

Dependency of Electronic Resources by the Media Professionals of Thiruvananthapuram Press Club: An Investigation

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Abstract

The role of journalists and their nature of work have changed with the introduction of online technologies. Today electronic resources offer a broad range of information to the media professionals. This study attempts to identify the level of awareness of the e-resources, purpose of use, extent of utilization, the challenges faced in accessing e-resources and to make suggestions for the optimum utilization of e-resources by the media professionals of Press Club, Thiruvananthapuram. A Census method was adopted for collecting data from the respondents through a well structured questionnaire. Out of 75% responded 11.2% are from Asianet. It was found that 66% are aware of the e-resources, majority of the respondents (88%) consider e-resources are very useful for their professional activities, majority of the respondents (87%) are satisfied with the availability of the e-resources and 72% are satisfied with the facilities provided by the Press Club media library for the use of the e-resources and 60% opined that e-resources cannot replace the print resources. The major challenges faced by the respondents are improper connectivity and lack of digital literacy. It was suggested to strengthen the e-resource collection of the Press Club library and to establish a comprehensive networking with news chambers for resource sharing. The study strengthens the need for organising regular orientation programme to the media professionals for the optimum utilization of e-resources and thus to improve their skill and proficiency in accessing information quickly for their professional activities.

Keywords: Media Professionals; Press Club Library; Thiruvananthapuram; E-resources; Journalist

1. Introduction

The role of journalists and their nature of work have changed with the introduction of online technologies. Wainwright (1982) defined journalism as a "skill by which an event of the day is distilled into a few words, sounds or pictures processed by the mechanics of communication to satisfy the human curiosity of the world that is always eager to know what's new." Thus, journalism thrives as a field that deals with large volumes of information. Use of the web, as a news gathering resource has also grown rapidly in the past six years, for public awareness and commercial use, including that by news organizations. News media, in the Internet have had revolutionary impact on journalism. It is possibly, changing the role of the journalist to that of an intermediary. It offers a broad range of new mediums with which to deliver messages; and furthermore, it is creating its own form of journalism.

The current technologies of news media make gathering and producing news more efficient, faster, and cost-effective. These technologies also enhance creativity and encourage new approaches to old tasks. The next generation of the Internet, currently known as Internet 2, is expected to have even more significant effect on news reporting and content delivery. A growing number of daily newspapers are using the Internet and World Wide Web to search for, and gather information. Hundreds of web search tools have been developed and become available. A recent study found that journalists sought well-structured sites with more information on content than graphics, and sites that adequately attribute to information. Journalists perceive success in using the web when they find information they seek, especially when it has been challenging to locate. They seek background information and other material which would otherwise be difficult to find, using online resources.

Electronic news gathering and the satellite age have pushed television news deadlines

back to the last minute of the programme. News stories are able to be constantly means the viewing audience is able to be kept abreast with developments as they happen. New technologies have been key in bringing down existing barriers to regional and international reporting, as it is now possible to broadcast live from any destination in the world. Electronic newsgathering crews, satellite technology, mobile broadcasting vehicles and portable editing equipment mean news reports can be broadcast live or put together and relayed back rapidly with ease.

2. Relevance of the study

The Press Club, Thiruvananthapuram is the hub of media activities in Thiruvananthapuram, capital of the south Indian state of Kerala, established in 1965 with 20 members, which has now swelled into 350. The main objectives of the Press Club are to promote the professional interests of journalists and for the diffusion of useful knowledge in journalism; to provide a forum for the exchange of views and for collection and dissemination of information; to conduct a professional training institute and a research centre for journalism; to set up a theatrical centre for dramas and other forms of entertainment; to organize study circles and seminars in arts, literature and science; to set up a recreational centre for the members; and to provide medical, educational and financial assistance to deserving persons. The media professionals of Press Club mainly perform two functions. The first one being, reporting the news and the second one is to offer interpretation and opinion, based on the news.

