

Researchers of Tomorrow

A three year (BL/JISC) study
tracking the research behaviour of
'Generation Y' doctoral students

Interim Research Report 1
Summary Report

October 2009

Executive Summary

This is a Summary Report about the **interim** findings of the first year of the Researchers of Tomorrow study, which began research in April 2009.

Building on the 'Google Generation' research, the British Library (BL) and the JISC commissioned this three-year research study into the information-seeking and research behaviour of doctoral students born between 1982 and 1994 – commonly dubbed 'Generation Y'. Researchers of Tomorrow is based around a longitudinal study of up to 70 full-time Generation Y doctoral students and two annual surveys. The first of these – a survey of the research and information-seeking behaviour of a representative sample of **all doctoral students** studying in the UK – was completed in autumn 2009. Over 6,500 doctoral students responded and the findings are reported in the 1st Interim Report and this Summary Report. They tell us, for instance:

- Time pressures are a significant constraint for most respondents, both full-time and part-time.
- More Generation Y than older scholars are likely to be working from office space, laboratory or studio in their own institution, rather than working from their own home.
- About half of the respondents have been usefully trained in, for instance, finding and using subject-based bibliographical and journal resources, and finding research resources beyond their own institution.
- Far fewer respondents, however, have received any training in using more advanced technology-based research resources and tools such as e-research methods, finding and using online datasets or working in virtual research environments.
- Only a small proportion of respondents in any age group say they use 'emergent technology' (e.g. Web 2.0 applications) in their research, although those that do generally find it valuable.
- In a snapshot of information-seeking and research activity, the majority of doctoral students were looking for text-based and secondary, published research resources, rather than primary research resources (e.g. data to analyse or original manuscript sources).
- Google and Google Scholar are dominant as the main source used by doctoral students of all ages to find the information they require.

Setting the Scene

The aims of the Researchers of Tomorrow study

The 'Google Generation' report¹, published in 2008, focused on how researchers of the future, currently in their school or pre-school years, are likely to access and interact with digital resources in five to ten years' time. The British Library (BL) and the JISC have now commissioned a further three year research study into the information-seeking and research behaviour of doctoral students born between 1982 and 1994 – commonly dubbed 'Generation Y'. The study will establish a benchmark for research behaviour against which subsequent generations of scholars can be measured and ultimately provide guidance to the community of libraries and information specialists on how best to meet the research needs of Generation Y scholars and their immediate successors.

The main aims of the study are to:

- Map emerging research behaviour trends across Social Sciences, Arts & Humanities, Science, Technology and Medicine;
- Investigate how doctoral scholars currently in higher education in the UK, particularly those from Generation Y, seek information both on and offline;
- Measure the relative use of digital resources and physical resources (including research spaces) during the period of the study;
- Understand how Generation Y students in particular search for and use digital content for research, and how (and if) they use emergent technologies to do so;
- Compare the attitudes and behaviour of the Generation Y scholars with those of the larger national body of UK-based doctoral students.

The study methodology

At the heart of the Researchers of Tomorrow research is a longitudinal study of up to 70 full-time Generation Y doctoral students from across all subject disciplines studying in UK higher education institutions. This tracking study will use a range of web-based and face-to-face qualitative research techniques to

¹ CIBER. (2008). *Information behaviour of the researcher of the future. (A CIBER Briefing Paper)*. CIBER, University College of London.

engage with the students in order to monitor and assess the evolution of their attitudes and behaviour over the course of three years. It will investigate their overall research behaviour and habits in digital (online) and physical environments and also track their use of library and research resources both online and off. The Generation Y doctoral students were recruited to the study in June/July 2009; evidence gathering began in September 2009 and will be complete in December 2011.

To support and provide context for the longitudinal study there will be two further annual research exercises in 2009-2011:

- Small-scale cross-sectional surveys of around 350 **first-year Generation Y** doctoral students (full-time or part-time, including international students). The survey sample will be recruited largely from those students attending the BL National Postgraduate Training Days (NTDs) in the autumn and winter terms. A small number of these students will also attend a discussion workshop later in their first year of studies. The first cohort of students will be surveyed in 2009/2010. The same procedures will be repeated in the two following years to evaluate change through examining different first year cohorts at the same, very important, point in their information-skills development, as they set out on a long doctoral journey.
- Large-scale surveys of the research and information-seeking behaviour of a representative sample of **all doctoral students** studying in the UK, whether UK citizens or international students, will also be undertaken. This exercise will provide a context for, and address, any under-representation of subject disciplines in the findings of the main longitudinal study. **The first of these 'wider context-setting' surveys has just been completed in autumn 2009 and the results form the basis of this first Interim Report.**

Education for Change, in association with The Research Partnership, was commissioned to undertake the study. A public website dedicated to the research has been set up at www.researchersoftomorrow.net.

What is 'Generation Y'?

Generation Y, the children of the Baby Boomers, are variously defined as having been born between 1978 and 1995, 1981 and 2000, or (as defined in this study) between 1982 and 1994. They have also been dubbed the 'net generation':

"We have grown up with internet, broadband, wi-fi, Google, CD, DVD, MTV, MP3, SMS and MMS. This multitude of choice, this freedom, this instant connectivity, this speed of globalisation is all we've ever known.....We've never had to memorise a phone number and we've never had to get off the sofa to change a channel on the TV.....You won't find many Gen-Yers in the local library and it's highly unlikely we would ever use a 'real' dictionary to check a spelling."²

Crucially for this research study, however, Generation Y students are not 'digital natives': unlike the 'Google Generation' currently in school, Generation Y students were educated at least up to their senior secondary years in schools with very limited, if any, access to computers and the internet. In a largely technology-free environment it is assumed that Generation Y acquired information-seeking and enquiry skills without learning "to 'get by' with Google"³.

The 70 Generation Y doctoral students recruited for the longitudinal study (our 'Trackers') have told us about some aspects of their educational background, experience and attitudes to technologies and media. Over half had a computer at home when they were in secondary school and used it frequently. The majority identify themselves as 'elite users' of ICT; that is, they are among the groups that have the most information technology, are heavy and frequent users of the internet and mobile phones and, to varying degrees, are engaged with user-generated content. However, five (out of 70) do not own a mobile phone of any kind and there are very few among them with a phone/PDA that they use to access the internet and e-mail.

We also asked the Trackers which web-based and Web 2.0 tools and applications they use in their non-academic life: the majority (82%) have never used Twitter, or blogs (63%), VOIP (e.g. Skype) (57%), or video over the internet (72%). The majority are members of a public library.

² From Baby-boomers' restless offspring believe new business 'can change the world' by Roland Gribben. 29 November 2007. Online. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/personalfinance/2820326/Generation-Y-talking-about-a-revolution.html>. Last accessed 09.10.09.

