

Use of E-resources by Faculty Members and Students in Pokhara University

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Abstract:

Objectives: *Online resources are widely used in universities but their use and types of resources may vary in different countries and universities across the globe. The study aims to find out the type of online resources accessed by faculties, members and students of constituent colleges of Pokhara University.*

Methodology: *The study selected 80 samples among the faculty members and students of constituent colleges of Pokhara University using stratified, purposive, and quota sampling methods. Opinion was collected through a structured questionnaire and data were analyzed with descriptive statistics.*

Conclusion: *The intentions of the use of online resources are mostly to search the articles, books, theses, indexing and abstract which is used for writing articles and books, theses, project works and term papers, preparing materials for the training, seminars, and conferences and also preferred to update knowledge. Large number of respondents spent an average of three hours getting and study of online resources. Almost half of the online resource users have already published some works that indicates online resources are instrumental to enhance the academic excellence and knowledge generation.*

Practical implications: *However, the student got oriented about library resources before their class started; still, there is somehow a lack of information-searching skills. The study provides input to university authorities to improve the existing online resources facilities and gives insight into the users' behaviors.*

Keywords: *E-resources, Library databases, Online resources, Pokhara University, University libraries, Nepal.*

Introduction:

The internet has been defined as the communication superhighway that links,

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hooks, and transforms the entire world into a global village where different individuals can easily get in touch, see, or speak to one another, as well as exchange information instantaneously from one point of the globe to another (Shitta, 2002). The internet's rapid growth triggered an information revolution of unprecedented magnitude (Jadad and Gagliardi, 1998).

E-Resources are the resources available in electronic forms such as E-Books, E-Journals, E-Newspapers, bibliographic databases, images, E-Sounds, and music collections. The term E-Resources is used to describe all of the information products that a library provides through a computer network. This includes electronic books, Journals, bibliographic databases and library website pages.

Online resources are a collective term to describe all the digital/electronic resources that have either been purchased or subscribed to by the University Libraries. Online resources include eBooks and article databases as well as periodical indexes and abstracts. There are numerous types of online resources and have a large number of alternatives to access these resources.

Many universities, including leading academic institutes, are implementing advanced technologies as a part of existing teaching frameworks (AFT, 2001; Bonk, 2001). Similar to other universities, being research cum teaching university, the focus has been given to enriching the reference collection along with textbooks. There are several online information resources available purely for academic purposes. Pokhara University Central Library (PUCL) has been getting an opportunity to access e-journals, e-books, and other resources through reliable organizations and databases. It was made possible via national and international Intuitions Like INASP/PERII (Program for the Enhancement of Research Information), NeLIC (Nepal Library & Information Consortium), Research4life, NepJOL, and other free databases like Directory of Open Access Journal, Social Science Research Network (SSRN), etc.,

Pokhara University has subscribed to some limited online journals databases like Jstor, Research4Life, and ProQuest. These major online resource links have been listed on the PUCL website and PUCL blog (www.puclwordpress.com) as well. Besides that, PU has made MOU with Bellevue University and Library access. PU faculties and researchers have got some access to their library too.

Users of the library ranges from undergraduates to Ph.D. level students, faculty members, staff, and community people. Besides, the library staff provides an orientation to the student from time to time and shares the information with faculty members through email. The websites of the library displayed the following information. University makes available Jstor, Project muse, Oxford University Journal, ProQuest, Research4life (Hinari, Agroa, ARDI; GOALI and other databases).

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A total of 5.07 billion people around the world use the internet today, equivalent to 63.5 percent of the world's total population. Internet users continue to grow too, with the latest data indicating that the world's connected population grew by more than 170 million in the 12 months to October 2022. As per the data of the authority, 27.76 million people have access to the internet as of June 14, 2021. A total of 331,422 more internet users have been added from mid-April to mid-May as compared to mid-March to mid-April. There were more than 27.375 million internet users till mid-May (NTA, 2022).

Using the internet has become part of the everyday experience of millions of people throughout the world. Undergraduate students are increasingly using the Internet for a variety of social and leisure purposes, as well as to find information resources that have relevance to their studies.

Pokhara University makes available certain closed accessed online resources and databases to faculty and students to its user for long years. Besides, faculty and students have the facility to access online resources massively. In this context, it is a matter of great interest to get the answer to how often such resources have been accessed by faculty members and students. What is their intention for the use of resources? What are their choices? What are the major online sources they have used?

The study digs out how many online resources are accessed by members of the Pokhara University Central Library, how often they visit the online resources, what is the major purpose of retrieving the online resources. The study also tries to find out whether users have fulfilled the objectives of visiting the online resource.

