

Familiarity and Use of Electronic Information Sources by B.Ed. College Students of govt. College of Education, Srinagar J&K. India

BY

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Abstract

An attempt has been made to determine the present status of knowledge and use of electronic information resources. It was observed that use of electronic resources is still inadequate among the Bed (bacholar of education) students of the Govt. College of Education, Srinagar. This paper presents the findings of a survey to about the familiarity and use of digital and electronic resources by BEd students through CD-ROM databases, online databases, online journals and OPAC etc. available in the college of education library, Srinagar. The subjects chosen for this study were BEd students of Govt. College of education Srinagar, Jammu And Kashmir, India. For evaluating study questions and data collection, the questionnaire was distributed to a random sample of 160 BEd students. The result of this survey are presented and discussed in this paper.

Key words: Digital resources, Electronic resources, college of education library.

1. Introduction

The even expanding field of education among the human race has necessitated a continuous modification and innovation of technologies. Educational researchers have indicated the need for a systematic approach for the effective teaching and learning of education literature and have emphasized teaching as an art, learning as a scheme, which depends on instructional objectives, appropriate instructional design and proper media selection. Education is a process of changing human behavior in the desirable direction or helping an individual to bring out his/her best character. Teaching and learning both work independently but are dependent on each other for certain specified objectives of teaching and learning process. The internet is transporting teachers and students beyond the walls of their classrooms by providing access to people around the world through networks. It is a rich streaming media high band width access and advanced website designing which are revolutionizing the education throughout the world. In today's rapid changing Globe, information needs of learners and knowledge seekers are met through a plethora

of information resources. The electronic sources available in a library play a prominent role in facilitating access to required information to the users in an easy and expeditious manner. Further, one need not go to the library to make use of print formats as the electronic resource can be made use of by any user through online access via networks or authentication methods at any time by comfortably sitting at home or workstation. However, it is imperative that one should be familiar with the use and exploitation of digital resources for their quicker and effective use. Further, electronic and digital resources can also be used for efficient retrieval. Thus, digital resources in a library play a significant role in academic libraries as they are mostly tuned for the promotion of academic learning and research. In view of all this, digital resources like CD-ROM database, online databases, online journals, OPACs and Internet etc. are slowly replacing the importance and usage of print media.

Background

Government College of Education Srinagar is the premier secondary teachers training institute that has successfully completed sixty years of its existence. The college made a humble beginning in the year 1948 as teachers training college in a small building adjacent to the Khalsa High School Srinagar. In fact it was up-gradation of already existing teacher's training school which used to offer two courses of B.T and D.T up to 1956. From 1956 the college started functioning independently and was shifted to the present campus near MA road Srinagar. Those were the days when the literacy rate in the state was very low i.e. ten percent. Women's education would carry a social stigma. To attend modern educational institution; it needed a lot of courage on the part of girls and their families.

A landmark achievement of the college was to introduce PG course in Education (M.Ed) in the year 2004. The college library was rated as the best among the Colleges of Education in the country. The Library is computerized with KOHA software, The electronic library comprises of 13-computers, which are equipped with the internet connection for online browsing of e-journals and other online databases for learning purpose. This facility is available both for the faculty and the Bed and MEd students. The Study material is available for students in e-form on College website (www.gcoe.kmr.org). The College Library has a reprographic facility for all its users,

which they can avail on all working days. This facility is availed by them on 75% discount from the market rate.