³ CIBER (2008) *ibid*

What we know about research and information-seeking behaviour so far

The Google Generation report notes that “enormous changes are taking place in the information landscape that are transforming teaching and learning, scholarly communication and the role of ‘traditional’ research library services. Many of these changes have been brought about by technology and the explosion of electronic ‘content’ made possible by electronic publishing, mass digitisation projects, and the internet. The volume of full text information that can be searched, browsed and printed from the convenience of a library user’s desktop machine is now almost unimaginable. And, for the first time, so are the choices: library users have rapidly become information consumers who can switch instantly between commercial search engines, social networking sites, wikis, bookmarked resources and electronic services provided by their library to satisfy their information needs.”⁴

From this and other previous research, the following things are broadly known about scholarly researchers in general, though not necessarily about doctoral students in particular (and never specifically about Generation Y students):

- Almost all age groups of researchers across the subject disciplines are competent and confident with ICT to the degree that they can and do prefer to do at least a proportion of their research using online sources and tools;
- Apparent capability with technologies belies, among the young (Google Generation) in particular, a significant lack of information-seeking and information literacy skills, which impacts upon the quality of learning and research outcomes. It is surmised, though not proven, that older generations accustomed to research in the non-internet age had to acquire skills and understanding about the organisation of information etc., which they continue to apply when they use web-based sources and tools.
- The majority of researchers (irrespective of age group or subject) prefer generic search engines (Google) over any mediated subject gateway (e.g. Intute) when initiating a search; the reasons for this include more immediate and comprehensive results, fewer clicks, and academics especially tend not to want others to mediate their searches.
- Over the last decade (with the growth in volume, accessibility and improved quality of online research resources), use of physical research resources (e.g. printed journals and books) and physical library

⁴ CIBER (2008) *ibid*

collections has declined dramatically among scientists, steadily among social scientists and more slowly in the arts and humanities.

- For all sorts of reasons, researchers don't like having to leave their desk to do their research or, at the very least, don't like to leave their institution – they are not willing to travel far, even arts and humanities researchers who occasionally need to look at primary research resources. The pressure to 'digitise everything' so all researchers can work almost exclusively online and from anywhere is increasing.
- The use of data and datasets is highly important among scientists, increasingly important among social scientists, but not terribly important as yet among arts and humanities researchers.
- There are well-documented differences between subject disciplines in, for instance, the kinds of research resources they favour (on and offline), the resource discovery tools and methods they use, the nature of their research (e.g. whether interdisciplinary, collaborative), their use of available support services and so on.
- Finding research resources online (specifically e-journal articles) is less of a problem than accessing them – which comes down to whether or not their institution subscribes to the particular e-journal in question.
- The Google Generation doesn't think in 'technology-driven' ways as older generations do (e.g. thinking in terms of what technologies are used when), they think primarily in terms of activities (e.g. texting, 'googling') – mobile phones and web-based tools are not considered to be 'technology'; rather, they are tools that get things done.

It is clear that quite a lot is known about the 'What?' and 'Where?' of information-seeking behaviour among researchers. The Researchers of Tomorrow study will focus on the 'Why?' and 'How?' with Generation Y students, and gather more general data that will validate or challenge existing evidence about the wider research community's research behaviour.

The Wider Context-setting Survey 2009: findings

The survey response

In this first context-setting survey of all doctoral students in the UK, 68 higher education institutions (HEIs) around the UK collaborated in the distribution of the survey and a total of 6,562 questionnaires were returned by students of which **5,408 were deemed complete for analysis**. This excellent response has provided a nationwide snapshot of doctoral research and information-seeking behaviour across all English regions, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland (see Table 1) and across all types of HEIs (see Table 2).

Table 1 Survey response by UK region

UK Region	Number. of respondents	Percentage of total
North East	28	1
North West	190	3
Yorks and Humberside	806	15
East Midlands	604	11
West Midlands	472	9
East of England	242	4
London	955	18
South East	650	12
South West	396	7
Wales	315	6
Scotland	353	7
Northern Ireland	397	7
Total	5408	100

Table 2: Survey response by type of HE institution

HEI type	Number of respondents	Percentage of total
University: old pre-1962	3145	58
University : old 1962-1991	1372	25
University: new 1992	701	13
University: new post 1992	181	3
HE College	9	0

Profile of respondents and their research

Age range

Figure 1 shows the age ranges of respondents, a profile very similar to the total doctoral student population according to Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) data. Generation Y students (aged 21 – 27) comprised almost two-fifths (38%, 2,061) of all respondents to the survey.

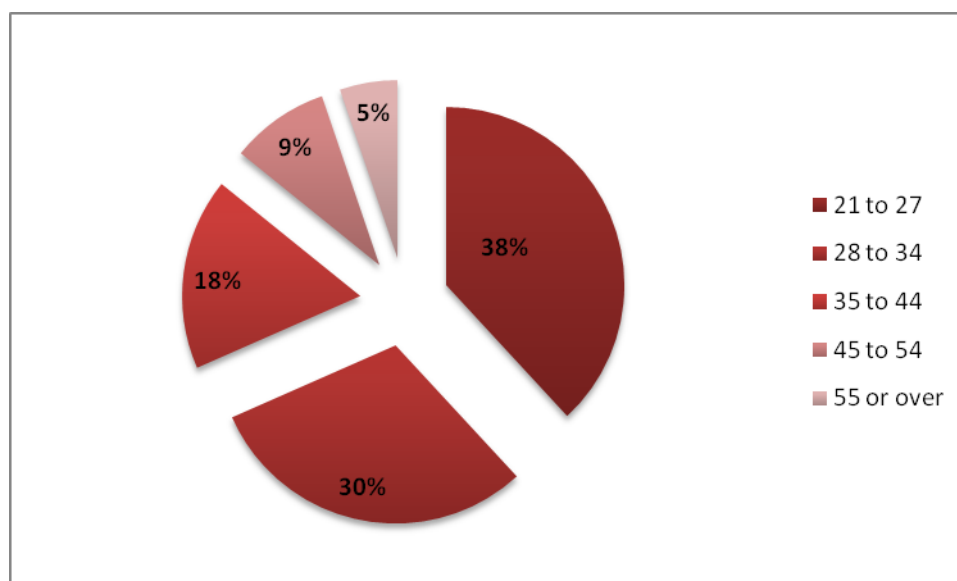


Figure 1: Age range of respondents (percentage of total respondents)

Subject discipline

Respondents come from all subject disciplines with slightly greater representation from arts and humanities (AH) and social sciences (SS) together (51%) than science, technology and medicine (47%).

On the other hand, Generation Y respondents are more evenly spread across the subject groups than respondents in other age ranges and, therefore, the proportion pursuing doctoral studies in any science (65%) is greater than that of respondents as a whole (47%). Generation Y students are particularly represented in Physical Sciences (PS), Biological Sciences (BS), and Engineering and Computing Studies (ECS).

Figure 2 shows the subject spread according to age.

