

Web 2.0 Portals for Green Research Practices

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Green management has been attracting increasing attention from researchers over the last two decades. But are researchers good stewards when it comes to environmentally friendly research practices? A recent study conducted by researchers from Saint Joseph's University and Drexel University provided some interesting insight to this question.

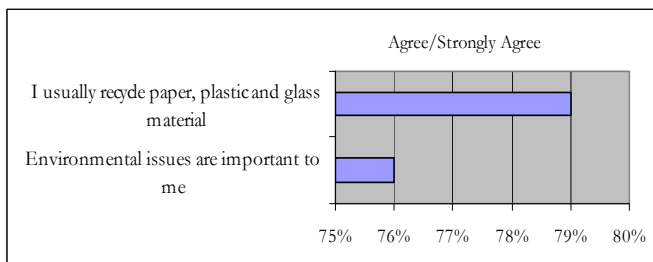
According to the University of Colorado Environmental Center

- 12,500 sheets of paper can be made from a single tree
- 10,000 sheets of paper per year are used by a single US office worker
- One tree can filter up to 60 pounds of pollutants from the air each year.

By conservative estimates a typical researcher uses 25,000 sheets of paper for research per year, which are two trees per year.

Researchers General Green Practices

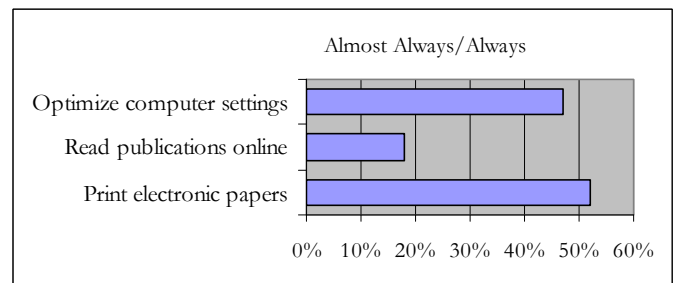
Over the last few decades concern for the environment has led to the rise of general green practices. These include recycling, and energy conservation among others. As can be seen below most researchers' were involved in general green practices.



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Green Research Practices

Researchers were asked about their specific green research practices. The results indicate that researchers' green research practices are considerably lower (18%-52%) than their general environmental practices (76%-79%).

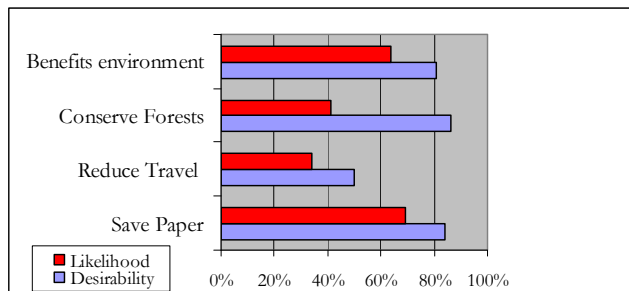


This implies that researchers do not apply the same environmental standards they apply to their own work as they do general environmental issues.

Researchers green research practices are considerably lower than their general environmental practices

To further understand this gap, the researchers' perceptions of the consequences of green research practices were examined.

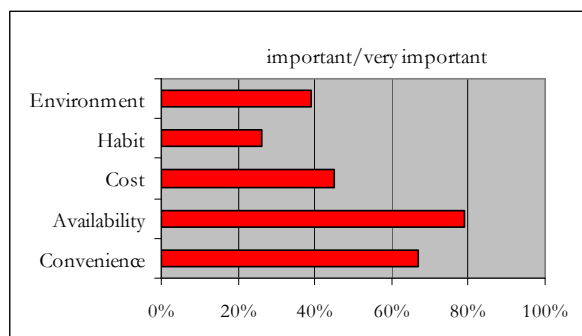
Consequences of Green Research Practices



Respondents were asked the desirability and likelihood of the consequences green research practices. These consequences include saving paper, reduce travel and thus pollution, conservation of forests, overall benefits to the environment. As can be observed, researchers scored consistently higher on desirability than likelihood of the consequences of green research practices.

Researchers consider convenience over environmental friendliness

In addition, the degree of importance of factors influencing respondent's choice of reading research material online rather than reading paper copies was examined. The results indicate researchers only read material online because it either available (78%) or convenient (68%). Interestingly, environmental benefits of online reading scored only 38%.



Looking Forward...

Role of Web 2.0 Technologies in Green Research Practices

By adopting green research practices, researchers can contribute significantly to the quality of the environment. These green research practices could include common practices such as recycling.

Researchers can contribute to the greening movement by using Web 2.0 portals in their work. Web 2.0 portals such as [MyNetResearch](#) can enhance research management, secure information sharing, and help researcher's collaborate with other researchers across the world.

Using Web 2.0 means that information (e.g. research findings) generated from individuals can be available from a central server through an Internet based community, reducing not only duplicate data, but also reducing the amount of paper, reducing travel and even reducing the need for brick and mortar buildings.

Web 2.0 technologies ability to collect, disseminate, and build upon information in cyberspace is thus a key functionality which has links to green research practices.

Recommendations For Improving Green Research Practices....

- Use recycled content paper
- Change printer and copier settings
- Use Internet Fax
- Assess and track your paper use
- Use electronic copies stored in a centralized online storage
- Collaborate using electronic documents
- Communicate with collaborators using Web 2.0 Technologies, e.g., blogs forums, instant messaging.
- Use online survey tools