2. Review of literature

There are numbers of studies on use of e-resources by students and faculty members. Achonna¹ in his research found, use of e-journal resources were low. Lack of skills, inadequate provision of computers and power outage etc. were the problems faced in use of e-resources. Study concluded the need for the training skills, provision of adequate computers; need to popularize the information technology and its usage and to motivate the students to use e-journal resources. Joteen Singh² *et al.* executed a study on “Use of Internet Based E-Resources at Manipur University: A Survey” to examine the use of electronic information focusing on the Internet services by post graduate students, research scholars, teachers and non-teaching staff members. Users were using the Internet mainly to download the information from web based resources and web sites. Lack of power supply and the low speed Internet access were general problems faced by users in accessing information from web based resources. Baikady and Mudhol³ explored use of web resources in learning, teaching, clinical practice, and patient care and found that users prefer web-based resources over traditional library and users perceive that web contains exhaustive information and is easy to use. Baskaran⁴ revealed that maximum use of library is by faculty of science particularly scientific e-journals for preparing seminars, conferences and other assignments. Bashorun⁵, *et al.* found that the frequency of use of electronic resources by teaching staff was low, as most of the faculty time is spent on teaching. The study also pointed out some of the problems like lack of awareness to users about electronic resources provided by the library, lack of electricity supply to use computer, slow speed of network, and inadequate searching skills. Kumar & Kumar⁶ found, in his study of medical and management colleges in Bangalore city that the users are well aware of e-resources and prefer to use internet. Madhusudhan⁷ conducted a survey on internet use by research scholars at Delhi University, which reveals that most respondents used search engines more than subject gateways or web directories to locate information. Negative attitudes as well as conservatism act as barriers to effective internet use.

3. Objectives

The objectives of the present study are:

- To assess the amount of familiarity and frequency in the use of the different types of electronic resources made by the BEd students;
- To find out the purpose and utilization of the digital resources and services by the BEd students;
- To find out the difficulties encountered by the BEd students while accessing and using digital resources; and
- To suggest suitable suggestions and recommendations to improve the use of electronic resources and services for the benefit of Bed students.

4. Methodology

A questionnaire was utilized to determine the information needs and the use of electronic resources by BEd students in the Govt.college of education, Srinagar. The questionnaire was distributed to 200 BEd students pursuing bachelor of education (Bed) at Govt. College of Education M.A Road, Srinagar J&K. India. The all questions were related to use of digital/electronic resources, internet, CD Rom databases and OPAC etc. However, the researcher received responses from the 160 BEd students only which are 80%. Then the data was analyzed and interpreted for the outcome and presented in the following paragraphs.

5. Data Analysis

5.1 B.Ed students familiarity with electronic sources:

The distribution of students according to their familiarity to use digital resources is shown in Table 1.

Table 1

BED students familiarity with digital resources (n=160)

Use	No of responses	Percentage
Familiar	89	55.63
Not familiar	71	44.37
Total	160	100.00

It is evident from Table 1 that 55.63 percent of the BEd students are familiar with digital/electronic resources, while 44.37 percent replied in the negative.

5.2 Frequency of using the computers

The distribution of BEd students according to their frequency of using the computers is shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Distribution of BEd students according to their frequency of using the computers

Frequency	No of responses	Percentage
Daily	38	23.75
2 or 3 times a week	39	24.37
Once a week	28	17.50
Once in a month	33	20.62
Rarely	11	6.88
Never	11	6.88
Total	160	100.00

It is evident from Table 2 that 24.37 percent of the BEd students are using the computers two or three times a week, 23.75 percent daily, 20.62 percent once in a month, 17.50 percent once in a week, 6.88 percent rarely and the remaining 6.88 percent of the Bed students are never using the computers.

5.3 Frequency of using the digital/electronic resources

The distribution of BEd students according to their frequency of using the digital resources is shown in Table 3.