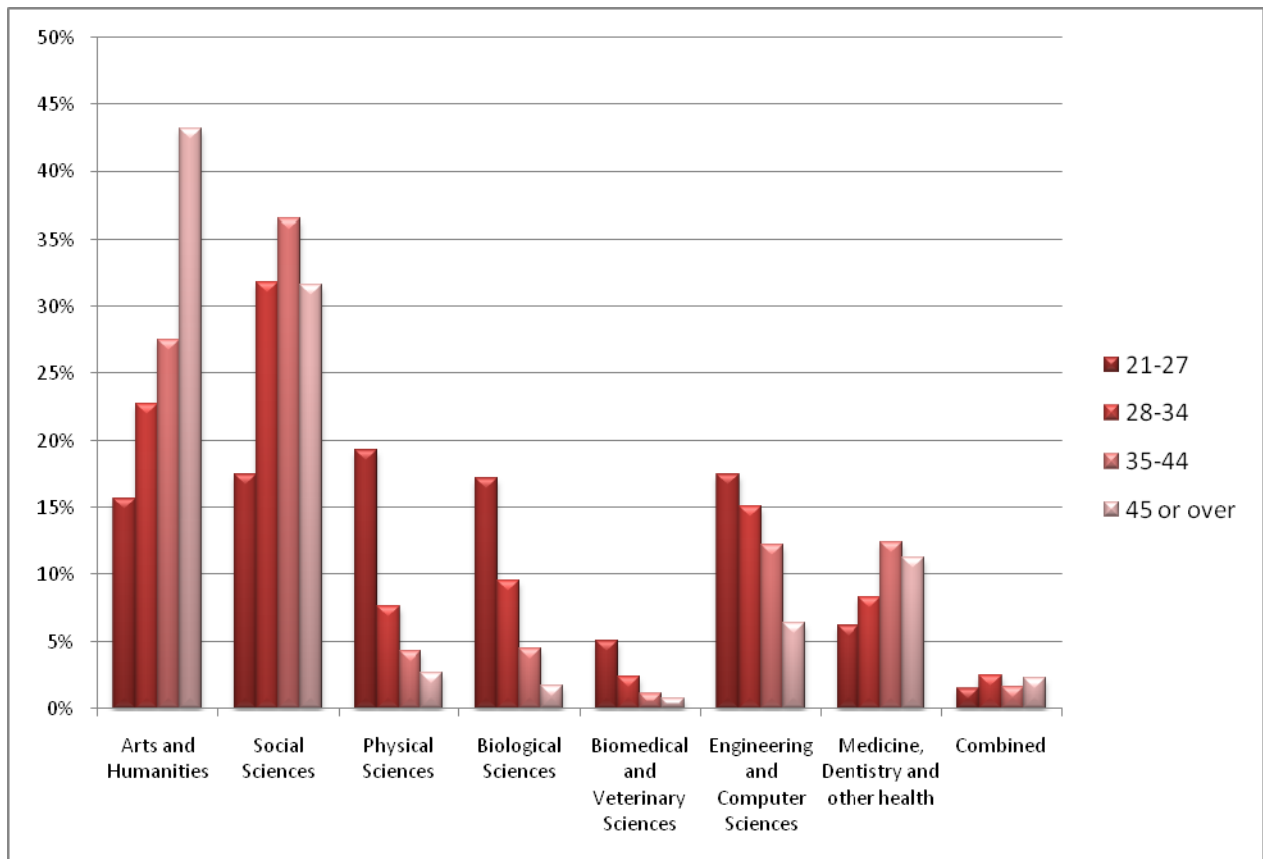


Figure 2: Age range of respondents and their subject disciplines: percentages within age groups

Year of study

Over 50% of respondents are in their **first or second year of study**, which indicates that we may be able to capture data from this group once or twice more in subsequent annual iterations of the survey.

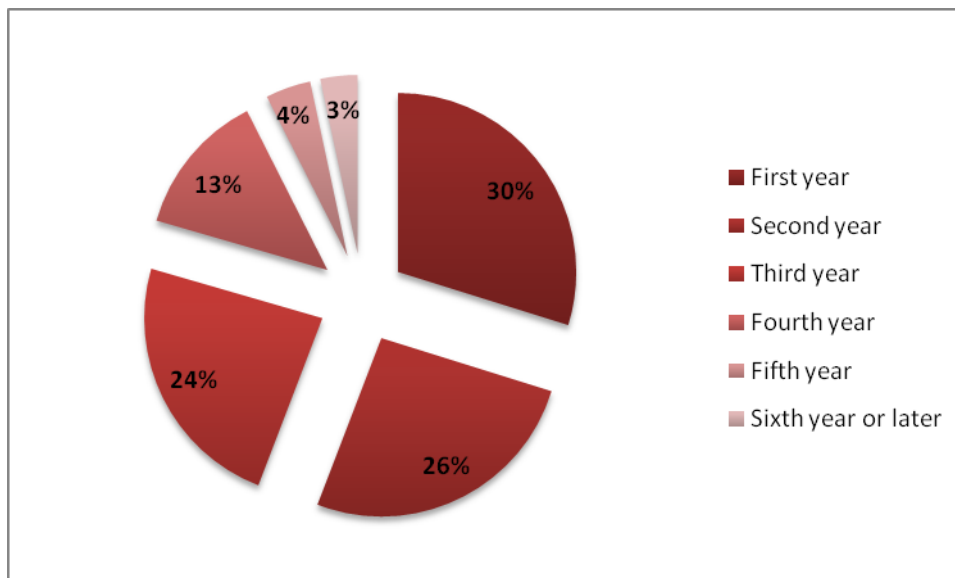


Figure 3: Year of study of respondents

Figure 3 summarises the spread across study years, which very closely matches the distribution across years of the total doctoral student population, according to HESA data.

Generation Y respondents are also fairly equally spread across year one (39%), year two (28%) and year three (25%).

Sources of funding and mode of study

The survey also reflects national trends in funding for doctoral studies with 28% of respondents receiving at least some of their funding from the research councils (RC). Almost half (49%) are funded from non-RC external sources but a third are entirely (21%) or partially (13%) self-funded.

Only 23% of respondents are studying part time.

A higher proportion of Generation Y respondents are wholly or partially funded by the research councils (43%).

Almost two-fifths (18%) of Generation Y students in the survey are funded by the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council.

Almost all Generation Y respondents (95%) are full-time students.

Principal place of work

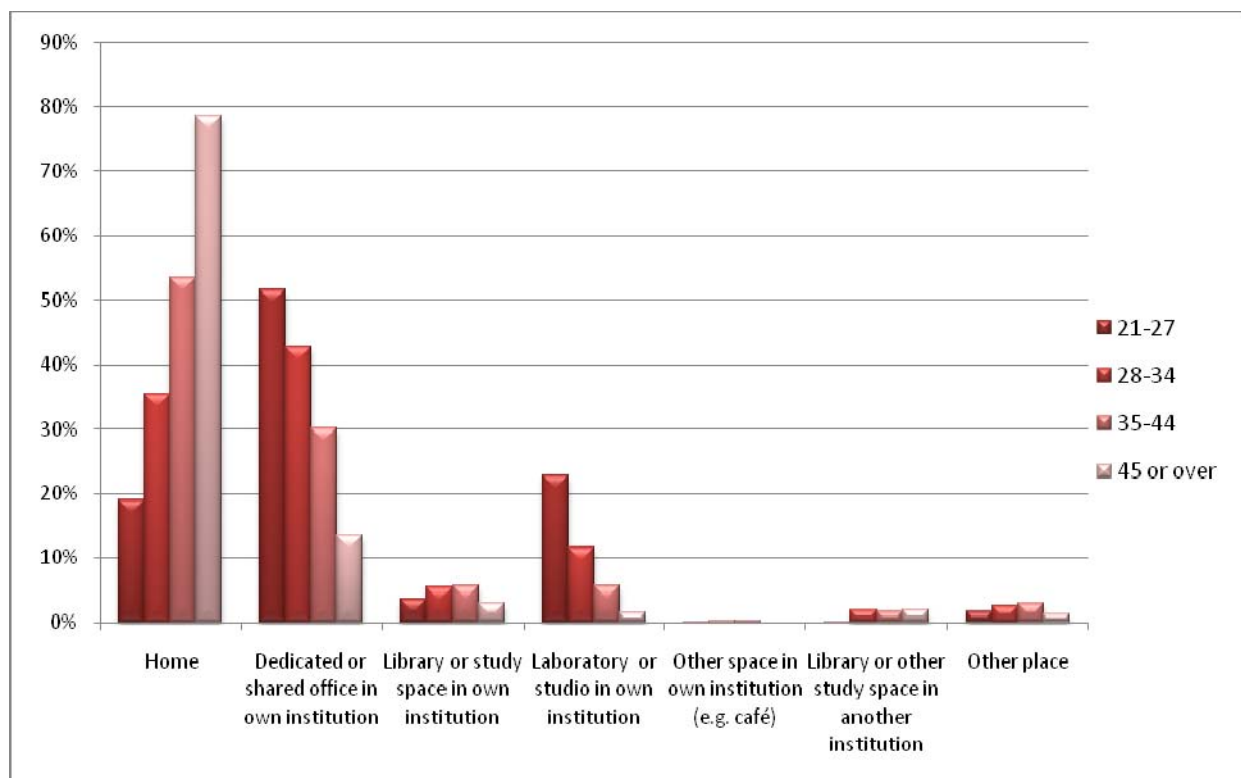


Figure 4: Main place of work and age range of respondents: percentages within age groups

Asked where is their principal place of work on their doctoral studies, 40% of respondents say they work in dedicated or shared office space in their own institution and 39% work mainly at home.

