

Extent of Future e-Resource Usage as Perceived by Students of Information Science in Iran

Mohammad Bagher Negahban*

Assistant Professor in Department of Information Science, Shahid Bahonar University of Kerman, 22 Baman Str. Kerman, Iran; mbnegahban@uk.ac.ir, negahban2003@yahoo.com

Abstract

The present study is aimed at investigating the extent of future E-Resource usage as perceived by information science students in Iran. A total number of 82 respondents (52 PG students and 30 Research scholars) were randomly selected. A questionnaire measuring usage of various digital technologies and accessing digital resources was prepared and administered to the sample population. Results revealed that there is a non-significant association between categories of responses for CD-ROM data base awareness. The association between categories of responses for CD-ROM database searches from RICSTand IRANDOC was also non-significant. It was also revealed that there is a non-significant association between category of responses for science citation index, bibliographic and citation analysis, IRANDOC abstracting and indexing services and Iran National Library bibliographical and cataloguing. But there was a significant difference in the respondents' awareness on subscription to online journals and also online database access. The association between categories of responses for content page services was also non-significant. The qualitative data presented through the research provided insight into electronic resource use within a cross section of the further education sector.

Keywords: e-Resources, Information, Information Science

1. Introduction

There has been a rapid growth of information and knowledge, scholarly journals, printed materials, and internet-based resources. E-resources play an important role in communicating and publishing research findings. It is important to discuss the role and relative importance of scholarly e-journals in education and as channels for research communication¹. This can influence the ways scholarly e-journals are growing and are becoming a critical component of academic research². It can be used for exchange of information and networking³. Because of its low cost e-journals are finding rapid adoption especially in sciences in this age of globalisation⁴. The purpose of this paper is to report the findings of a research study investigating the perceptions of future e- resources usage among Iranian information science students and research scholars. While such resources are widely available to this community of users, very little quantitative investigation has been done as to its likely impact upon future e-usage and how those who have access to it view it.

2. Objectives

- To study the extent of usage of information for various purposes by students of Information Science;
- To study the use/dependency on different types of Electronic sources by students of Information Science; and
- To understand the preferences for e-resources by students of Information Science.

3. Methodology

The study covered a total of 82 sample respondents selected from various universities of Iran, out of which 52 were studying in postgraduate departments of information science and remaining 30 were research scholars pursuing research in information science. They were selected through stratified random sampling technique. Consent was obtained from the respondents and prior permission was taken from respective heads of the departments.

*Author for correspondence

The questionnaire method was used to elicit data on perceived future usage of various e-resources. Various e-resources included CD-ROM databases, CD-ROM search service, CD-ROM database searches from RICST, CD-ROM database searches from IRANDOC, Science Citation Index (SCI), Bibliographic and citation analysis, IRANDOC abstracting and indexing services, Iran national library bibliographical and cataloguing,

Subscription to online journals, Online database access, and Content page services. The opinions on future e-resource usage varied at 25%, 50%, 75% and 100%. The respondents had to tick any one of the boxes meant for levels of perception regarding future resource usage for various e-resources. To find out the reliability of the questionnaire, Cronbach alpha was employed. The reliability of the questionnaire was found to be .7711,

Table 1. Percentage of awareness regarding various e-resources by PG students and research scholars of Iran and results of test statistics

Awareness	CD-ROM data base			Total	C D - R O M search service		Total	CD-ROM data base searches from RICST		Total	CD-ROM database searches from Iran doc		Total
		PG	PhD		PG	PhD		PG	PhD		PG	PhD	
25%	F	2	0	29	11	19	30	8	21	29	9	12	21
	%	6.5%	.0%	29.9%	35.5%	28.8%	30.9%	25.8%	31.8%	29.9%	29.0%	18.2%	21.6%
50%	F	0	1	23	11	24	35	7	16	23	12	27	39
	%	.0%	1.5%	23.7%	35.5%	36.4%	36.1%	22.6%	24.2%	23.7%	38.7%	40.9%	40.2%
75%	F	4	12	21	7	18	25	6	15	21	6	17	23
	%	12.9%	18.2%	21.6%	22.6%	27.3%	25.8%	19.4%	22.7%	21.6%	19.4%	25.8%	23.7%
100%	F	25	53	24	2	5	7	10	14	24	4	10	14
	%	80.6%	80.3%	24.7%	6.5%	7.6%	7.2%	32.3%	21.2%	24.7%	12.9%	15.2%	14.4%
Test statistics	CC=.223			CC=.074		CC=.121		CC=.128					
	P=.166			P=.913		P=.698		P=.657					

