Digital Information Seekers of Manonmaniam Sundaranar University: A Study

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Abstract - **The present study aims at assessing the attitude of digital information seekers, especially research scholars of Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli. The main objectives of the present study are to identify Internet cannot substitute the library and to find out the use of electronic resources by research scholars for their research work. A well structured questionnaire was prepared and distributed among the research scholars of Manonmaniam Sundaranar University out of 100, 78 filled in questionnaires were received back to get the data analyzed for this study. This survey indentifies that research scholars aren't fully satisfied with the Internet facilities available in Manonmaniam Sundaranar University Library. The study reveals useful facts on the use of electronic resources by research scholars. Based on these facts, the study gives some suggestions to improve the use of e-resources among the Research Scholars. In order to make e-resources be utilized to its maximum, the Research Scholars must be given orientation training to make them well-versed in the surfing and browsing on the internet.**
Keywords: **Academic Library, Manonmaniam Sundaranar University Library, E-Resources, Research Work, Internet Resource, Web Searching, Use of Internet, Research Scholars**

I. INTRODUCTION

Internet has inevitably become a formidable social and cultural tool with global presence enabling access to a large source of information on the web for the academic community to get their academic and research activities enriched. According to Misra and Satyanaraya's study, (2001), the use of e-resources plays a significant role in increasing the research output of scholars.

Internet facilitates to access global source of information resources for anyone from any part of the world at anytime. Communication and interaction among scientific research community has improved a lot through the use of internet so that the research scholars are able to access a vast range of latest information. The internet has become a powerful supplement to the traditional way of information access. The electronic exchange of ideas and collaboration among the scholars all over the world has been possible through the advancement of information technology and the advent of internet.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The major objectives of the study are furnished here under:
1. To analyze the use of digital information by the researchers of Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli.
2. To identify Internet and availability of e-resources are not a substitute for the conventional library
3. To determine decrease in the use of library after the advent of Internet
4. To know the purpose of using Internet, identify the most visited sites by research scholars and find out the impact of Internet by the library users
5. To find out awareness among users of e-resources in Manonmaniam Sundaranar University Library
6. To identify the digital information needs of the research scholars along with the use of various IT services available in Manonmaniam Sundaranar University Library.

III. METHODOLOGY

A well structured questionnaire was designed and distributed to 100 research scholars to collect the required data for the present study. A total number of 78 filled in responses were received out of 100 respondents with response rate of 78 per cent and analyzed using tables and charts with interpretations.

IV. HYPOTHESIS

The researcher has undertaken the present study to verify the following Null hypothesis:
1. Research scholars are not fully satisfied with the Internet facilities available in Manonmaniam Sundaranar University library
2. Internet is not a substitute for the library
3. Research scholars are not aware of the statement that the information resources can be had through the use of internet for their research purpose.

V. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The available literature pertaining to the present study is essentially reviewed here aiming to have an overview of the earlier studies undertaken in the present study area.

Radcliff, *et al. (*1993) undertook a study to discuss the challenges posed by internet in the reference services provided in the academic libraries, find text education as an issue of high priority, recommend for the inclusion of the acquisition of e-journals, local archiving of retrieved data and for the provision of bibliographic access through local library catalogue to e-resources in a modern library services.

The study of Das (1999) reveals that the availability of internet is very useful for sharing resources among different libraries. An innovative and rich electronic environment provided by Internet has made users locate the information they want, quickly and easily.Hopkins (2000) indicates in other words, digital Information has become a major force behind the change in the role of Libraries and Information Centers.

Misra and Satyanarayana's (2001) study states that digital electronic resources are very useful in the world of Information. The book authored by Laurence and Miller (2002) focused how libraries and scholars play significant role in the dissemination of electronic resources. The e-resources provided a useful reference tool for researchers and librarians. Kumar and Kaur's (2004) study suggests that the use of e-resources among the faculties and students in Shaheed Bhagat Singh College of Engineering and Technology requires to be improved. The study indentified that majority of the Internet users utilized digital information sources for educational purposes.