There is a striking difference between age groups regarding their main place of work on their research (see Figure 4): more Generation Y respondents work from dedicated or shared office space, or a laboratory or studio in their own institution, than work from their own home.

Stages of work

The main focus of the survey is on doctoral researchers' information-seeking and research behaviour. In order to put this behaviour in context, we asked them to tell us at what stage they were in the research process when they completed the questionnaire.

We used a model for the research process that assumes research is, or can be, an iterative process, with cycles of 'ideas generation – background work – preparing and organising – analysing' before 'writing up' and 'dissemination'.

The respondents are fairly evenly spread across the different stages of research - Table 3 summarises the overall picture.

Table 3: Respondents' current stage in the research process: percentage within year of research

	Year of research			
	First	Second	Third	Fourth or later
Ideas generation	27	10	5	2
Background work	21	7	3	1
Preparing and organising	33	38	16	8
Analysing	10	23	23	11
Writing/creation and revision	6	15	41	54
Dissemination	2	5	12	24

As one might expect, third and fourth year (or later) students form the majority who say that they are in the 'writing/creation and revision' stage. However, the responses do bear out the cyclical nature of research work; for instance, a considerable number of respondents in the second and third year of their research considered themselves engaged in 'ideas generation' and 'preparing and organising material', for instance, and some first year students are analysing findings.

Information seeking across disciplinary boundaries

We asked respondents whether their research required them to seek information from outside their core discipline, looking into disciplinary areas other than their own. The majority (76%) say that they ‘always’ (18%), ‘very often’ (29%) or ‘sometimes’ (29%) have to do so.

Table 4: Need to seek information across core subject boundaries: percentages within disciplines

	Discipline group								% of total
	AH	SS	PS	BS	BVS	ECS	MDH	Combined	
Always	24	21	9	8	4	18	17	55	18
Very often	33	34	21	19	20	25	27	34	28
Sometimes	28	29	26	30	35	30	34	6	29
Rarely	10	10	27	27	25	18	15	2	15
Never	4	4	14	12	11	6	5	2	6
Too early to tell	2	3	4	5	4	3	2	1	3

There are some differences between subject disciplines in these trends: as Table 4 shows, higher proportions of arts and humanities (AH) and social science (SS) students say that their research entails crossing core subject discipline boundaries ‘always’ or ‘very often’ than do ‘pure’ science students (PS and BS) or applied science students (in ECS, and medicine, dentistry and health).

Training in information seeking and research skills

Doctoral students were asked to indicate what training in information-seeking and research skills they had received since the start of their doctorate.

Training in specific information-seeking and research skills is elective in most institutions, i.e. students can choose the most relevant training interventions for their purposes. Over half (59%) have received useful training in finding and using subject-based bibliographical and journal resources, and a similar proportion (58%) has had useful training in using their own institution’s information portal. Almost half (48%) have had useful training in ‘finding research resources beyond their own institution’.

Far fewer respondents overall have received any training – useful or otherwise – in more advanced technology-based research resources and tools such as e-research methods, as Figure 5 shows.

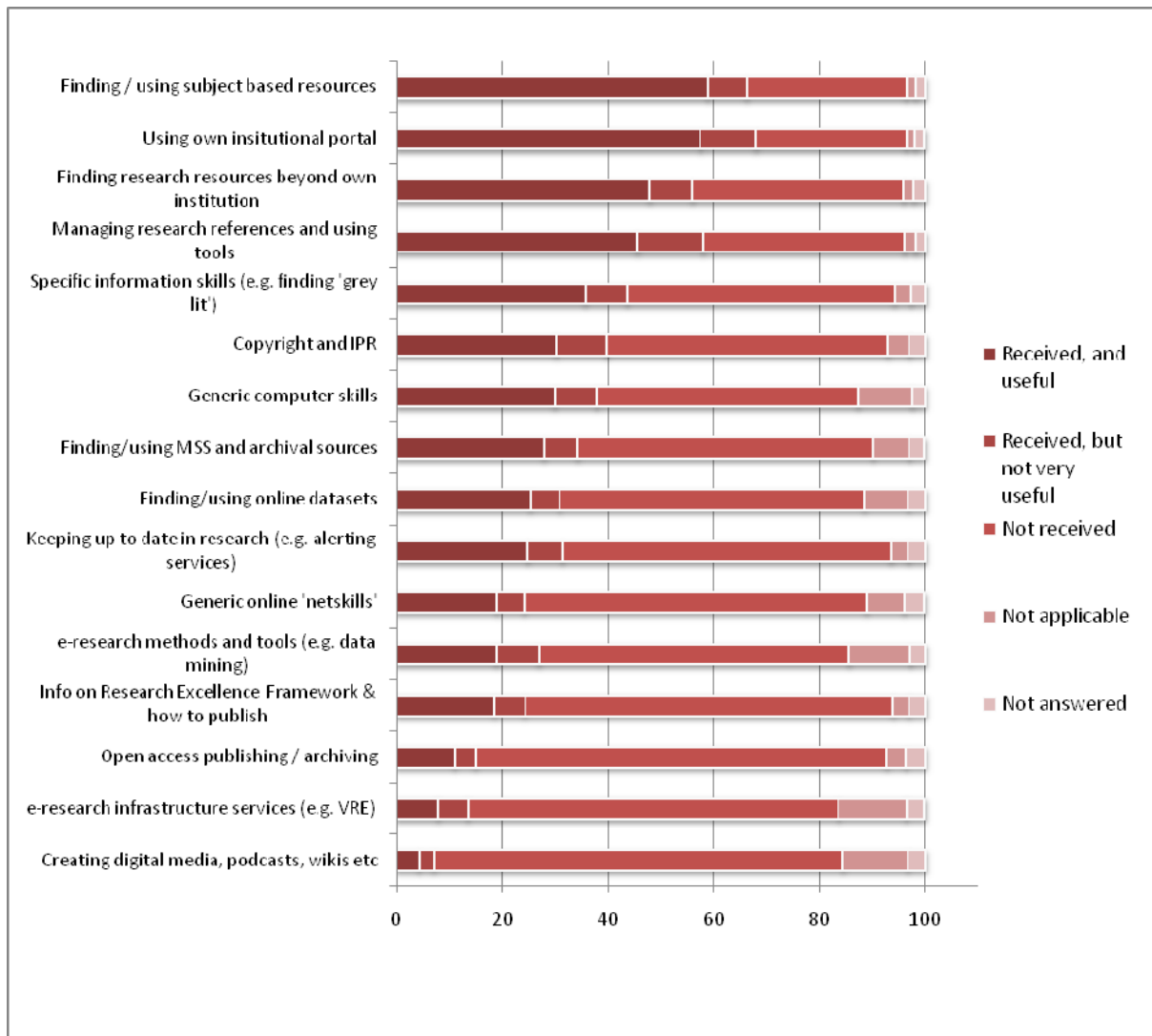


Figure 5: Training in information-seeking and research skills received and their value (percentage of all respondents)

Part-time students are less likely than full-time students to have received training of any kind in these areas.

