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UTILIZATION OF INFORMATION SOURCES, BY RESEARCH SCHOLARS OF SELECTED UNIVERSITIES IN CHENNAI: A STUDY

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ABSTRACT

In this paper, attempts have been made to identify the Information sources used, for writing thesis or research papers by research scholars. Moreover, this study also examined the researcher's dependency on Internet, for writing their thesis or research papers. For the study, the survey method was followed by using a well-structured questionnaire. It was identified that, respondents utilizing Information sources namely "E-resources or Internet" were 62.8%, other's dissertations or thesis were 58.7% and depended on textbooks were 41.5 %. The study concluded that, the there is no significant difference in the researcher's dependency on the Internet for writing thesis/research paper on the respective status of the university.

KEYWORDS: *Literature Search, Awareness about Information Sources, Utilization of Information Sources, Academic Library Use Studies*

INTRODUCTION

"Information can come from virtually anywhere: personal experiences, books, articles, expert opinions, encyclopedias, the Web. In academic institutions, staff and students consult various sources of Information. The choice of the source to consult is usually determined by the type of information sought" [1]. Literature search is very much essential for any research work. The researchers use to take help from different printed material (like textbooks, Journals/Periodicals, Conference/Seminar proceedings and also other's theses and dissertations) and non-printed material (like Internet, E Journal) for writing their thesis/research paper. In this light, the present study was undertaken to know the utilization of Information sources by research scholars of selected universities in Chennai. In order to identify the information sources used for writing thesis/research papers by research scholars, data have been analysed under the following aspects:

- From which source, respondents received help for writing their thesis or research papers.

- How much respondents are dependent on the Internet for writing their thesis/research paper.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Kulkarni (2017) revealed that, 47% of the respondents did not had any kind of library membership, and most (n = 154) of the respondents said that they own an electronic device for reading. In total, 25% admitted that reading books is one of the top leisure activities, and distance (31.7%) hinders people from visiting libraries for reading. 80% agreed that, visiting litfests influence them and improves their reading habit. Further, 48.4% read books several times in a week, and 46.7% read 5-20 books in any given year [2]. **Vadivukkarasi and Kavitha (2014)** found that, "the difference in the Internet usability among the students and teaching staff based on different socio-economic packets" [3]. **Sarvanan et.al (2012)** analyzed the respondents' behavior in relation to the Internet in various aspects such as awareness of IT, purpose of Internet access, and frequency of access [4]. **Sivakumaren et.al (2011)** found that, the application of ICT infrastructure is increasing in universities and academic libraries, and recommended that libraries should increase the number of computers available to users [5]. **Anjum and Ali (2011)** investigated that, majority of the researchers' copied ideas from different sources available on internet without acknowledgments and references. Researchers did it for the purpose of securing good grades [6]**.**

Based up on the context analysis, literature survey and logical scientific interaction with critical reflection showed that researchers and scientist have not studied "Utilization of Information Resources by research scholars of selected Universities in Chennai" till date. Therefore, scope and relevance of the study.

OBJECTIVES OF THE PRESENT STUDY

- To identify the utilization of Information sources for writing thesis or research papers by research scholars.

- To examine the researcher's dependency on Internet for writing their thesis or research paper.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

For collecting primary data, a self-designed questionnaire survey was made in Chennai according to action plan and research scholars from selected universities in Chennai have been included. Out of 550 questionnaires distributed, 419 research scholars responded, and the response rate was 76.18 %. The data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (IBM SPSS Statistics 21 version) software. Data had been statistically analyzed Percentage analysis, Cross table and Chi square test.