Rapid globalization to the world economy and the impact of the information age creates a changing approach in people. They hope to acquire specific facts in the fastest way possible, and rapid access to precise and reliable data with highly rapid machine oriented service gained importance. The traditional process of organizing, retrieving, disseminating and managing information is being replaced by new methods and techniques, using sophisticated information technologies. The information with their traditional source in print format is now being added with electronic information sources. This study helps to throw some light on the use of electronic resources by media professionals, and to identify the problems they face that are associated, with the use of these electronic resources. No systematic study in this area has been conducted so far.

updated and live coverage

3. Objectives of the study

The main objectives of the study are: -

- i. To identify the level of awareness of the E-Resources among media professionals of Thiruvananthapuram, Press Club.
- ii. To identify the purpose of using E-Resources.
- iii. To examine the various factors affecting the availability of E-Resources in the media.
- iv. To know the obstacles faced by media in using E-Resources.
- v. To examine the utilization of E-resources by the media.
- vi. To find out the factors that attract the use of E-Resources.
- vii. To determine the time spent for E-Resources.
- viii. To find out the frequency of usage of E-Resources.
- ix. To suggest suitable recommendation to improve the use of E-Resources for the benefit of media professionals.

4. Data and Methodology

The study has started with a literature search from different databases and various libraries in Thiruvananthapuram such as Kerala University Library, State Central Library and Thiruvananthapuram Press Club Library. Some important primary documents such as annual reports, PCI (Press Council of India) reviews, newsletters, brochures, seminar volumes etc, were consulted to understand the recent developments in the field of media profession. Based on the objectives of the study a questionnaire was designed with a total of 22 multiple choice questions. The population for the study consists of 250 Journalists of different medias who are members of Press Club, Thiruvananthapuram. The details of the news media selected for the study is given in the Table 1. The questionnaire was personally distributed among each and every media professionals under study and finally one hundred and eighty seven professionals responded to the questionnaire. The percentage of response is 74.8 %. The scope of the study is to analyze the effectiveness of the usage of electronic resources by the media professionals. This study aims at understanding the existing

infrastructure facilities for accessing electronic resources and how these can be utilized for

the development of professional activities.

5. Review of Related Literature

Olarongbe and Aina (2017) investigated the accessibility and utilization of electronic information sources (EIS) by journalists in Nigeria and it was found that facebook, twitter, e-mail and YouTube were readily accessible to journalists while online databases, e-books and online reference works were not readily accessible. The electronic sources were mainly used for fact checking, writing news and conducting research. Cost of subscription, lack of awareness, assistance from media librarians, ICT training and poor internet connection were identified as major constraints to EIS utilization. Mahajan and Kumar (2017) conducted a survey on the information seeking behavior of the journalists in north India found that the journalists mostly use the newspaper libraries once a week to consult the reference books. Most of the respondents are satisfied with the behavior of the library staff and opined that the newspapers should be digitised. Singh and Sharma (2013) conducted a study found that different categories of journalists used various types of sources for acquiring the needed information. The periodicals, news magazines, current issues of newspapers, newspaper clipping files and dictionaries/ biographical dictionaries are most frequently used sources of information. The main difficulties faced by

journalists are lack of modern communication gadgets, information scattered in many sources, lack of time to look for or read information, lack of readily available information and inadequate library services and sources. Simon Attfield and John Dowell, (2003) reported that the information seeking behavior of journalist are motivated by context, facilitated by resources, and how they enrich the journalist's resource space. Kumar and Kumar (2010) examined the perception and use of e-resources and the Internet by the Engineering, Medical and Management Academics in Bangalore city, India. It aimed to establish the extent of Internet use, the purpose of such use and factors influencing it. Study results showed that the students and faculty who participated in this survey are aware of e-resources and also the Internet. The study revealed that a majority of the academic community use electronic information sources for their academic related work.

6. Analysis and Discussions

6.1 Distribution of Respondents

The respondents from different media under study is given in Table-1. It was found that majority of respondents are from Asianet (11.2%).

