Characteristics and use of grey literature in scientific journals articles of Algerian researchers:

Case study of University of Science and Technology Houari Boumediene (*Physic, Chemistry and computer sciences*)

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Rome, Italy. *29 Nov 2012*

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Introduction

The advent of the World Wide Web and the Internet in particular has a huge impact on the publishing of science where new forms of circulation and access to knowledge have emerged namely open access.

A need to assess the effectiveness of scientific research has emerged which be consistent with current knowledge modes of communication and the news users needs.

In reality, issues of significant amounts allocated to electronic resources integrated into the academic sphere and for which a return on investment analysis and is indispensable, have allowed the development of studies uses in order to guide the offer and services to offer.

In Algeria, Algerian scientific research makers are aware the evaluation of scientific research is an absolute necessity, there for a favorable policies with infrastructure and digital services to promote a national research policy and development is created.

However, when studies of uses of electronic resources and free access platforms proliferate, it should be noticed, that few studies, in this regard, in developing countries in general and Algeria in particular.

Question research

- Among of documents used by researchers which belong to the so-called grey literature
- Not easily accessible, especially for developing countries that many studies and researches are made on issues of importance vital to the growth and development, but which are not widely distributed and difficult to find.

- What are the Algerian researchers habits regarding information retrieval?
- How important and characteristics ifs grey literature publications in scientific research? What are its caracteristics?

Objective of study

- This study is the first of its meaning, it can be seen as a contribution to stimulate interest in an issue that we consider important to the Algerian researchers,

 - the assessments of research institutions to decide how to orient and improve their acquisitions, information policy, and information dissemination. It also contributes to study the impact of open access on publication of Algerian researchers.

Methodology

Our study sample is Algerian University of Science and Technology Houari Boumediene "USTHB" : Physic, Chemistry and computer science.

Quantitative component

The sample is composed of five articles (from Spocus) per year for each chosen discipline and for 2009 to 2012.
The selection of items is based on:
•Period: 2009-2012
•Most cited journals articles
•First author affiliated to USTHB
1028 references were examined and derived from 60 Algerian teachers- researchers articles journals.

Methodology

Quantitative component

Achieve semi-structured interviews with a sample of 12 teachers, researchers, men and women, PhD, lecturers and professors. Distributed among three faculties of University of Science and Technology Houari Boumediene "USTHB"
The interview grid was based on:
- teaching and research of the teacher-researcher areas ,
- research and teaching disciplines
- time devoted to research and teaching
- habits and practices regarding information retrieval
- use and characteristics of grey literature
Interviews lasted between 40 minutes and 1 hour 30 minutes on October 2012 to November 21,012 in offices of faculty, which has allowed reading the material environment and organizational documentation and resources used.

Results

Information research

- used the web to find the scientific literature
- connection problems at the university and if it exists, it does not permit necessarily a good information retrieval and the download of full text because of its slow speed.
- use of Google as a search engine and allowed to understand that consultation platforms is limited.
- shortcomings in terms of supply and services, adding connection problems that drive most of the time to give up.
- using Google for the supervision of doctoral theses, or through contact with colleagues, or through an internship
- a random and inefficient search for information which indicates a need for training on the web as well as platforms for electronic resources.
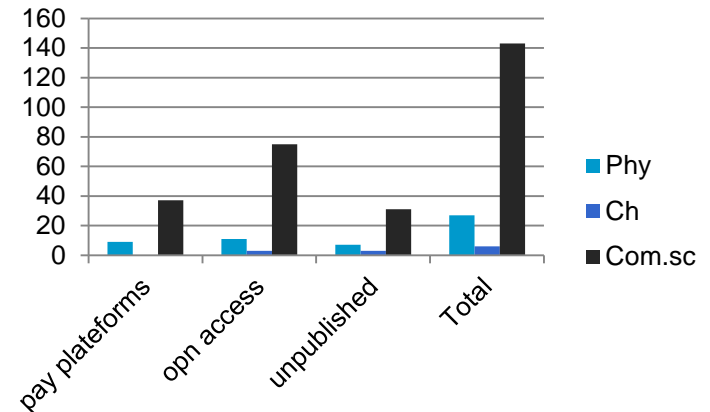
Results

Place and characteristics of gray literature

According to the quantitative informations as shown below the use of grey literature differs from discipline to another. The higher level citation of this kind of literature comes from computer science and the last one form chemistry.

This difference is due to the characteristics of information research for each discipline. The Interviews related with what we said earlier, in some discipline, researchers prefer simple research, which guarantee wider answers, even if they are not well organized.
In other discipline, as chemistry, the
interviews allowed us to understand that the majority of teachers-researchers prefer to include items most cited and not difficult to identify.
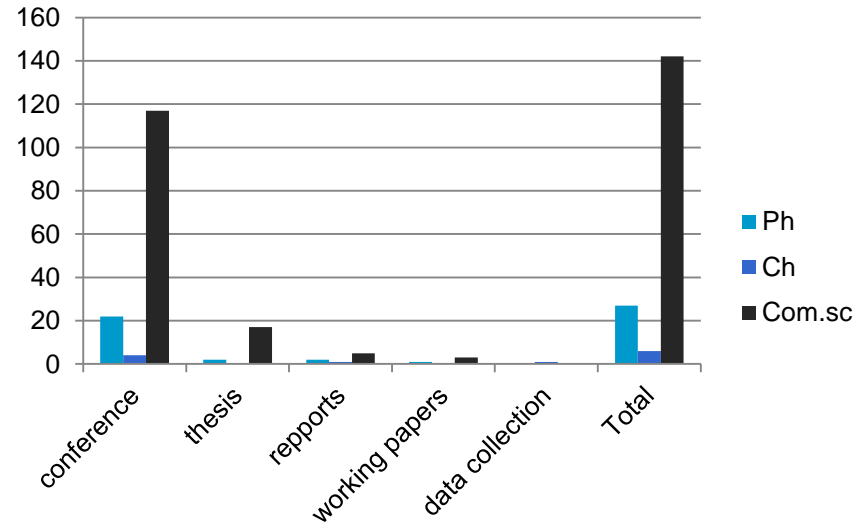

The teachers-researchers have a limited time to read, they have a teaching activity parallel to them research, they have administrative and educational responsibilities and it have yet to publish regularly in places recognized by the community.

Results

Place and characteristics of gray literature

The information we have gathered during the interviews shows clearly that this practice is more prevalent among the more experienced users, with scientific and administrative responsibilities, and combining the roles of "reader-author-reviewer".

Therefore the characteristics of grey literature used, is consisted to five documents type: thesis, conference, working paper, reports and data collection, where the conference take the majority of uses. (tab.2)

For the accessibility and grey literature full text retrieval, qualitative and quantitative results revealed that most of full text can be found on the web freely. (tab.3)

Finding

This is an exploratory study that can be considered difficult in this type of work.Even the limits this study reveals characteristics of Algerian teachers-researchers practices regarding the information research. The reality is that:

- even quantitative data reveals the use of electronic resources, difficulties that the teachers- researches could face, show a marked lack of uniformity due to the environment in which they work and consult electronic resources.
- like autonomy and isolation that leads to develop unraveling practices that are not homogeneous and inactive. Despite the offer content which it's not enough.
-as was clearly indicated in some studies, grey literature has found a means of communication, in open access repositories.
- grey literature studies covering other developing African nations are necessary.

Thank you!