The entire paper has been divided into five sections. The 2nd section reviews the few most relevant previous studies. The third section mentioned the methods of the research and the fourth section present the data in tabular form and discusses the results. The final section concludes the paper based on the findings and discussion.

Review of Literature:

The role of a librarian is significant to promote users engaging in the access and reading of online resources. Panneerdas (2022) recommends library professionals take initiative to make awareness about e-resources and intensive marketing strategies should be adopted to increase the usage of electronic resources in management institution libraries in Coimbatore.

Even faculty members have a low level of competence of teachers regarding the use of ICT with students with disabilities, where gender and age variables are not relevant to predict the level of digital competence. In this sense, the establishment of specific plans for teacher training and advice on the use of technologies that can help people with disabilities is discussed. (Batanero, Almenara & Graván, 2022)

Users depend on several but specific online search engines to obtain online

information. There are various reasons but one may be the lack of knowledge about the different sources of information and search approaches. Most people prefer open access and free access materials like google, yahoo, etc. to paid resources (Apuke and Iyendo, 2018).

Teachers are also interested in whether the students use various types of information while preparing term papers and assigning given by the instructors. Researchers in various fields have been interested in students' online information selection behaviors and patterns (Hsu et al., 2014; Kirkwood, 2008; Leeder and Shah, 2016).

Mohtar, et. al (2015) concluded that due to the lack of knowledge of the Ph.D. scholars while retrieving the online resources, they need to have specific training to retrieve the needed and relevant materials. Tsai et al. (2012) indicated that university students' online search strategies utilized for searching daily life information were significantly better than those utilized for learning activities, especially in behavioral and metacognitive strategies.

A combination of various contextual factors determines the use of Web resources for learning. Of the academic factors that emerged from the interviews, assessment requirements, and the pedagogic approach was particularly important (Kirkwood, 2008).

Purposes of using e-resources are different based on their profession and education. Students are often required to search for information via the Internet to finish and turn in their homework or research projects (Tekinarslan, 2008).

Methods and Materials:

Population, sampling procedure and Sample size: The study was carried out with Faculty members, Master level and Ph.D. level students of Pokhara University. There are only four faculties in Pokhara University. All faculties are included in this research. The study is limited to the four faculties (Faculty of Management Studies, Faculty of Health Sciences, Faculty of Science and Technology, and Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences) and four constituent colleges (School of Business, School of Health and Allied Science, School of Engineering, and School of Development and Social Engineering). The population is divided into four strata and 80 respondents were selected using stratified, purposive, and quota sampling methods.

Instruments and data analysis: Structured questionnaire was developed by consulting experts, tested with a few respondents, and confirmed its reliability and validity. Data were analyzed and presented using descriptive statistical and pictorial tools.

Result and Discussion

This section presents the result of the study and discusses the results.

4.1 Description of respondents

Characteristics of respondents like sex, age group, profession, educational qualification, and institution of association is presented in table 1.

Table 1: Description of respondents

Factors	Attributes	Total	
		N	Per.
Sex	Male	46	58%
	Female	34	43%
Age group	Up to 30 year	20	25%
	Above 30 to 40 year	30	38%
	Above 40 to 50 year	23	29%
	Above 50 year	7	9%
Profession	Faculty	34	43%
	Master Thesis student	34	43%
	PhD Research Scholar only	9	11%
	Faculty cum PhD Research Scholar	3	4%
Highest Qualification	Master	30	38%
	MPhil	2	3%
	PhD	13	16%
	Post-Doctoral	1	1%
Institutional associated with	School of Business / FMS	30	38%
	School of Health and Allied Science / FHS	25	31%
	School of Engineering / FST	15	19%
	School of Development and Social Engineering / FHSS	10	13%
	Total	80	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2023

The demographic feature of the respondents is presented in table 1. Out of the total of 80 respondents, the number of males is slightly higher (58%) than females (43%). The table shows that the mode age group is above 30 to 40 (38%), Thesis year (Master level) students and Faculty are in the same number (43%), largest respondents' (38%)

highest education is master level and highest number of respondents are associated with the faculty of management studies (38%) out of four institutions.

4.2 Objectives and frequency of using online resources

The objectives of searching online resources and their frequency of accessing online resources have been exhibited in cross table 2. In this study the terms Frequently, Seldom, and Rarely are used relatively while never means not used at all. Every respondent should choose one of the options (Frequently, Seldom, Rarely, and Never) in each statement.

