Profiling information seeking behavior of distance learning students in Wawasan Open University

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Profiling Information Seeking Behavior of Distance Learning Students in Wawasan Open University

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Intro: Context of Study

Wawasan Open University (WOU) is one of the three full-fledged distance learning institutions ➔ a heavier focus on online learning

Active Collaboration between Library & SELC ➔ A lots of concerns were raised to the Library & SELC on lack on materials for literature review – PGDE & MEd

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5. You are strongly advised to refer to **journal articles to support the literature review**. You may refer to full text articles from the Wawasan Open University Library.

WOU Library ➔ List of e-resources ➔ E-journals ➔ ProQuest and/or Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ)

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Intro: Guidelines for Library Services

Based on this philosophy on the Bill of Rights for the Distance Learning Community, the *Standard* for *Access for Achievement of Superior Academic Skills* requires the Library of distance learning institutions to provide services and resources equivalent to conventional institutions (American Library Association, 2008)

This is a standard of practice for Library Services that is **often undervalued** in some distance learning institutions, which ultimately leads to the common perception that the Library is no more than an avenue for a collection of books and resources; which is certainly not the case!

My Gosh!!

http://scoop.intel.com/what-happens-in-an-internet-minute/

<u>Research Objectives</u>

Recognizing this key importance, the mandate falls onto the Library to cultivate effective information seeking behavior among students
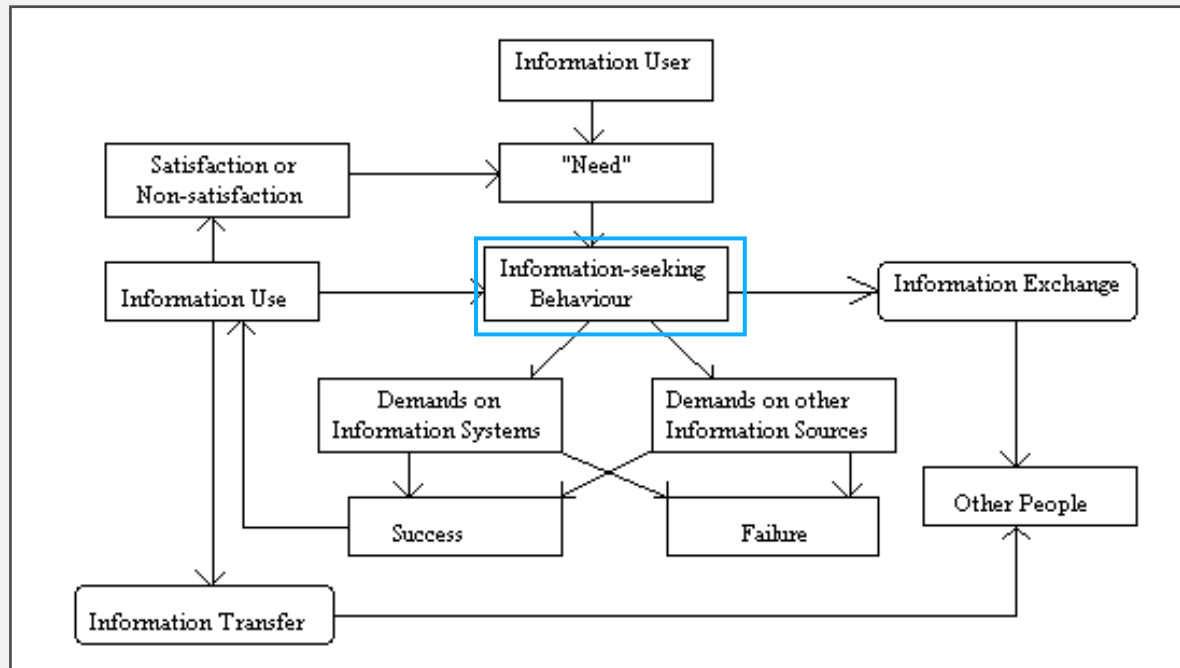
1. Identify the problems faced in information search

