

A Study on the Use of E-Resources by the Faculty Members of Vel Tech Technical University, Chennai

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Abstract - This paper intends to have an analysis on the use of e-resources by the faculty members of Vel Tech Technical University, Chennai, in order to estimate the extent to which the familiarity of the faculty members with the e-resources rests. Moreover, it strives to highlight the hurdles faced by the users and proposes certain remedial measures as trouble shooting. The authors examine the use of e-resources by the faculty members of Vel Tech Technical University through a survey based on a structured questionnaire. Various statistical methods have been used for the purpose of data analysis. The study has affirmed that the faculty members are well aware of the e-resources and the various types of e-resources, e-database and e-journals. This study offers suggestions for the enhancement of the access facilities with the more advanced infrastructure and subscription to more e-resources by the Central Library of Vel Tech Technical University.

Key Words: E-resources, Vel Tech Technical University, faculty members.

1. INTRODUCTION

The world has become so advanced that any field taken into consideration, Information Technology has become *omnipresent*, anywhere and everywhere. Undoubtedly, our library services are not exempted to this. The fifth law of Dr.S.R.Ranganathan also says that Library is a growing organism. Since library services are directly linked to education and in a broader term knowledge, the advancement through Information technology tools have become indispensable now.

It is amazing to note that the growth of information and communication technology (ICT) has brought revolutionary changes in the information field and of course it has paved way for multiple options to manipulate various sources of information. ICT has made it easier that the data handling is comfortably done with the utility of tools and applications. This has also resulted to the position that e-resources have become the most-sought-after modern library's reserves in satisfying the requirements of the student community, faculty members, researchers and those in the related industries with minimum risk and time.¹

The time has come that the information sources in electronic forms have begun to dominate other sources as these sources are easily available and everyone can afford to avail these services. The process of retrieval of information is based on the quality of services available in consonance with the information and communication technology tools. The electronic information resources have acquired a major portion of library collections. The value and use of information resources, particularly e-resources have increased over the period of time. In such a given scenario, it was felt absolutely necessary to make a study on the various aspects of e-resources and the issues relating to the use of e-resources by the intended users, especially by the faculty members of academic institutions.

This study intends to make an analysis of the use of e-resources by the faculty members of Vel Tech Technical University, Chennai and also to identify the negative aspects viz. the problems and the challenges faced by the users in accessing the e-resources with an attempt to provide solutions for the sustained growth.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

There have been many studies taken up specifically on the use of e-resources largely by students, research scholars and teachers of various institutions all over the world. Swain and Panda in their study, 'Use of e-services by faculty members of business schools in a state of India.'¹ Maunissamy and Swaroop Rani in their study, 'Evaluation of usage and usability of electronic journals', have identified the usage and usability of e-journals by the users of the NIT, Tiruchirappalli.² Sunil Kumar Satpathy and Biswanth Rout have analyzed the 'Use of E-Resources by the Faculty Members with Special Reference to CVRCE, Bhubaneswar.'³

Appleton, in his study, perceptions on electronic library resources in further education, has expressed personal experiences on the use of e-resources and their impact on teaching and learning activity.⁴ Nikam and Pramodini in their study, 'use of e-journals and databases (subscribed by UGC-Infonet consortium) by the University of Mysore: A survey' have analyzed the scrutinized of e-resources and the satisfaction levels of users of Mysore University.⁵ Haridasan and Khan in their study, 'impact and use of e-resources by social scientists in NASSDOC, India', have identified the acceptance of e-resources in the National Social Science Documentation Centre (NASSDOC) library in New Delhi, and determined their usage,

performance, degree of user satisfaction, and barriers faced in the access of e-resources.⁶

3. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The Vel Tech Technical University has been subscribing online database and a large no. of e- journals. In addition to 81979 books and 9899 back volumes, the library maintains UG project reports, PG and Ph.D Theses/Dissertations, E-books and E- Journals. The digital knowledge centre enables access to the following E-Resources through library website: E-Database, E-Journals, IEEE, ASCE, ASME, J-Gate- Management and Engineering, Scopus and E-books. The Central Library is also the Institutional Member of DELNET, New Delhi, and British Council Division, Chennai and thereby has the facilities to access their online databases. So far, no survey has been undertaken to know the usefulness of these e- resources to the users and use pattern of these e- resources. The present study would reveal the usage and usability of these subscribed e- resources.

4. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study are:

- ❖ To analyze the attitude of the faculty members towards the use of e- resources
- ❖ To quantify the use of electronic information resources by the faculty members.
- ❖ To identify the need felt by the users for the usage of electronic resources.
- ❖ To find out the factors which contribute to the growth or to hamper the use of electronic resources.
- ❖ To offer suggestions and solutions for improving the existing library services relating to e-resources being availed by the faculty members in the Central Library of Vel Tech Technical University

5. METHODOLOGY

This study is based on survey (questionnaire) method. A structured questionnaire was designed to collect data from the faculty members of Vel Tech Technical University, Chennai, keeping in mind the basic objectives of the study. The data was personally collected from the faculty members. Besides, personal interviews were also conducted with library and information science professionals to assess the problems relating to use of e- resources by the faculty members.

6. ANALYSIS OF DATA

Vel Tech Technical University has the strength of more than 180 full-time teaching staff members and out of the above, only 95 (53 per cent) responded with the completely filled in questionnaire and others have given responses to select queries of the Questionnaire. The questionnaires were suitably edited where ever necessary. The data collected through the

questionnaires were carefully scrutinized, classified, and tabulated for better understanding and clarity. Statistical methods were applied to verify and cross check the data as correct.

6.1. Classified Data of the Respondents

Out of 95 respondents, 67 (72 per cent) respondents were Assistant Professors, 18 (17 per cent) Associate Professors and 10 (9 per cent) Professors. Further 51 (53.68 per cent) were M.E./M.Tech./M.Phil; and 44 (46.32 per cent) Ph.D.

Regarding teaching experience of faculty members, 57 (60 per cent) were having 1-5 years; 23 (25 per cent) 5-10 years; 02 (2 per cent) 10-15 years, 8 (9 per cent) 15-20 years; and 5 (2 per cent) 25-30 years of teaching experience. Thus, the average years of teaching experience of faculty members was 5.8 years.

6.2. Computer Knowledge of Faculty Members

The present period is also known as Digital Modern Age and sufficient Knowledge on computers has become absolutely essential irrespective of the profession. The present analysis, therefore, strives to ascertain the knowledge of computers of the faculty members of this institution. This study exhibits that all the respondents were computer literate, which is a healthy sign for any organization. The study has also attempted to know about the extent of computer knowledge of the faculty members.

