AWARENESS AND UTILIZATION OF E-RESOURCES BY FACULTY MEMBERS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO AN ENGINEERING COLLEGES, VIRUDHUNAGAR DISTRICT, TAMILNADU- A CASE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

To study and investigate the awareness and utilization of library electronic resources and related issues among faculty members of Engineering Colleges at Virudhunagar district. A descriptive method has been used in this research. A total of 250 questionnaires distributed but 210 were returned duly filled in as a sample. A well structured questionnaire was designed for collecting data from the chosen sample group. The study covers the faculty members from all departments to engineering colleges at Virudhunagar district. The study aimed at identifying that needs and the level of awareness and utilization of the staff community on networks such as internet and e-resources and the like.

53.81 percentage of respondents are Assistant Professors, followed by 29.05% of respondents are Associate Professors, and only 17.14% of respondents are Professors. 78 (37.14%) and 49 (23.33%) were the most used E-Journals and E-Books respectively and followed by use of E-Database 15.24%; e-thesis & dissertations 10%; e-magazines 8.58% and only 5.71% responses indicates the use of all e-resources used by the respondents. 42.38 percentage of respondents visiting library to access E-resources weekly thrice. 28.09% of them fall under twice whereas 12.38% of them use e-resources daily. 60 percent age of respondents are satisfied with all e-resources they are getting from the identified sources. Furthermore, 20.48% indicated fully satisfied while 10.95% and 8.57% were moderately satisfied and dissatisfied respectively. 84 percentage of respondents faced problem of slow Internet access speed which takes a lot of their slot time to retrieve the relevant information.

KEYWORDS: Awareness and Utilization, Staff Community, E-Resources

INTRODUCTION

The internet provides access to unlimited sources of information and search engines are continuously being advanced to provide efficient ways to help users to find what they want. The internet eases and increases access to a large amount of data, saves time and money, and provides an opportunity to consult several experts with a single request (via discussion groups), and more independence from specific times and places for information seeking. Technology has penetrated all areas of life. Libraries use information technology (IT) for better services and satisfying diverse users’ needs. Libraries have transformed into digital and virtual libraries where books, journals, and magazines have changed into e-books, e-journals, and e-zines. This has increased the global dissemination of information. Electronic resources (e-resources) are easily accessible in the remote areas.

The e-resources solve storage problems and thus control the flood of information. Today we are living in the age of information. The information is a dynamic and unending resource that affects all disciplines and walks

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of life. Over the last decade, electronic resources have become increasingly substantial components of academic library collection.

This is due to the continuous development of IT and its impact on library collection development policies due to changing demand of users for the pin-pointed and exhaustive information within a short time. With the growing popularity of e-resources, the traditional libraries are gradually migrating from print documents to e-resources where providing access to information is considered more important than owning it. This has compelled libraries to rethink about their collection development functioning. Applications of information communication technology (ICT) in libraries have provided enough opportunities for e-resource development and disseminate it in the manner that their users preferred. Among e-resources, the e-journals and e-books are more in demand by the users.

The quality of higher education in India requires ongoing changes and developments in the teaching-learning process. Faculty members in universities need to let go the concept of merely text-book-oriented lecturing system in the changing higher education environment. The countries with advanced education systems developed extensive teaching/learning strategies, planned to train their students for a wider market place, through lectures, seminars, workshops, handouts, and web-based tutorials.

The present study is an attempt to analyse the use of e-resources by faculty members of Engineering Colleges from Virudhunagar District and to find out the problems and constraints faced by the users in accessing the e-resources with some purposeful suggestions for their development.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study was an attempt to find out the awareness and utilization of library electronic resources and services by the staff members of engineering colleges.

The study was designed and conducted during the year 2012 to achieve the following objectives.

• To find out the awareness and uses of E-Resources by staff community;
• To observe the type of e-resources by the staff members;
• To find out the purpose of utilization of E-Resources;
• To find out the frequency of access to internet;
• To explore the impact of E-Resources;
• To find out the problems faced by the respondents while using resources.
• To suggest improvement measures based on the inferences drawn from the study.

SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

The study was limited to faculty members from all departments to engineering college staff members in Virudhunagar District, as the study is to know information seeking behaviour in the digital environment.

METHODOLOGY

This is essentially a survey study. This study of the research used questionnaire- based survey method in order to
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achieve the above objectives; descriptive type was used to perform the research. A detailed and well structured questionnaire was designed and distributed to the selected 250 staff members from all departments of Engineering Colleges. Out of 250 respondents, 210 Questionnaires were returned duly filled in by the users community with over all response rate was 84 per cent. The questionnaire contained both open ended and close-ended questions. The collected data were classified, analyzed and tabulated by using statistical methods.

DATA ANALYSIS

Table 1: Based on Gender Wise Classification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>No. of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>64.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>35.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>210</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This table indicates that 136 (64.76 %) of the respondents are male and the remaining are female.

Table 2: Based on Position- Wise Classification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>No. of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Professors</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>17.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Associate Professors</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>29.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Assistant Professors</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>53.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>210</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 shows that the majority of 113 (53.81 %) of respondents are Asst. Professors, followed by 61 (29.05%) of respondents are Associate Professors, and only 36 (17.14%) of respondents are Professors.

