RESEARCH ARTICLE

USE OF ELECTRONIC INFORMATION RESOURCES AMONG ENGINEERING STUDENTS – A CRITICAL STUDY

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ABSTRACT

This paper present the use of electronic information resources by students in sahrdaya college of engineering and technology, kodakara. Relevant literature of the electronic information resources and its use in various categories of users has been reviewed. The study examined the types of electronic information resources used by the research scholars, the frequency of use, the purpose of use of electronic information resources, the level of satisfaction in electronic resources and barriers faced by the students while accessing the same. Updates, easy accessibility, and ease of use are the major factors which attract most of the users towards e-resources.

INTRODUCTION

Information is the basic resource which plays a vital role in the development and progress of a society. Over the years, the process and media used for recording, storing and transmission of information have changed. As a result, now a days library collections are not limited to print documents only but also electronic resources. Electronic resources are documents in electronic form or that can be accessed via electronic transmission and include e-books, e-journals, e-magazines, e-archives, e-thesis, e-conference proceedings, e-government papers, e-research reports etc. These resources have become critical part of the learning environment, particularly in the higher education, and bring tremendous benefits to organizations and individuals to perform their work more efficiently and effectively. With the advent of electronic media the potential to store large quantities of information has increased. E-resources have an advantage of accessing and transferring it to any place and from anywhere in the world through electronic means. Electronic resources and services have become the popular tools for research and academic activities and there is an increasing preference for the electronic format because these sources provide reliable information (Kanniyappan, 2010). Engineering is the discipline, art, and profession that apply scientific theory to design, develop and analyze technological solutions.

Updated information relating to various branches of engineering can be found mostly through e-resources. This has forced engineering college libraries to change their collection development policies and move towards e-resources. The aim of this study is to identify how electronic sources are utilized by the students in Sahrdaya College of Engineering & Technology, Kodakara.

RELEVANCE OF THE STUDY

Engineering college libraries are currently heavily committed to the use of electronic resources, because they are required to provide high quality services to large numbers of faculty, students and researches who must have to access to information services can now be provided with the aid of electronic resources. As a result these libraries are spending a larger portion of their budget for acquiring variety of e-resources for their users. It is necessary to ensure maximum utilization of these e-resources. This study aimed to find out the utilization, adequacy and satisfaction of e-resources provided by Sahrdaya College of Engineering and Technology Library, Kodakara.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the study are:

- To identify the extend of use of e-resources by the engineering students.

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- To know the factors that attracts users towards e-resources.
- To know the level of satisfaction in using e-resources.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology used in this study is survey method, and it includes the following techniques:

- Questionnaire
- Interview
- Observation

SCOPE

The Sahrdaya College of Engineering and Technology has been in existence for more than 10years. College of Engineering is considered as an excellent institution of engineering education. The excellence of an educational institution is largely depends on its library. The core components of libraries are the information sources and the services provided by it. Evaluating the efficiency of the information sources and services reveal the effectiveness of a library.

Review of literature

Review of literature is a significant part of every research work. Before conducting a systematic study, it is necessary to make a thorough survey of the related studies previously conducted. Gul, Sumeer Shah, Ahmad Tariq, and Suhail Ahmad (Kanniyappan, 2010) aimed to explore digital user behavior of academicians in Kashmir (Indian Administered) in the times of conflict (2008-2010) and peace (2011-2012). There is a strong relationship between peace, conflict and e-resource usage. The results confirm peace and conflict as explanatory factors on the use of electronic resources in conflict zones, like Kashmir. The study is the first of its kind as it is trying to relate the user behavior with political setups in a conflict zone, Kashmir.

Premkumar and Gopikuttan (Gul, 2014) conducted through questionnaire method a study among the research scholars of the University of Calicut regarding their use of electronic information. The study highlights the need for intensifying the awareness campaignes as well as orientation programmes so that the utilization of electronic information resources must be enhanced in its optimum level.

E-RESOURCES

E-resources are such as e-books, e-journals, online database, CD-ROM database and internet that delivers a collection of data, be it text referring to full text basis, e-journals, image collection, other multimedia products and numerical, graphical or time based. Electronic publishing has lead to new era of communications and information sharing. It creates opportunities for users as well as authors and publishers.

