

UTILIZATION OF E-RESOURCES AT VALIVALAM DESIKAR POLYTECHNIC COLLEGE, NAGAPATTINAM, TAMIL NADU: A CASE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

In the last few decades, many research studies have carried out on how academic community use electronic resources or on their feelings about electronic and print resources in the library. These usage studies draw many conclusions about the behavior and preferences of academic community, although sometimes the conclusions are contradictory or unclear. The way libraries organise, present and offer the e-resources can eliminate the barrier and get maximum utilisation with high recognition of their value. The present paper examines the existence and use of various e-resources in Valivalam Desikar Polytechnic College Library. The study also highlights the preferences and importance of resources among the teachers and students.

Key words: E-resources, impact, polytechnic college, IT infrastructure, print media

INTRODUCTION

Libraries of all sizes and types are embracing digital collections, although most libraries will continue to offer both print and digital collections for many years to come. New purchases and purchases of journals, magazines, and abstracting and indexing services are heavily weighted toward digital, while digital books (e-books) are only beginning to become a presence in library collections. The Internet and the Web are constantly influencing the development of new modes of scholarly communication; their potential for delivering goods is quite vast, as they overcome successfully the geographical limitations associated with the print media. This important fact is convincing many libraries to move towards digital e-resources, which are found to be less expensive and more useful for easy access. It further aims to establish the extent of internet use, the purpose of such use and factors influencing it.

OBJECTIVES

The main aim of the study was to supplement the results obtained in many earlier studies, which had provided very interesting general information on the use of the e-resources. The objective is to analyze dependency of the teachers and students on e-resources, the perceived impact of the e-resources on their academic efficiency and problems faced by them while using the e-resources. This survey was particularly conducted to assess the benefits of the e-resources over conventional sources of information.

MAJOR OBJECTIVES ARE TO

- study the different types of electronic resources used by teachers and students;
- study the purpose and frequency of using the electronic resources and services available in the library;
- locate the impediments faced by the teachers and research scholars while accessing and using the electronic resources in the library;

PREVIOUS STUDIES

A number of earlier studies of users of e-resources have appeared in the last few years. Tenopir (2003) in a major survey of the literature on the subject analyzed the results of over 200 studies of the use of electronic resources in libraries published between 1995 and 2003. Results drawn from this study indicate that electronic resources have been rapidly adopted in academic spheres, though the behavior varies according to the discipline. Kaur and Verma find that users use all the sources available to them regularly, like CD ROMs, online databases, Web resources and audio/video tapes. The findings of an important work of Bar-Ilan and Fink (2005) are the usage of electronic journals increases with time. The variables such as age and/or academic position are inversely related to the use of electronic format and journals. There is a decrease in the use of printed journals as users prefer and use the electronic format more. When time passes many users access the electronic format more frequently.

SURVEY DESIGN/METHODOLOGY/APPROACH

The study was limited to the teachers and students of Valivalam Desikar Polytechnic College, Nagapattinam . Data were collected from 80 students and faculty members in all departments. The questionnaire consists of 5 main questions with many of them having a number of subsidiary questions. The questions are designed for the students and faculty members to elicit their experience with the e-sources and internet use for their study and research work. The questionnaires were completed by personal visits with users. Questionnaires were distributed randomly to the users. The collected data was analyzed and presented in the tabular form.

DISCUSSION

Table-1: Use of Various E-Resources

Resources	Respondents	
	Teachers	Students
E-Journals	19 (63.33%)	14 (26.92%)
WWW	46 (88.46%)	28 (93.33%)
E-Newspaper	14 (26.92%)	3 (10.00%)

E-Mail	30 (57.69%)	23 (76.66%)
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Table 1 shows that the majority of the teachers 46 (88.46%) and students 28 (93.33%) prefer to internet. Second highest preference is e-mail 30 (57.69%) for teachers and 23 (76.66%) students. Use of e-journals are 19 (63.33%) and 14 (26.92%) among teachers and students respectively and keep the third position in terms of usage. Whereas use of e-newspaper 14 (26.92%) among teachers and 3(10.00%) among students takes the bottom level. Table 1 highlights that internet and e-mail are used effectively by students and faculty members, the rest of the resources i.e. e-journal and e-newspapers are comparatively less used.