The secondary data elicitation was confined to the documentary sources of data and information such as research articles and online data base.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The data collected from research scholars in selected universities in Chennai through questionnaires has been analysed and interpreted using appropriate statistical tools and techniques. A few tables have been represented in graphs and diagrams for clear understanding. To fulfil the objectives of the study, the data have been analysed under the following major groups:

DEMOGRAPHIC DETAILS OF THE RESPONDENTS

Table 1: Demographic Details of the Respondents

S. No.	Description	State Universities	Deemed Universities	Total
a.	**Gender**			
	Male	106	140	246
		25.3%	33.4%	58.7%
	Female	75	98	173
		17.9%	23.4%	41.3%
b.	**Category of Researcher**			
	Full time	44	89	133
		10.5%	21.2%	31.7%
	Part time	137	149	286
		32.7%	35.6%	68.3%
c.	**Age Group**			
	21- 30 Years	59	71	130
		14.1%	16.9%	31.0%
	31-40 Years	77	95	172
		18.4%	22.7%	41.1%
	41-50 Years	42	71	113
		10.0%	16.9%	27.0%
	51-60 Years	3	1	4
		0.7%	0.2%	1.0%
d.	**Universities**			
	Total	**181**	**238**	**419**
		43.2%	**56.8%**	**100.0%**

The analysis of the respondents was carried out based on their demographic nature, such as gender, category of researcher, age and status of universities and the same has been presented in Table 1. It is inferred from Table 1 that out of 419 respondents, 58.7% of the respondents were male and 41.3% of the respondents were female. Out of 419 respondents, 68.3% of the respondents were part time research scholars and 31.7% of the respondents were full time research scholars. Out of 419 respondents, 41.1% of respondents were in the age group of 31 to 40 years. 31.0% of the respondents were in the age group of 21 to 30 years. 27.0% of respondents were in the age group of 41 to 50 years and very few respondents (1.0%) were in the age group of 51 to 60 years. It is also seen from Table 1 that out of 419 respondents, 56.8% of the respondents were from the deemed universities and 43.2% of the respondents were from the state universities.

UTILIZATION OF INFORMATION SOURCES BY RESEARCH SCHOLARS

Table 2: Utilization of Information Source for Writing Thesis/Research Papers by the Respondents

S. No.	Types of Information Sources	Yes	No
a.	Textbooks	174	245
		41.5%	58.5%
b.	Journals / Periodicals	155	264
		37.0%	63.0%
c.	Internet /E-resources	263	156
		62.8%	37.2%
d.	Other's Dissertations/ Thesis	246	173
		58.7%	41.3%
e.	Conference /Seminar Proceedings	118	301
		28.2%	71.8%

Textbooks

It has been inferred from the table 2, that out of 419 respondents, 41.5% of the respondents admitted that they took help from textbooks for writing their thesis/research papers and 58.5% of the respondents replied that they did not take help from text books for writing a theses/research papers.

Journals / Periodicals

It has been inferred from the above table that out of 419 respondents, 37.0% of respondents used to take help from journals / periodicals for writing a theses/research and 63.0% of the respondents replied that they were not taking help from journals / periodicals for writing a theses/research papers.

Internet /E-resources

It has been inferred from the above Table 2 that out of 419 respondents, a majority (62.8%) of the respondents used to take help from Internet/E-resources for writing a theses/research papers and 37.2% of the respondents did not take help from Internet/E-resources for writing a theses/research paper.

Other's Dissertations/ Theses

It has been also inferred from the table 2 that out of 419 respondents, 58.7% of the respondents admitted that they used to take help from other's dissertations/ theses for writing a theses/research and 41.3% of the respondents do not take help from other's dissertations/ theses for writing a theses/research paper.

Conference /Seminar Proceedings

It is also inferred from the above table that out of 419 respondents, 28.2% of the respondents used to take help from the Conference/ Seminar proceedings for writing a theses/research papers and 71.8% of the respondents did not take help from the conference/ seminar proceedings for writing a theses/research paper.

RESPONDENT'S DEPENDENCY ON THE INTERNET FOR WRITING THEIR THESIS/RESEARCH PAPER

Internet is becoming a part of the 21st century for human being around the world. In the age of Information Technology, everyone is dependent on the internet for getting knowledge on any subject and it is very much easier to copy anything from the Internet. In order to examine the researcher's dependency on Internet for writing their thesis or research paper, the data have been analyzed on four point scale, such as highly depended, frequently depended, occasionally depended & rarely depended and the percentages analysis for the same has been presented in Table 3 and Figure 1.