2. Identify the problems faced in effective utilization of information

3. Examine the relationship between problems faced in information search and effective utilization of information
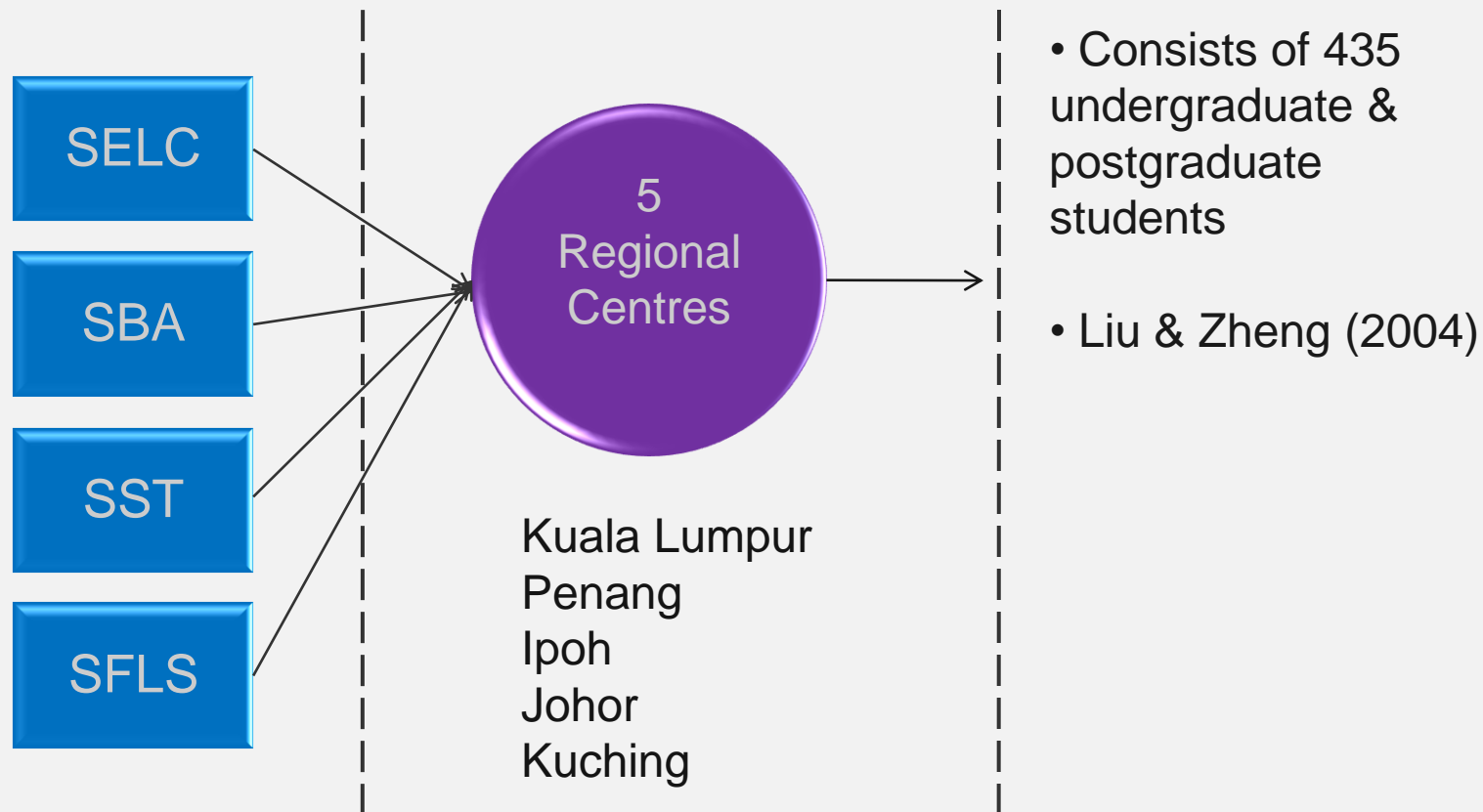
Theoretical Model

The process of seeking and utilizing information in a meaningful manner (Bystrom & Hansen, 2005)