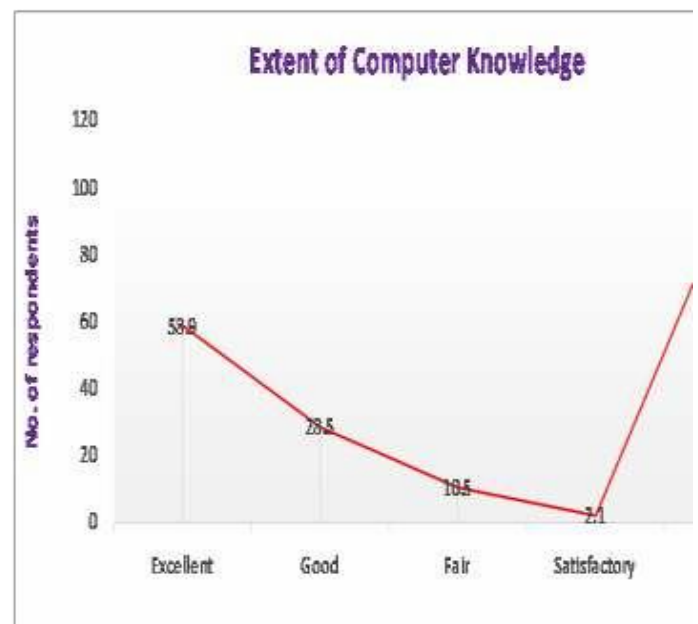


Figure 1 Extent of computer

The scrutiny of Fig1 reveals that large no. of respondents i.e 56 respondents, representing 58.9 per cent of total respondents had 'excellent' computer knowledge. Next to that, 'good' computer knowledge was supposed to have been possessed by 27 respondents (28.5 per cent) followed by 10 respondents (10.5 per cent) with 'fair' computer knowledge, and meager no. of respondents i.e 2 (2.1 per cent) with 'satisfactory' computer knowledge. Altogether, the responses exhibit an encouraging picture on the extent of computer knowledge possessed by the faculty members of Vel tech Technical University.

6.3. Use of Internet

In the present world, Internet has become an indispensable and inevitable tool for all activities including academics. Details relating to all fields of knowledge under the Sun is available on Internet, which is quite useful and essential for all faculty members to enhance their knowledge. The present study has attempted to seek information on the use of Internet, frequency, purpose and place of Internet use. Fig2 gives a clear picture on the frequency of use of Internet by the respondents, that is, the largest no. of the faculty members, i.e., 83 out of 95 (87.4 per cent) were stated to be using Internet on daily basis, 4.2 per cent respondents were using it on weekly basis and 8.4 per cent of the respondents have declared that they use it only when they require it.

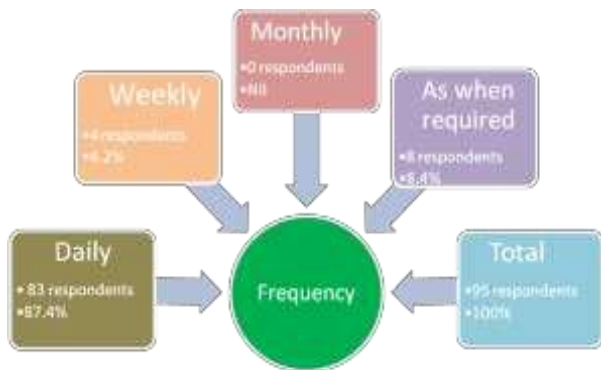


Figure 2 Frequency of Internet use

The use of Internet has many advantages and some disadvantages. It depends upon the purpose for which Internet is used and by whom used. It enables the users to gain more knowledge and to update themselves with the day-to-day advancements. Table 1 which ventures into the analysis on the purpose of the use of Internet has shown that as high as 116 responses out of 162 (71.6 per cent) have expressed that the Internet was used mainly for the purpose of education and research. It is followed by 43 responses (26.5 per cent) for e-mail/chatting, and only 3 responses (1.9 per cent) have opted for the use of Internet for entertainment.

Table 1 - Purpose of Internet Use

Purpose	No. of responses	Percentage
e-mail/Chatting	43	26.5
Entertainment	3	1.9
Education and Research	116	71.6
Total	162	100

The place where Internet is used is of great importance because it determines the positive attitude towards using Internet. While using Internet in educational institutions, it is undoubtedly for the purpose of education and research and while using of Internet for the purpose of entertainment mostly occurs out of the educational premises. So, it can be stated that according to the convenience of the user and availability of access facility, Internet can be used in various places. In Fig3, there is a clear indication of the facts that as high as 93 responses, out of 168 (55.4 per cent) used Internet in their respective departments, followed by its use at home (28.9 per cent), at Central Library (14.8 per cent) and very least no. thro' their mobile i.e. 1.8 per cent.

It shows that Vel Tech Technical University has provided necessary facilities for the use of Internet in the departments. Central Library has attracted faculty members to use Internet in Library next to their respective departments and their homes.

