fine “usage” in such various ways as accessing the homepage of the e-resource, downloading a full text article, or simply accessing table of contents/abstract or full text (McDowell & Gorman). Keeping in line with protecting user’s privacy they also avoid collecting data on user behavior. Most vendors provide information on number of sessions or searches but in reality a user might have logged in repeatedly to do the same search for a variety of reasons (system failure, interrupted work session, too many simultaneous users), so this information is of dubious utility.

Time period of usage statistics is another concern. Some vendors (e.g., StatUSA) do not keep statistics for more than six months on their Website and do not even bother to provide the previous data on demand. Most vendors provide the ability to choose a time period for data retrieval, but in some cases it is not possible to choose a specific time period or to pull up data for more than one year in a single report in order to analyze the changing usage patterns. One has to be content with whatever time periods are available. There are different standards for the time limit and the number of clicks that vendors count may result in the counting of one usage as multiple usages. It takes considerable time to check individual e-resource’s Website and collect this information for presenting it in a suitable format for ensuring a proper analysis. Merging this data together for a realistic analysis in the absence of qualified staff is another problem that many libraries face. Most libraries prefer to access the raw data available on the vendor’s Websites but hesitate to compile it for comparison purposes as they are not sure about what would best suit the institutional needs. Even though standardization is a critical factor, vendors have to realize individual needs of libraries and must provide abilities to customize the data (McDowell & Gorman).

How realistic is it, then, to assess e-collections with the help of — unfortunately ever so inadequate and difficult to measure — usage statistics data? During my tenure of just one and half years as an e-resources librarian, I have come across three incidents of vendors reporting inaccuracies of their usage data. When libraries have no control in collecting data and can not identify consistent under, or, over counts (Luther, Shim & McClure) how wise is it to trust the validity of the usage statistics for making informed decisions? Until usage statistics produce meaningful data that can be interpreted in some sensible ways, libraries can not depend solely on this information to make collection assessment decisions.

The broader question, however, is this: how much do usage statistics really matter when every reader has his/her resources and every e-resource has its user? At best, the usage statistics for any given e-resource tell nothing more than how many articles were downloaded or how many search sessions were initiated. Did the user find what he or she was looking for? Do hit counts reflect on the quality of the articles? And for growing universities, is it realistic to stop subscribing to costly, possibly lesser-used databases that might be required for program accreditation purposes, for important faculty research, or which are critically important to one or two programs? For example, at FGCU, we pay $20,000 for Research Insight software because this e-resource has its users

BORN & LIVED: Born in New Delhi, capital city of India. I lived in India until 1995 and then moved to Syracuse, NY, United States. Since 1997 Fort Myers, Florida has been my home.

EARLY LIFE: When I was young I lived in very small towns that were close to uranium mines in forest because my father worked at the Department of Atomic Energy of the Indian government. I grew up with nature and with poor, and yet, down to earth natives. Moving every three years with my parents through a number of cities, towns and villages aroused my interest in geography and far about places on this earth. It also gave me wonderful opportunity to learn languages from people belonging to different culture and fall in never ending love with nature. I learned to adjust with any thing that came my way and move on.

FAMILY: I have three siblings: 2 sisters and 1 brother, and am married to an Engineer husband from a completely different community than mine. I have a 22 years old son who will graduate in Spring 2007 with Theatre major degree from the University of Central Florida.

EDUCATION: M. S in Information Science, MLIS and MA in English Literature, Eligibility of Lectureship in Library & Information Science from the University Grants Commission of India.

MOST MEANINGFUL CAREER ACHIEVEMENT: Moving over to US for higher education, serving at FGCU, first as the Business Librarian and now in my dream position of E-resources Librarian.

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES: Member of ALA, ACRL, and Asian African and Middle Eastern Section (AAMES) of ACRL. I present regularly at these conferences.

IN MY SPARE TIME I LIKE TO: Read (fiction and philosophical books), sing, do things strictly for just MYSELF, watch movies, make pencil sketches, write poems and at times just sleep continuously. I love gardening but have not done any.

FIRST JOB: Humble beginnings of Library Assistant at the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT), Hyderabad Branch, India. Assigned to manage the publisher’s catalog library.


PET PEEVES: War and war mongrels. I hurt with every human being who gets hurt because of the act of terrorism and war. I dislike any act, be it at physical or psychological level that renders humans helpless and fearful. These acts destroy human potential and snatch away their right to lead a peaceful life.

PHILOSOPHY: You will become as small as your controlling desires or as great as your dominant aspiration. If we believe we can do something, then we can acquire the ability to do it even if we did not have it in the beginning. Everything we need for a happy life is within our self. We need to remember that life is a compromise of what our ego wants to do, what experience tells us to do, and what our nerves let us do.

WHERE DO I SEE THE INDUSTRY IN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS: Generation of techno savvy students and emerging Web based technologies will shape next five years of information industry and university libraries. I see possibilities of increased free access to authoritative information.

CAREER GOAL I’D LIKE TO ACHIEVE IN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS: Head the Electronic and Digital Services department of a learning center.

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