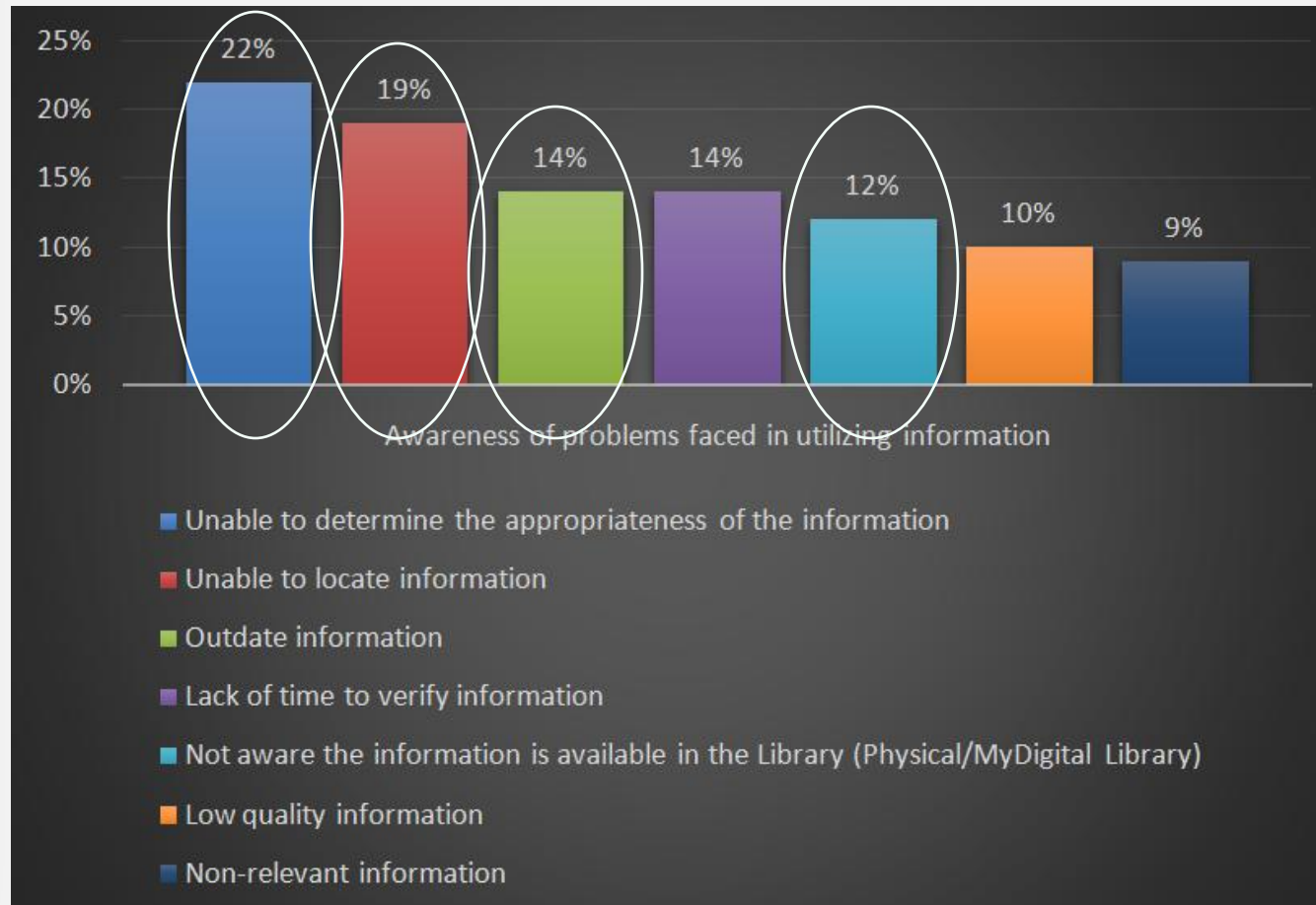Wilson's (1999) information seeking model