Table 3: Based on Types of E-Resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No</th>
<th>E-Resources</th>
<th>No. of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>E-Books</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>23.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>E-Journals</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>37.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>E-Magazines</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>8.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>E-Thesis / Dissertations</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>E-Database</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>15.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>210</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data of analysis in Table 3 reveals that E- Journals and E- Books were the most used e- resources by the respondents as seen from their responses which are 78 (37.14%) and 49 (23.33%) respectively. It is followed by use of E- Database 15.24 %; e- thesis & dissertations 10%; e- magazines 8.58% and only 5.71% responses indicates the use of all e- resources used by the respondents.

Table 4: Sources of E-Resources Used

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No</th>
<th>Sources</th>
<th>No. of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>UGC-INFLIBNET</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>44.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>DELNET</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>INTERNET RESOURCES</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>12.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>OPEN ACCESS RESOURCES</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>CD / DVD</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>210</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The e-resources available in the library are basically the subscribed online resources through UGC-Inflibnet
consortium, online resources freely available on internet and open access journals/books and the offline e-resources in the form of CDs/DVDs.

A study of data in Table 4 indicates the category-wise respondents’ sources of e-resources used. UGC-INFLIBNET occupied the first position their overall sources of e-resources used as their secured and followed by DELNET

Table 5: Based on Frequency of Visit to library to Access E- Resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>No. of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Almost Daily</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>18.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Thrice a Week</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>42.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Twice a Week</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>28.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Once a week</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>11.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>210</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above table 5 shows that the majority 89 (42.38%) of respondents access E- resources weekly thrice while 59 (28.09%) of them fall under weekly twice. 38 (1.09%) of them fall under almost daily whereas 24 (11.43%) of them use e-resources weekly once.

Table 6: Based on Level of Satisfaction of E- Resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>No. of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Highly Satisfied</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>20.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Satisfied</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Moderately satisfied</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>10.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Dissatisfied</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>8.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>210</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6 shows the results that most of the staff members 126 respondents (60%) are satisfied with all e-resources they are getting from the identified sources. Furthermore, 43 (20.48%) indicated they were fully satisfied while 23 (10.95%) and 18 (8.57%) indicated moderately satisfied and dissatisfied respectively.

Table 7: Based on Problems Faced by the Users

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>No. of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Power failure</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Slow Accessibility</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Lack of IT knowledge</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>12.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Limited access to computers</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>12.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Lack of time</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Poor personal assistance</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>210</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It can be inferred from Table 7 that using the Internet is not free from problems. The most common problem faced by the users is that more no of respondents 84 (40%) of slow Internet access speed which takes a lot of their slot time to retrieve the relevant information.

FINDINGS

53.81 percentage of respondents are Assistant Professors, followed by 29.05% of respondents are Associate Professors, and only 17.14% of respondents are Professors.

78 (37.14%) and 49 (23.33%) were the most used E-Journals and E-Books respectively and followed by use of
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E-Database 15.24%; e-thesis & dissertations 10%; e-magazines 8.58% and only 5.71% responses indicates the use of all e-resources used by the respondents.

42.38 percentage of respondents visiting library to access E-resources weekly thrice. 28.09% of them fall under twice whereas 12.38% of them use e-resources daily.

60 percentage of respondents are satisfied with all e-resources they are getting from the identified sources. Furthermore, 20.48% indicated fully satisfied while 10.95% and 8.57% were moderately satisfied and dissatisfied respectively.

84 percentage of respondents faced problem of slow Internet access speed which takes a lot of their slot time to retrieve the relevant information.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made for the effective use of e-resources

- The LIS professionals of the Library have to spread more awareness on e-resources. In this context the website of library and newsletter of the Institution should highlight the available e-resources in the library regularly.
- Higher speeds Wi-Fi campus needs to be developed by Library, so that users can use online e-resources
- Besides UGC-Inflibnet consortium, e-resources as per the need of the users need to be subscribed from publishers, vendors, etc. Accordingly more funds should be diverted from the library budget towards e-resources.
- The Library needs to arrange various users’ orientation and training programmes for faculty

CONCLUSIONS

The e-resources are the best means of getting current and up-to-date information. The library environment has currently undergone drastic changes in terms of collections and services. The proliferation of e-resources has had a significant impact on the way the academic community uses, stores, and preserves information. The advantages of e-resources have drawn attention of the library users to a great extent. Accordingly, these resources have occupied a significant place in the collection and budget of almost all libraries. Research scholars’ attitude seem to be very positive towards e-resources for their study and research and the role of libraries as gateways to provide assistance in accessing these resources. The study shows that e-resources have radical impact on the changing higher education environment. It is interesting that e-resources usage among faculty members of engineering colleges is much more than expected. It is broadly used for teaching and research purposes.

The use of electronic information sources for study and research purposes must be encouraged and proper training should be organised from time to time. This is a comprehensive study of the use of e-resources by faculty members. It is hoped that its findings would help the colleges and its libraries in framing its policies and programmes related to e-resources to facilitate teaching and research.
REFERENCES