Table 2: Objectives and frequency of using online resources

Objectives of online resources		Frequency of the resources use				Total
		Frequently	Seldom	Rarely	Never	
To write articles / books	N	50	24	6	0	80
	F	63%	30%	8%		100%
To write thesis / project works / term papers	N	42	30	8	0	80
	F	53%	38%	10%		100%
To prepare for teaching study notes	N	39	12	5	24	80
	F	49%	15%	6%	30%	100%
To prepare materials for the training, seminars and conferences	N	50	30	0	0	80
	F	63%	38%	0%	0	100%
To update knowledge	N	61	12	7		80
	F	76%	15%	9%	0	100%
To use spare times	N	11	45	24		80
	F	14%	56%	30%	0	100%

N = Number, F= Frequency

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Respondents need online resources for different purposes. Six different objectives were listed and asked respondents how often they use online resources.

Writing articles/books: among 80 respondents, 63% accessed and read online resources frequently, followed by 24% use seldom and 8% rarely used the resources.

Write thesis/project works / term papers: only 53% of respondents frequently visited online platforms.

Preparing for teaching study notes: Almost half of the respondents (49%) accessed

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online resources frequently, and 30% never used online resources to prepare the notes for teaching.

Preparing materials for the seminars/conferences: Out of 80 respondents, almost two third (63%) opined that they frequently browsed the websites and obtained the resources.

The study further explored that 79% of respondents frequently obtained the online resources for the following purposes:

Update knowledge: Utilizing their spare time, the majority of the respondents (56%) seldom visit the online resources website. The cross-tabulation shows that a higher number of people visited research platforms more frequently to update their knowledge.

To use spare time: Sometimes people used online resources to manage leisure time. Few (14%) frequently and the majority of the respondents (56%) seldom used online resources to use their spare time.

The study shows that online resources are mostly used to update knowledge, seldom and rarely use to spare time and it is never used by one-third of the respondents preparing teaching notes. It is also observed that the majority of the respondents frequently used online resources to write articles and books, write a thesis, project works, and term papers, prepare materials for training, seminars, and conferences, and also preferred to update knowledge.

4.3 Daily time spending for online resources:

Various studies proved that most students, researchers, and teachers prefer online resources since it is cost-effective, easy to access, and times saving. Online resources are used as other types of materials. It is a matter of curiosity how long they engaged in retrieving and reading the online resources.

Table 3: Daily time spending to access online resources

Daily time spending for online resources	Total	
	N	Percentage
> 2 hours	23	29%
2 to 4 hours	46	58%
> 4 hours	11	14%
Total	80	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2023

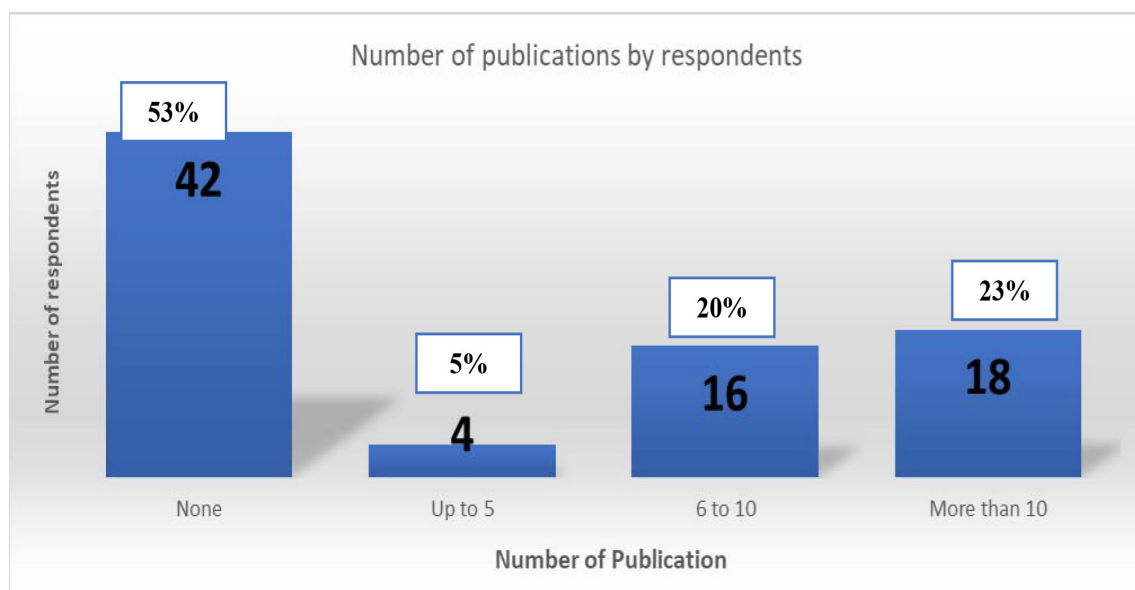
The survey results show that the majority of the respondents spent 2 to 4 hours

on online resources, followed by less than 2 hours (29%), and the least number of respondents have spent more than 4 hours (14%) searching and reading the online (Table 3).