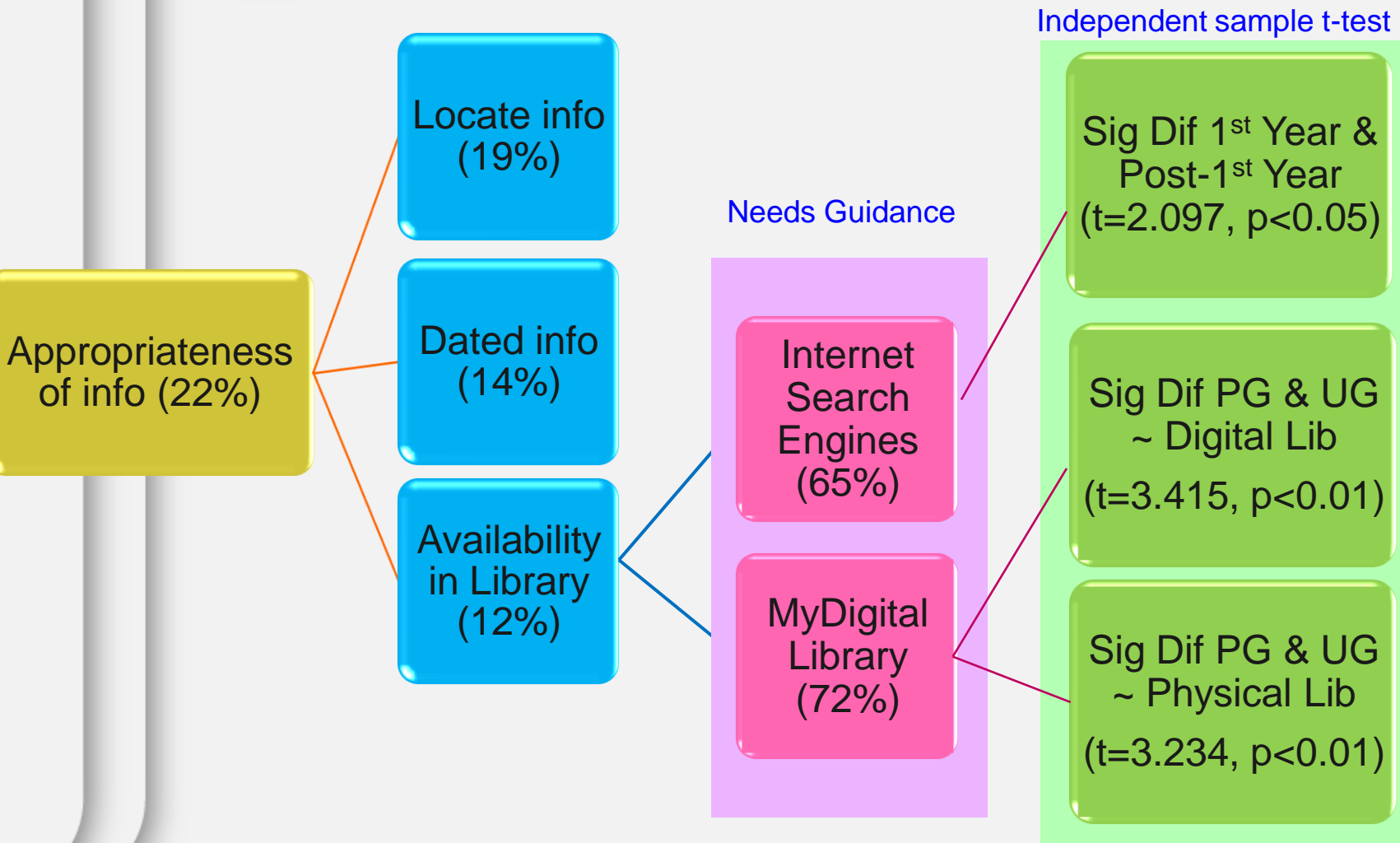
Methodology: Sampling