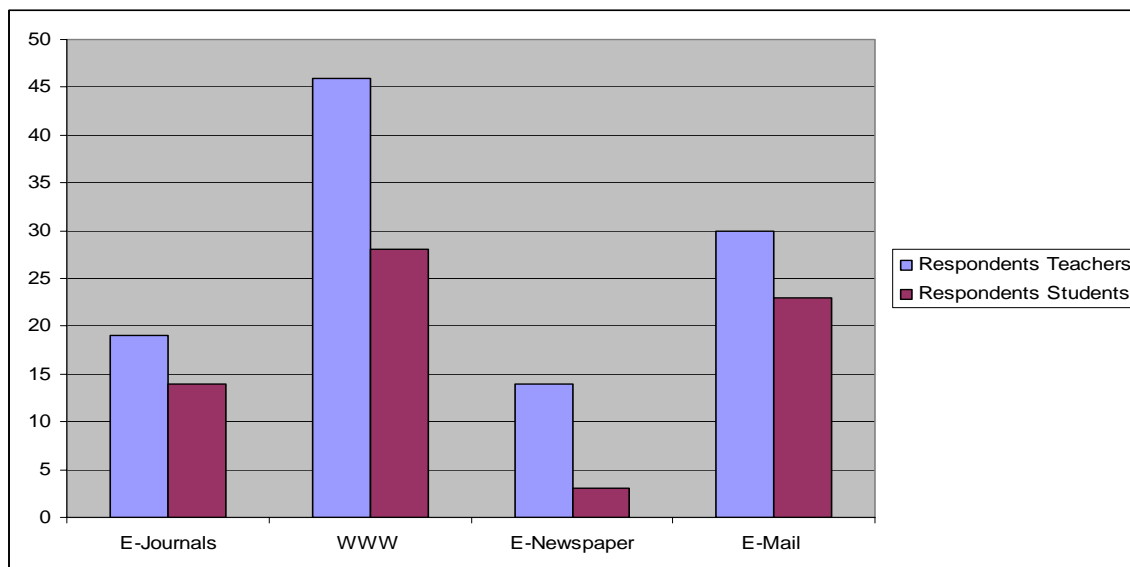


Table-2:Ease of Access to E-Resources

Respondents	Total	Yes	No
Teachers	24	16 (66.66%)	8 (33.33%)
Students	56	18 (32.14%)	38 (67.86.33%)

Table-2 represents that 16 (66.66%) teachers and 18 (32.14%) students are able to access the e-resources very easily. Only 8 (33.33%) teachers and 38 (67.86.33%) majorities of the students feel that to use the e-resources is not easy.