A snapshot of information seeking and research

We adopted a 'critical incident' approach to central questions about information seeking and research resources. We asked students to think about the last reasonably significant piece of information-seeking activity they undertook and tell us:

- what kind of information they were hoping to find (e.g. a bibliographical reference, published writing, data of some kind etc.);
- what was the one main source that led them to find what they were looking for (e.g. e-journal service search page, library catalogue, website or search engine);
- what kind of format(s) the information came in when they found what they needed (e.g. an e-journal article, a printed book, a digital photo); and
- what did they do with the information they found (e.g. downloaded it for later use, borrowed it, read it online)

With the large achieved sample of responses, this approach allows us to look across a great number of separate, recent episodes of information seeking by researchers with a range of things in common (age, subject, stage in the research process etc.) to identify trends and patterns of behaviour.

What were they looking for?

The majority (80%), irrespective of year of study, were seeking bibliographical or published sources – i.e. secondary research material rather than primary research resources (such as statistical or scientific data, archival material etc). Generation Y students showed the same behaviour patterns in this aspect as the other age groups.

Almost twice as many AH and SS students compared to those in the sciences, technology and medicine were looking for 'published writing that they already knew about' or 'all background written information' on a topic.

Figure 6 summarises the responses overall.

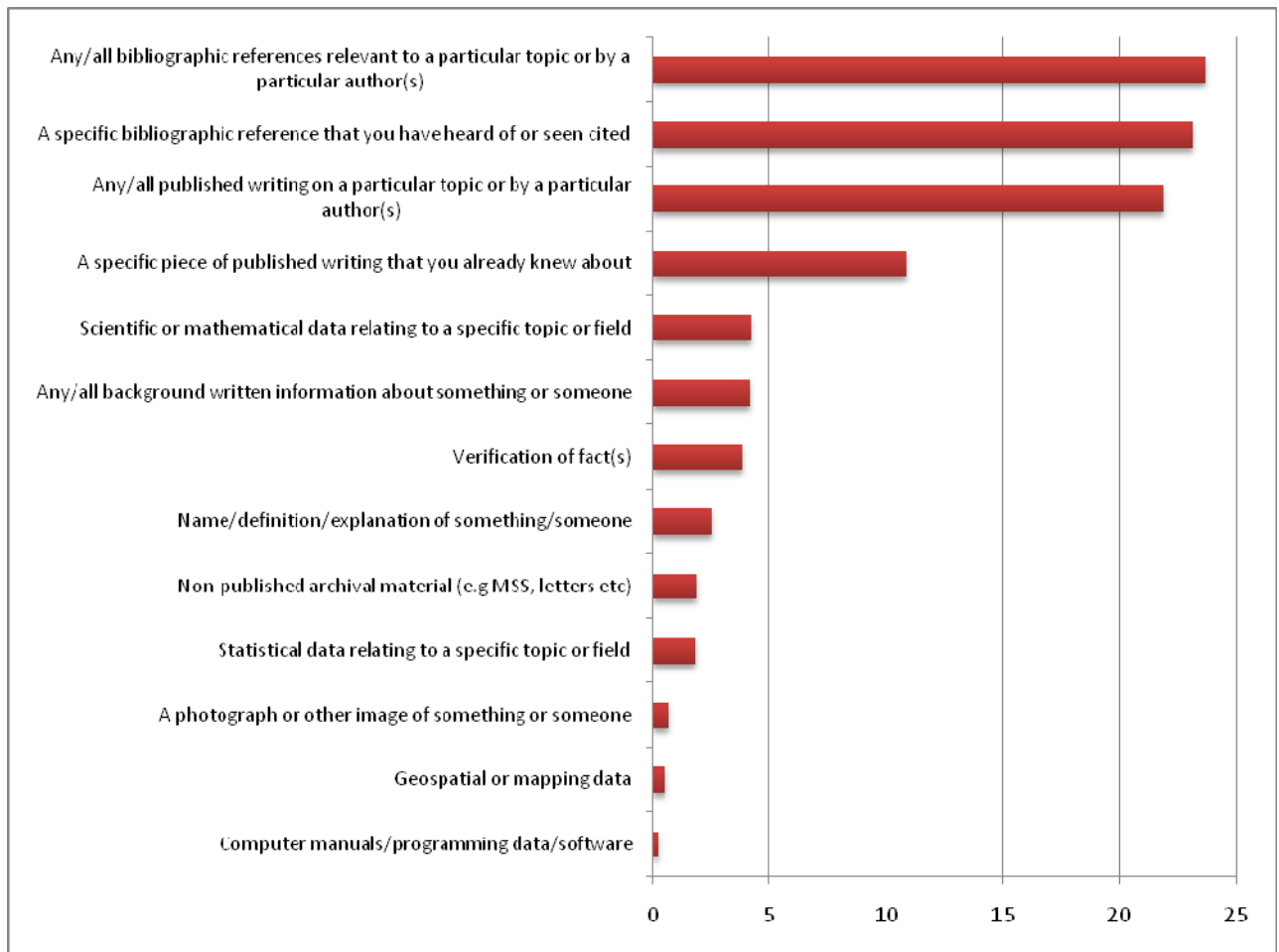


Figure 6: Main kind of information being sought (percentage of all respondents)

What was the one main source of information used?

Google or Google Scholar proved to be their main source of information for 30% of all students, including about 30% of the Generation Y respondents (see Figure 7: Main source that led to information being sought). Looked at by subject, however, more students in SS (38%), ECS (43%) and 'combined' (40%) research cited Google/Google Scholar.

About 14% overall found what they were looking for through a citation database, though this figure rises sharply among students in the sciences – PS (33%), BS (26%) and BVS (24%).

More Generation Y students (20%) than those in other age groups used a citation database as their main source, which may correlate with the fact that, in our survey sample, a higher proportion of Generation Y students is studying sciences than of other age groups.

Thirteen percent of students overall used the search interface of an e-journal service, and again the majority of these were in the sciences – BS (30%), BVS (28%) and MDH (24%).

Only about 8% of respondents cited their institutional library catalogue as their main source and fewer still (4%) cited cross-institutional catalogues (e.g. COPAC).