Table -1: List of News Media

Sl.No.	Name of the News Media	No. of respondents	Percentage
1	Amritha TV	9	4.8
2	Asianet	21	11.2
3	Deepika	12	6.4
4	Deshabhimani	15	8.0
5	India TV	1	0.5
6	India Vision	2	1.1
7	Jeevan TV	4	2.1
8	Jaihind TV	9	4.8
9	Kairali	6	3.2
10	Kerala Kaumudi	17	9.1
11	Madhyamam	8	4.3
12	Malayala Manorama	16	8.6
13	Mangalam	14	7.5
14	Mathrubhumi	18	9.6
15	Reporter	4	2.1
16	Surya TV	12	6.4
17	The Hindu	8	4.3
18	The New Indian Express	6	3.2
19	The Times of India	4	2.1
20	Times Now	1	0.5
	Total	187	100.0

6.2 Demographic and social conditions of the respondents

Table 2: Demographic and Social Conditions of the Respondents

Gender wise distribution	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Male	113	60
Female	74	40
Age wise distribution		
21- 30	54	29
31-40	62	33
41-50	45	24
51-60	26	14
Qualification wise distribution		
Graduate	78	42
Post Graduate	102	54
Ph.D	7	4
Status wise distribution		
Junior Journalist	58	31
Senior Journalist	102	55
Freelance Journalist	27	14
Total	187	100

Table 2 indicates that out of a total of 187 respondents, 113(60%) are male and 74 (40%) are female. The age wise distribution shows that 54 (29%) are below the 30years, 62 (33%) belongs to the age group of 31-40 years, 45 (24%) are in the age group of 41-50 years and 26 (14%) are above the age of 51 years. The average age of the respondents is 37.8 years. The qualification wise analysis

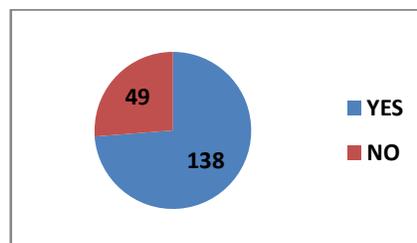
shows that 78(42%) are Graduates, 102 (54%) are post graduates and 7(4%) have Ph.D. It is concluded that majority(54%) of the journalists are at least post graduates. The status wise distribution indicates that 58 (31%) are Junior Journalists, 102(55%) are Senior Journalists, and 27(14%) are Freelance Journalists. Hence majority of the respondents are Senior Journalists.

6.3 Awareness of computer

Computer knowledge has become a necessity in all professions. A question was raised to know the awareness of computers among the respondents. It is a fact that no formal computer education is needed to get a journalism degree but in the IT era, computer literacy is essential to make use of Internet

and other databases. Realizing this, the present study attempted to ascertain the knowledge of computers of journalists. Fig.1 indicates that out of 187 respondents, 138(74%) have knowledge in computer and 49(26%) have no knowledge in computer. This implies a positive sign regarding the use of computers by the journalists.

Figure –1: Awareness of computer



6.4 Use of Internet

Internet has become important channel of information, which is very useful for all

professionals. Table 3 indicates the use of Internet by the journalists.

Table -3: Use of Internet

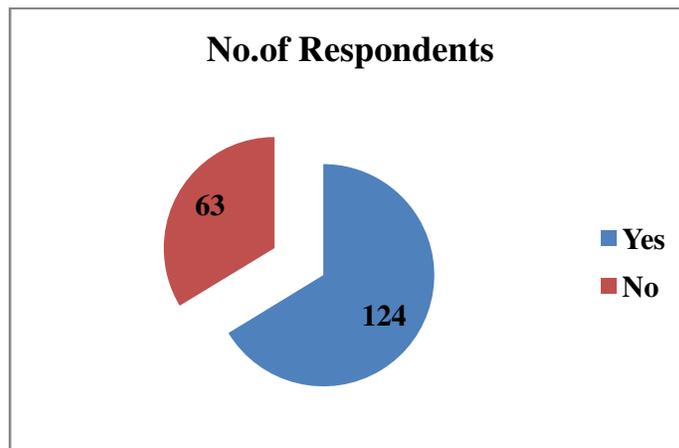
Responses	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	144	77
No	43	23
Total	187	100

Table -3 revealed that out of 187 respondents, 144(77%) are using Internet and 43(23%) are not using the Internet. This result shows a positive sign regarding the use of the internet by the Journalists.