Awareness	Science Citation index (SCI)			Total	Bibliographic and citation analysis		Total	Irandoc abstracting and indexing services		Total	Iran national library bibliographical and cataloguing		Total
		PG	PhD		PG	PhD		PG	PhD		PG	PhD	
25%	F	8	12	20	16	24	40	11	22	33	10	20	30
	%	25.8%	18.2%	20.6%	51.6%	36.4%	41.2%	35.5%	33.3%	34.0%	32.3%	30.3%	30.9%
50%	F	9	23	32	4	27	31	13	23	36	11	24	35
	%	29.0%	34.8%	33.0%	12.9%	40.9%	32.0%	41.9%	34.8%	37.1%	35.5%	36.4%	36.1%
75%	F	4	15	19	1	9	10	3	14	17	4	14	18
	%	12.9%	22.7%	19.6%	3.2%	13.6%	10.3%	9.7%	21.2%	17.5%	12.9%	21.2%	18.6%
100%	F	10	16	26	10	6	16	4	7	11	6	8	14
	%	32.3%	24.2%	26.8%	32.3%	9.1%	16.5%	12.9%	10.6%	11.3%	19.4%	12.1%	14.4%
Test statistics	CC=.154			CC=.371		CC=.143		CC=.127					
	P=.502			P=.001		P=.570		P=.664					

Awareness	Subscription to on-line journals			Total	On-line database access		Total	Content page services		Total	
		PG	PhD		PG	PhD		PG	PhD		
25%	F	4	0	4	2	0	2	0	1	1	
	%	12.9%	.0%	4.1%	6.5%	.0%	2.1%	.0%	1.5%	1.0%	
50%	F	2	1	3	0	4	4	7	8	15	
	%	6.5%	1.5%	3.1%	.0%	6.1%	4.1%	22.6%	12.1%	15.5%	
75%	F	1	20	21	7	8	15	9	16	25	
	%	3.2%	30.3%	21.6%	22.6%	12.1%	15.5%	29.0%	24.2%	25.8%	
100%	F	24	45	69	22	54	76	15	41	56	
	%	77.4%	68.2%	71.1%	71.0%	81.8%	78.4%	48.4%	62.1%	57.7%	
Test statistics	CC=.392			CC=.275		CC=.169					
	P=.001			P=.047		P=.417					

which was sufficiently high. Face validity and content validities have been established for the questionnaire with standard procedures. Contingency coefficient analysis was employed to find out the association between categories of respondents employed using SPSS for Windows (version 16.0).

4. Results

The responses were coded; a master chart was prepared and fed to the computer. Contingency coefficient analysis was employed to find out the association between level of awareness and categories of respondents for various e-resources. Table 1 presents responses for Percent future usage of e-resources by PG students and research scholars of Iran and results of test statistics. Following are the results.

4.1 CD-ROM Databases

A non-significant association was observed between categories of responses for CD-ROM data base awareness, where contingency coefficient of .223 was found to be non-significant ($P=.166$). In other words the pattern of responses from PG and PhD students was similar for awareness about e-resource usage for CD-ROM database. Further, on the whole, we find that about 53% had less than 50% awareness, and only 24.7% of the total sample had 100% awareness.

4.2 CD-ROM Search Service

Respondents in PG and PhD qualifications did not differ significantly in CD-ROM services. Contingency coefficient value of .074 was found to be non-significant ($P=.913$). On the whole, the awareness was less as we find that about 67% of them had less than 50% awareness. Only 7.2% of them had 100% awareness.

4.3 CD-ROM Database Searches from RICST

A non-significant association was observed between category of responses for CD-ROM data base searches from RICST, where contingency coefficient of .121 was found to be non-significant ($P=.698$). In other words the pattern of responses from PG and PhD students was similar for awareness in CD-ROM data base searches from RICST. Further, on the whole, we find that about 29.9% had 25% of awareness, 24.7% had 100% awareness, 23.7% of the respondents had 50% awareness and remaining

21.6% of the respondents had 75% awareness.