Table 3

Distribution of BEd students according to their frequency of using the digital resources in percentages (n=160)

Digital Resources	Frequency (%)						Total
	Daily	2 or 3 times in a week	Once in a week	Once in a month	Rarely	Never	
CD-ROM Databases	44 (27.50)	27 (16.88)	35 (21.87)	23 (14.38)	18 (11.25)	13 (8.12)	160 (100)
Internet	55 (34.38)	33 (20.63)	34 (21.25)	13 (8.12)	12 (7.50)	13 (8.12)	160 (100)
E-mail	63 (39.37)	48 (30.00)	23 (14.37)	14 (8.75)	7 (4.38)	5 (3.13)	160 (100)
Online Databases	15 (9.37)	23 (14.38)	25 (15.63)	41 (25.62)	22 (13.75)	34 (21.25)	160 (100)
Online Journals	18 (11.25)	23 (14.37)	28 (17.50)	33 (20.63)	28 (17.50)	30 (18.75)	160 (100)
Search Engines	57 (35.63)	53 (33.13)	32 (20.00)	7 (4.37)	6 (3.12)	6 (3.75)	160 (100)
OPAC	28 (17.50)	23 (14.37)	39 (24.38)	38 (23.75)	18 (11.25)	14 (8.75)	160 (100)
College Websites	32 (20.00)	28 (17.50)	27 (16.88)	33 (20.62)	27 (16.88)	13 (8.12)	160 (100)

It is evident from Table 3 that 27.5 percent of the BEd students are using the CD-ROM databases daily, 21.87 percent once in a week, 16.88 percent two or three times in a week, 14.38 percent once in a month, 11.25 percent rarely, and 8.12 percent never use the CD-ROM databases. Majority of the BEd students(34.38%) using the Internet daily, 21.25 percent once in a week, 20.63 percent two or three times in a week, 8.12 percent once in a month, 8.12 percent never use, and 7.5 percent rarely use the Internet. 39.39 percent of the BEd students are using e-mail daily, 30 percent two or three times in a week, 14.37 percent once in a week, 8.75 percent once in a month, 4.38 percent rarely, and 3.13 percent never use the e-mail facility.

It is also evident from table 3 majority of the BEd students (25.62%) are using the online databases once in a month, 21.25 percent never use, 15.63 percent once in a week, 14.38 percent two or three times in week, 13.75 percent rarely use, and 9.37 percent daily use the online databases. Majority of the BED students (20.63%) are using the online journals once in a month, 18.75 percent

never use, 17.5 percent once in a week, 17.5 percent rarely use, and 11.25 percent daily use the online journals.

It is also evident from table 3 that 33.65 percent of the BEd students are using the search engines daily, 33.13 percent two or three times in a week, 20 percent once in a week, 4.37 percent once in a month, 3.75 percent never use, and 3.12 percent rarely use the search engines. Majority of the BEd students (24.38%) are using the online public accesses catalogue once in a week, 23.75 percent once in a month, 17.5 percent daily, 14.37 percent two or three times in a week, 11.25 percent rarely use, and 8.75 percent never use the OPAC. About 20.62 percent of the Bed students are using the college website once in a month, 20 percent daily, 17.5 percent two or three times in a week, 16.88 percent once in a week, 16.88 percent rarely uses, and 8.12 percent of the BEd students never use the college website.

5.1 Relative frequency use of digital/electronic sources

In order to know the relative frequency in the use of the different electronic resources by the BEd students, weightages of 5,4,3,2,1 and 0 are assigned to responses of daily, two or three times a week, once in a week, once in a month, rarely and never used respectively. Total weightage is calculated for each electronic resource. Mean Weightage is calculated by dividing the total weightage by the number of BEd students included in the sample. Based on the Mean weightage the electronic resources have been ranked.

The distribution of users according to their relative use of different electronic resources, total weightage, mean weightage and ranks are shown in Table 4.

Distribution of medical students according to their relative frequency of digital resources (n=160)

Digital Resources	Total weightages	Mean weightages	Rank
CD-ROM	497	3.11	4
Internet	547	3.42	3

E-mail	611	3.82	2
Online databases	346	2.16	8
Online journals	360	2.25	7
Search engines	612	3.83	1
online catalogue	443	2.77	6
college website	446	2.79	5

It is evident from table 4 that the BEd students are mainly using search engines compared to other digital resources and it has got first rank. It is followed by e-mail, internet, CD-ROM, college website, online public accesses catalogue, online journals, and online databases, which have got the second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth ranks respectively for their use.