There is a remarkable shift of choice from print resources to e-resources by the users for information. The attempt to ascertain the knowledge of e-resources by the media professionals is given in Fig. 2. It is clear that 124 (66%) are aware of e-resources and 63(34%) are not aware of e-resources. The result implies a positive approach to e-resources by the journalists.

6.5 Awareness of E-Resources

Figure 2 : Awareness of E-Resources



6.6 Types of E-Resources frequently used

The news agency profession is a highly competitive business. Keeping pace with developments on the technology front is inevitable if professionals in the field are to survive. Technology being capital-intensive,

the news agencies have in the process been forced to look for additional sources of revenue resulting in the agencies expanding beyond some of their long-established frontiers in the news world. E-Resources used by the journalist include e-journals, e-discussions, e-news, data archives, e-mail, online chatting etc.

Table - 4 : Types of E-Resources frequently used

Types of E-Resources	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Internet Resources	121	65
CD ROM/DVD databses	10	5
e-news/e-discussions /Forums	10	5
Online databses/Reference sources	21	11
E-Books/E-Journals	25	14
Total	187	100

Table 4 shows that 121(65%) participants use Internet resources, 10 (5%) use CD-ROM/DVD databases and e-news/e-discussion/online forums,21(11%) use online data bases/reference sources and 25 (14%) use e-books/e-journals. Therefore, it can be seen that Internet resources, databases and e-journals/e-books were the most used e-resources.

6.7 Preference of search engines

For finding information on the Internet, online searches are carried out with the use of search engines. The search engines will search for Internet containing the words that designate as a search term. The preference given by the journalists in the use of search engine is given in Table 5.

Table- 5 : Preference of search engines

Search Engines	Preferences	Percentage
Google	115	61
Yahoo	72	39
Ultavista	0	0
Excite	0	0
Hot Bot	0	0
Total	187	100

Among the respondents, 115 (61%) preferred Google followed by Yahoo by 72 (39%) respondents. The other search engines are not preferred by the respondents. It can be found out from the analysis that Google and Yahoo are the most preferred search engines.

Internet use has both advantages and disadvantages. It depends upon the purposes of use. If it is properly used, it helps to increase knowledge and keeps one abreast with the latest developments. Table -6 shows the the purpose of browsing Internet by the media professionals.

6.8 Purpose of browsing Internet

Table -6: Purpose of browsing Internet

Purpose	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Checking E-Mail	32	17
Professional Purpose	65	35
Chatting	30	16
News	34	18
Entertainment	26	14
Total	187	100

Table 6 shows that out of 187 respondents 65(35%) used the Internet for Professional purpose, 32 (17%) for email, 30 (16%) for chatting ,34 (18%) for news and 26(14%) for entertainment.

Information in all fields is available on Internet, which is very useful for all professions. The present study attempted to find the frequency of use of Internet by the respondents. Table-7 indicates the frequency of use of Internet by the journalists.

6.9 Frequency of Internet use

Table -7 : Frequency of Internet use

Frequency	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Daily	141	75
Twice in a week	32	17
Once in a month	9	5
Rarely	5	3

Table -7 reveals that 141(75%) respondents are using Internet on daily basis. Furthermore, 32 participants (17%) are using the Internet twice in a week, 9 (5%) use the Internet once in a month and 5 (3%) use it rarely.

6.10 Usefulness of E-Resources

There has been a remarkable shift of choice from print resources to e-resources by users for information. Table-8 shows the opinions of

journalists on the usefulness of e-resources for profession.

