



The use of web-based academic databases by postgraduate students



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Research Problem

Postgraduate students of Western Cape universities find it difficult to obtain full text academic references, thereby delaying or hampering progress.

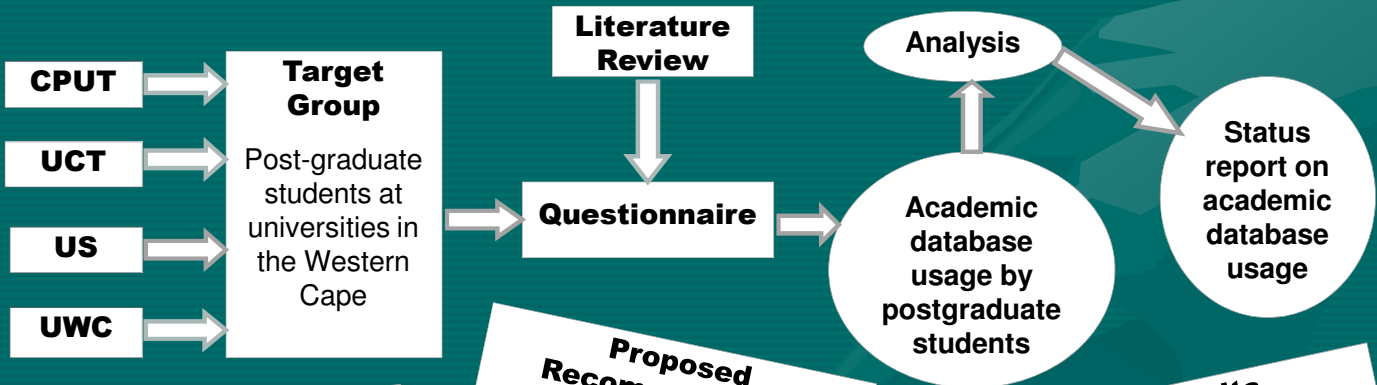
Research Question
What are the complications of finding free full-text academic references on the Internet?

Objectives

- To highlight some of the challenges that are being faced by postgraduate students.
- To identify areas of benefit academic databases offer to postgraduate students.
- To determine the current usage of databases.

Research Design

The study will use a quantitative data collection technique, whereby data will be collected using structured interviews, focus groups and documentary notes. Questionnaires will be administered to postgraduate students of selected universities to generate the data necessary for accomplishing the objectives of the research project.



References

Castles, J. 2004. Persistence and the adult learner: Factors affecting persistence in Open University students. *Active Learning in Higher Education*, 5(2):166-179.

Chang, A, & Davis, D. 2010. Transformation of Access Services in the New Era. *Journal of Access Services*, 7(2).

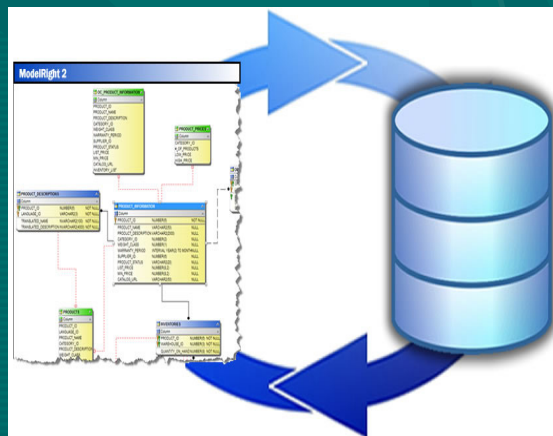
Nair, P.A.P., Pillay, J. 2004. Exploring the validity of the continuous assessment strategy in higher education institutions. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 18(2):302-312.

Proposed Recommendation

Postgraduate students in the Western Cape should make use of the access they have to academic databases, by virtue of their registration.

Expected Results

- All Western Cape Universities offer online academic databases to registered students.
- Most postgraduate students do not use academic databases for finding references.



Proportion of OA journals from each region compared to all journals covered in the citation databases

Region	Number of OA Journals	Number of Journals	% OA
Asia-Pacific	79	530	14.9%
Eastern Europe	19	282	6.7%
Middle East/Africa	5	57	8.8%
North America	58	3910	1.5%
South/Central America	33	78	42.3%
Western Europe	45	3961	1.1%
Whole database	239	8818	2.7%