SELC

SBA

SST

SFLS

5 Regional Centres

Kuala Lumpur
Penang
Ipoh
Johor
Kuching

• Consists of 435 undergraduate & postgraduate students

• Liu & Zheng (2004)

Findings: Demographic Information

550 questionnaires ⟶ 435 returned (79% response rate)

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	188	43.2%
Female	247	56.8%
Age		
21-29 years	224	51.5%
30-39 years	130	29.9%
40-49 years	63	14.5%
Above 50 years	18	4.1%
Student Status		
Undergraduate	334	76.8%
Postgraduate	101	23.2%
Year of Study		
One year	145	33.3%
Above one year	290	66.7%

RO 1: Problems faced in Information Search

Locate info (19%)

Dated info (14%)

Appropriateness of info (22%)

Availability in Library (12%)

Needs Guidance

Internet Search Engines (65%)

MyDigital Library (72%)

Independent sample t-test

Sig Dif 1st Year & Post-1st Year (t=2.097, p<0.05)

Sig Dif PG & UG ~ Digital Lib (t=3.415, p<0.01)

Sig Dif PG & UG ~ Physical Lib (t=3.234, p<0.01)

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RO 2: Problems faced in Utilization of Information
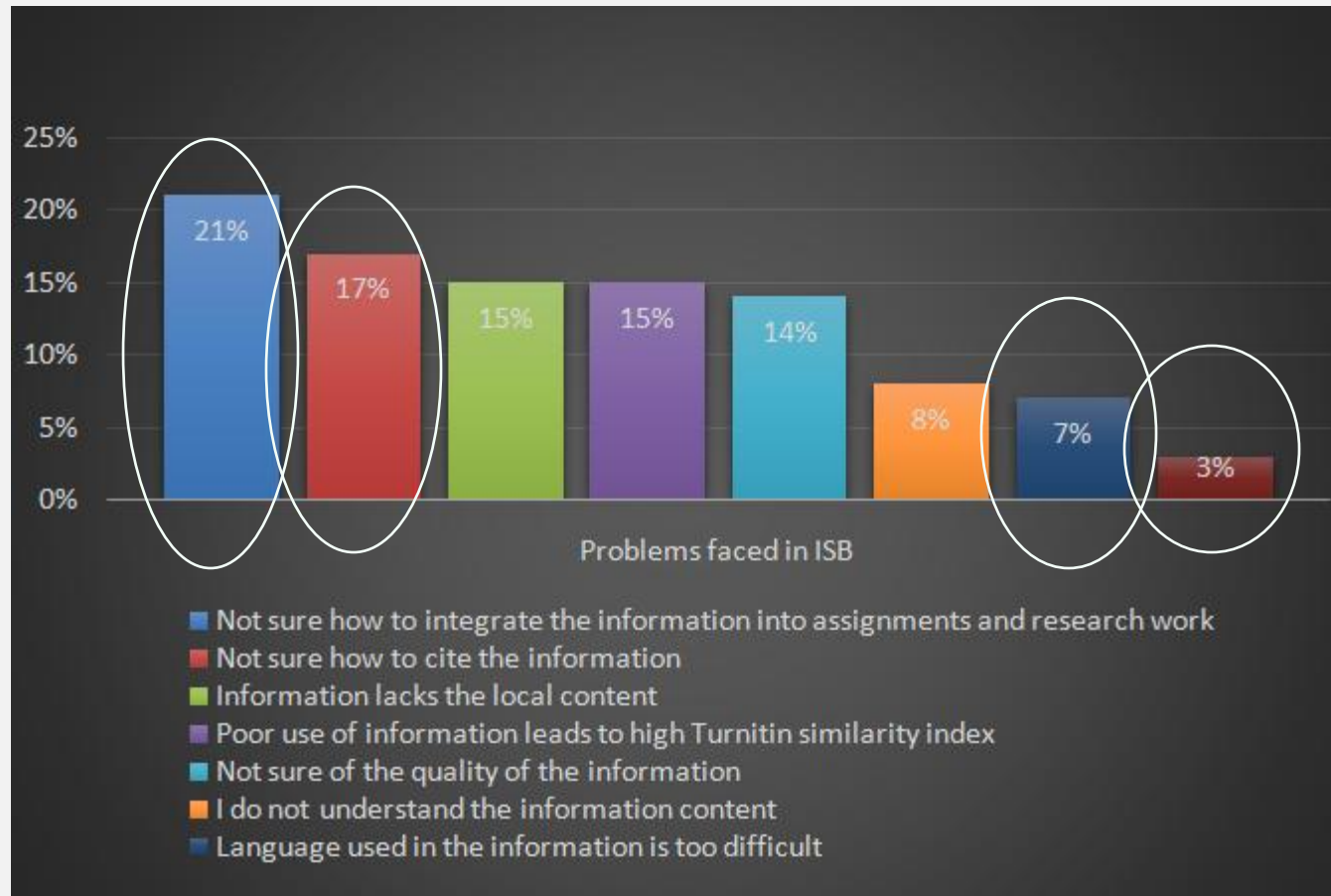
Effective Utilization of Information:

➔ Undergraduate students faced more problems in <u>understanding the content</u> of the information they obtained compared to PG students.