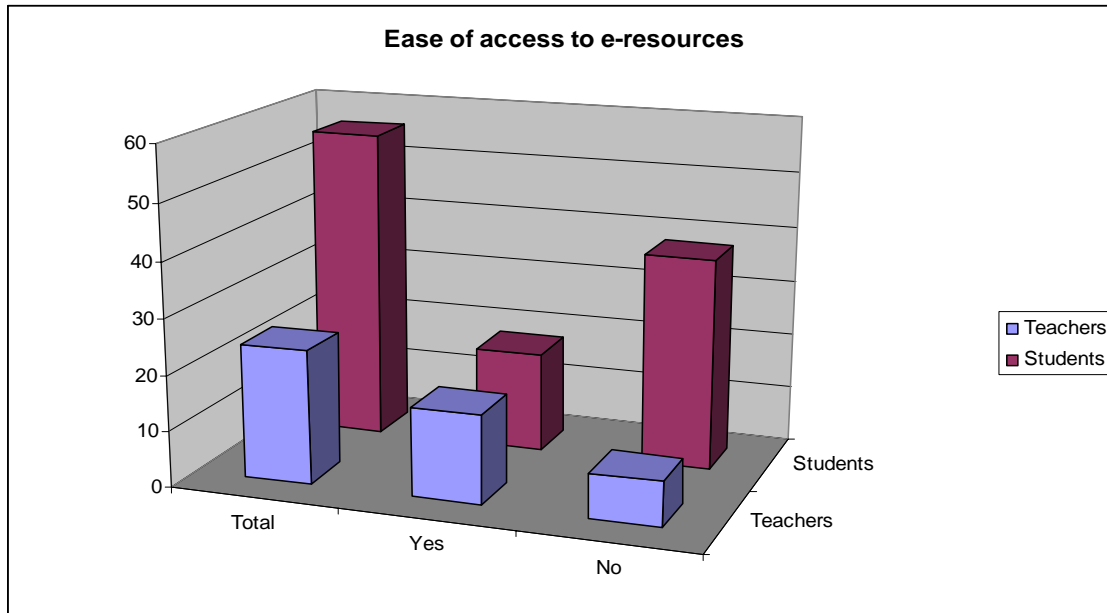


Table -3: Frequency of Using E-Resources

Respondents	Total	Usually	Sometimes	Rarely
Teachers	24	13 (54.16%)	9 (37.50%)	2 (8.33%)
Students	56	32 (57.14%)	18 (32.14%)	6 (10.71%)

Table-3 shows that 13 (54.16%) teachers and 32 (57.14%) students usually use e-resources. 9 (37.50%) teachers and 18 (32.14%) students use the e-resources sometimes, whereas 4 2 (8.33%) teachers and 6 (10.71%) students use e-resources rarely.

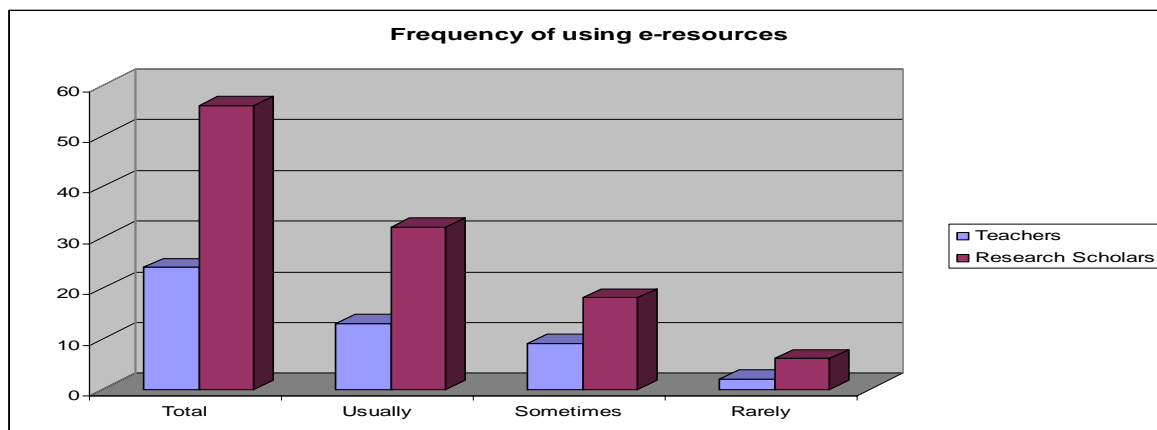


Table-4 Satisfaction with Existing IT Infrastructure

Respondents	Total	Yes	No
Teachers	24	13 (54.16%)	11 (45.83%)
Students	56	32 (57.14%)	24 (42.85%)

Table-4 shows that the majority of teachers, 13 (54.16%) and students 32 (57.14%) are satisfied with the existing IT infrastructure within the organization. Only 11 (45.83%) teachers and 24 (42.85%) students are not satisfied with the IT infrastructure of the college. Results shows that the Polytechnic College have proper IT infrastructure facilities.