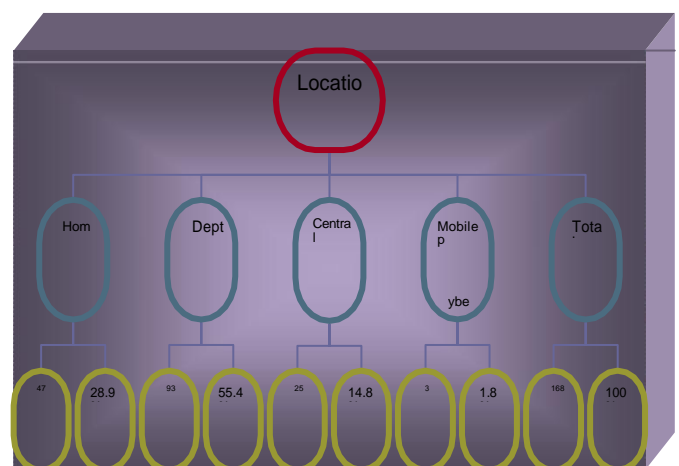


Figure 3 Location of Internet Use

6.4. Use of e-Resources

The use of print resources only is the story of the past. It has assumed various dimensions and has undergone various changes and updates. The resources in electronic formats have also come and have become indispensable sources along with print resources in modern day libraries. The users have also learnt to accommodate these positive changes to their convenience. Taking into account these changes, the libraries are very much interested in acquiring volumes of e-resources for their libraries. However, it has to be noted that the use of e-resources has not attained its full swing in most of the libraries may be due to the reasons of lack of knowledge and reason.

Table 2 has taken up an analysis on the types of e-journals and e-databases mostly used by the respondents as envisaged from their responses which quantify that E-Journals and E-databases are the most preferred ones amounting to 61 (35.7 per cent) and 37 (21.7 per cent), respectively. They are succeeded by the use of e-books (12.9 per cent), e-theses/dissertations (3 per cent), e-newsgroups/magazines (9.9 per cent), and e-article/e-prints (5.2 per cent). Among the respondents, 12.9 per cent of them have stated that they use all types of e-resources.

Table 2 - Utility statement on the types of e-resources

E-resources	No. of responses	Percentage
E-databases	37	21.7
E-journals	61	35.7
E-articles/e-reprints	9	5.2
E-books	22	12.9
e-newsgroups/magazine	17	9.9
E-theses/dissertation	3	1.7
All	22	12.9
Total	171	100

The main purpose of using e-resources by the faculty members of the Vel Tech Technical University is teaching (Table 3). It shows that as high as 78 responses, out of 205 representing 46.4 per cent indicates the purpose of using e-resources for study and teaching, 25 (15 per cent) for research work, 17 (10.1 per cent) for presentation in seminar/conference/workshops, and 10 (5.9 per cent) is for writing papers. Interestingly 38 responses representing 22.6 per cent of total responses indicate that the respondents use e-resources for all the above mentioned purposes.

Table 3 - Purpose of using e-resources

Purpose	No. of responses	Percentage
Study and teaching	78	46.4
Research work	25	15.0
Paper writing for publication	10	5.9
Seminar/Workshop presentation	17	10.1
All	38	22.6
Total	168	100

6.5. Knowledge of Copyright/IPR Issues

Knowledge management has become an important that all contents should be prevented from misuse by way of plagiarism. Awareness is being created among all concerned stakeholders that violation of the legal provisions relating to copyright and Intellectual Property Right (IPR) will have serious repercussions. Therefore, it is mandatory that the Faculty members should have sufficient knowledge of these legal rights while using the e-resources. Realizing its importance, the present study has attempted to collect data on these legal aspects (Table 4).

Analysis of Table 4 reveals that a majority of 77 respondents (81 per cent) had knowledge regarding the copyright and IPR issues whereas 18 respondents (19 per cent) have not possessed sufficient knowledge about the copyright and IPR issues.