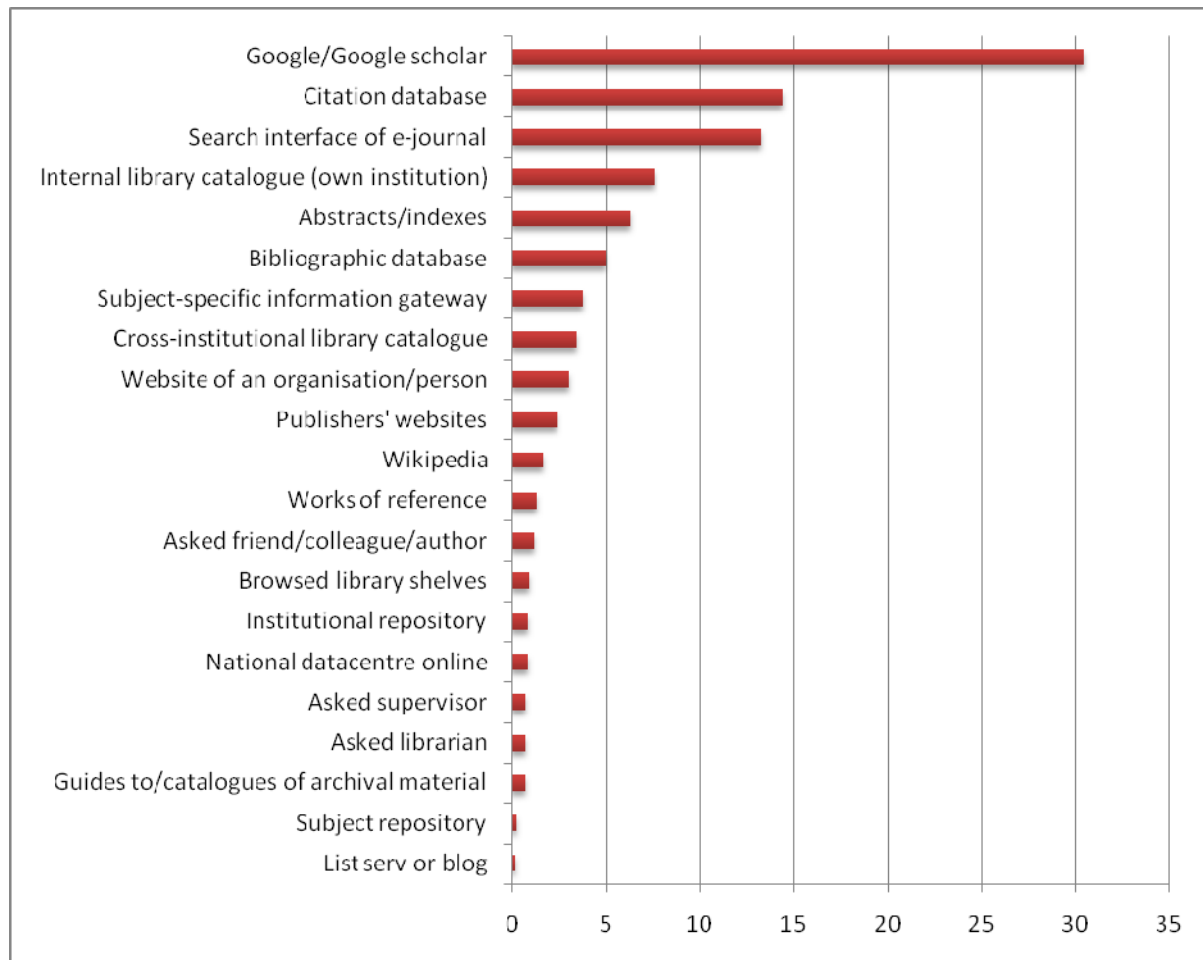


Figure 7: Main source that led to information being sought (percentage of all respondents)

What format(s) did their information come in?

Most respondents indicated that they found information in more than one format to satisfy their requirements.

Journals and journal articles predominate, with 69% finding the information they sought in a full-text e-journal article and 25% in a printed journal article.

Three-quarters (75%) of Generation Y students, more than those in other age groups, found the information they sought in an e-journal article

These figures are unsurprising and confirm trends in researcher behaviour that are well-established. As CIBER says “the popularity of desktop access to electronic journals is already immense and use is growing very rapidly as publishers open up their content to be indexed by Google and other search

engines. The major journal platforms like Blackwell’s *Synergy* or Elsevier’s *ScienceDirect* attract literally millions of hits each month”⁵.

Almost a quarter (23%) of students found what they were looking for in a printed book or excerpt and 18% in an e-book; the majority of these were students in AH and SS, as Table 5 shows.

Table 5: Format of the information being sought: percentage within discipline groups

	Discipline group							
	A&H	SS	PS	BS	BVS	ECS	MDH	Combined
Printed book or excerpt	41	23	15	8%	5	25	12	22
e-book (or excerpt)	20	19	14	10	8	24	13	17
Printed journal article	24	25	23	22	27	29	28	20
Full-text e-journal article	45	69	83	82	82	78	79	72
Abstract/ bibliographic ref	21	25	24	32	38	27	36	38
Raw data (available for analysis)	3	4	6	2	3	3	2	3
Published data (analysed and organised)	7	10	11	15	14	15	15	13

What did they do with the information they found?

On this occasion of information seeking activity, over half (59%) downloaded their electronic information and just under half (49%) printed it out.

These findings bear out other research: for instance, CIBER finds that “academic users have strong consumer instincts and research shows that they will squirrel away content in the form of downloads, especially when there are free offers. In spite of this behaviour and the very short session times that we witness, there is no evidence as to the extent to which these downloads are actually *read*.”⁶

⁵ CIBER (2008) *ibid*

⁶ CIBER (2008) *ibid*

However, 2,620 (48%) respondents said they read, worked with or scanned the information online (see Table 6) and of these 713 (27%) neither printed out nor downloaded the information.

Table 6 Patterns of information use among online users: percentage of total respondents

	Online use				Total
	Read/worked with only	Scanned only	Read and scanned	Neither	
Downloaded only	7	2	2	11	21
Printed only	4	1	1	10	16
Both	11	3	5	9	28
Neither	10	2	1	21	34
Total	31	9	9	52	100

Using emergent technology in research

Technology-based tools

The majority of doctoral students in our survey do not use emergent or advanced technologies – such as Web 2.0 tools, virtual research environments and e-portfolios - in their research work. Of the small numbers of respondents who have used these technologies in their research, generally higher proportions have found them valuable, as Figure 8 shows. For instance, just under half of the respondents have used ‘wikis’⁷, and ‘alerting services and RSS’, and half of those find them valuable.

In this matter, Generation Y students in the survey show exactly the same pattern of use as other age groups.

Use of all the tools listed is higher among engineering and computer studies respondents than in any other discipline.

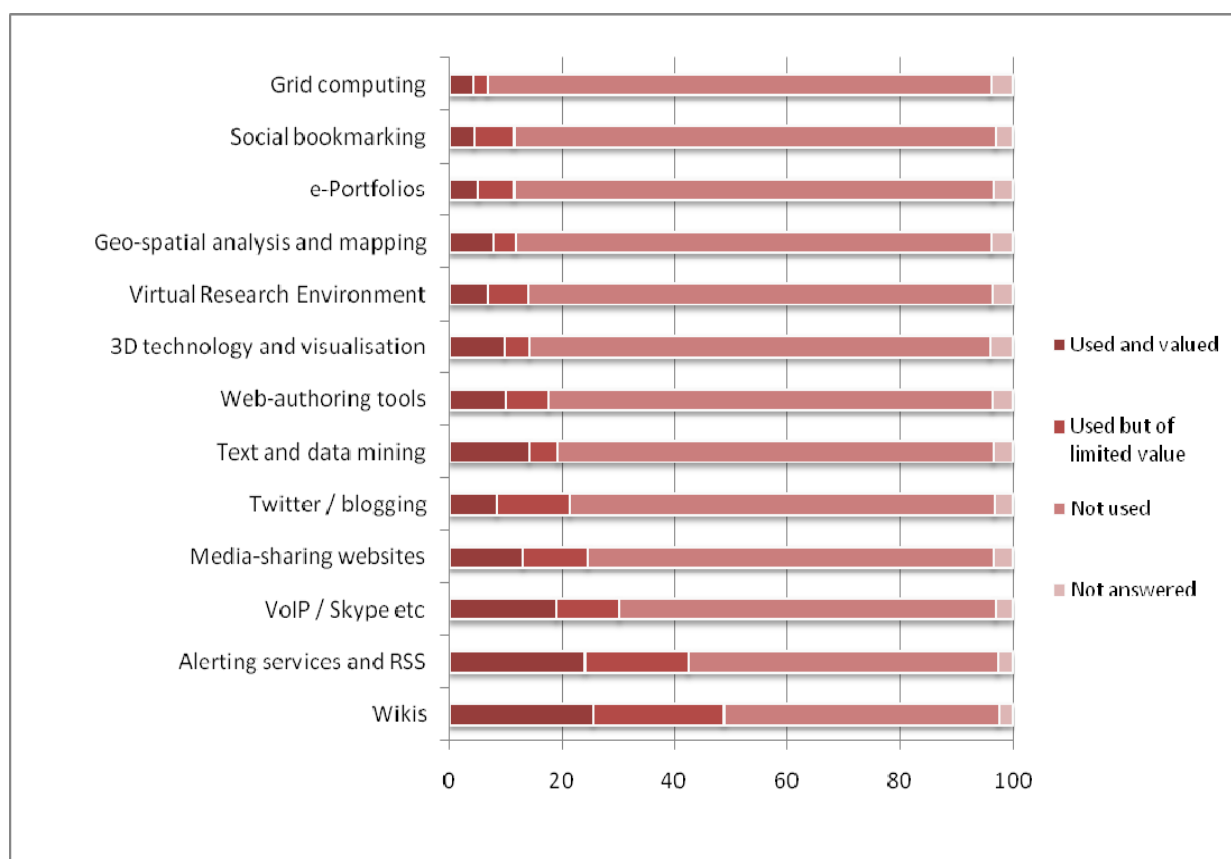


Figure 8 Technology based tools used in research, and value (percentage of all respondents)