4.4 CD-ROM Database Searches from IRANDOC

A non-significant association was observed between category of responses for awareness about CD-ROM database searches from IRANDOC, where contingency coefficient of .128 was found to be non-significant ($P=.657$). In other words the pattern of responses from PG and Ph.D. students was similar for awareness CD-ROM database searches from IRANDOC. Further, on the whole, we find that about 61% of the total respondents had less than 50% awareness and only about 14% of them had 100% awareness.

4.5 Science Citation Index

A non-significant association was observed between category of responses for science citation index, where contingency coefficient of .154 was found to be non-significant ($P=.502$). In other words the pattern of responses from PG and PhD students was similar for awareness in science citation index. Further, on the whole, we find that about 33% had 50% of awareness, 26.8% had 100% awareness, 20.6% of the respondents had 25% awareness and remaining 19.6% of the respondents had 75% awareness.

4.6 Bibliographic and Citation Analysis

PG and PhDs differ significantly in their awareness on bibliographic and citation analysis, where contingency coefficient value of .371 was found to be significant at .001 levels. We find that PGs were more aware of bibliographic and citation analysis than PhDs (32.3% and 9.1% of 100% awareness). However, on the whole 73% of the respondents had less than 50% awareness and very few of them 100% awareness (16.5%).

4.7 IRANDOC Abstracting and Indexing Services

Respondents in PG and PhD qualifications did not differ significantly in their awareness on IRANDOC abstracting and indexing services. Contingency coefficient value of .143 was found to be non-significant ($P=.570$) indicating that pattern of responses was similar for PG and PhD respondents in different levels of awareness. On the whole, the awareness was less as we find that about 67% of them had less than 50% awareness. Only 11.3% of them had 100% awareness.

4.8 Iran National Library Bibliographical and Cataloguing

A non-significant association was observed between category of responses for awareness for Iran national library bibliographical and cataloguing, where contingency coefficient of .127 was found to be non-significant ($P=.664$). In other words the pattern of responses from PG and PhD students was similar for awareness in Iran national library bibliographical and cataloguing. Further, on the whole, we find that about 67% of the total respondents had less than 50% awareness and only about 14% of them 100% awareness.

4.9 Subscription to Online Journals

PG and PhDs differ significantly in their awareness on subscription to online journals, where contingency coefficient value of .392 was found to be significant at .001 levels. We find that PhDs were more aware of subscription to online journals than PGs. We find that about 98% of the PhDs had more than 75% of awareness regarding subscription to online journals compared to about 78% of the PG students.

4.10 Online Data Base Access

A significant association was observed for levels of awareness and category of respondents ($CC=.275$; $P=.047$), where again 81.8% of the PhD scholars had 100% awareness as against 71% of the PG students. On the whole we find that about 94% of the total sample had more than 75% of awareness.

4.11 Content Page Services

A non-significant association was observed between category of responses for content page services, where contingency coefficient of .169 was found to be non-significant ($P=.417$). In other words the pattern of responses from PG and PhD students was similar for awareness in content page services. Further, on the whole, we find that about 57.7% had 100% awareness, 25.8% had 75% awareness, 15.5% of the respondents had

50% awareness and remaining 1.0% of the respondents had 25% awareness.

5. Discussion

The qualitative data provides insight into electronic resource use within a cross section of the education sector. It is therefore of use to those studying the impact of electronic resources, particularly in the education sector. The research provides evidence, which can be used to formulate e-resources policy.

6. Conclusion

The future is both bright and challenging, one in which user needs and, of course, opportunities will be available for exploitation of e-resources. Nowadays, electronic resources are considered as a valuable research tool. The results of this study covering Iranian Post-graduate and PhD students of information science, suggest that there will be a greater reliance on electronic resources in future. The findings further reveal an increase in the use of electronic journals and databases. In addition it is expected that with an instant access to resources through new web services, the libraries' role in providing access to resources will be less in the near future. Using various new web services such as databases, abstracts, and online journals, the users will also be able to retrieve their desired information in different forms.

7. References

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