➔ 1st year students faced more problems in <u>understanding the language</u> used

➔ 1st year students were not clear on <u>how to cite the information</u> obtained

## RO 3: Relationship between Info Search & Utilization of Info

Simple linear regression analysis →
Positive Correlation was found

The results indicate that problems faced in information search process significantly predicts effective utilization of information with 32% prediction of the variance [F(1,433)=202.619, p<0.01].

Implications and Future Studies

1. Distance learners are not familiar with information seeking processes and the subsequent process of effective utilization of information

   ➔ They need to be made aware & seek guidance
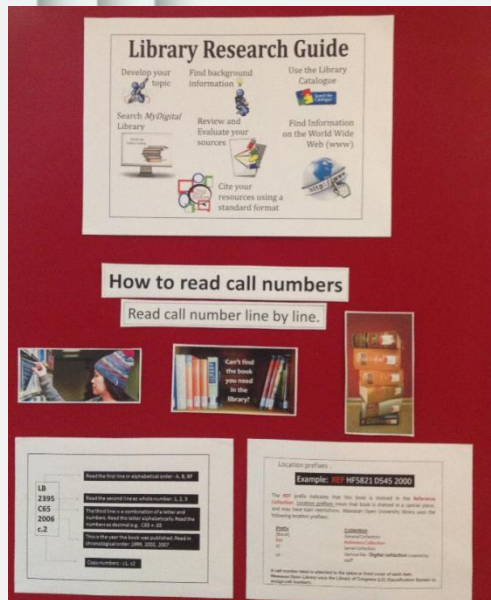
Implications and Future Studies

2. Poor information search behavior can lead to distance learners to develop a <u>sense of isolation</u> in the scholarship of learning and research.

➔ developing the perceptions of incompetency of learning and the encumbrance of returning to learning, more so of engaging in distance learning.
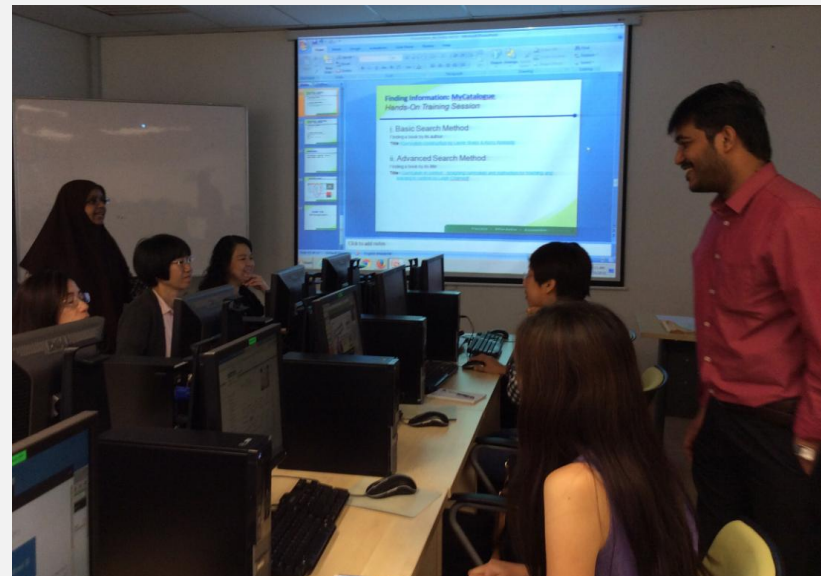
Implications and Future Studies

➔ Next step: Look at the relationship between information search & student isolation

"80% - eight in ten of the students PIL surveyed in 2010 reported having over-whelming difficulties with getting started on research assignments and determining the nature and scope of what their instructors required of them."

(Head, 2013, p.474)

Project Information Literacy (PIL) - more than 11,000 students from 57 colleges and universities across the US.

Acknowledgments

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Tan Sri Professor Emeritus Raj
IRI Director

Prof Dato' Dr Ho Sinn Chye
Vice Chancellor

Pn Kamsiah Mohd Ali
Library Director