Luambano and Nawe (2004) explored that the students use digital resources for communication with friends and relatives less than for academic purposes and the level of students' access to the digital information was low due to inadequate computers and internet facilities by the time of the study. The study undertaken by Genoni, et al. (2006) explores the way how digital information seeking in support of e-research has been changing the nature of research academicians. The study reveals that research scholars express positive opinion with respect to the usefulness of digital resources for research purposes.

Hinson (2006) postulated on Internet Adoption Model for academics. The Internet Adoption Model for Academics (IAMA) was conceptualized as an abstract object with five main components such as (i) Internet for teaching, (ii) Internet for research, (iii) Internet for consultancy, (iv) Internet for administration, and (v) Internet for policy making. Manimekalai, et al., (2006) in their study state that the use of seeking digital information is inevitable and the perceived usefulness was an important driving force of Internet usage.

Mulla and Chandrashekara, (2006) identified that the teachers, research scholars and students of higher education use Internet to keep themselves up to date. The study undertaken by Islam and Panda (2007) indicates that In Indian University, traditional library and printed materials were still more effective to researchers than digital Information and resources. Bansode and Pujar (2008) identified that the research scholars of Shivaji University, Kanpur use the Internet for their research and communication purposes and have more awareness on digital resources and training in use of e-resources. Madhusudhan, (2008) reveals that research scholars and students require to be provided with orientation training in the use of electronic resources. Haridasan and Kaur (2009) expressed that electronic resources are significant part of library collections.

VI. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The data presented in the Table 1 shows that 50 out (64.10 percent) of 78 respondents from the research scholars of Manonmaniam Sundaranar University belong to the age group of 25-35 years followed by 10 respondents (12.82 percent) belonging to the age group of 30-35 years and 9 respondents each (11.54 percent) belonging to the age group of below 25 years and above 35 years respectively. It is evident that almost half of the respondents from the research scholars of Manonmaniam Sundaranar University belong to the age group of 25-30 years who are eager to search the new innovative ideas or develop new technologies of the latest advancements.

TABLE 1 AGE WISE DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS

AGE	SCIENCE	SOCIAL SCIENCE	HUMANITIES	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE
Below 25 Years	3	4	2	9	11.54
25-30 Years	22	21	7	50	64.10
30-35 years	4	3	3	10	12.82
Above 35 Years	3	4	2	9	11.54
TOTAL	32	32	14	78	100.00

Source: Calculated from Primary Data

In the present study, research scholars were asked to answer the question whether they use the Internet or not, aiming at determining their level of access to Internet. All the respondents participated in the survey replied that they are using the Internet.

TABLE 2 PURPOSE OF SURFING INTERNET

PURPOSE	SCIENCE	SOCIAL SCIENCE	HUMANITIES	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE
Research	18	20	11	49	62.82
Infotainment	02	03	01	06	07.69
Recreation	02	02	01	05	06.42
E-mail	05	03	04	12	15.38
Seeking Tabs	03	01	-	04	05.1
Curiosity	01	01	-	02	02.56

Source: Computed from Primary Data

The analysis of data presented in the Table 2 reveals that a total of 49 respondents (62.82 percent) opine that they use internet for the purpose of research followed by 12 respondents (15.38 percent) who use internet for checking and sending electronic mails, 6 respondents (7.69 percent) who surf internet for infotainment, 5 respondents (6.42 percent) who go online for the purpose of recreation, 4 respondents who visit internet for seeking tabs and 2 respondents (2.56 percent) who seek surfing internet for curiosity. It is evident that most of the respondents (more than 60 %) use digital resources for their research purpose.

The data presented in the table 3 shows that 23 respondents (29.48 percent) visit academic websites mostly followed by 19 respondents (24.36 percent) who visit websites related to entertainment, 13 respondents (16.67 percent) who visit news websites, 12 respondents (15.38 percent) who visit on line for film news and 11 respondents (14.11 percent) who visit sports websites. It is concluded from the table-3 that academic websites are the most visited websites by the research scholars compared to other websites related to news, films, sports and entertainment.