USE OF E-RESOURCES

Digital Library Facility

Students were asked to mention whether they have digital library facility.

Table 1. Digital Library Facility

Sl. No	Parameters	No. of respondents	Percentage
1	Yes	418	98.58%
2	No	6	1.42%

This table shows that majority of the students 98.58% are aware of digital library facility.

CD Collection

A question is asked to know, whether there is a separate section for CD collection in the library.

Table 2. CD Collection

Sl. No	Parameters	No. of respondents	Percentage
1	Yes	358	84.43%
2	No	66	15.57%

This table shows that 84.43% of students indicate separate section for CD collection in the library and 15.57% of respondents indicates separate section for CD collection is not in the library. That is they are not aware of this separate collection.

Satisfaction of Digital Library Facilities

Next question was aimed to know users satisfaction about digital library facilities.

Fully Satisfied

The above table exhibits that, majority of students 77.12% are fully satisfied with CD-Rom databases, 70.29% with no. of terminals and 54.49% with scanner available in the library. A good number 42.92% of respondents fully satisfied with printer and 27.36% with online database.

Partially Satisfied

49.53% of respondents partially satisfied with online database while 45.51% with scanner and 39.62% with printer available in the library. 22.88% of respondents partially satisfied with CD-Rom database and 21.93% with no. of terminals available in the library.

Not Satisfied

Table 8 shows that 23.11% of respondents are not satisfied with online database while 17.46% with printer and 7.78% with no. of terminals.

Place of Access to E-Resources

The respondents were asked to mention the place of access to e-resources.

Table 4 Place of Access to E-Resources

The above table depicts that most of the respondents 42.92% access e-resources at their College Central Library where as 24.53% of respondents prefer to use e-resources from department computer lab.

Table 3. Satisfaction of Digital Library Facilities

Sl. No	Digital Library Facilities	Fully Satisfied	Partially Satisfied	Not Satisfied	Not Available
1	No. of terminals	298 (70.29%)	93 (21.93%)	33 (7.78%)	0
2	Printer	182 (42.92%)	168 (39.62%)	74 (17.46%)	0
3	Scanner	231 (54.49%)	193 (45.51%)	0	0
4	CD-Rom database	327 (77.12%)	97 (22.88%)	0	0
5	On-line database	116 (27.36%)	210 (49.53%)	98 (23.11%)	0

Table 4. Place of Access to E-Resources

Sl. No	Place of Access	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Department computer lab	104	24.53%
2	College Central library	182	42.92%
3	Cyber café	36	8.49%
4	At home	102	24.06%

Table 5. Frequency of Using E-Resources

Sl. No	Frequency of Use	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Daily	65	15.33%
2	Alternative days	135	31.84%
3	2-3 time a week	92	21.69%
4	Once a week	102	24.06%
5	2-3 times a month	30	7.08%
6	As and when required	0	0

Table 6. Factors that Attract towards E-Resources

Sl. No	Factors	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Up to date information	130	30.66%
2	Comprehensiveness	15	3.54%
3	Easy access to information	95	22.41%
4	Time saving	32	7.54%
5	Easy to use	91	21.46%
6	Downloading facility	26	6.13%
7	Less expensive	20	4.72%
8	Access to wide range of information	15	3.54%
9	Any other	0	0

Table 7. Satisfaction Level

Sl. No	Satisfaction Level	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Fully satisfied	66	15.57%
2	Partially satisfied	358	84.43%
3	Least satisfied	0	0
4	Not satisfied	0	0

Table 8. Quality of Information Retrieved through E-Resources

Sl. No	Quality	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Excellent	92	21.70%
2	Average	332	78.30%
3	Below average	0	0

24.06% of students access e-resources from their home and only 8.49% respondents access e-resources from Cyber cafe.

Frequency of Using E-Resources

A question was asked to specify the frequency of using e-resources. This table illustrates that most of the students 31.84% use the e-resources in alternative days where as 24.06% of students use the e-resources in once a week. 21.69% of students use the e-resources in 2-3 times a week where as 15.33% of students use e-resources daily and only 7.08% of students use 2-3 times a month.