5.4 Purpose of using electronic/ digital resources

The distribution of BEd students according to purpose of using digital resources is shown in Table 5.

Table 5

Distribution of medical students according to their purpose of using the digital/electronic resources (n=160)

Purpose	No of responses	Percentage
For communication	139	86.87
For research	84	52.50
To collect subject information	114	71.25
Upgrade general knowledge	81	50.62
For career development	63	39.37

It is evident from Table 5 that 86.87 percent of the BEd students indicate that the digital resources are used for communication purpose, 71.25 percent to collect subject information,

50.62 percent upgrade general knowledge, 52.5 percent research purpose, and 39.37 percent of the BEd students are using digital resources for their career development.

5.5 Learned to use digital/electronic resources

The distribution of BEd students learned to use digital/electronic resources is shown in Table 6.

Table 6

Distribution of medical students according to the learned to use digital resources (n=160)

Learned to use digital resources	No of responses	Percentage
Self study (reading books/journals, tutorials)	72	45.00
Family, friend or Colleague	57	35.62
Guidance from the library staff	66	41.25
Guidance from the departmental staff of computer Science	54	33.75
Formal courses	35	21.87

It is evident from Table 6 that 45 percent of the BEd students are learning the necessary skills to use digital resources through self study (reading books/journals, tutorials etc), 41.25 percent learned through the guidance from library staff, 35.62 percent through family, friend or colleague, 33.75 percent guidance from the departmental staff of computer science, and 21.87 percent of the BEd students are learning to use electronic resources through formal courses.

5.6 Difficulties in accessing the electronic resources

The distribution of BEd students according to prevents in accessing the electronic resources is shown in Table 8.

Table 8

Distribution of BEd students according to the difficulties in accessing the electronic resources (n=160)

Prevents	No of responses	Percentage
Lack of training	81	50.62
Lack of time	66	41.25
Too much information retrieved	63	39.37
Lack of IT knowledge	38	23.75
Limited accesses to computers	59	36.87

It is evident from the Table 8 shows the opinion of the BEd students regarding difficulties in accessing the digital resources. Majority (50.62%) of the BEd students stated that ‘lack of training’ is the main impediment to use digital resources, 41.25 percent ‘lack of time’, 39.37 percent ‘too much information retrieved’, 36.87 percent ‘limited to accesses to computers’, and 23.75 percent ‘lack of IT knowledge’ is the main difficulty to use electronic resources.

6. Conclusion

Most of the BEd students are familiar with the usage of digital/electronic resources. Study indicated minimum number of the BEd students are using the computer two or three times a week. Survey showed BEd students are using CD-ROM, Internet, E-mail, Search engines, and College websites for required information. Most of the BEd students are mainly using search engines compared to other digital resources. Online journals and online databases are less used compared to other resources being used rarely vis-à-vis other resources. Majority of the BEd students are using digital/electronic resources for enhancing and upgrading their communication purposes. Study also indicated most of the BEd students opined that they were acquiring skills to use digital/electronic resources through ‘self-study’ method (reading books/journals, tutorials etc). Findings revealed BEd students expressed ‘lack of training’ and ‘lack of time’ is the main problems in securing access to electronic resources.

7. Suggestions

Based on the detailed study and its outcome, the following suggestions are recommended to improve the use of electronic resources among the BEd students.

1. With the increasing influx of electronic resources into libraries the user orientation programmes should be implemented in regard to digital/electronic resources.
2. Awareness levels should be increased for maximizing the usage of online journals/databases for procuring the current and required information.
3. More computer terminals should be installed in libraries for facilitating easy and quicker access to electronic resources.
4. Budgetary resources should be increased gradually for strengthening electronic resources in Bed college libraries.
5. The library should conduct regular evaluations and assessments to determine the effectiveness of the digital/electronic resources in meeting information needs of the Bed students.

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