Table4-Knowledgeofcopyright/IPRissues

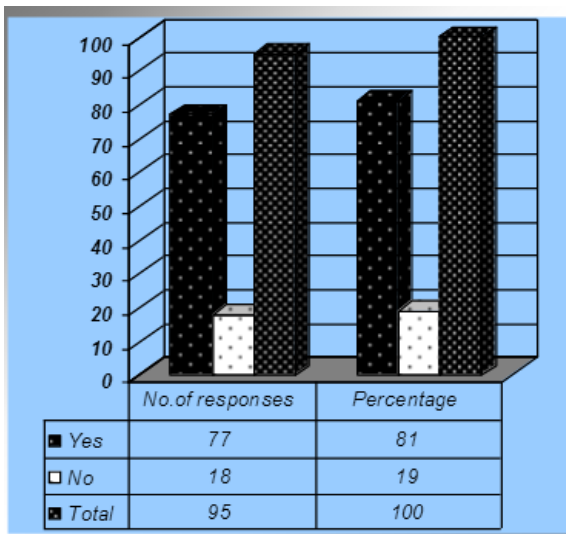


Table5-Reasonsofdissatisfactiononavailable e- resources

Reasons of discontent on available e-resources	No.of responses	Percentage
Infrastructure is not good	11	25
E-Resources are not as per need	27	61.3
Library time is not suitable	6	13.7
Library staff are not cooperative	0	0
Total	44	100

6.6.ReasonsforDissatisfactiononavailablee- Resources

Every aspect has positive as well as negative traits. There may be discontent on the part of the faculty members on the availability of e-resources and this study has tried to explore the grounds on which the elements of discontent rest (Table 5).

Table 8 exhibits the grounds of discontent on the availability of e-resources. Large no. of respondents i.e 61.3 percent have stated that non-availability of e-resources as per the need was the reason. 25 percent of the respondents have expressed the reason for discontent that the infrastructure is not good and 13.7 percent of them have stated that library time is not suitable. It is praiseworthy that none of them has stated that the library staff was not cooperative. This has to be noted with appreciation here.

6.7.Sources of Information on e-Resources

It is very important to record that the sources from where the faculty members obtained knowledge regarding the availability of e-resources have to be reckoned. Since, this has to be focused for enhancement for better use in future. The responses are categorized in Table 6.

Analysis of Table 6 shows clearly that the library staff was the main source of information for faculty members for identifying the sources of information about e-resources (57.1 per cent). It is followed by other sources such as Institutions' websites (33.7 per cent) office circular (7.2 percent) and library noticeboard/circular only (2 percent). It implies that the Central Library was playing a key role in informing faculty member about the e- resources.

6.8.Usefulness of e-Resources

Table 7 analyses the responses of the faculty members on the usefulness of e-resources. It demonstrates that a majority of respondents, i.e., 78 out of 110 (70.9 per cent) were of the opinion that e-resources are more useful than print resources to a great extent, followed

Table 6 - Sources of Information on e-resources

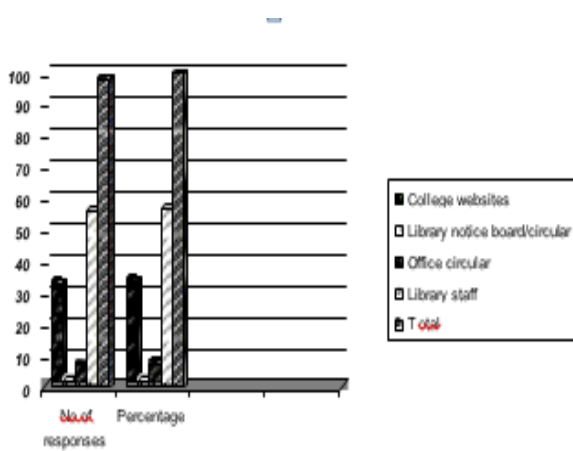
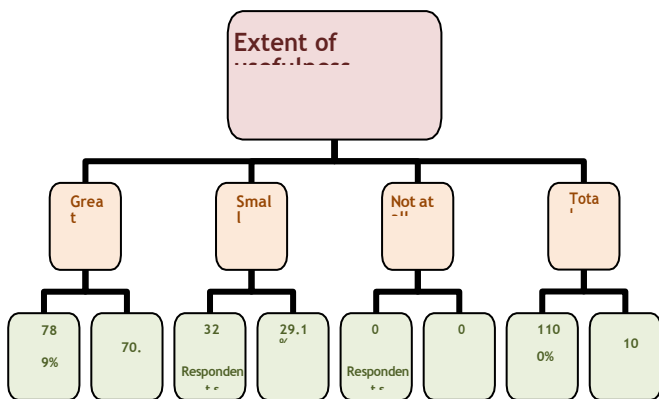