FACTORS THAT ATTRACT TOWARDS E-RESOURCES

Respondents were asked to indicate the factors that attract them towards e-resources.

The above table indicates that 30.66% of respondents use e-resource because of up to date information and 22.41% of respondents are attracted towards e-resources because of easy accessibility of information. 21.46% of respondents stated that e-resources are very easy to use. According to 7.54% of respondents e-resources are time saving. 6.13% of respondents use e-resources because of its downloading facility and 4.72% of respondents stated that it is less expensive. Only 3.54% of respondents opined that comprehensiveness and access to wide range of information are the factors that attract them towards e-resources.

SATISFACTION LEVEL

Students were asked to indicate their level of satisfaction towards the e-resources provided in their library. The Table 7 shows that majority 84.43% of students are partially satisfied
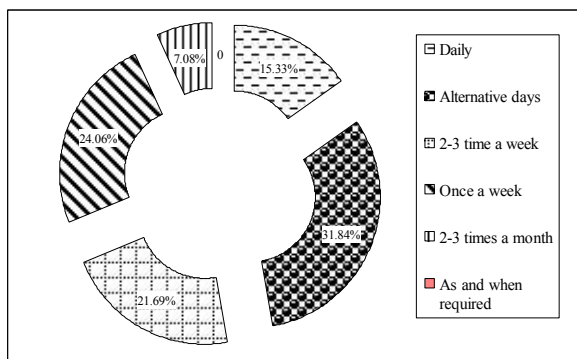
Figure 1 Doughnut diagram indicating Frequency of Using E-Resources
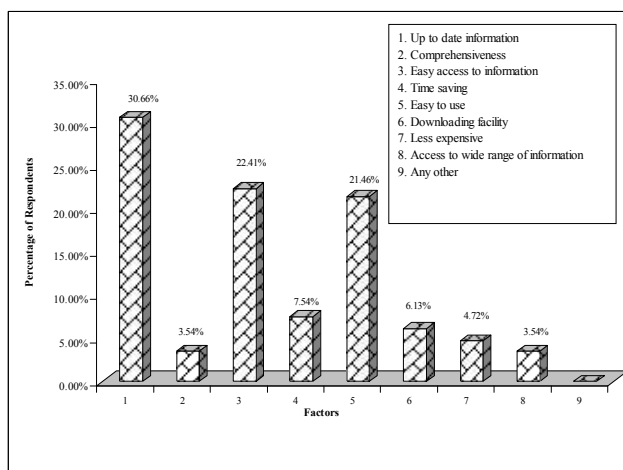

Figure 2. Column Diagram Indicating Factors that Attract Towards E-Resources

with the availability of e-resources while 15.57% of respondents are fully satisfied with the availability of e-resources in their library.

Quality of Information Retrieved through E-Resources

Respondents were asked to specify the quality of information retrieved through e-resources. Table reveals that 78.30% of students answered the quality of information retrieved through e-resources is average while only 21.70% of students answered that it is excellent.

MAJOR FINDINGS

- Majority of students in the college are aware of the digital library facility.
- It is evident from the analysis that majority of students are fully satisfied with the CD ROM databases collection in the digital library.

- Majority of students access e-resources from their college digital library.
- The study reveals that majority of users use e-resources in alternative days.
- Updateness, easy accessibility and ease of use are the major factors which attract most of the users towards e-resources.
- Majority of the users are partially satisfied with the availability of e-resources.
- It is evident from the analysis that for majority of users the quality of information retrieved through e-resources is average.

Conclusion

Electronic resources have played a significant role in all fields of human life especially in education and information handling. These have rapidly changed the way of seeking and disseminating information. It is clear from the study that the ease of updateness, easy accessibility and the ease of use make the students use electronic resources. This study helps to know the importance of electronic resources in academic environment. Major problems encountered by the users toward access to e-consortium are lack of awareness, slow internet access and inadequate computer skills. Proper feedback as well as orientation programmes should be conducted from time to time by the college so that the problems encountered must be resolved according to users requirements.

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