Table 3: Respondent's Dependency on the Internet for Writing Their Thesis or Research Paper

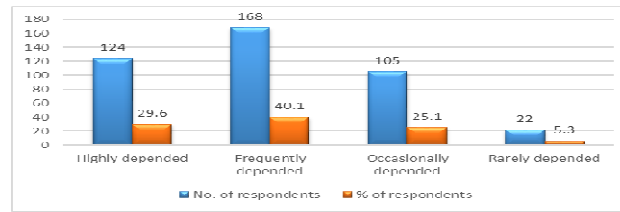| S. No.	Level of Dependency	No. of Respondents	% of Respondents
1.	Highly depended	124	29.6
2.	Frequently depended	168	40.1
3.	Occasionally depended	105	25.1
4.	Rarely depended	22	5.3
	Total	**419**	**100**

Figure 1: Respondent's Dependency on the Internet for Writing their Thesis or Research Paper

It has been inferred through Table 3 and Figures 1 that out of 419 respondents, 40.1% of respondents frequently depended on the Internet for writing their thesis/research paper, 29.6% of respondents highly depended and 25.1% of respondents occasionally depended.

It has been also observed from the above mentioned table that only 5.3% of respondents rarely depended on the Internet for writing thesis/research paper.

Table 4: Respondent's Dependency on the Internet for Writing Thesis/Research Paper vs. Status of University

S. No.	Level of Dependency	Status of University		Total
		State	**Deemed**	
1	Highly depended	57	67	124
		13.6%	16.0%	29.6%
2	Frequently depended	75	93	168
		17.9%	22.2%	40.1%
3	Occasionally depended	40	65	105
		9.5%	15.5%	25.1%
4	Rarely depended	9	13	22
		2.1%	3.1%	5.3%
Total		**181**	**238**	**419**
		43.2%	**56.8%**	**100.0%**

Respondent's dependency on the Internet for writing their thesis/research paper further analysed by status of university and the same has been presented in Table 4. It has been seen from the above table that the majority (22.2%) of respondents frequently depended on the Internet for writing thesis/research paper in deemed universities and 2.1% of the respondent rarely depended on the Internet for writing thesis/research paper in state universities.

Chi-Square Summary Result

Chi Square Calculated Value	**1.692**
Degrees of Freedom	**3**
Chi Square Table Value at 5%	**7.815**

The chi-square test was applied for further discussion. The computed chi-square value is 1.692, which is less than it's tabulated value at 5% level of significance. Hence the difference in status of university-wise response is statistically identified as insignificant with respect to respondents' dependency on the Internet for writing thesis/research paper.

It is concluded that there is no significant difference in the researcher's dependency on the Internet for writing thesis/research paper on the respective status of university.

CONCLUSIONS

This paper described briefly, a survey conducted at selected universities in Chennai to find out the utilization of different types of Information sources by research scholars and their dependency on Internet for writing their thesis or

research papers. From the analysis, it was identified that respondents utilizing Information resources namely, E-resources or internet were 62.8%, used other's dissertations or theses were 58.7% and depended on textbooks were 41.5 %. 40.1 % of respondents frequently depended on the Internet for writing their thesis/research paper, 29.6% of respondents highly depended and 25.1% of respondents occasionally depended. It is also observed from the above mentioned table that only 5.3 % of respondents rarely depended on the Internet for writing thesis/research paper (Table 5.14 and Figure 5.6). The majority (22.2%) of respondents frequently depended on the Internet for writing their thesis/research paper in deemed universities and 2.1% of the respondent rarely depended on the Internet for writing their thesis/research paper in state universities. There is no significant difference in the researcher's dependency on the Internet for writing thesis/research paper on the respective status of university. This study recommended that technological facilities available in the digital era must be effectively and efficiently utilized by research scholars. Continual efforts to educate research scholars about the Information sources are desirable.

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