Table - 8 : Usefulness of E-Resources for Profession

Responses	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Very Useful	164	88
Rarely Useful	23	12
No Use	0	0
Total	187	100

Table - 8 shows that 164 (88%) of the respondents opined that e-resources are very useful and 23 (12%) find it rarely useful. It shows that e-resources are highly useful for the news media profession.

E-Resources can be used in different places according to the convenience of the user and availability of access facility. Table -9 indicates the place of access of E-resources by the media professionals.

6.11 Place of access of E-Resources

Table -9: Place of access of E-Resources

Place of access of E-Resources	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Library	10	5
Office	142	76
Home	32	17
Any other	3	2
Total	187	100

Table-9 shows that 142 (76%) respondents access E-Resources at office, 32(17%) at home, 10(5%) of respondents at library and 3(2%) at another place such as cafe etc.

6.12 Extent of satisfaction with the availability of E-Resources

The respondents were asked to indicate their satisfaction, in the availability of e-resources. Table -10 shows the satisfaction of journalists in the availability of e-resources.

Table -10 : Extent of satisfaction with availability of E-Resources

Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	162	87
No	25	13
Total	187	100

It is revealed that 162 (87%) respondents are satisfied with the availability of E-resources and 25 (13 %) are not satisfied.

The Journalists have been asked to indicate the problems faced while using E-Resources. Table-16 indicates the obstacles in using E-Resources.

6.13 Obstacles in the use of E-Resources

Table -11: Obstacles in the use of E-Resources

Obstacles	No. of respondents	Percentage
Connectivity problem	121	65
Unfamiliarity to use	28	15
Time consuming	8	4
Unwanted information	15	8
Poor readability	8	4
Costly	7	4
Total	187	100

Table – 11 shows that 121 (65%) respondents find connectivity problem as the main difficulty in using E-Resources. Twenty eight (15%) find

unfamiliarity to use e-resources and 8 (4%) find the usage of such resources as time consuming, 15 (8%) respondents are facing

the difficulty of unwanted information and 8 (4%) complained the poor readability, while 7(4%) participants opined that e-resources are costly.

In order to find reasons for using the e-resources, respondents have been asked to indicate their major purpose of use on e-resources. Data shows that there are different specific purposes for which the journalists use e-resources. Table - 12 shows the specific purpose of using e-resources.

6.14 Specific Purpose of using E-Resources

Table -12: Purpose of using E-Resources

Purpose	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Writing a news item	83	44
Writing a feature	29	16
Editing a news item	21	11
Writing an article	37	20
Writing an editorial	7	4
Writing a column	10	5
Total	187	100

Table - 12 shows that 83(44%) participants use e-resources for the purpose of writing a news item, 29 (16%) for writing a feature, 21(11%) for editing a news item. The data indicates 37 (20%) uses e-resources for writing an article, 7(4%) for writing an editorial and 10 (5%) for writing a column.

6.15 Attractiveness of E-Resources

An analysis is made to know the factors that attract the use of e-resources among the respondents .The response is shown in Table - 13.

Table -13 : Attractiveness of E-Resources

Factors	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Up to date	57	30
Easy search	112	60
Comprehensiveness	7	4
Multimedia	11	6
Total	187	100

Table - 13 shows that 112 (60%) considered that it is easy to search , 57(30%) opined that the information obtained through the e-resources are up to date , 7 (4%) respondents indicated it is comprehensive and 11 (6%) indicated that it is more attractive due to its multimedia features.

6.16 Effect of E-Resources on the use of print media

There is a general belief that the use of e-resources affect negatively in the use of print resources. Table -14 shows the effect of e-resources on the use of print media.

Table -14 : Effect of e-resources in the use of print media

Responses	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	74	40
No	113	60
Total	187	100

Table -14 reveals that 113(60%) respondents feel that the advent of electronic resources cannot affect the use of print resources and 74(40%) respondents feel that the advent of e-resources affect the use of print resources.

The respondents were asked to indicate their level of satisfaction in the facilities given by the media library to access e-resources. Table-15 shows the respondent's satisfaction in the facilities given by the media library to access e-resources.