4.4 Number of publications by respondents:

Out of 80, 35 faculties and 9 Ph.D. research scholars participated in the survey. To know whether they have published papers or books is of great interest to researchers. The response to the queries is presented in figure 1. The majority of the respondents still have not published any publications whereas 23% have published more than 10 publications and least number of respondents (5%) has published 5 publications.

Figure 1: Number of publications by respondents



Source: Field Survey, 2023

The study specifies that almost half of the respondents already have some publication due to their involvement and engagement in online resources download and study. It can be concluded that online resources are very helpful for academic excellence and knowledge generation.

4.5 Name of Online research platform:

Large number of online research platforms are available in the internet. Among them 7 free of cost and 11 subscribed daw tabase have been displayed to the respondent and asked them whether they have used each of the search engine and two options were given either yes or no.

The result has been presented in table 4.

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All respondents were familiar with the free of cost search engines like google, Google scholars, research gate, SSRN, Microsoft Academic, Sci-hub and academia.

Table 4 : Name of Online search database

Name of Online research platform	Number of Respondents		Percentage of Respondents	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
1. Google	80	0	100%	0%
2. Google Scholar	80	0	100%	0%
3. Research Gate	80	0	100%	0%
4. SSRN	80	0	100%	0%
5. Academia	80	0	100%	0%
6. Sci-Hub	80	0	100%	0%
7. Microsoft Academic	80	0	100%	0%
8. JSTOR	42	38	53%	48%
9. ProQuest	32	48	40%	60%
10. Springer	32	48	40%	60%
11. Emerald Insight	28	52	35%	65%
12. HINARI (AGORA, OARE, ARDI)	25	55	31%	69%
13. EBSCO Host	23	57	29%	71%
14. Taylor and Francis	23	57	29%	71%
15. R4Life	13	67	16%	84%
16. Sage Journals	4	76	5%	95%
17. Cambridge University journals	2	78	3%	98%
18. Palgrave Mcmillan	2	78	3%	98%

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Among the different subscribed database, more than half of the respondents (53%) preferred and frequently visited JSTOR followed by ProQuest and Springer (40%). Similarly, almost one-third preferred Emerald insight (35%) followed by HINARI (31%). Very few have visited the site of Palgrave McMillan and Cambridge University journals (3%).

The free access search engines and open access databased are visited by a large number of respondents. Very few (3 to 5%) respondents have visited Sage Journals,

Cambridge University journals, and Palgrave Mcmillan databased. These three databased are not subscribed by Pokhara University.

4.1 Objectives of searching of online resources:

Various types of online resources are available on the internet among them; articles, books, news and other information, thesis/dissertation, YouTube, general information of organizations, databases, indexing, and abstracting database are mostly searched items. The same list was put forth to the respondents to enquire about their preferences. The response is tabulated in table 5.

All respondents intended to access articles, books, news and other information, thesis/dissertation, and YouTube from the internet. But online resources are visited by 98% to access general information about organizations, 23% for searching databases and 15% try to find Indexing and Abstracting database.

Table 5: Objectives of searching of online resources

Types of online resources searched	Number of Respondents		Percentage of Respondents	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Articles	80	0	100%	0%
Books	80	0	100%	0%
News and other information	80	0	100%	0%
Thesis / Dissertation	80	0	100%	0%
YouTube	80	0	100%	0%
General information of organizations	78	2	98%	3%
Databases	18	62	23%	78%
Indexing and Abstracting database	12	68	15%	85%

The result indicates that all respondents used the online resources to access articles, books, news, Youtube, and thesis and dissertation. But, 98% obtained the information of the organization, 23% obtained the database and 15% used the database to search the indexing and abstract.

Conclusions:

The study arrived at a couple of conclusions based on the results. The purpose of using online resource is to search the articles, books, thesis, indexing, and abstract. The resource is used for writing articles and books, thesis, project works, and term papers, preparing materials for training, seminars, and conferences, and also preferred

to update knowledge. Some of the users have already published their works using the online resources so that online resources are instrumental for academic excellence and knowledge generation. All users used freely available sites, database and resources. The sites subscribed by Pokhara University are also visited by all users. Very few users used the self-paid sites.

Scope for the further research:

The present studies cover the population of the constituent colleges of Pokhara University so the generalization of the findings is not appropriate. The sample representation from the entire colleges (68) of Pokhara University is better for the generalization of the findings. Another study of the same kind is also can be carried out with undergraduate-level students also suitable to measure the level of awareness towards online resources and their usage in the learning process. The national-level study including the sample of all universities is also necessary to explore the actual situation of the application of the online resource and its impact on the student's performance and knowledge. The faculty-specific study is also useful to get insight into the abilities of the teachers on obtaining quality information.

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