⁷ However, we assume that ‘wikis’ may have been widely interpreted as ‘Wikipedia’ due to the prevalence and popularity of Wikipedia.

Where do students turn for help and advice in their research?

Using technology

Of those students who tell us that they have used any emergent and advanced technologies in their research, 27% have received no help at all or they self-help (for instance, using online guides and manuals).

About 37% rely on other students for help, and 26% turn either to library staff or their supervisors.

More Generation Y respondents (46%) than other age groups turn to their fellow students and/or to their supervisors for support in using emergent and advanced technologies: this is likely to correlate with more Generation Y respondents than other age groups working mainly from within their institution, and as such are probably in closer daily contact with fellow doctoral students and their supervisors.

General research support

We asked respondents to tell us what other kinds of research support they get from their institution (see Figure 9).

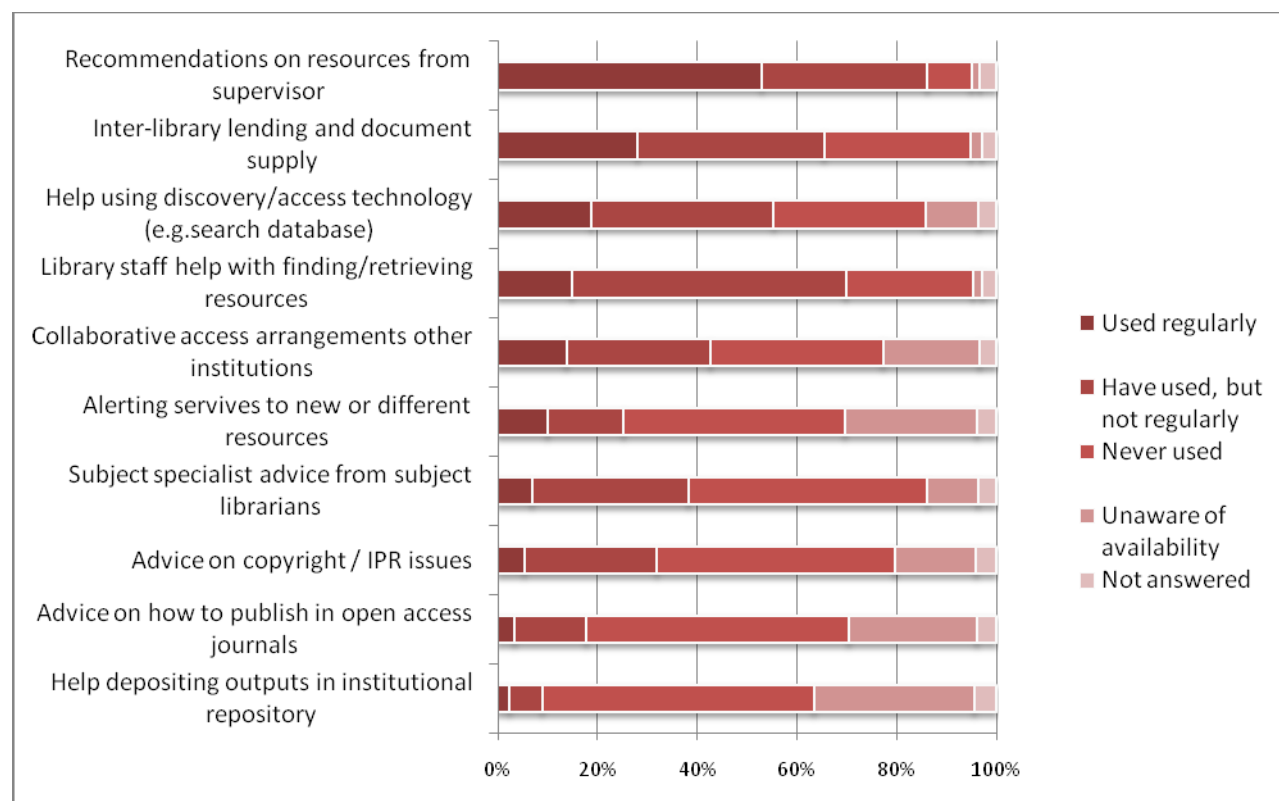


Figure 9 Research support services or facilities used in respondents' institutions

Around 30% of respondents have never used inter-library loan and document supply services, although 70% have sought library staff assistance in finding or retrieving research resources that are difficult to identify or obtain.

Around 30% have used subject specialist library staff for advice, and 7% say they do so regularly. The majority of those availing themselves of advice and support from library staff are students in AH and SS.

Recommendations on research resources from their supervisor are sought by the majority (86%) and sought regularly by 53%.

Fewer Generation Y students than other age groups (11% of Generation Y compared to an average of 17% of the other age groups) say they regularly use library staff support to find their research resources or take advice from subject specialist librarians (4% compared to 9% total average).

More Generation Y students than other age groups regularly rely on their supervisors' recommendations on research resources (60% compared to 47% average).

Progress in their doctoral research

Possible constraints

We asked respondents to rate a list of factors that might constrain their progress in doctoral studies. Figure 10 shows that time pressures emerge as a constraint for most respondents, both full-time and part-time. ‘The need to work to support research’ emerges as a more significant constraint for part-timers, while both full-time and part-time students are constrained by concerns about money and funding for their research.