TABLE 3 MOST VISITED WEBSITS

MOST VISITED WEBSITES	SCIENCE	SOCIAL SCIENCE	HUMANITIES	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE
Academic Websites	13	06	04	23	29.48
News	05	06	02	13	16.67
Films	04	06	02	12	15.38
Entertainment	11	05	03	19	24.36
Sports	04	05	01	11	14.11

TABLE 4 SATISFACTION ON DIGITAL RESOURCES

Response	Science	Social Science	Humanities	Total	Percentage
Satisfied	34	18	07	59	75.64
Not Satisfied	09	07	03	19	24.36

Source: Calculated from Primary Data

The data shown in the table 4 indicates clearly that 75% of the research scholars of Manonmaniam Sundaranar University are satisfied with the digital resources available in the internet whereas nearly 25% of them are not satisfied with the electronic resources available in the internet. It is evident from the Table 5 that 42 respondents (53, 85 percent) opined that they are satisfied with digital information available to a great extent while 36 respondents (46.15 percent) expressed that they are satisfied with the available digital information to some extent. No respondents registered their opinion that they are satisfied with the available digital information to a least extent.

TABLE 5 LEVEL OF SATISFACTION

Level of Satisfaction	Science	Social Science	Humanities	Total	Percentage
To a great extent	21	16	05	42	53.85
To some extent	16	14	06	36	46.15
To a least extent	-	-	-	-	-

Source: Prepared from Primary Data

TABLE 6 USERS' SATISFACTION WITH INTERNET FACILITIES

Response	Science	Social Science	Humanities	Total	Percentage
Fully Satisfied	18	11	06	35	44.87
Partially Satisfied	17	14	07	38	48.72
Not satisfied at all	02	03	-	05	06.40
Total	37	28	13	78	100.00

The above Table 6 indicates clearly that 35 respondents (44.87 percent) among the research scholars of Manonmaniam Sundaranar University are fully satisfied with the internet facilities available in the University Library followed by 38 respondents (48.72 percent) who are partially satisfied with the internet facilities and 5 respondents (6.4 percent) who are not satisfied at all with the internet facilities available in the University Library.

TABLE 7 FREQUENTLY USED SEARCH ENGINES

Search Engines	Science	Social Science	Humanities	Total	Percentage
google	21	14	14	49	62.82
Yahoo	05	04	03	12	15.38
MSN	02	01	-	03	3.85
Alta Vista	01	-	-	01	1.28
Lycos	-	01	-	01	1.28
Rediff	06	02	01	09	11.54
Hotbot	-	-	-	-	-
Khoj	-	-	01	01	1.28
AOL	01	01	-	02	2.56
Others	-	-	-	-	-
Total	36	23	19	78	100.00

Source: Computed from Primary Data

The analysis of data presented in the Table 7 shows that 49 respondents (62.82 percent) use google search engine for seeking digital information followed by 12 respondents (15.38 percent) who use yahoo for seeking e-resources, 9 respondents who use Rediff for searching electronic resources, 3 respondents(3.85 percent) who use MSN for searching digital resources, 2 respondents(2.56 percent) who use AOL for seeking electronic information and 1 respondent each (1.28 percent) who use Alta Vista, Lycos, and Khoj for seeking digital resources respectively. The study reveals that google is the most frequently used search engine followed by yahoo. The data shown in the Table 8 shows that 30 respondents (38.46 percent) opine on the difficulty in surfing internet that important fields in the subject area are not known followed by 27 respondents (34.62 percent) who opine that the allotted time slot for them is not enough, 6 respondents (7.69 percent) who opine that they are difficult in finding appropriate information and 15 respondents(19.23percent) who opine that they find other reasons such as electricity failure, frequent disconnection of Internet, etc., for their difficulty in surfing internet for seeking digital information.