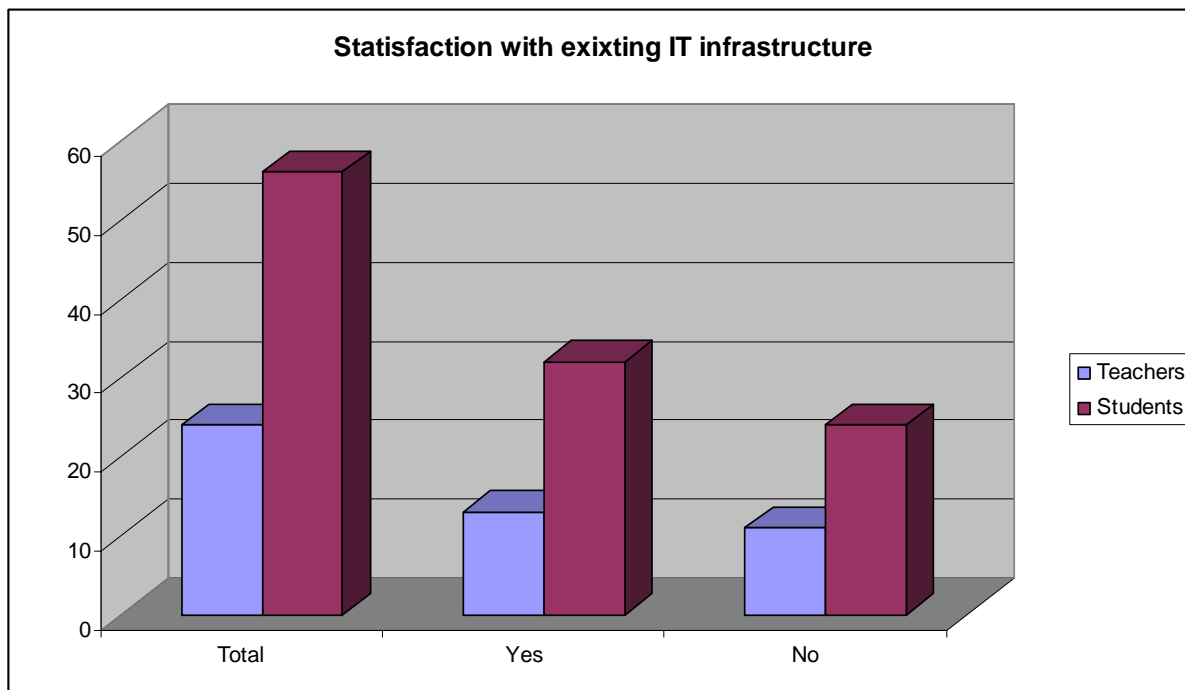


Table-5 Do E-Resources reduce the Importance of Traditional Resources

Respondent	Total	Yes	No
Teachers	24	4 (16.66)	20 (83.34%)
Students	56	31 (55.35%)	25 (44.64%)

Table-5 reflects that a large number of teachers, 20 (83.34%), and students, 25 (44.64%), think that e-resources never reduce the importance of traditional resources, whereas 4 (16.66) teachers and 31 (55.35%) students feel that e-resources may replace traditional sources of information: Table -4 indicates contradictory statements. But in the digital age, academics are equally attached to traditional sources of information.

CONCLUSION

Study indicates that majority of the teachers and students are dependent on e-resources to get the desired and relevant information. But practical use of e-resources is not up-to the worth. They mainly use the internet and e-mail for various purposes. Interestingly the users have knowledge about availability of electronic resources, but many use them as the supplementary way to use information. However, the preference for the electronic format is related to the type of resources, IT infrastructure and availability of time.

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