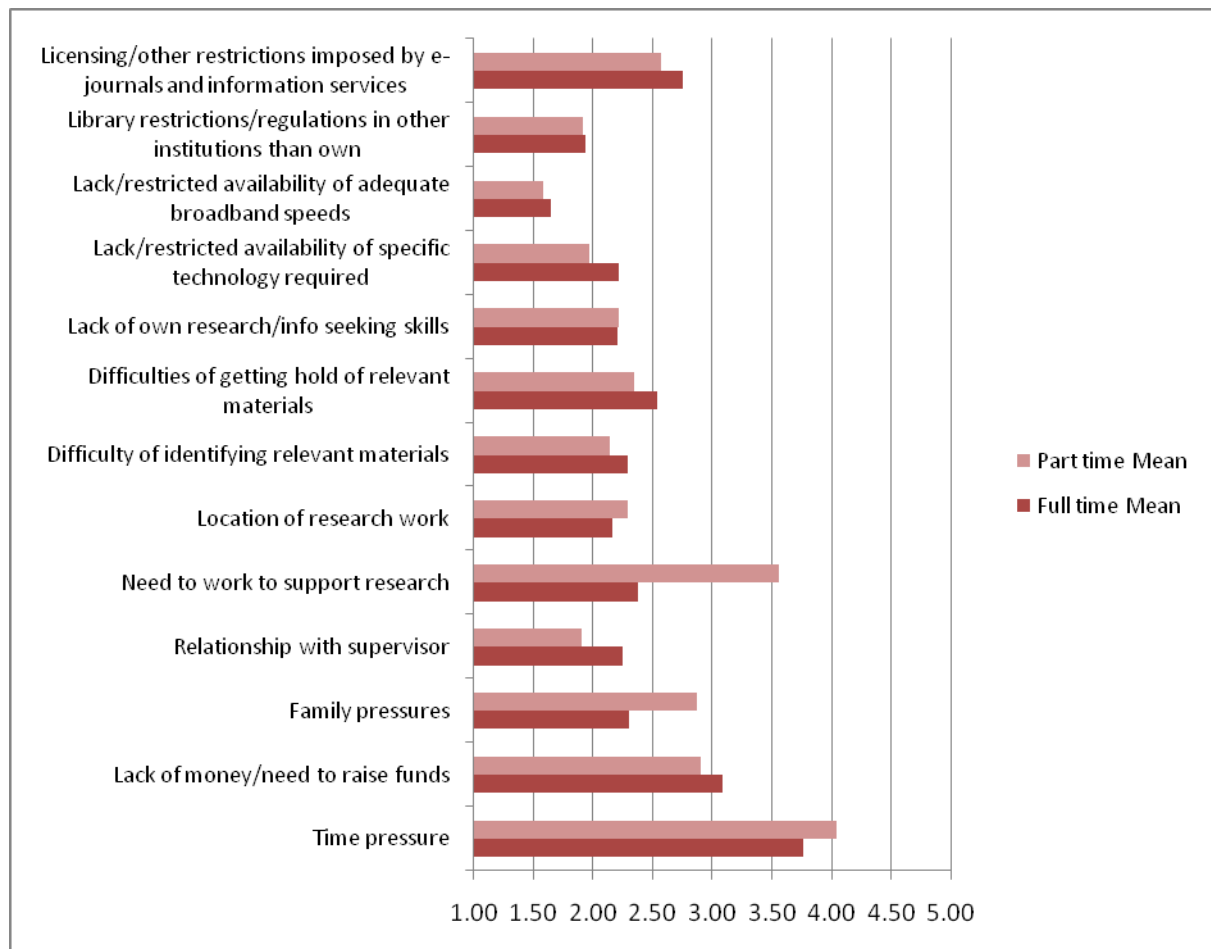


Figure 10: Constraining factors for part-time and full-time respondents

Problems with ‘licensing and other restrictions imposed by online e-journals and other information services’ also emerge as a constraining factor, probably closely allied to ‘difficulties in getting hold of relevant research materials’.

This supports the findings from other research⁸ that, in particular, students using Google to identify relevant e-journal and other electronic information sources, rather than services offered through their own institutional portals, are often unaware that their institution does not subscribe to the relevant e-journal.

Research outputs

Most doctoral students are producing or intend to produce peer-reviewed journal articles and conference papers or presentations as their intermediate research outputs (see Figure 11).

Open access journal articles lag considerably behind in respondents' output choices, although about one in four respondents nonetheless is publishing, or is planning to publish in open access.

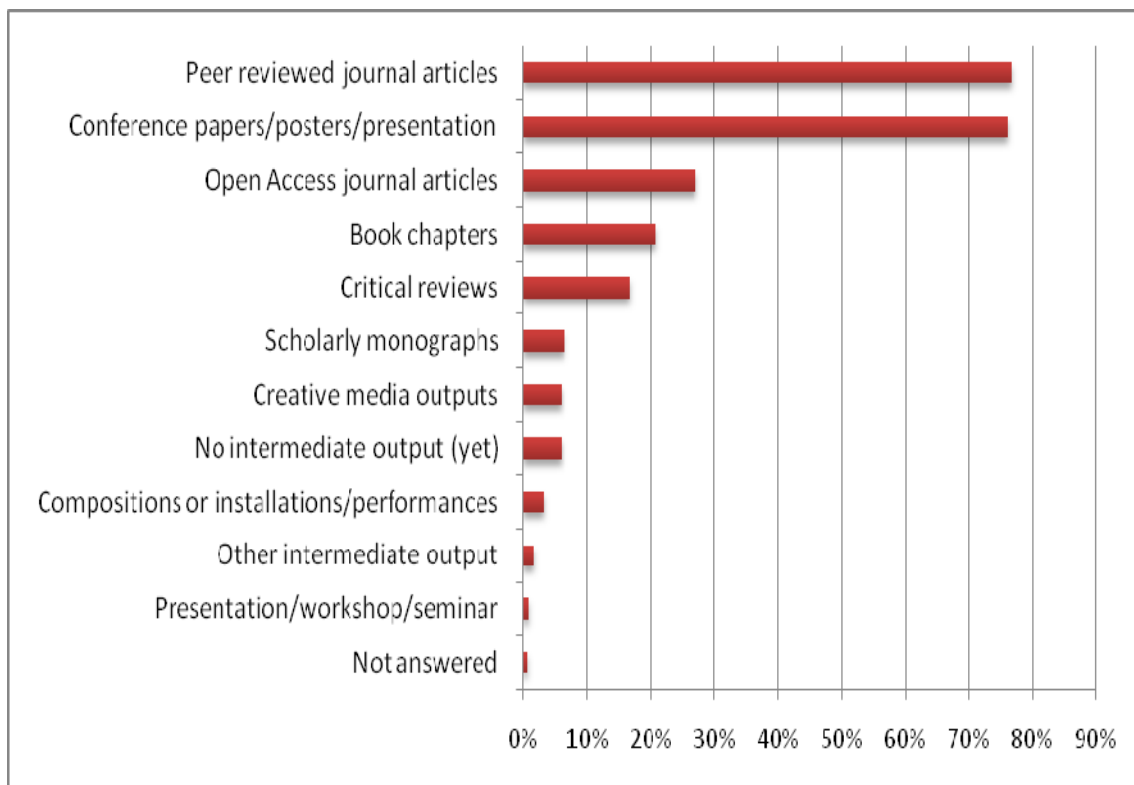


Figure 11: Intermediate research outputs

Almost all students (99%) aim to produce a written thesis as their final doctoral research output.

⁸ For instance, Key Perspectives Ltd. (2006). *Researchers and discovery services: behaviour, perceptions and needs*. RIN

Next steps in the research study

Longitudinal Tracking Study ('Trackers')

The recruited doctoral students ('Trackers') are interacting with the research team, and each other, on a customised and dedicated Moodle site, specially tailored for the purpose of gathering qualitative information on their research and information-seeking behaviour over time. The site is accessed through www.researchersoftomorrow.net using a secure login and password. This Moodle site hosts personal profile pages for each Tracker and their journal blogs; open discussion forums by subject discipline, which each Tracker is invited to join and to which EfC will post discussion topics; and shares information about the Researcher of Tomorrow study and news updates.

The majority of students are already blogging about their everyday information-seeking and research activities and evidence gathered will be coded and analysed at regular intervals from January 2010 onwards

Survey of 1st year Generation Y doctoral students

Between November 2009 and February 2010 a sample of 1st year 'Generation Y' students will be drawn principally from participants in the annual British Library National Postgraduate Training Days (NTDs) and supplemented by recruitment from other sources to ensure representative subject discipline coverage. The sample (around 350 students) will be asked to complete a survey about their current experience and expertise in information seeking and research and their expectations of their doctoral research. The survey will be followed up later in the year in a discussion workshop with a small number of the sample to investigate any changes in views, attitudes or behaviour during their first year of doctoral studies.