TABLE 8 DIFFICULTIES IN SURFING INTERNET

Response	Science	Social Science	Humanities	Total	Percentage
Important fields in the subject are not known	13	11	06	30	38.46
Difficulty in finding appropriate information	01	03	02	06	7.69
The allotted time slot is not sufficient	16	08	03	27	34.62
Other reasons	07	05	03	15	19.23
Total	37	27	14	78	100.00

Source: Primary Data

TABLE 9 PROBLEMS FACED BY THE RESEARCH SCHOLARS

Response	Science	Social Science	Humanities	Total	Percentage
Lack of Uninterrupted Power Supply	03	03	01	07	8.97
Limited Number of Computers	09	10	03	22	28.21
Very Slow Internet	16	11	02	29	37.18
Time Lag	03	04	01	08	10.26
Frequent Disconnection	06	04	02	12	15.38
Total	37	32	09	78	100.00

Source: Primary Data

The Table 9 shows clearly that 29 respondents (37.18 percent) express their view on the problem faced by them while seeking digital information that speed of the internet is very slow followed by 22 respondents (28.21 percent) who opine on the problem in the use of internet that there are limited number of computers in Manonmaniam Sundaranar University Library, 12 respondents ((15.38 percent) who opine that they find frequent disconnection of internet, 8 respondents (10.26 percent) who opine that time lag is the problem faced by them while surfing digital information and 7 respondents(8.97 percent) who opine that lack of uninterrupted power supply is the problem faced by them while seeking digital information through internet by them while surfing digital information and 7 respondents(8.97 percent) who opine that lack of. It is evident from this data analysis that connectivity is the critical technical factor for surfing internet towards seeking digital information. The problem of slow access to the Internet also make hindrance in the access and use of the Internet by the research scholars. The major contributory factor is very low bandwidths that affect Internet access in many university libraries.

VII. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The findings of the present study entitled "Digital Information Seekers of Manonmaniam Sundaranar University-A Study" are the following:

1. Most of the research scholars (64.10%) using the University Library are in the age group of 25-30 years.
2. A large number of research scholars (85.89%) are using the digital resources for their research work.
3. Academic websites are the most visited websites by the research scholars whereas ports websites are the least.
4. More than half of the respondents are satisfied with the digital information accessed through internet
5. Most of the research scholars use google for their digital information seeking followed by yahoo
6. A majority of users are satisfied with the availability of information on the Internet.
7. A majority of the respondents (48.72%) are partially satisfied with the internet service provided by Manonmaniam Sundaranar University Library and 44.87% of the respondents are fully satisfied.
8. A majority of the respondents faced the difficulty of insufficient time slot allotted to the use of Internet.
9. The most common problems faced by the majority of the research scholars are slow Internet speed (37.18%), availability of limited number of computer systems (28.21%) and frequent disconnection of Internet (22.41%).

VIII. TESTING OF HYPOTHESES

The present study made an attempt to understand the use of the Internet by Research scholars of Manonmaniam

Sundaranar University and the key observation of the above analysis confirmed that: Internet is not a substitute for the library. Research Scholars are not fully satisfied with the Internet facilities provided by Manonmaniam Sundaranar University library; and Research scholars have aware of the Information Resources in the Internet for their research work.

IX. SUGGESTIONS

The researcher put forward following suggestions to improve digital electronic services based on the findings of the present study.

1. The number of the computers and internet connection should be increased in Manonmaniam Sundaranar University Library.
2. The hostels should also be given internet facility.
3. The particulars related to prominent and latest websites and their addresses whould be displayed to the users of digital resources.
4. Printing facility should be made available profusely in the Library Digital Division so that the users would be able to take print outs of important required documents at nominal rates.
5. University Library is suggested to organize Digital Information Literacy Programme, Network Literacy in order to educate maximum number of users how to use digital resources for academic or research purposes.
6. A powerful generator should always be ready to ensure uninterrupted power supply to optimize the benefits of digital electronic services.
7. University Library should make sure providing high speed internet facilities for easy and faster access to digital resources by the users.

X. COCLUSION

Digital Information is a vast ocean of resources of almost all subjects. The present study indicates that a majority of users seek digital information for their research purposes. The study also reveals that most of the research scholars of Manonmaniam Sundaranar University are satisfied with the available digital information. From the analysis of the present study, it is understood that digital resources are being widely used by the research scholars. Some of the users face a little problem to find out required digital information as they are not most familiar with the use of internet. Therefore, University Library must organize more training and orientation programmes in the use of digital resources. Research scholars and their research supervisors should be motivated and encouraged to use the digital resources for their research rather than relying on printed resources alone.

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