6. 17 Extent of satisfaction of facilities given by the Media Library to access E-Resources

Table – 15: Extent of satisfaction of facilities given by the Media Library to access E-Resources

Satisfaction	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	135	72
No	52	28
Total	187	100

Table -15 shows that 135(72%) respondents are fully satisfied with the facilities given by the library and 52 (28%) respondents are not satisfied.

7. Major Findings of the Study

- a) Out of the 187 respondents, 66 % were aware of the e-resources.
- b) Majority of the respondents (77%) were using the Internet. This shows a positive sign regarding the use of Internet by the journalists.
- c) Google is the most preferred search engines by the journalists as seen from their responses, which is 61% and the second preference is given to Yahoo, which is 39 % only.
- d) Regarding the purpose of Internet use, 65(35%) respondents out of 187 deduced that the Internet was used for professional purpose.
- e) Seventy five percentage of the respondents are using Internet daily and 17 % use it twice in a week.
- f) Majority of the respondents (88 %) consider e-resources very useful for their professional activities.
- g) Out of the 187 respondents, 60% are males, indicating the presence of male domination in news media profession in Thiruvananthapuram Press Club.
- h) Majority of the participating respondents are in the age group of 31 - 40 years.
- i) Majority of the respondents (54%) are Post Graduates.
- j) Majority of the respondents (55%) are found to be Senior Journalists.
- k) Seventy percentage of responses shows that Internet resources are the most used e-resources.
- l) Seventy six percentage of the respondents access the e-resources from their office, while 17% access from home.
- m) Majority of the respondents (87 %) are satisfied with the availability of the e-resources.
- n) Out of the 187 respondents, 65% of the respondents find that connectivity problem is the main difficulty in using the e-resources. Due to unfamiliarity 15% find it difficult to use such resources.
- o) Responses show that 44% of the respondents use e-resources for preparing a news item and upto 20% use such resources for writing an article. Only 4% seek the help of e-resources for writing editorials which is normal because editorials are written by the well experienced and senior most staff members.
- p) Sixty percentage responses show that easy search is the main attracting factor of e-resources. Thirty percentage responses indicate that updation is the attracting factor of e-resources.
- q) Majority of the respondents (72%) are satisfied with the facilities provided by the media library for the use of the e-resources.
- r) Sixty percentage of the respondents feel that e-resources cannot replace the print resources.

8. Suggestions

- a) The media association should create programmes to train its journalists on Information Communication Technologies(ICT)with particular reference to the use of e-resources.
- b) The media associations should co-operate in providing facilities to procure and give access to electronic information resources.
- c) News Media Professionals should acquire basic skills, including soft skills for acquiring the right information from the right source at the right time in appropriate format.
- d) Whenever necessary, library professionals should give user education programmes to news professionals to help them to acquire and practice the skill.

- e) Press Club Library should subscribe to more e-journals and e-databases.
- f) Compared to the total number of journalists, the number of journalists using the e-resources is small. Further, those who do use such resources do not have adequate knowledge of the above mentioned resources. Therefore it is recommended that the qualified IT staff should be appointed to provide expert guidance to users about e-resources and Internet.
- g) There should be complete campus wide networking with Internet browsing facility connecting the news chambers. Some orientation training programs should be organized by the Press Club at regular intervals so that the maximum users can improve their proficiency in the use of e-resources for their professional purposes.

9. Conclusion

The impact of information and communication technologies has revolutionized every walk of life. The study revealed that respondents are using e-resources. E-resources have become the vital part of human life in present day. It has rapidly changed the way of seeking and disseminating information. It is clear from the study that electronic resources are useful to the media professionals. Media professionals in the Press Club, Thiruvananthapuram are aware about the e-resources, but they do not know all its techniques and applications. A small portion of news media professionals have no knowledge about the e-resources and related applications. For this purpose, there is

need for effective information literacy programmes to develop awareness, and knowledge of the journalists.

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