Use of Electronic Resources by Postgraduate Students: a case study at the Open University of Sri Lanka.

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Abstract

Presently using of e-resources for higher education purposes has been increased day by day in the world. The purpose of present study was to determine the extent of use of e-resources by postgraduate students at the Open University of Sri Lanka (OUSL). The descriptive survey method was used as the research method and stratified random sampling used as the sample technique for this study.

Although, most used e-resources for academic needs, most postgraduate students were unaware to use various types of e-resources. Also it was revealed that main reason (92%) for using e-resources was for writing assignments. Most of postgraduate students at Faculty of Education rarely used e-resources for academic needs and most of postgraduate students at the Faculty of Natural Sciences students highly used e-resources for academic needs. Further, the study revealed that overall more than 50% indicated that they were comfortable with e-information literacy skills but considerable amount indicated that they do not feel comfortable with e-information literacy skills. Furthermore, the study found that majority of postgraduate students' self–perceived computer knowledge level was medium. Furthermore, more than half of the respondents positively agreed with using e-resources for academic purposes while significant amount had neutral attitudes on using e-resources for academic needs. The main barrier was slow Internet connectivity for those who used e-resources and those who were not using e- resources had the barrier of poor computer literacy skills and poor web browsing skills.

Therefore, it is recommended to design a series of workshops keeping those points in mind and deliver the workshops on a regular basis. In addition promotional campaigns, handouts etc. will be useful to enhance the awareness of e-resources, e-information literacy skills and computer literacy skills of OUSL postgraduate students. Public speeches, forums, seminars will create a good interest and cooperation to generate positive attitudes towards using of e-resources for academic needs by OUSL postgraduate students.

Keywords:- Electronic resources, OUSL postgraduate students, Electronic information literacy skills, Computer literacy skills, Attitudes