1-2 hours a day for the use of online resources. The data in the table also indicate that 26.67% of Science students, teachers and research scholars spend on an average of less than one hour a day for the use of online resources. The corresponding percentage of Social

Science and Humanities are 42.88% and 25.71% respectively. The academic community in Science (33.33%), Social Science (35.71%) and Humanities (25.71%) spend on an average of more than two hours a day for consulting the online resources.

As the P-value is 0.499, no significant difference is observed in the duration of use of online resources among the academic community in different subjects.

Table 10: Duration of use of online r esources

Duration	Science	Social Science	Humanities	Total
Less than one hour	16 (26.67%)	12(42.88%)	18 (25.71%)	46 (29.11%)
1-2 hours	24 (40%)	6 (21.43%)	30 (42.86%)	60 (37.97%)
More than 2 hour	20 (33.33%)	10 (35.71%)	18 (25.71%)	48 (30.38%)

Pearson chi-square : 5.35267, df = 6, P = .499453

Saving Pattern of Information

As seen in Table 11, a vast majority of the students, faculty members and research scholars in Science subjects (80%), Social Science (85.71%) and above half of the Humanities (57.14%) registered a high preference for saving the retrieved articles from the

online resources in the computer itself. The academic community give second preference to 'take the print out' of the retrieved articles (37.97%) and last preference is to store the articles in any external storage device (24.05%).

Table 11: Saving Pattern of Information(Faculty-wise)

Saving pattern	Science	Social Science	Humanities	Total
Save in Computer	48(80%)	24(85.71%)	40(57.14%)	112(70.89%)
Take printout	28(46.67%)	10(35.71%)	22(31.43%)	60(37.97%)
Download in storage device	14(23.33%)	6(21.43%)	18(25.71%)	38(24.05%)

B Satisfaction with the Online Resources

The data in Table 12 show that more than half of the students, faculty members and research scholars

in the Science subjects (53.33%) are satisfied with the online resources. The corresponding percentage with regard to Social Science is 42.86% and Humanities is

48.57%. As many as 46.67% of Science group, 42.86% of Social Science and 45.71% of Humanities are partly satisfied with the online resources. None of the academic community in Science and a small percentage in Social science (14.29%) and Humanities

(5.71%) are not satisfied with Online resources.

Since the p-value is 0.385, there is no significant difference is seen among the different faculties with regard to the satisfaction with the online resources.

Table 12: Satisfaction with the online resources(Faculty-wise)

Status	Science	Social Science	Humanities	Total
Not satisfied	0 (0.00%)	4 (14.29%)	4 (5.71%)	8 (5.06%)
Partly satisfied	28 (46.67%)	12 (42.86%)	32 (45.71%)	72 (45.57%)
Satisfied	32 (53.33%)	12 (42.86%)	34 (48.57%)	78 (49.37%)

Pearson Chi-square : 4.15096, df = 4, P =. 385980

Problems in Accessing Online Resources

Around half of the academic community in Science subjects (53.33%), Social Science (50%) and Humanities (54.29%) reported that their major problem of accessing online resources is "the difficulty in finding relevant information" from the vast online resources. To the Science groups (36.67%), Humanities (34.29%) and Social Science (14.29%) "Overload of information on the internet" is also a problem of accessing online resources. A small percentage of the students, faculty members and research scholars in Science subjects (16.67%), Social Science (14.29%) and nearly one third of Humanities (31.43%) reported that "not many resources in my subject is available online". A meager percentage of Science groups (3.33%) and Humanities (5.71%), whereas 21.43% of Social Science subjects reported that "assistance is not obtained from the library professionals for accessing online resources."

Conclusion

The study concludes that most of the academic community in the subjects of Science, Social science

and Humanities are aware of important online resources on their subjects. But they require awareness programmes or seminars to be acquainted with more online resources that will help them to update their knowledge. They have the problems of overload of information in the internet and they also find difficult in getting relevant information from the vast information in the online resources.

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