Table 7 - Usefulness of e-resources over print resources



by 32 respondents (29.1 per cent) to a small extent and surprisingly none on 'not at all'. It indicates that e-resources were being used frequently by the faculty members. Table 8 also reveals the multiple opinions regarding the advantages of accessing these resources. Maximum respondents were of the opinion that the main advantage of accessing e-resources was spending of least time in searching (21.2 per cent). It was followed by simultaneous usage (18.8 per cent), downloading facility (18.2 per cent), and easy accessibility (17.6 per cent), availability of journals before its print publication (12.7 per cent), archival facility (6.7 per cent) and facility to communicate with the authors (4.8 per cent).

Table 8 - Advantages of accessing e-resources

Advantages	No. of responses	Percentage
Less time in searching	35	21.2
Availability of the journal much before the print copy	21	12.7
Simultaneous usage	31	18.8
Easy accessibility	29	17.6
Downloading facility	30	18.2
Author can be Contacted directly through e-mail	8	4.8
Archival facility	11	6.7
Total	165	100

7.SUGGESTIONS

- ❖ First and foremost, LIS professionals of the Central Library should strive to develop a mechanism in order to create awareness on e-resources.
- ❖ The Central Library should have an exclusive website of its own wherein details of the available e-resources should be made available.
- ❖ User Study in the form of survey needs to be conducted at regular intervals on the use and usability of e-resources.
- ❖ Higher speeds Wi-Fi campus needs to be strengthened by the Vel Tech Technical University, so that faculty members can use online e-resources and Internet within the campus according to their convenience.
- ❖ Infrastructure facilities such as extension of LAN connection with all departments including Central Library should be developed.
- ❖ Orientation programmes and training sessions for the faculty members especially for the newly inducted faculty members have to be conducted periodically.
- ❖ The University should allot sufficient funds for acquisition of the e-resources by way of subscription etc. The no. of available e-resources has to be increased necessarily.

8.CONCLUSION

The utility of e-resources has become an integral part of education and research. The library services have also started focusing on the features of e-resources, their importance in the field of research for all constructive purposes. The library operations are also being modified suitably to incorporate the entire required infrastructure along with the latest technical know-how and latest methodologies. The wider usage of e-resources has made an indelible impact on various modes of usages such as storage, retrieval and proper application of the available information. The e-resources help to motivate the faculty members to make optimum use of the library services since the no. of users for the conventional library system is on decline due to the fall in the reading habit. People have begun to realize the essential nature of the e-resources and the relevant library services to a great extent. It is the imperative duty of the Library and Information Science professionals to keep on motivating, guiding and aiding the faculty members as well as the students towards the maximum use of e-resources.

Owing to the convenience and the easy access to the e-resources, there is a tendency for the Faculty members to depend fully on resources based on their requirement. Hence, they keep themselves up-to-date in their respective subject and in the allied subjects. There is a mis-conceived apprehension that the value of the library services will be decreased owing to the dependence of the faculty members on the e-resources. This concept may not be correct on the basis that the LIS professionals are playing effective roles in training and motivating the faculty members on the use of e-resources. The LIS professionals should bridge the gap between the demand and supply aspect. Therefore, the importance for the library professionals will definitely increase more due to their skills in the identification and selection of the e-resources. The libraries have to develop necessary tools to provide such services to their users more effectively.

The above study has presented a clear picture that the faculty members of the Vel Tech Technical University, Chennai, are using the available e-resources satisfactorily. At the same time the Central Library of the Vel Tech Technical University is playing a vital role in promotion, assistance and guidance in accessing the e-resources. The organisation should provide sufficient means for the growth of infrastructural facilities to the Central Library for accessing e-resources, acquisition of more e-resources as per the standard requirement.

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